

83. I want to point out to you that these discrepancies are free from any suggestion of fraud. It was fluted glass that was charged at per sheet instead of per foot?—Yes.
84. "1450": That was a reduction on reap-hooks?—Yes.
85. "2210": That was a reduction on hose?—Yes.
86. "2199": Tin tacks; a reduction on that?—Yes.
87. What number does that come under in the schedule?—Item 836.
88. You do not think it comes under 642?—I do not think so.
89. That is the last item I will take you to; I now ask you whether there is any room for the suggestion that these are fraudulent overcharges?—No.
90. *Mr. Menteath.*] These are vouchers that are produced by you, Mr. Wilson?—Yes.
91. How is it that certain items are produced by you and certain others by Mr. Blow: do they not all pass through your hands?—The whole of the Public Works vouchers do not pass through my hands.
92. Are you acquainted with the vouchers produced by Mr. Blow?—Yes.
93. Are these vouchers you have been speaking to checked by you?—Most of them.
94. Why is there a distinction between those which came into Mr. Blow's possession and those which came through you?—They came conveniently into Mr. Blow's evidence; he was discussing the evidence given by Jenkins.
95. The vouchers produced by Mr. Blow containing errors cover the same ground, do they not?—Yes.
96. Then the vouchers produced here are culled of the general course of transactions simply because taken from the remainder in which mistakes occur?—Yes, they bear corrections.
97. Do you know whether these vouchers have been completely checked—in your opinion?—They have been completely checked, in my opinion.
98. Are you aware of the reason why cement has been purchased from Briscoe and MacNeil?—No.
99. Are you aware of the price of cement according to the schedule?—They are not the contractors for it.
100. Will you say what is the schedule price of cement?
- Mr. Skerrett* objected to the question as being irrelevant, because cement was not in the contract.
- Mr. Reid* objected to the question, as relating to a matter outside the contract.
- The Committee deliberated.
- The Chairman* announced that the decision was that the questions must be confined to matters in the contract.
101. *Mr. Menteath.*] Look at Exhibit 23: there appears there an item, "26 sheets of galvanised corrugated iron, 8ft., and 26 gauge, 385"; that is struck out?—Yes.
102. 4cwt. and 20lbs.?—This is not in the Public Works Department; it is certified by Dr. Fooks.
103. Then, what department is it in?—The Lunacy Department.
104. It is charged as £4 15s. 10d.
105. Look now and see what the weight is of apparently the same item further on: the weight is put in as 5cwt. and 20lbs.; do you know how that works out?—It does not work out correctly.
106. Yet it is allowed to pass at £4 15s. 10d.?—It seems so; the two items are on different dates; they are not the same item evidently; one was sold on the 27th February, and the other on the 14th March. The weight is not correct apparently.
107. What is the difference?—9ft.; the weight is 4cwt. and 20lbs.
108. That strikes you on the face of it as incorrect; and yet you say that item was fully checked?—This is not in the Public Works Department at all. I do not take any responsibility in connection with it.
109. Does it not show that there may be still errors in this contract which have not been detected?—Not so far as the Public Works Department is concerned.
110. But generally, as far as the vouchers under this contract are concerned, does it not show that some of these vouchers have not been corrected?—It is not in the Works Department; it belongs to the Lunacy Department.
111. *Mr. Blow.*] What is the voucher?—4105; the item is uncorrected.
112. *Mr. Menteath.*] The amount expressed in the voucher has been paid?—Yes, it has been paid; I think it has been produced in the information given to the Committee by Mr. Blow.
113. There are two vouchers, are there not—one correct and the other not correct?—One has been crossed out altogether; the other has not been corrected.
114. Is galvanised corrugated iron included in the contract?—No.
- 114A. Have you formed any estimate of the total value of the overcharges ascertained to date; not those on paid vouchers alone, but those on paid and those on corrected vouchers?—Approximately I should say about £25.
115. You have not worked it out?—No.
116. *Mr. Skerrett:* That includes every overcharge?—Yes, I think so.
117. *Mr. Menteath.*] You could not say that as sworn evidence?—No.
118. Will you look to voucher for jumpers and cleaners, charged at 352lb., or, rather, it was originally charged at 352lb.; to whom were they supplied?—To the Survey Department; I am not conversant with the Survey Department vouchers.
119. *Mr. Reid.*] You stated, with reference to the voucher produced by you, that the error in weight there was only one partially?—Yes.
120. Will you look to the statement produced by you to-day, and say how many errors of weight appear in that statement?—Twenty-one overcharges and two under-charges.