

Railroad Notes.

Traveling Agent Collins, of the Omaha, returns today to his post at Helena, after several days in St. Paul.

Supt. Tourtellot, of the Northern Pacific dining car service, returned yesterday from a trip of inspection to the Pacific slope.

Among the out-of-town railroaders in St. Paul yesterday was H. J. Falkenbach, traveling freight and passenger agent of the Mexican National, with headquarters at Chicago.

District Passenger Agent John Turner, of the Northern Pacific, who went to Perham a week ago, accompanied by several Indiana railroad friends, returned home on the overland train yesterday after several days' excellent fishing.

The Northern Pacific is making arrangements for the temporary handling of its freight and passenger business at Little Falls until spring, when a new depot will be built to replace the one recently burned.

CAPITOL STONE CONTROVERSY.

Hon. Channing Seabury Writes a Letter Worth Reading.

The current issue of the Owatonna Chronicle has the following:

The controversy over the action of the capitol commission in selecting Georgia marble for the facing of the new capitol has waxed warm during the past few weeks, and as a result general interest has been aroused over the matter. In view of this fact, we are glad to be able to lay before our readers this week the following communication from the vice president of the commission, Hon. Channing Seabury, which cannot fail to be of great interest, being a clear, strong and personal statement of the reasons actuating the commission in their decision:

Editors Owatonna Chronicle, Owatonna, Minn.
Gentlemen—As requested in yours of the 23d inst., I give you the lowest bids received by our board, August 10th, 1897, on the two kinds of stone referred to in your letter, viz: Amberg Granite company, for Wisconsin granite \$719,167
W. C. Baxter, for Minnesota granite..... 787,000
Butler, Ryan & Co., for Georgia marble 690,000
Butler, Ryan & Co., for granite base-ment, the remainder Georgia marble 696,000

Every bid submitted to us required the bidder to furnish all the labor and material necessary to complete the shell of the building, including the roof, but not including the dome or the steps. The contractor will furnish all the brick, cement, lime, steel floor beams, roof trusses, etc., together with all brick-laying, stone-cutting and labor of every description. (The brick work will be two feet thick, and will support all the weight of the floors, etc.) In every contract we have let, we have carefully estimated whether we could make it or not, and still keep within the total original appropriation of \$2,000,000. The same is true of the last one. Careful estimates showed us that we had not exceeding \$701,112.84 available for this contract.

It will be seen that we might have accepted

the bid, using marble for the entire exterior facing of the building, \$47,000 less than the lowest bid for Minnesota granite, and that the one we did accept (St. Cloud granite for the basement, and marble above that), in effect, paid a premium of \$6,000 to Minnesota granite, since no one will claim that the use of marble in the basement of the building, when it was to be used in the remaining stories, would have impaired its beauty, strength, or any other quality. We could, however, use granite appropriately for the basement, and were glad to do so, even at a slight increased cost, thus utilizing Minnesota stone to as great an extent as possible, without losing the opportunity (which had never, until the last bids were opened, seriously entered our minds) of constructing this building of a material which has been recognized for 2,000 years as the most beautiful and durable one known to the builders' art, white marble.

The same reason prompted us to require Butler, Ryan & Co., to substitute Kettle River sandstone (about 76,000 cubic feet), for St. Paul blue limestone, in the dome masonry yet to be constructed, at an increased expense of \$13,000 or \$15,000 to the contractor (because the specifications called for the use of the last named stone, and we allowed nothing for the change which we demanded as a condition precedent to the award).

Kettle River sandstone was adopted by the board for the dome foundations, and was used last year, because of its known strength; it was a prominent competitor for use on the exterior of the building in this last contract; it is one of Minnesota's stone industries; and we desired to scatter the labor and material as fairly as we could among the citizens of our state, without losing the chance (which had not before offered, and was not likely to be repeated), of utilizing the most desirable material offered to us for the exterior walls. Our local blue limestone would be

fully strong and durable for this masonry, and our arbitrary dictation was not at once accepted by the contractor, but was finally agreed to, after several hours deliberation on his part.

It does not seem necessary that I should say anything in this connection about white marble in comparison with any of our Minnesota stones, for there can be no comparison made. To my mind, the whole matter can be properly summed up in one sentence. Minnesota possesses no deposit of white marble, and consequently, our board, in having adopted it for the exterior of the new capitol, at a cost many thousand dollars less than the best stone which Minnesota produces, simply exercised good business judgment, and purchased a material infinitely superior to anything found within our borders, on a business basis, exactly the same as actuates each one of us in his private affairs; and in so doing we have cast no slight upon any of the products of our Minnesota quarries.

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that we have, as yet, discovered nothing that at all compares with this wonderful deposit of white marble in Georgia within our state, rich as we are the countless other sources of wealth. But is this a sufficient reason why Minnesota, when constructing her permanent home, should not purchase the best that can be found, at least within the limits of the United States (whose citizens know no narrow state lines in commerce), when the better article comes within the limits of the funds available? A majority of our board thought that it was not. Rhode Island thought it was not when she adopted this same Georgia marble for her new capitol (now up to the third story and greatly admired), discarded her famous "Westerly" granite and all the other New England granites and marbles which have been famous for a century past. Countless other parallels could be cited, but they are unnecessary.

It is a beautiful, strong, substantial and enduring stone, beyond any sort of comparison handsomer than anything in the way of stone of any kind which can be found within the limits of our state. Some of us have seen it in the walls of St. Luke's hospital in New York, the Corcoran art gallery in Washington, the new Rhode Island state capitol, etc., etc., and we think we know what we are doing in adopting it for our own beautiful new building which should be, when completed, the handsomest and best building in the Northwest, as we intend to make it. Notwithstanding all the unpleasant things that have been said, I yet feel perfectly confident that before the new capitol is under roof, an overwhelming majority of the people of our state will rejoice that we have had courage enough to adopt and use it.

"Home stone" was, and is, a proper sentiment within reasonable lines, and every member of our board possesses as much of it as any other citizen. We are, however, concerned only in the proper construction of the new capitol, in accordance with the best judgment and information we possess. We have acted at all times and on all questions that came before us upon the theory that this work was committed to our judgment, investigation and action, and that the conclusions we might reach from time to time would be assumed by

the people of our state to be the result of better knowledge (because more carefully studied) than the masses could give to the questions involved in a superficial way, and that our honesty of purpose would be assumed and would not need to be proven.

It is the ambition of our board to demonstrate that this great public state building can be constructed with clean hands and free from "jobs" and corruption. If we live, and do not become disgusted with misrepresentation and abuse in the meantime, we are quite confident that we shall accomplish this result, and that we shall leave behind us an enduring and beautiful monument that will help to educate our children and those who follow us into a love of the beautiful in architecture and a pride in conscientious effort. Very truly yours,

—Channing Seabury, Vice President.

HANNA THEIR GUEST.

Annual Dinner of the Marquette Club at Chicago.

CHICAGO, Oct. 9.—The annual banquet of the Marquette club on Chicago day was held at the Auditorium, Senator M. A. Hanna being the guest of honor. Mr. Hanna was down for a speech on "Ohio—the Modern Virginia." His speech had no political significance, and he did not touch on political matters save to recall the assistance given him by the members of the Marquette club when he first started actively in the campaign for the nomination of President McKinley. He spoke of Ohio as the Modern Virginia, in that it had furnished so many presidents to the nation, and announced to the members of the club that he would rely on them for assistance when he again needed their aid. His speech was greeted with cheers, and the aid was promised him at any time he might call for it. The other speakers of the evening were Edgar A. Bancroft, who responded to the toast, "The Marquette Club," J. R. Burton, of Kansas, who spoke on "An Epoch and Its Lesson," and Frank O. Lowden, of Chicago, on "Chicago."

FEVER THE SAME.

No Great Change in the Situation in the South.

NEW ORLEANS, Oct. 9.—The fever situation is practically unchanged and new cases were numerous, coming from all parts of the city, the foci being widely distributed. The deaths today were:

Miss Pauline Heltman, Miss Katie Leitch, Sister Eulogia, Mrs. E. A. Reppert. There were thirty-three new cases.

Edwards, Miss., Oct. 9.—There was one death from yellow fever today, that of Mrs. Burt Walton, and seventeen new cases.

Biloxi, Miss., Oct. 9.—Board of health report: Yellow fever under treatment, 93; new



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