

to contract again to do the same work upon the same terms for which I had contracted the last, and several preceding years, provided the committee concluded to have it done in the same style, or if any modification was required, I proposed that it be made matter of stipulation as to the manner. Such was the substance of my proposals, and the page of the journal of the last session was pointed to as to particulars. I should have thought it impossible that the committee could have understood that I proposed for any part, however small or unprofitable, that might be selected to assign to me of the job, and without any consultation or intimation whatever to that effect. I beg the legislature to reconsider the vote that they have contracted with me for the work mentioned, and to allow me to decline accepting it.

Very respectfully,

J. HUGHES."

This letter was read in the House of Delegates and laid on the table, and no proceedings were had thereon or in reference to this contract.

In this state of the inquiry a question of fact arises upon which the decision may, and indeed does depend. "Was there a contract in fact made with Mr. Hughes, as stated in the report of the joint committee?" The undersigned thinks that the report, uncontradicted as it is, is evidence that Mr. Hughes did agree to perform the part of the work assigned him by the committee. Besides this proof, the committee called on the gentlemen of the Senate and House, now at the seat of government, who were members of the joint committee, for their recollection of what passed at the time the proposals were received and the contracts made. The following is their statement: "Being called on to state the circumstances connected with the contract for printing made with the joint committee at the last session, as far as recollected they are as follows: After the meeting of the committee, Mr. Hughes being known as an applicant and absent, was sent for, and informed that the committee were about to contract for the work of the ensuing session, and would be glad to know the proposals he had to make. Mr. Hughes replied, that notice of the meeting of the committee was short, and being unable to prepare more formal proposals, he stated that he was willing to contract for the printing of the House on the same terms as before, and then mentioned several of the prices of the different kinds of printing required, and concluded by referring the committee to the prices stipulated in his then existing contract. The committee were of opinion that Mr. Hughes offered to take any part of the printing at the prices stated in said contract, and under that opinion proceeded to give him such portions of the printing as stated in the report of the committee to the House of Delegates.

J. B. RICAUD,

WM. T. GOLDSBOROUGH."

My recollection of the conversation had by the committee and Mr. Hughes, agrees substantially with the statement made by Messrs. Ricaud and Goldsborough. My understanding of his