

\$1,500,000 SUBWAY LOSS LAID TOHYLAN

Degnon Contract for 14th St. Tunnel Voided and Work Delayed.

DRAGGED TWO YEARS

Will Be a Count in Indictment if Miller Takes Up Removal Charges.

MAY AVERT DRASTIC ACT

Estimate Board's Course in Transit Affairs To-morrow Eagerly Awaited.

The special meeting of the Board of Estimate called for to-morrow probably will determine whether or not that body is to remain obdurate toward Frank Commission contracts in face of Gov. Miller's threat of "more drastic action."

Should the Mayor and his associates elect to defy the gubernatorial wrath and provoke action for removal from office under charges, one of the counts in the prospective indictment will be the story of a loss of \$1,500,000 incurred by the city upon a single contract because of the obtuse and dilatory tactics of the Board of Estimate. The mulcting of the city in that sum was an incident of the first year of Mayor Hylan's administration—1918. It occurred long before the present Transit Commission took office.

When work was begun upon the Fourteenth street-Eastern district (Brooklyn) subway the tunnel work under Fourteenth street, Manhattan, was divided into two sections. The contract for section No. 2, extending from Irving place to Avenue B, was delivered by the then Public Service Commission on August 10, 1916, to the Degnon Contracting Company. It called for the completion of the work on October 10, 1918, and the contract price was \$1,572,319.

After America entered the world war in 1917 this job was seriously interfered with because of the rapidly mounting cost, especially of labor. Strikes were threatened repeatedly, and in view of the demand for labor on imperative Government work there was extreme and increasing difficulty in enlisting the

CIRCUS MAKES PARTY CALL AND DELIGHTS BELLEVUE

Clowns Put on Their Very Best Pranks for Crippled Youngsters and Even Bored Funmakers Find Much to Laugh At.

By annual custom, the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey combined circus sent elephants and clowns, horses and dogs and seals and acrobats to Bellevue Hospital yesterday to be enjoyed in particular by the ill and crippled youngsters, but no less by the doctors and nurses, the painters and the carpenters, the kitchen and neighborhood employees of various neighborhood businesses.

There were all of 2,000 spectators at this open air circus performance in the U-shaped enclosure made by the hospital's new buildings. Many patients watched from porches, which were crowded seven stories up. Above all were the youngsters who are fighting infantile paralysis.

In a Red Cross bus, attended by a physician, went a score of youngsters from the Willard Parker Memorial Hospital, each a diphtheria case and each with a tube in his throat. They watched the show from their automobile.

The clowns, as they always do when they go to Bellevue, added all the antics they could think of to the ones with which they amuse in the Garden, and were repaid by shouts and shrieks and waving arms, except from those beds and chairs from which there was strength only for a smile.

There appeared to be only one unhappy kid at the circus. He had a large and very tender boil, and his young sister, who had been delegated to look after him, left him, so he announced to all the crowd:

"I'm lost 'n gotta boll. I'm lost 'n gotta boll." It's a mighty good circus when the Ringmaster himself laughs over it, and Fred Bradner was laughing at the clowns most of the time. Even the clowns laughed when Joe Spisael's field kitchen collapsed. The clowns had their pictures taken with the nurses and with the crippled youngsters. They made faces until their makeup cracked.

necessary labor for subway construction.

Degnon Agreement Made.

In the hope of relieving this situation the then Public Service Commission negotiated a supplementary agreement with the Degnon Company. Under its terms the contractor was to waive all claims for damages and was to receive from the city the sum of \$232,000 in addition to the original contract price, to enable the company to meet the cost of increased wages and to proceed with the work. Mayor Hylan and his Board of Estimate colleagues, who then had been in office since the previous January, received this supplementary agreement on November 12, 1918. They failed to ratify it.

The tunnel work dragged along until a strike, which began in August, 1919, tied it up effectually for months, and finally the Degnon Company was unable to resume because of financial difficulties.

In the meantime the then Public Service Commission was succeeded by Transit Construction Commissioner John H. Delaney, and more harmonious relations were hoped for. Mr. Delaney, a prominent Tammany Democrat, was then the appointee of Gov. Smith. At the present time he is Mayor Hylan's Commissioner of Docks and Ferries.

Commissioner Delaney executed a new agreement with the contractor. It was substantially similar to the previous one in that it also called for an additional payment of \$232,000 to help meet the swollen wage scale. Mr. Delaney sent it to the Board of Estimate on February 2, 1920. The Board of Estimate dallied with it nearly two months and on March 20 rejected it.

The Commissioner in his communication to the Board of Estimate had figured that under the supplementary agreement which he had negotiated the total sum to be paid to the Degnon Company for completing the work, including the additional \$232,000, was \$1,799,113.62.

Bids Are Readvertised.

Degnon struggled along and his contract was about one-third completed when Commissioner Delaney declared the contracting company in default and readvertised for bids on the work remaining to be done. Patrick McEvoy was the lowest bidder and the contract

was delivered to him by Delaney on July 15, 1920.

The price at which the contract for finishing the job was awarded to McGovern was \$3,363,974.50. If the Board of Estimate had voted the additional \$232,000 to finance and expedite the Degnon contract as it was asked to do first by the then Public Service Com-

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mission, in November, 1918, and later by Delaney, on February 2, 1920—more than two years ago—the travelling public and the New York taxpayers would have reaped two important benefits:

First—The city would have saved the difference between \$3,363,974.50 and \$1,799,113.62, which is \$1,564,860.88.

Second—Long delay might have been averted in completion and operation.

Comptroller Craig again struck back at the Transit Commission yesterday. He made public his adverse report to the Board of Estimate, which is to be on the calendar for action at its next meeting, regarding an application made by the Transit Commission two weeks ago. The contractors for section 1 of the Fourteenth street-Eastern district subway tunnel construction, extending from Sixth avenue to Irving place, Manhattan, are Booth & Flinn, Ltd. Their job is about 98 per cent. completed. Actual construction was finished for months.

The Transit Commission, on March 28, asked the Board of Estimate so to modify the contract as to permit the payment to Booth & Flinn of \$175,000 of their retained percentages. There would still be left available \$109,000 wherewith to clean up incidentals, the cost of which will not exceed \$45,000. Mr. Craig says

the payment would be a gratuity.

Injunction proceedings against certain of the latest of the municipally operated buses in the Sixty-fifth street and 110th street Cathedral Parkway lines were started yesterday when papers were filed in the County Clerk's office by attorneys for the Belt Line Corporation and the Forty-second Street, Manhattanville and St. Nicholas Avenue Railway Company.

The surface car companies in seeking to restrain the Board of Estimate and the operators of the buses charge that the law has not been fully complied with in that no public hearings were conducted on the projects, and that no certificate of permission had been obtained from the Transit Commission. The bus lines were authorized, the filing papers state, by a resolution of the Board of Estimate March 24.

Fraud is alleged in that signs displayed in the buses lead the public to believe that the buses are operated for the city, whereas the companies charge that the city is receiving no revenues from the Transit Commission. The bus lines also ask the court to accertain the waste to city funds and property accruing from the operation of the buses.

BANKRUPT BROKER, INDICTED, IS SOUGHT

Roy H. MacMasters Is Charged With Grand Larceny in Richmond.

Roy H. MacMasters of the bankrupt stock brokerage firm of R. H. MacMasters & Co., 82 Broad street, is being sought by the police upon the request of authorities of Richmond, Va., where he has been indicted for grand larceny. It was learned yesterday.

On February 16 the firm was expelled from the Consolidated Stock Exchange and two days later was forced into bankruptcy, with liabilities estimated at \$700,000 and assets at \$30,000.

Benjamin F. Schreiber, Assistant Dis-

trict Attorney, who has been detailed exclusively to bucket shop charges, said he is investigating several complaints of bucketing against the MacMasters firm.

Expulsion of the company from the Exchange followed legal action begun by District Attorney Banton. George E. Silkworth, president of the Exchange, admitted the concern had violated a regulation of the Exchange in selling stock that should have been carried for a customer.

The bankruptcy proceedings were instigated by six employees of the firm. It had branch offices in Chicago, Milwaukee, New Haven, Richmond, Petersburg, Va., and Pittsburgh. James A. Corcoran, said to be a member of the firm, has been arrested here and is under \$5,000 bail. His attorney said he would fight attempts at extradition on the ground that his client was merely a bookkeeper in the company.

Magistrate George W. Simpson in Tombs Court yesterday committed to the Tombs Harry Simons, aged 26, who gave his address as 288 Riverside Drive and who is charged with conspiracy in Philadelphia, involving \$20,000. Simons is believed to be a Philadelphia broker. He will be held for extradition Friday.

BRIDGE CAISSON TO BE LAUNCHED LIKE SHIP

Philadelphia-Camden Ceremony Set for Monday.

PHILADELPHIA, April 22.—The first important step toward the bridge that will connect Camden with Philadelphia will be taken at noon Monday, when a huge steel caisson will be launched from the ways of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation's yards in Camden.

As much ceremony as ordinarily goes with the launching of a ship will attend the occasion. Miss Ruth Gardner Swaab, fifteen-year-old daughter of Mr. S. M. Swaab of Philadelphia, and a freshman in the Girl's High School, will be sponsor, while members, officers and engineers of the Delaware River Bridge Joint Commission will view the launching from a police boat.

When the caisson, said to be the largest ever built, slides down the ways, it will be practically a barge 113 feet long, 76 feet wide and 65 feet high. It will float like any other barge and will be towed by tugs to the foot of Race street, Philadelphia, to be sunk at the outer end of a pier.



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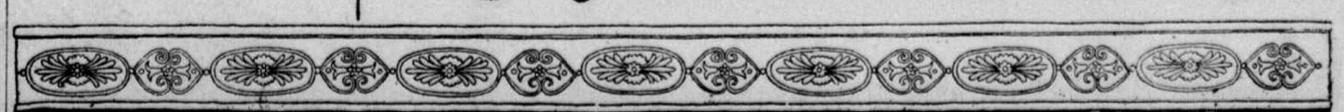
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