

California Stone Monument & Building Industry circa July 1909

“The West Coast”

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“San Francisco, Cal., July 20. – This is usually the quiet season with the retail monument dealers around San Francisco, and there is no discouragement felt at a slight falling off in the general business. On the whole, there is more movement than there was a year ago. The wholesale trade in monuments, according to local dealers, has been fairly active up to the present time, but the retailers are now well stocked and are not likely to buy very largely for the next month, unless some special work comes up. There has been little out of the ordinary in recent sales in eastern monumental marbles, though there are one or two fairly large jobs in sight. A good deal of granite monument work is being done, but it may be said that, on the whole, marble is fairly holding its own. Quite a number of vault jobs are being taken by local firms, using Italian marble and California granite, and it is understood that some of this work is being done at very low prices.

“The situation in building marble has been rather disappointment this month, as nothing of any importance has come up locally, and only one large job has been taken in the vicinity of San Francisco. This is the interior finish of the First National Bank, of San Jose, Cal., in which the Vermont Marble Company, of this city, will set about six carloads of marble, some of which is foreign. None of the local marble works are as busy as they were a month ago, and the larger dealers are holding off from the competition for the numerous small jobs around the city. Prices on this work are even lower, as a rule than they have been before, and it is believed that many of the smaller and less stable concerns are merely trying to ‘keep their heads above water’ as long as possible. It is hardly possible to find any profit in much of the work that is being done, and it would not be surprising if some firms would go out of the business within the next few months.

“While money for building purposes appears to be more plentiful than a few months ago, it is still difficult to obtain capital for the finer class of structures, and few builders are specifying any large quantity of expensive materials.

“There is a fair amount of work in prospect for the fall and winter, however, as several good sized municipal jobs are to come up in the near future, and plans for several private buildings are rapidly taking shape. Plans are about completed for the Oakland Y.M.C.A. Building, and it is understood that considerable marble work will be requested. Little has been heard of late of the new wing of the St. Francis Hotel, but it is likely to come up at any time.

“It is reported that Mahoney Bros., of this city, will have charge of the new W. R. Hearst Building at Third and Market Streets, and that contracts will soon be let.

“Marble-quarry development in California is inactive at present, partly owing to the inactivity of the market, but also largely from lack of capital to carry out the work on a large scale. Some of the local quarry firms are well established, but all the work done so far can hardly be regarded as more than a beginning.

“E. C. Dalzell, of the California-Nevada Marble Company, of Reno, Nev., has returned to Nevada, and it is reported that the company will install a polishing plant there.

“Charles M. Neal, a marble dealer of Punxsutawney, Pa., was in San Francisco recently, and considers going into the business in Central or Southern California.

“The Western Cut Stone Company is just starting work on its contract for granite and marble work in the new Columbia Theater.

“Fred Heindenreich, a monument dealer in Honolulu, H. I., has taken a contract for a large monument consisting of a shaft surmounting a vault, for which white Vermont marble is specified.

“The McGilvray Stone Company has taken the contract for granite and limestone work for the ten-story building of the White Investment Company, at California and Battery Streets. The contract amounts to \$13,200.

“The interior marble work in the Douglas Building, at Eddy and Market Streets, will be set by the Sterling Marble Company, for \$2,577.

“Plans have just been announced for the new building of the Home Telephone Company, to be erected shortly on Market Street. The building will be faced with stone, probably sandstone. Colusa sandstone is specified for a sub-station of the same company.

“M. J. Hawley, of the Vermont Marble Company, has been in the east since June 1, but is expected back next week.

“Contracts have been let for the remodeling of a large hotel building in Sacramento, Cal., the principal work being the addition of a stone facing. The work will cost about \$100,000.”