

THE MARCONI CONTRACT.

Select Committee of H. of C.

The value of a University Degree.

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Captain E.F. Charlton, Assistant Director of Torpedoes, asked by the Chairman if it would not have been possible to obtain a larger staff by drawing upon the open market, he replied that he did not think so at the price. They had recently advertised for men when they wished to increase their staff, but though they had stipulated that applicants should have a University Degree, very few of the applicants had been sufficiently good for them.

Mr. Booth asked whether, when the Admiralty wanted a wireless expert, it was fair to stipulate that he should have a University Degree. The witness replied that the statement that an applicant with a University Degree would have the preference was put into the advertisement by the Director of Naval Education. The absence of a University Degree would not be an absolute bar, for some of the applicants who were considered had no University Degree. The reason for the stipulation might have been that they wanted a man who would be on an equality with the people he had to meet. At a later stage, however, Capt. Charlton (the witness) said he wished to correct that answer. The reason why they desired that candidates should have a University education was that they wanted men who had had a good engineering or mechanical training. As a matter of fact, the man who was appointed had not had a University education. He believed the salary offered had been £300 to £350.

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THE MARCONI CONTRACT.

-- ADMIRALTY LOSSES AND GAINS. --

UNIVERSITY DEGREES AND WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

"The Select Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Sir Albert Spicer, yesterday continued the inquiry into the circumstances in which the Marconi Company obtained from the Government without competition a contract to establish a chain of wireless telegraph stations across the Empire.

Captain E.F.B. Charlton, Assistant Director of Torpedoes at the Admiralty, an appointment that carries with it responsibility for all matters connected with the development of wireless telegraphy, was further examined.

Questioned by Mr. Faber as to the possibility of the Admiralty constructing the Imperial wireless stations, witness said they could have done so under exceptional circumstances, but it was undesirable they should do so. The principal reason was the shortness of their staff. To show how busy the Admiralty wireless staff were, he said that the meetings of the Technical Committee were held not in London, but on board the "Vernon", in order to save the time of the experts.

Wireless experts and University Degrees.

Even for your own naval wireless work you had not a sufficient staff? -- In May and June, 1911, we had not. In August there was a slight increase, and at the present moment we have just a sufficient staff. They could only increase the wireless telegraphy staff at a certain rate, and although men were to be obtained outside the Service it was very difficult to get them at the price. They had advertised, and of the sixty candidates only two or three were suitable and one was selected. All the applicants, however, had not a University Degree, as indicated by the Advertisement.

Mr. Booth -- When the Admiralty want a wireless expert, do you think it fair to stipulate that the applicant should have