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"How the Money was Spent."
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HOW THE MONEY WAS SPENT.

THE CHARGES WHICH LED TO THE
COAST SURVEY INVESTIGATION.

A Treasury Official Outlines the Scope
of the Inquiry--The Committee Begin
the Work of Investigation.

The committee appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury to in-
vestigate the affairs of the Coast and Geodetic Survey will inquire into
the general management of the bureau as well as the methods of expending
the funds and keeping the accounts. They were busy at the work all day
yesterday, and they expect to be ready to report within a week. The
report made by First Auditor Chenoweth, upon which Superintendent Hilgard
was suspended and four of his assistants absolutely dismissed, will not
be made public until the investigation by the committee has been completed.
The chief officials concerned in the matter are reticent; but it is known
that the charges made by Mr. Chenoweth are strong and emphatic, and that
otherwise the sudden suspension of Prof. Hilgard, the superintendent, and
the summary dismissal of his four assistants would not have been made so
promptly. It is denied that on appealing to the Secretary of the Treasury
the four gentlemen who had been dismissed had their dismissals modified
into suspensions; but it is understood that old Capt. C. O. Boursal, who,
after forty-three years of service, feels his dismissal keenly, will be
relieved to the extent of having the order at least temporarily changed
to one of suspension. The Treasury officials, who have undertaken to
reform the bureau, had come to regard it as a superfluous little aristoc-
rracy of scientists, who considered themselves an entirely self-contained
and independent organization, accountable only to Congress, the appropriation
committees of which they could always control by bringing the influence of
the college professors to bear upon them, and representing that science
would suffer if the bureau was to be crippled by common restrictions or to
be ruled by any but its own scientific heads.

"This attitude has become traditional in the bureau," said a Treasury
official yesterday who is familiar with the facts in the case. "The men
at the head of the service are a close set of old barnacles who have
always tried to have things their own way, without any checks, supervision
or interference; and having succeeded so long, they are impatient under the
present movement of reform. Regarding the work of coast and geodetic
survey, as a special branch of scientific work, they indignantly resisted
any suggestions as to the proper expenditure of the moneys appropriated
for the service. None but themselves, they thought, had wisdom enough to
know how these things ought to be done or the authority to say them so.
These ideas rooted and these abuses existed years ago when other men had
charge of the bureau, and when the late incumbents succeeded to their
positions they continued in the old ways and claimed the wide, irresponsible
freedom of their predecessors. They had ways of their own, arbitrary ways,
of making appointments in the service and of treating their various classes
of employees, who were drawn from the navy, the army and from civil life.

When Mr. Chandler was Secretary of the Navy there was a tough controversy
between him and the bureau on the question of authority to make appointments.
The Secretary contended that the Navy Department was entitled to a certain
quota of appointments in the survey service for its cadets; but the bureau,
tru to its traditions, insisted that the will of the heads of the bureau
in their work of science must be supreme.

"Can you say generally what is the nature of the charges made against
Prof. Hilgard and his assistant?"

"Well, in a general way, was the reply, "the charge is understood to mean a reckless misappropriation of funds. Money charged as salaries
that were alleged to have been paid to men who really were not employed;
extavagant allowances to men who were employed and unauthorized allowances
to their families; too frequent and too liberal entries of money under the
head of traveling expenses and other charges and accounts that don't bear
analysis."

"Prof. Hilgard," suggested the reporter, "has the reputation and the
appearance of being a very honest, simple, easy-going man."

"Well, reputation and appearance may or may not be correct," responded
the treasurer official; "but evidence has come under my own notice quite
recently to convince me that the professor is far more than the simple-
minded, easy-going, harmless creature that reputation and appearance would
indicate."

"Yes," said he, changing the topic, "another of the charges, I think,
is that work was regularly done in the Coast Survey office in business
hours by Government-paid employees of the bureau for outsiders not con-
ected with any Government service, and for pay."

"You have seen by an interview published in THE POST that some of the
men dismissed allege that the investigation and all the trouble connected
with it have been instigated by a Texan sorehead, a friend of Mr. Chenoweth,
who was dismissed some time ago from the Coast and Geodetic Survey Service.
Do you know the alleged sorehead?"

"Yes; I think I know the man referred to. I believe it is a fact that
this investigation was suggested to Mr. Chenoweth by some information about
the working of the bureau, which he received from this man. But the man I
think cannot fairly be called a sorehead. The information was given without
malice, and only with the object of having crooked things straightened, and
the information thus given had been fully justified by the knowledge which
Mr. Chenoweth's examination has already developed. The investigation by
the committee will probably more than confine the report which Mr. Chenoweth's
examination led to."