The Sun.

THIRTY-NINTH YEAR. NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1872. PRICE TWO CENTS.

THE ROBESON FRAUDS.

Forcing the Investigation in the Chairman's Absence.

ACTION OF A JUG-HANDLED COMMITTEE.

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THE EXTENT OF THE ROBBERIES.

WASHINGTON, April 5.—In the absence of Gov. Blair of Michigan, the regular Chairman, Mr. Sargent, the second name on the Robeson Investigating Committee took the chair to-night and called the committee to order. Besides Mr. Sargent, there were present Messrs. Archer, Peters, and Warren. Mr. Bartlett addressed the committee as follows:

MR. BARTLETT ASKS FOR A FULL COMMITTEE.

Mr. Chairman—I said last evening that I supposed the rest of the testimony which we desired to put in, so far as we in particular are concerned in this investigation, would probably occupy about three further hearings. That testimony relates to alleged transactions in Philadelphia, and to other transactions, some of which were mentioned and some of which were not mentioned in THE NEW YORK SUN. Now, in consequence of the, to me, unexpected absence of one member of the committee, who was its mover and is its Chairman, we must, so far as we are concerned, decline to put in this testimony, unless before a full committee; and in order that there may be no misapprehension, and in order that you may all understand that there is no effort on our part either to assume to dictate to the committee or to doubt the honesty of purpose on the part of each member of the committee now present, I will state that our reasons for this course are: First, that this, as was suggested last evening by one of the members of the committee, has seemed to us from the first a *quasi* investigation, at least so far as our part in it is concerned, and in order that that investigation may be conducted fairly, it is of an extreme importance, in our view, not only that each of you who altogether are to constitute the judges should become cognizant of the literal testimony of each witness, but should also be able to see in what manner that testimony is given; how willingly or reluctantly he testifies; what efforts on the part of counsel it requires to draw from him the answer, and all these facts and indications with which every lawyer is acquainted, and which go so far to make up a correct determination of the weight and effect to be given to the evidence of each particular witness. From the beginning of the inquiry I think no act has been performed except when the committee has been full. Although I believe the resolution authorizing the committee permits them to proceed either by a quorum or sub-committee, yet before there had been any resignation, and while the committee, in fact, was as full as it is now, we adjourned here, I think, four days in succession, and no action was taken until the place of Mr. Voorhees was filled. If I am not mistaken, during some of the discussions which took place at these meetings, one of the members of the committee expressed a decided disinclination to going on except with a full committee, and went so far as to say that he must be understood as resigning unless the committee was full. We also think that it is of vast importance to us in this investigation that the member of the committee who moved it, and who actively desired investigation in the first instance, and who was the only one, so far as I know, of you all to do so, should be present during all the proceedings. Let me say in addition that the absence of Gov. Blair was entirely unexpected to us; as much so as I suppose to every member of the committee, and that we are in no wise responsible for it. If he were present I should proceed with my testimony, so far as I had it to offer, and not ask for the slightest delay.

CONGRESSMAN SARGENT AGAIN.

Mr. Sargent—Mr. Secretary, have you anything to say in regard to this matter?

Secretary Robeson—I do not understand that the committee is called upon to do anything. The gentleman merely says that he does not intend to go on.

Mr. Bartlett—I want to say that I felt it my duty, under all the circumstances, to state what I have to the committee. I have stated it just as it struck my mind, and as fairly and fully as I can.

Mr. Sargent—The question raised is whether you say you decline to go on during the ten days that Gov. Blair is absent, and ask to have the investigation put over.

Mr. Bartlett—We do not ask you to put it over, but I consider it would be unjust to us to make us go on. I think I said I must decline to go on, but I do not wish to be misunderstood in regard to this matter. I do not want anybody to assume that I came here to-night, or have come here any night, to dictate to this committee. Although that imputation has been repeatedly made, it is not my intention to do anything of the sort.

MR. BARTLETT AGAIN REQUESTS A FULL COMMITTEE.

Mr. Archer—Do you put it in the form of a request to the committee that a postponement be made until Gov. Blair's return?

Mr. Bartlett—That is what I would like done.

Mr. Sargent—I understand that the alternative is that he refuses to proceed.

Mr. Archer—I do not think he has stated it in that way. He stated it with a qualification.

Mr. Sargent—The gentleman is intelligent, and can state definitely what he wants in the matter, and the committee can make up its mind.

Mr. Bartlett—What I desire is, and the committee can take any action they see proper—I do not wish to tell them how, because I do not know so well as they do—that we should be permitted not to put in any more testimony, and that the investigation should stand over, until the return of Gov. Blair.

Mr. Sargent—In case the committee does not take that view of the matter, what then?

Mr. Bartlett—In case the committee does not take that view of the matter I should like to have the committee take whatever action in regard to the investigation they choose, and so far as I am concerned I should have to say we should not introduce any more evidence.

ROBESON ANXIOUS TO SHUT OFF THE INVESTIGATION.

Secretary Robeson—Mr. Chairman, it is proper that I should say something, I suppose, about this thing. I said last night before this committee exactly what I felt about it. I feel it just as strongly to-night, and I feel the obligations which press upon me just as imperatively to-night. The committee is here—an impartial committee, I suppose. No one will dare to pronounce it otherwise, except in a spirit of reckless calumny. It is a regularly constituted committee under a resolution of Congress, which authorizes its existence. It is, by the special provisions of that resolution, clothed with full power to proceed, invested as a quorum with all the powers of Congress for that purpose. The charges are before us; the accuser and his counsel are here; the evidence, if we may believe their assertions, is on hand; the Department is open before it; the country waits; the public service waits; the accused, who has the right before God and man to be treated as an innocent man until he is proved guilty, stands here and demands before the country that this investigation shall proceed. I am not willing as a public officer or as a private citizen, if I can help it by any action or my protest, to stand for the next ten days without having this matter at least as far cleared up as practicable under the circumstances. I say that the interests, public and private, involved are so great that they are not to be swayed by the mere idea, opinion, or wish of the other party; and I say to you, gentlemen, as a matter of common right between man and man, I am entitled to have it proceed. I wish you, and I wish Congress, that constituted you, and the country to take notice that from the beginning of this investigation to the end, not one minute's delay has been occasioned by me; that leaving every engagement of every kind, I have always been here at the minute, and have always stayed here until the last, and have pressed every time for progress, and I still stand here and press for it and ask for it as a common right. Why, gentlemen, perhaps the most important proceeding of this committee that has yet been taken was taken with four members. That was the admission of these gentlemen here by their counsel. The committee then had but four members. The very authority which brings them here, which permits them to be here, and to act as prosecutors in this case, was passed in a resolution when there were but four members present.

A FAIR INVESTIGATION WANTED.

Mr. Bartlett—Mr. Chairman, in reference to what the Secretary has said, it is, perhaps, as well for us all to bear in mind that it cannot be assumed by the members of this committee that there was no foundation for the origin of the investigation. There was reason enough in the estimation of the House of Representatives to call you together here to inquire into a matter, the importance of which has not been exaggerated by anything that the Secretary of the Navy has said. But allow me to call your attention to the one fact that it is probable that the people of the United States are as much interested in having this investigation full, fair, and impartial as they are in having it hurried to an abrupt termination. We have come here at the invitation of this committee. We have offered to prove these charges so far as we are able. We have had to work with material almost all of which was under the control of the Navy Department, and we have shown you, in the few days that we have appeared here, at least four conspicuous and systematic violations of the laws of the United States.

Mr. Peters—I don't think you should argue the case.

Mr. Bartlett—I do not wish to argue it. I merely wish to call your attention to our view of the case, and to say to you that my position here is that, while we are ready to go on, if we may go on in the way that seems to us most likely and necessary to arrive at a just determination of the question at issue, if you will not allow us to go on in that way, then this committee must take the investigation into its own hands entirely, as I suppose it is competent to do, and we will relinquish all share in it.

THE DEFENDANT'S PLEA.

Secretary Robeson—Mr. Chairman, let it not be understood that I ask this investigation to terminate abruptly. All I ask is, that it go on, and not terminate. I am not willing that it terminate until these charges are pursued to their end. The witnesses, as I have stated, are here; the public documents of the Department are here; processes are at your command; you are all lawyers, or at least three of you are lawyers, and you are able to go on, even if the gentlemen should see fit to retire.

MAINE'S REPRESENTATIVE FAVORS A HASTY INVESTIGATION.

Mr. Boutwell—If the documents are here, it is the first day they have been here.

Mr. Peters—I will state my views of this case. Stress is laid by the counsel for Mr. Dana on the fact that early in the case, before evidence was submitted, there was a desire on the part of the committee to proceed with the full committee. I think every member of the committee desired it at the time, but it was because the committee was not constituted. Still, with a committee of four, we took the most important step that we have taken in the organization of this committee, in the vote which we in the first place passed allowing these parties to appear in person and by counsel. Any advantages which have grown out of not having a full committee have been on the side of what is called here the prosecution. It was important to have a full committee in the beginning to fix the mode of proceeding; but having been several evenings here, the accusations being well before us, the mode of taking evidence being without objection of any consequence, I think the force of the suggestion for a full committee less now. We determined last night to go on with four, and the Chairman assented to it. We are merely taking testimony, every word of which is recorded. While I should prefer a full committee, I don't think it imperative, and although the prosecuting party may desire a full committee, I think the good of the service, justice to the Secretary, and our duty to the House of Representatives demand that our work should be pursued diligently as long as any quorum is present. I take the ground further that when they appear here before this committee, being aware of the vote of last evening, under a threat that unless a particular member of this committee shall be here at all times when they offer their testimony they will withdraw, it will be beneath the dignity and character of this committee to listen to such a proposition under such a threat, and for one I am not willing under any such circumstances to postpone this investigation, as desired by Mr. Dana and his counsel.

MARYLAND'S REPRESENTATIVE SPEAKS.

Mr. Archer—I am free to say that if the evidence had progressed to a point that threw any doubt on the personal integrity of the Secretary, I should have voted last night and should vote to-night that the evidence should go on until it was made manifest either that the Secretary was guilty or that he was clear of all guilt in the matter. Not having come to that point I voted last night and shall vote to-night for a continuance of the case until the return of the Chairman. There may be many points that will arise in the evidence where the committee would be divided two and two, and when we would come to a dead lock.

Mr. Peters—Why should you anticipate that? There are no politics in this matter.

Mr. Archer—There are no politics in it, but I think it very probable that the committee may divide on questions. That is frequently the case in courts. Politics in this matter would not weigh a feather with me. I think I could sit as easy and as unprejudiced as though I were a sworn juror trying the meanest or the highest man in the land. I did not understand Mr. Bartlett as threatening the committee.

MR. BARTLETT AGAIN ASKS FOR A FULL COMMITTEE.

Mr. Bartlett—Not at all. That is an entire misapprehension.

Mr. Peters—The proposition is that we adjourn till Mr. Blair returns or that Mr. Bartlett withdraws.

Mr. Archer—He simply renews the motion that we adjourn till Mr. Blair returns.

The Acting Chairman, Mr. Sargent—Is there any doubt as to its alternative?

Mr. Bartlett—I say I will not put in any more testimony if you go on with the case. I would rather leave my case where it is now.

Mr. Peters—You do not mean to say that you will withdraw? If the Secretary offers his testimony you are ready to remain and cross-examine his witnesses.

Mr. Bartlett—I would rather let the case remain where it is.

The Acting Chairman—Why not speak plainly? You mean us to understand that if we do not adjourn you will have nothing more to do with the case?

Mr. Bartlett—Yes.

Mr. Sargent—Is not that a threat?

Mr. Bartlett—No; I don't intend it as such.

Mr. Peters—I am not ready as one of four gentlemen, or one of five, having proceeded thus far, and having allowed a counsel in *ex gratia*, in one respect, to adjourn because he is not willing to go on in the absence of a particular member.

Mr. Bartlett—I should take the same position if you were gone.

Mr. Peters—And the objection to it would be just the same.

Mr. Bartlett—I think we should have a member of the committee here who was interested in getting up the investigation.

THE VOTE OF THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. Sargent—The matter was discussed last night, and the Secretary protested, just as he is doing to-night. It was then voted that the committee should meet during Mr. Blair's absence and proceed with the case. That is the order of the committee, and will remain so unless reversed by the action of the committee. The order of the committee is that this matter proceed.

Mr. Archer moved to reconsider the vote of last evening resolving to proceed. The motion was rejected, Mr. Archer voting in the affirmative, and Messrs. Peters and Warren in the negative.

THE FIRM OF SARGENT AND ROBESON.

Mr. Sargent announced the vote, and informed Mr. Bartlett that he was now at liberty to proceed and introduce his witnesses if he desired to do so.

Mr. Bartlett—There is no reason why I should not introduce further testimony except the reasons that I have already suggested. Those reasons have been sufficient to justify me in saying that under these circumstances I cannot aid the committee any further.

Mr. Sargent suggested to Mr. Robeson that the persons mentioned as having made corrupt bargains with the department, and the officers of the department with whom the bargains were alleged to have been made, be summoned.

A SUGGESTION FOR SARGENT.

Mr. Robeson—I suggest that the committee need not wait for a witness on the part of the prosecution. The accuser is here—the man who asserts his knowledge—and I suggest that the committee call him.

The Acting Chairman—What is the pleasure of the committee with regard to that?

Mr. Archer—If the Secretary requires Mr. Dana to be examined, let him.

Mr. Robeson—When I come to my case I will call my own witnesses.

Mr. Bartlett—I have repeatedly stated that Mr. Dana has no personal knowledge on the subject, and never meant to assert he had.

Mr. Robeson—He may give to the committee the people from whom he got his information. The witnesses whom I shall call will be all the people who know anything about the transaction. I shall not be content that this investigation concludes without calling Mr. Secor and Mr. Roach and the contractors for the iron, and I shall protest against the closing of the investigation unless they are called.

Mr. Archer—I thought you would perhaps confine your evidence simply to the violations of the law, as they were the points that were brought in.

Mr. Robeson—My interest in the matter does not stop with the mere alleged violations of law. My interest is to see if there is anybody who says that I ever have been guilty of corruptions. If you leave it to me I will call all these people, and if I omit to call any, the committee will suggest it to me without hesitation.

MR. DANA ON THE STAND.

After some further colloquy, Mr. Charles A. Dana was called on to testify.

Charles A. Dana sworn and examined by Mr Sargent.

Q.—What is your residence? A.—New York.

Q.—What is your occupation? A.—Editor of a newspaper.

Q.—What is the name of that newspaper? A.—THE NEW YORK SUN.

Q.—In THE SUN from February 19 to March 14 there has been a series of editorial articles relating to the Navy Department and to Secretary Robeson. Who is the author of these articles? A.—If you will allow me to look at them I can tell you. (After examination.) Yes, sir, I wrote them.

Q.—Did you there state facts with your knowledge as far as they related to Secretary Robeson, or on information and belief? A.—I stated the facts on information and belief.

Q.—Are any of the facts there stated within your own knowledge? A.—No, sir; not within my own personal knowledge.

ROBESON'S SHIP CHANDLER.

Q.—Who was your informant that A. G. Cattell, a ship chandler in Philadelphia, purchased all the supplies for the navy? A.—That information was communicated to me confidentially by a person in such a situation that to reveal his name would do him injury.

Q.—You decline to state from whom you received that information? A.—I decline to do an injury to the person who told me this confidentially.

Q.—Is that person in the Navy Department? A.—He is not.

Q.—Is that person in the service of the Government? A.—He is not.

Q.—In what way then can the statement of the name of the person who gave you that information do him an injury? A.—That person is employed in a situation in which, if I were to reveal his name, the revelation would do him injury.

Q.—An injury by losing his position? A.—Injury by suffering in various ways.

Q.—In what way? A.—By the loss of his position, and by incurring the enmity of persons who could do him an injury.

Q.—Did this same person also inform you that Cattell and Robeson were interested in the purchase of iron for torpedo boats? A.—This same person gave me this information.

DOCUMENTARY PROOF, BUT NO VIOLATION OF CONFIDENCE.

Q.—Did you receive your information in reference to any of these charges in THE NEW YORK SUN from any other person? A.—Yes, sir, from various persons.

Q.—Name them. A.—They are all in the same relation with that person.

Q.—Every one of your informants is in such a position that to reveal their names would do them an injury, and therefore you cannot give us the name of any person? A.—As far as the information is derived from public documents, from the debates of Congress and acts of Congress, and from the reports of executive departments, of course this remark does not apply. Very much of the information has been gathered in that manner.

THE IRON CONTRACTS.

Q.—Who informed you that the Secretary of the Navy was interested in the Chester Iron Works? A.—I think my information was given to me by the same person I have already spoken of.

Q.—What means of information did this person have? A.—I do not know what his means of information were. I have not investigated that.

Q.—You did not investigate the truth of the charges he made? A.—I asked several persons if there was a general rumor and belief being circulated that these charges were true, and they said there was.

Q.—Who told you there was a general rumor and belief to that effect? A.—I cannot remember the names.

Q.—You cannot remember any person who told you? A.—No, sir.

Q.—You cannot state the name of any person you asked about it? A.—No, sir.

Q.—The one person you named gave you this varied information. You asked persons if there was a public rumor or belief that the information was true, and you cannot give the name of any person who thus furnished you the basis of those articles in THE NEW YORK SUN? A.—The basis was the statement of the original party in whose character and information I had confidence.

Q.—Did that person request you to conceal his name? A.—He did.

Q.—He told you all these things, but he told you not to tell that he said it? A.—He communicated it to me in confidence.

THE GREATEST ROBBER IN THE COUNTRY.

Q.—Confidence, so far as the name was concerned? A.—Confidence so far as his personality was concerned.

Q.—Did he say that he knew these things of his own knowledge, or did he state to you how he knew them? A.—I understood him that he knew them of his own knowledge and belief; that he was satisfied they were true.

Q.—What evidence did this person present? A.—No other evidence than that I have stated.

Q.—Did he speak of the Secretary as the greatest robber in the country? A.—No, sir.

Q.—That is in your article? A.—The language of the article is an inference from the facts developed so far as they were developed.

Q.—The statement that the Cattells were the purchasing agents of the whole Navy Department; that they made a contract for iron whereby $100,000 was realized upon that single item, and upon that statement you based your inference which you incorporated into your article as a fact that the Secretary of the Navy was the greatest robber in America? A.—The facts that have been developed within the last three or four days in regard to the purchase of iron from Pennock & Co. go very far to justify the statement.

Mr. Sargent—I do not wish to argue the matter.

Witness—He stated also that the iron was furnished under this contract for less than the market price for that quality of iron. He stated also that iron that was good enough for this purpose could be bought for a great deal less.

THE BRICK BUSINESS.

Q.—Who was your informant that said that several hundred thousand bricks were purchased in Philadelphia, shipped to New York, and sent around the Horn to California? A.—That was communicated to me in the same manner, and by the same person.

Q.—By this same person of universal information? A.—Yes, sir.

Q.—Did he say that he knew that of his own knowledge? A.—I did not ask him whether he had any personal knowledge of it or not. He said he knew it to be so.

Q.—You did not take the pains to sift the matter at all to ascertain whether there was any corroborating evidence? A.—As far as the bricks were concerned, I did not. Finding that some of the statements were confirmed, and those the most important ones—confirmed by Congressional documents—I believed the others to be true.

Mr. Sargent said he desired the advice of the committee as to what course they should take in relation to the witness refusing to give the name of his informant.

DOCUMENTARY PROOFS NOT YET PRODUCED.

Mr. Peters said that if Mr. Dana was willing to have his informant stand as a myth, he was of opinion that the committee should not press him further. He desired, however, to put some questions to him at this point.

By Mr. Peters—I understood you that the facts alleged in your articles came from one person? A.—And from official documents and Congressional reports which have not yet been introduced.

Q.—You have but one person as your informant? A.—But one for the charges that Mr. Sargent has referred to.

Q.—What I want to know is, whether there is more than one individual who was your informant as to the facts upon which you base your charges in these articles? A.—There are two or three, but the main facts were derived from a careful examination of the public documents and Congressional debates, and the acts of Congress and public reports.

Q.—Did your informants give you names of persons who have not been introduced here, and who can give us their knowledge of these charges? A.—No, sir; I wish to say if it had been possible for us to go on with the investigation in the manner we desired, we should have produced evidence, and were ready to produce witnesses upon these various points.

THE PROOFS FORTHCOMING.

By the Secretary of the Navy—In the articles of Feb. 26 I find this sentence:

"We say that Cattell has been empowered by Robeson, his associate in robbery, to buy for the Navy Department all the coal that is required for the navy steamships. We say that Cattell buys this coal not by public competition, but privately, paying such prices as he chooses, and that he, doubtless, divides with Robeson the money of which they thus rob the Government. We say that he pays on the average $9 a ton for this coal in Philadelphia, and receives $5 a ton from this Navy Department. The amount of coal to be consumed by the navy in the year 1872 is estimated at 600,000 tons, the profits on which to Cattell and Robeson will be in round figures $1,200,000, all pure robbery."

Q.—You mean by evidence and witnesses? A.—Witnesses and documents.

Q.—Will you give us the names of the witnesses, that we may introduce their testimony? A.—I have not them in my mind now. I will communicate them to you.

Q.—Will you give us a list in writing of the names? A.—I will, and state also what I would expect to prove by them.

Mr. Sargent—You may also please furnish a list of public documents to which you wish to call the attention of the committee? A.—I will do so.

ROBESON'S CROSS-EXAMINATION.

The Secretary of the Navy was then informed that if he desired to propound any questions to the witness, it was his right to do so, and he would now have that opportunity.

Secretary Robeson—I would like to know the authority of that statement. A.—That statement as to the quantity of coal is entirely a mistake. The navy does not consume any such quantity, and the statement is a blunder of the pen. I suppose the navy consumes all together not over thirty or forty thousand tons a year.

Q.—I would like to know the authority of the statement they buy at three dollars and sell at five? A.—If I had been allowed to introduce witnesses I should have been able to prove this in the course of a few days, if allowed to do it in my own way before the committee.

Q.—Why the evidence of documents or witnesses? A.—Both.

Q.—What witnesses? A.—I will communicate the names to Judge Sargent.

Q.—Give us some of the names now? A.—I do not remember them now.

Q.—What documents? A.—The evidence in the navy reports that no contracts have been made during the last year.

Q.—I am now speaking of Mr. Cattell's buying coal. A.—As far as Mr. Cattell's buying coal is concerned, my statement was made on information, I believe.

Q.—What witnesses will speak of it? A.—I am not able to give you the names now.

Q.—Do you know any witnesses that will demonstrate that fact? A.—I think I can furnish them to you. I will furnish you with the names of the witnesses.

Q.—But you cannot do it now? A.—I do not remember the names now.

Q.—Have you ever heard the name of any witness who will testify to the fact? A.—I have.

Q.—Did you hear the name of that witness before you made the charge? A.—I did not hear the name of the witness before I made the charge.

FACTS ALREADY PROVED.

Secretary Robeson—The next charge is as follows:

"We allege also that Robeson and Cattell have made a private contract for some fifteen hundred tons of iron plates to be used in building two torpedo boats which Congress has authorized, and that they pay for this iron $224 a ton when its market value is only $150 a ton. This piece of robbery will net the robbers a profit of about $111,000. Now, we declare that this money is robbed from the people and that Robeson, using his official power as a member of the Executive Government to put this vast sum of money in his own pocket and that of his associate, is as much a robber as if he took the highway with blunderbuss and bowie knife and plundered travelers of their watches and purses.

Q.—What is the authority for that statement? A.—The statement in respect to iron has been demonstrated in evidence here already, as I conceive. It has been proved that a great deal more was paid for the iron than the market price.

Q.—Have you anything else to prove that we put the money in our pockets, and divided between us Mr. Cattell and myself? A.—That is sufficient. When it is proved that a public officer pays a great deal more than the market price for an article, and does it without advertisement or chance of competition, the fair inference is that the profit is divided. I consider the evidence already in sufficient to establish that charge.

Q.—You consider that sufficient to establish the charge of plunder and robbery on the part of the Secretary of the Navy? Have you any testimony to establish that charge? A.—We have already produced evidence to prove the robbery in respect to the iron.

MEN WHO BELIEVE ROBESON A ROBBER.

Q.—Have you any evidence to show the division or appropriation by me of any money, or of its division with any one else? A.—No, sir.

Q.—That, however, was told you by this person? A.—That is a matter of inference.

Q.—Then you make that statement simply as a matter of inference? A.—I make it upon a variety of circumstances which seemed to me to justify it.

Q.—Then you made the statement without evidence? A.—Of course I did not see you take the money.

Q.—Have you seen anybody who has seen it? A.—I have not seen anybody who has seen it.

Q.—Have you seen anybody who told you it was so? A.—No, I have not seen anybody who told me it was so.

Q.—Have you seen anybody who told you he believed it to be so? A.—Yes.

Q.—Whom? A.—My counsel has told me he believes it.

Q.—Who else? A.—The gentleman who sits next to me, Mr. Gibson, believes it.

Q.—Who is he? A.—He is a newspaper correspondent in this city.

Q.—A correspondent of what paper? A.—He reports sometimes for me and sometimes for the *Herald*, and sometimes for other papers.

Q.—Who else? A.—I cannot remember the names of all.

Q.—Can you remember the names of anybody else whose attendance can be procured by the process of this committee. A.—I do not remember anybody who will be able to testify to that as a matter of fact. It is a matter of inference and belief.

Q.—And that is all? A.—That is quite sufficient.

THE FRAUDULENT CONTRACT WITH ROACH.

Q.—You say in THE SUN, "The Tennessee is a well known old steamship. She is rotten, she can never go to sea again. Robeson has made a contract with Jno. Roach & Son to build new boilers and engines for this rotten and useless old ship. This contract was not let by public advertisement and fair competition, that every engine builder could have come in to say for what price he would make such boilers and engines. It was made secretly in the way that a public plunderer would make it. Robeson agrees to pay Roach & Son $400,000 for this new machinery—$300,000 in cash and $400,000 in the old engines and boilers, when there are responsible machine builders who would have contracted to furnish the new boilers and engines for $200,000 alone. This single item of Robeson's robbery amounts to $400,000. Now what responsible builder will contract to do that? A.—I can't state that any one will. I was informed that Mr. Murphy has said that he would do it.

Q.—By whom were you informed? A.—I do not remember.

Q.—Did you take any means to ascertain whether he had stated so or not? A.—I did not.

Q.—Then you did not take any means to ascertain the truth of the statement on which you made your charge? A.—In making that charge my belief is strengthened very greatly by the clandestine nature of the arrangement and the illegal nature of it. The law requires such work to be done and material furnished by public advertisement. The clandestine manner in which this arrangement was made, at once leads any one to infer that something is wrong.

Q.—You think the law requires that there should be advertisements in reference to the purchase of articles of this character, and the Department did not advertise, but paid two prices for the article, and that the Secretary, therefore, put the money in his own pocket? A.—Not only that, but the value of the old engines estimated by very far too low.

THE BRICK BUSINESS AGAIN.

Q.—Your article goes on to say:

"Then look at Robeson's great speculation in bricks. Congress appropriated $50,000 to build a naval storehouse at Mare Island. Bricks for this purpose could have been bought in California, the price being only about ten per cent higher than in Philadelphia or New York, but Robeson and Cattell could not allow so excellent a chance of robbery to be unimproved. They bought the bricks, between five and six hundred thousand, in Philadelphia and shipped them to New York by canal boats, paying for freight in the aggregate as much as the difference between their price in Philadelphia and their price in San Francisco. Then they put them on board a sailing vessel bound for California by way of Cape Horn, and when she arrived at Mare Island the freight amounted to more than the original cost of the bricks. When the hatches were opened to discharge the cargo it was found that during the voyage the bricks had been shaken and tossed about so in the hold of the vessel that they had actually ground themselves to dust, and out of the whole lot not one thousand good bricks remained. So brilliant was the success of this experiment that Robeson and Cattell have repeated it.

Q.—What authority have you for that statement? A.—I believe that the latter part of it, which refers to the sending of the second cargo, is incorrect. The first cargo, as I understand, was sent in the manner described.

Q.—From whom did you understand it? A.—My information comes in this manner: I gather from a person who communicated it to me confidentially.

Q.—The same man you spoke of in answer to Mr. Sargent's examination? A.—The same man.

THE ROACH PARTNERSHIP.

Secretary Robeson—I read from the article further: "As there is no seasoned live oak to be had these vessels must be built of iron, and with a view to this contingency the Chester Iron Works, near Philadelphia, have been purchased by Robeson and his associates to do the job. Among the partners in the Chester Iron Works are John Roach, of whom we have already spoken, and A. G. Cattell of Philadelphia, and Geo. M. Robeson, Secretary of the Navy." What authority have you for that statement? A.—That comes to me from the same source.

Q.—Did you ask anybody else about that? A.—I do not think I did.

Q.—Did you have the records examined to see if there was anything of that kind? A.—There would not be any record of the formation of any such partnership.

Q.—There would not be any record anywhere of the ownership of the Chester Iron Works? A.—The Chester Iron Works have been notoriously bought by John Roach, but the names of his partners were not published, and the probability of that statement was also greatly confirmed in my mind by the fact of the peculiar relations between Mr. Roach and the Navy Department.

Q.—Then you made that statement upon the information of the person you speak of, and fortified it by the peculiar relations of Mr. Roach with the Navy Department? A.—That is so.

Q.—Is there any other reason? A.—I thought that was sufficient.

Q.—Is that all? A.—I have no other.

THE SECOR FRAUD.

Q.—In speaking on March 2d of what is called the Secor claim, you said that I received the $93,000 myself. What authority have you for that statement? A.—That was communicated to me at the time the fact was originally communicated. I am satisfied since that it was a mistake.

Q.—You have been a public officer in this city? A.—Yes, sir.

Q.—And know something of the course of business in the departments? A.—Yes.

Q.—You knew, did you not, that no bill could be paid at the Treasury except to the person in whose favor it was drawn? A.—No bill would be paid, but a man could go with him and get the money.

Q.—But no bill could be paid except to the man? A.—Except upon his receipt.

Q.—Had you any information upon the fact to lead you to believe that I went and drew that money? A.—I believed that the money came into your hands.

Q.—From what reason? A.—From the extraordinary nature of the payments. I could not conceive of a man making such a payment with any honest authority behind him.

Q.—Is that all? A.—That, and I was informed, also, that it was corruptly made.

Q.—By whom? A.—The evidence on that subject, all that I have, I have produced here.

Q.—But you were informed by whom? A.—I do not remember who it was who first told me of the Secor payment.

ROBESON WANTS A MAN PRODUCED WHO HAD SEEN HIM PUT $93,000 IN HIS POCKET.

Q.—Who informed you it was corruptly paid? A.—The information upon that subject I derived from the public records, and then I saw that the law had been violated.

Q.—You say that you were also informed that I received the money. To whom were you so informed? A.—I do not remember.

Q.—It was rather an important piece of information, was it not? A.—It was.

Q.—How long is it since it came to you? A.—It came to me at the time the original fact came to me.

Q.—How long since? A.—I do not remember. The date is given there.

Q.—On the 2d of March? A.—I do not remember the date; whenever the fact was published first.

Q.—And you have since forgotten the name of the person who gave you the information? A.—I have.

Q.—Entirely? A.—I talked with people about it. I showed this to people in my office, and it was a subject of common conversation there.

Q.—But somebody informed you that I received that money. Now, have you forgotten the name of the person who so informed you, since the 2d of March? A.—I decline to say that this information it was in my hands for a long time, that is, for many days before I published it, during which time I had the documents of Congress investigated, and satisfied myself that it was true, and during that time there were many persons in my office who talked with me about it and to whom I talked about it, and some one among them, I cannot remember who it was, said that this was a corrupt payment, and that you had received the money, no doubt.

Q.—Tell me the name of one of them. A.—I do not remember.

By Mr. Peters.—Was that the expression of an opinion or a statement of fact? A.—Well, it was partly both. I do not think there were any men who claimed to have seen the money put into Mr. Robeson's pocket.

AN UNSATISFACTORY ANSWER.

Q.—I understand you to say now, that you are satisfied that he did not receive any part of it? A.—No, sir: I have not said that; I am not satisfied of that at all. I am satisfied that he did not go to the Treasury himself and draw it.

By Mr. Sargent—Did any one tell you that he did go to the Treasury with any one else to draw the money? A.—No, I do not remember that anybody did.

Q.—Did anybody tell you that any one else went and drew it and went to his office and paid him the money? A.—No, I do not remember that these details were mentioned at all.

Q.—Was that statement an inference drawn from the premises, or did he speak from special knowledge of his own? A.—I cannot say with absolute certainty, but I should rather suppose more on inference than a pretence of absolute personal knowledge. As I said before, no one stated that he had seen him put the money in his pocket.

Q.—But the statement, freshly at that date in the paper, was that he drew the money and put it in his pocket? A.—Well, he might draw the money indirectly. If I send a check to the bank on which the money is drawn for me I really draw it, although it may be carried by a third person.

Q.—I understood you to say that this was an inference of corruption from the fact that you thought the law of Congress was violated in the payment made. That inference is different from a direct statement? A.—I was—

Mr. Robeson (interrupting)—To whom did Robeson hand over the money thus stolen from the Treasury? That is the statement in the paper, and he must have had it to have handed it over.

HOW MUCH WAS STOLEN.

By Mr. Peters—You say in one of these articles that the Secretary has made about a million and a half out of these transactions. Do you still adhere to that statement? do you think it is as much as that? A.—The statement there I think is that we cannot tell how much he has made, but that from a rough estimate we think it is about a million and a half.

Q.—Would you now be willing to come down from that sum a little? A.—In that I think the statement of the engines of the Tennessee was exaggerated. In regard to that we were evidently mistaken.

Q.—So that you would not now put it more than a million? A.—I should say perhaps not more than a million. In another place it is stated at five hundred thousand.

THE BRICK FRAUD AGAIN.

By Secretary Robeson—There is a statement that Secretary Robeson and his partner, Cattell, have found so much profit in the business of buying bricks in Philadelphia and sending them around Cape Horn for government use, that they desire to extend their field of operations, and have accordingly induced Mr. Coghlan to introduce a bill into the House of Representatives directing the Secretary to build, at an expense of $500,000, and at the earliest practicable moment, two excavated dry docks at the Mare Island Navy Yard. It is needless to say that there will be an opportunity of swallowing up bricks, not by the thousand, but by the million, with a proportionate amount of pecuniary advantage to Robeson and Cattell? A.—I do not remember the statement.

Q.—It appears in the article of March 6? A.—I do not remember it.

Q.—It follows with another statement of the sending of the brick to California. A.—That is an editorial article.

Q.—Yes, on March 6. A.—That was written, I think, upon a bill introduced in the House of Representatives.

Q.—I dare say, but what induced you to say that Mr. Coghlan had been induced by the Secretary and by Cattell to take part in this thing? A.—A large quantity of brick was required for this purpose, and the brick business appeared to be so profitable in that direction that we supposed there might be some connection between them.

Q.—Is that the only ground for the statement? A.—That is the authority for it.

Q.—And upon that supposition you accused not only Cattell and Secretary Robeson, but also Mr. Coghlan so far as I remember.

THE EXTENT OF THE FRAUDS.

Q.—On March 11 you say, "taking the facts already within our knowledge, a rough calculation shows that his robberies will not amount to less $1,400,000." Now, what facts have you in your possession, or within your knowledge, as you say, to justify that statement? A.—The Secor fraud, the two Secor frauds, and—

Q.—How much is that? A.—That was written before the Tennessee case was investigated, Mr. Sargent has just interrogated me about it.

Q.—How much of the Secor frauds did I get of your own knowledge? You speak there of your own knowledge. A.—By knowledge there I don't mean personal knowledge.

Q.—Oh, you do not? A.—No, sir; and it does not say personal knowledge.

Q.—Then when you say within our knowledge you do not mean that you have any knowledge about it?

A.—Yes. When you say that a thing is within your knowledge you mean that you know it—that it is a fact that you have learned from reading, from information, from——

Q.—Well, go on. You have mentioned the Secor claim. How much of that did I get on your knowledge that you have from information and reading? A.—I have no means of knowing. I only know the aggregate amount of the claim. I am not able to state how it was divided.

Q.—Suppose you take it all, then, and go on. What next? A.—The Tennessee case.

Q.—How much of that did I get? A.—That was put down originally at $400,000.

Q.—I got $400,000? A.—No; you did not get that. I am stating that that was an error or exaggeration.

Q.—What next? A.—I do not remember; I am not prepared to go into an arithmetical calculation.

ROBESON EXCITED.

Q.—You were prepared to make that statement in a public newspaper, but you are not prepared to establish it even by suppositious figures? A.—I have established a considerable portion of it by evidence before this Committee.

Q.—No, you have not. That question remains to be decided. Are you prepared to make any other statement?

Mr. Peters—He says that he does not call it more than a million now.

Mr. Robeson—That is leaving the Tennessee out.

Q.—Have you ever taken any means to know whether I was a rich man or a poor man? A.—I only know from public notoriety.

Q.—Public notoriety—from whom? A.—General opinion and belief, which is circulating around in the community.

Q.—That is all? A.—That is all.

Q.—Did you ever take any means of finding out? A.—Not beyond that.

Q.—There are means of knowing that kind of thing? A.—There are, I presume. The opinion prevails that you spend a great deal more money than you earn, and that is the foundation of this general belief.

Q.—That is all, is it? Did you ever take any means of verifying it in any way or shape? A.—I have never investigated your income or property.

Q.—Have you any idea how much I spend in any way or shape? A.—No.

Q.—You never have had? A.—Not any precise idea.

THE CORLISS CLAIM.

Q.—In speaking of what is called the Corliss claim, you say you have good authority for saying that money has been paid and divided up. What is your authority for that year "good authority?" A.—I do not remember the very phrase that is used. Is that the word?

Q.—You speak of the amount $[illegible], and you say, "Pending the investigation, however, we have excellent reason to believe that Robeson has paid this dishonest claim, every cent of it was divided, and what share the great robber in the Navy Department got, we are unable to state." What are your excellent reasons for knowing these things? A.—That article I did not write, and I did not myself make personally the investigation of the Corliss claim that is detailed there.

Q.—Who wrote that article? A.—That is a confidential matter