

*Mr. Blow* : I can get the vouchers for this easily.

*Mr. Menteath* : Then, the total overcharge would be for 22lb., at 1s. 6d. per pound.

113. We come next to "lead piping," date 15th February, voucher No. 8?—That was procured from Burt and Co.

114. An invoice would be sent with it?—Yes.

*Mr. Hutchison* : Can that be produced?

*Mr. Skerrett* : We will produce it to-morrow.

*Mr. Menteath* : We propose to adduce expert evidence to prove, in the case of the sash-cord, that these hanks are nearly all made of a certain weight, so that any discrepancy would be very slight.

116. What is the next?—Thirty-six squares of glass (voucher No. 21 in Government contracts journal), I find there are 380ft. of glass here; the order was for four squares, 49½in. by 10½in.; 28oz. glass: the total would be 180ft. In item 64, "Paints and Colours," 9d. is charged, and 9d. was the contract price: that was procured from Messrs. Tingey.

117. *Mr. Tanner*.] What are the dimensions given?—380ft.

118. What is the invoice?—Thirty-six squares of glass 60in. by 12in.; roughly, 180ft.

119. *Mr. Hutchison*.] How is that entered?—380ft.; not in my handwriting.

120. Whose handwriting is it?—I am not certain.

*Mr. Reid* : I will be able to show that that item was corrected.

*Mr. Blow* : The officers of the department have checked everything except this £4. So far as the Public Works Department is concerned, we do not conceive that we are investigating a fraud. We do not know anything of a fraud. We have received and detected incorrect documents which were sent to the department.

121. *Mr. Menteath*.] What would the difference of price be?—£7 10. I see 9d. is the scheduled price.

122. *The Chairman*.] Have you anything more to say on that item?—No; not on that item.

123. The weights were not put in by you?—Not by me.

124. What correction is that?—It was altered from 280 to 380. It is not in my handwriting. From what I remember of Mr. Bridson's handwriting I think it is his.

125. How was it charged?—It was charged in voucher 21, in connection with the Mount View Asylum.

126. The amount charged was?—I can tell from this book that the voucher has been sent in. The voucher was for 380ft.; the charge was £14 5s. in excess; £7 10s. was the contract price.

THURSDAY, 22ND AUGUST, 1895.—(Mr. A. R. GUINNESS, Chairman.)

J. H. JENKINS further examined.

1. *Mr. Menteath*.] You see there an alteration from 7lb.; what is that alteration?—That is an alteration to 7½lb. and to 19lb.

2. Are these alterations in your handwriting?—They are not; they are to "7½" for the first two hanks; the second alteration is from "12" to "19."

3. *Mr. Reid*.] Say what the alteration was from?—From "5."

4. *Mr. Montgomery*.] What is the item?—Silverlake sash-cord.

5. *Mr. Menteath*.] Look at the journal, and say if you see there an entry for lead piping in February: "Voucher No. 4, supplied to the Mount View Asylum"?—Yes; "one piece of lead piping, 1½in., equals 20lb."

6. You will produce Burt's invoice, Mr. Skerrett?—Yes. [Produced.]

7. To witness.] What is the price?—20s. the hundredweight.

8. *Mr. Blow*.] Charged to whom?—Charged to the department.

9. *Mr. Menteath*.] What would the weight of that piece be?—16lb.

10. Was that before or after you took over the books?—It was before I took over the books.

11. That entry was not made by you?—No; it was not made by me.

12. What was the extended price?—3s. 7d.

*The Chairman* : It would shorten the proceedings if it were admitted that what was charged in this Government book was the same amount that was in the Government voucher rendered.

*Mr. Skerrett* : I admit that, reserving to myself liberty to show that the proper reductions were subsequently made.

14. *Mr. Menteath*.] Look to April 17th. There is an item there for Silver Lake sash-cord?—Yes; page 105 of the contract journal.

15. *Mr. Tanner*.] What is the number of the voucher?—Voucher 83: 10 hanks of Silverlake cord, "B" quality, 75lb.

16. What is the price of that?—1s. 6d. per pound?—Yes.

17. And what is the extension?—£5 12s. 6d. That was for the Stock Inspector's house at Woodville.

18. Do you say that item is incorrect?—It is incorrect, because No. 7 does not weigh more than 3½lb. per hank.

19. Do you produce any invoice in support of that?—No; but I have specimen-papers.

20. Is that a question for expert evidence?—Yes.

21. Then, instead of 7½lb., the weight per hank would be about 3½lb.?—About.

22. Referring again to the Silverlake sash-cord; how was it that you filled in the weight?—The general direction for the Silverlake sash-cord was to fill in from the weight "as before."

23. What was that?—That was 7½lb. the hank.