The Sun.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1873.

Amusements To-Day.

Booth's Theatre—Rip Van Winkle.
Bowery Theatre—Buffalo Bill.
Daly's Theatre—La Fille De Madame Angot.
San Francisco Minstrels—Twenty-third street.
Grand Opera House—Midsummer Night's Dream.
Niblo's Garden—Black Crook.
Olympic Theatre—Lydia Thompson Troupe.
Theatre Comique—Grand Combination.
Union Square Theatre—Fun in a Fog.
Wallack's Theatre—Nina.
Wood's Museum—Dick, the Clerk&c. Matinee.

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Fifty copies to one address	80 00
WEEKLY, per year	1 00

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"The Constitution says that all trials shall be by jury, and the accused is entitled, not to be first convicted by a court and then to be acquitted by a jury, but to be convicted or acquitted IN THE FIRST INSTANCE by a jury."—SAMUEL BLATCHFORD.

A Terrible Revelation.

In our Washington correspondence this morning will be found the most shocking disclosure of fraud which has yet been made even in this day of political profligacy and widespread official corruption. Our correspondent presents the most invincible proofs that Gen. BABCOCK, who has illegally been foisted into the position of private secretary of the President; who is the confidential agent and trusted companion of Gen. GRANT, whether at Long Branch or in the White House; and whose functions extend from leading after the Presidential baggage to the negotiation of annexation treaties, has been engaged in supplying the District of Columbia Board of Public Works with false vouchers whereby the United States Government has been defrauded of great sums of money.

This is no vague and unsubstantiated charge. The proofs of BABCOCK'S criminality which our correspondent gives are so complete and overwhelming that the most extreme partisan of the Administration must be stunned by them. The official reports of the Board of Public Works, actual measurements made by a thoroughly competent engineer, and even the earth marks on the WINDER Building, all combine to show the falsity of vouchers which BABCOCK gave his confederates in the District of Columbia Ring in order to enable them to plunder the tax payers of the United States. There is no loophole for escape left to this detected criminal.

Those who have observed the effrontery with which the members of the District of Columbia Ring have pursued their reckless course in utter defiance of law—running the District Government into bankruptcy and contracting enormous obligations which the law expressly prohibited them from doing—have wondered what influence they depended upon to shield them from the punishment justly due to such malfeasance in office. The most common explanation that has been given of their conduct is that they thought they could control Congress by giving members profitable contracts and opportunities to share with them in promising real estate speculations.

There is no doubt that several Congressmen have been won to the support of Ring schemes by such means. But it is President GRANT and not Congress that is mainly responsible for the lawlessness of the Board of Public Works. It was the President who appointed them to office, and it is the President who has continued them there, notwithstanding that he is fully acquainted with their flagrant violations of law and honesty. What mysterious influence has been brought to bear upon him that he should thus encourage the robbery of the Government and the spoliation of a defenceless community?

This is a question which we do not propose to answer nor discuss at this time. It is no longer a secret that intelligent and well-informed citizens of Washington believe that Gen. GRANT profits personally by the operations of the Ring through his confidential agent BABCOCK, whose sudden financial prosperity has occasioned general surprise. Whether there is any foundation in fact for this surmise we neither know nor care, for it makes not the slightest difference so far as guilt is concerned whether the President abets fraud on the Government for the benefit of his own pocket or only for the emolument of his favorites and cronies. The simple fact that he sustains this shameless Ring in all its acts is enough for him to answer for at present.

But it is a scandal and a cause for national humiliation that an inmate of the White House and the trusted confidential agent of the President should be detected in defrauding the Treasury by means of false vouchers in their greedy violations of law.

What the Fathers Thought.

It was proposed and much considered in the Convention that framed the Constitution to fix the pay of members of Congress definitely, so as to remove the temptation from loose or venal men who in time might come to exercise undue influence to regulate their own compensation. Mr. MADISON, with the calm wisdom which was one of his chief characteristics, foresaw the danger of confiding such a power to uncertain hands, and hence he was among the foremost advocates of a positive restriction to guard against it.

He was ably seconded in this view by FRANKLIN, who offered a specific proposition to give it lasting effect. But the Convention, measuring those who were to come after them by their own pure standard of patriotism, declined to impose this restraint. One idea, however, dominated throughout the debate, and that was that the salary, however determined, should be moderate. In the various amendments that were submitted the word "liberal" in this application was uniformly stricken out.

That moral law was laid down, and the tradition was respected for seventy-seven years, until the Republican party renounced it first in 1866, and recently renewed the outrage in a still more aggravated form by the salary steal of last March. When this subject was under discussion in the Convention Mr. MADISON said:

"With respect to the right of ascertaining their own pay, I will acknowledge that their compensation, if practicable, should be fixed in the Constitution itself so as not to be dependent on Congress itself or on the State Legislatures."

Under the old Confederation representatives had been paid directly by the States, but this led to much inconvenience, and it was feared by some, if the practice was continued, it might tend to weaken the ties of the "more perfect Union" which the new order of things was intended to establish.

It is remarkable, looking back over the long interval of time that has elapsed since that debate took place and considering the experience of this day, to find how exactly the fathers predicted what would occur if the discretion which the Constitution left to Congress in the matter of their own compensation should in any way be abused. EDMUND RANDOLPH expressed his opinion in these words:

"Should the general Congress annex *wages disproportionate to their services, vote themselves exorbitant salaries* during the sense of the country, *they would be repudiated.*"

Mr. Madison was equally emphatic:

"This is a power that cannot be *abused without rousing universal attention and indignation.* What would be the consequence of a Legislature raising their pay to $4 or $5 a day? *The universal indignation of the people!*"

Twenty-eight years after these prophetic words were spoken the Fourteenth Congress ventured to disregard the spirit of this strong admonition, and to change the per diem system which had prevailed from 1789 to an annual salary of only $1,500. Although there was no exorbitance in the increase and the individual gain of members was comparatively small, still a cherished principle had been wounded, and the "universal indignation" followed which Mr. MADISON had foreseen as inevitable in case of a departure from the rule of right.

The very Congress which committed this error was quick to repeal it, but that did not satisfy an outraged people. They were resolved to brand the act with reprobation as a lesson, and the authors and abettors of it with disgrace. When the next elections came on, that Congress was literally swept out of existence by a sort of popular tornado.

That warning held good for much more than a third of a century, and during all the changes of values and the cost of living in that period of thirty-eight years, no serious attempt was made to alter the pay of 1818. If there was anything at all in the old pretext set up by Mr. CARPENTER, Gen. BUTLER, Mr. MORTON, and other advocates of the increase of pay in seven years between 1866 and 1873, it was certainly five times as strong from 1818 to 1856. Yet it was never urged, though the circumstances of the country in a certain sense would have justified a modification then if at all.

It was reserved for the Republicans to initiate not only the grossest abuse of the power they possessed, but with circumstances calculated to make it more odious and oppressive. They increased the pay in 1866 by prostituting one of the regular appropriation bills to that purpose, and counting upon the impunity which that outrage received, they repeated it last March with an act which exceeds all others combined in enormity. After first diminishing their duties a third by substituting two sessions for three, then they added one-half of the old pay to the new, extended it back two whole years, and voted that men holding certificates to be determined by the Clerk of the House—not members of Congress sworn in as such—should draw $625 per month from the 4th of March till December, or nine months before Congress can be organized, without rendering one minute's service for the $5,625 which they will have received.

And not content with that, they doubled the President's salary and augmented that of all the principal officers of the civil list with a reckless disregard of decency and a defiance of public opinion without parallel. The party which committed this atrocious robbery twice in seven years has now the audacity in State Conventions, when elections are pending, to profess resentment against the men whom they re-elected, knowing what they did in 1866, and knowing, too, that they were guilty of other crimes by which the Treasury was plundered of hundreds of millions, while they themselves were enriched by corruption and Credit Mobilier jobbery.

If there be virtue left in the country, as we have faith there is, these repeated wrongs must be sternly punished. The party and the leaders who have betrayed confidence and set up the golden calf as the only god to worship, must be put down and Congress purified. Without some radical reform, sweeping and searching like the indignation which stirred the country in 1816 for a small cause by comparison with this, hope would be crushed for any such regeneration as that which is now needed to rescue the Union from a greater peril than beset it when the first gun was madly and wickedly fired on Fort Sumter.

Spain and her American Colonies.

Elsewhere we publish to-day an account of the present social and political condition of the island of Porto Rico. From its contents it is fair to conclude that the policy of Spain is to allow that island to declare its independence. This would merely be a proper though somewhat sudden manner by which the actual President of Spain, Don NICOLAS SALMERON, could prove that his doctrine respecting Spanish colonies has not been changed by his advent to power; for in the Constitution of a federal republic which in conjunction with Señor CHAO he drew up and presented to the Federal Assembly, he laid down the following bases for the connection between the mother country and the colonies:

"Spain acknowledges that she has no property in nor perpetual dominion over her colonies.

"Meanwhile the colonies shall govern themselves autonomically, but without violating the laws of the mother country, for which purpose their constitutions and laws shall be submitted to the Cortes for revision."

Of late Spain, as if ignorant of the state of affairs in Cuba, has for the third time offered to the Cubans to cede to them the autonomy or self-government of the island. In reality, Spain offers only what already exists on the island, and exists to the unpleasant extent of being a double, not a single, autonomy. For while President CESPEDES and his gallant heroes hold and rule, with the sole exception of the cities, the whole of the Central and Eastern Departments, the slave traders of Havana and their cut-throat volunteers are at least in as open rebellion against all rule of Spain in Cuba. Every effort that Spain has made to introduce enlightened ideas, and the progress which is not only demanded by the spirit of the age, but which Spain is pledged to give to Cuba, has been frustrated by the Havana rebels. Gen. DE RODAS took out thirty thousand splendid troops purposely to suppress these Havana rebels, was bought by their gold, and packed off when they were tired of him. VALMASEDA was their equally humble servant, and the actual Captain-General, even if he wishes it, which of late seems questionable, has no force with which to restore Spain's dominion in either part of the island. The sole possible solution of the present contest is the destruction of one of these autonomies by the other.

The New Philadelphia Scandal.

We are, we confess, staggered, and so, according to the Philadelphia papers, seems the decent part of that rather apathetic community. The Grand Jury of the August term of the Criminal Court determined, as it had a perfect right to do, to investigate the alleged malfeasance of the District Attorney, the notorious WILLIAM B. MANN.

The District Attorney is, in theory, the adviser of the Grand Inquest. It is his duty to give them instruction and information, and if he refuses to do either he is amenable to their jurisdiction. "If," as our Judge DAVIS the other day said to a Grand Jury, "if the District Attorney does not do his duty, indict him!" The Philadelphia Grand Jury sent for its District Attorney and asked courteously from him certain information connected with their common duties—what he had done with TAMAR JOHNSON, who forged Mrs. PARKER'S name; with the clerk in the Treasurer's office, who had stolen Mrs. PARKER'S bonds; what with DICK DONEGAN, who had mutilated the court records; what with BUNN'S recognizance?

These were questions which the public prosecutor was bound to answer, and which, if he were faithful to his trust, he would have been glad to answer. Instead of which he comes before the Grand Inquest and defies and insults them. He asserts his power to be greater than theirs; that they have no business to meddle with him; that if he chooses to compound felonies he may; and when the matter is reported to the Court we read that Judge LUDLOW said the District Attorney was right! This it is which we confess staggers us.

The Grand Jury, as the *Ledger* says, has a right to inquire into things which are of "public notoriety," and certainly if any one Philadelphia thing has notoriety it is the larceny of Mrs. PARKER'S bonds from the treasury and the compounding of the felony by the District Attorney, the City Solicitor, and their confederates. What Judge LUDLOW means, we are, we confess, at a loss to imagine. Can he be weak enough to suppose that because he is a candidate for judicial office he must play a game of affectation? Can he be afraid of the District Attorney? Has his Quarter Sessions' experience put him in the power of this desperate man?

If it has, then, we pity the Democratic party, which has made him its candidate for higher office. We shall pause to see how Philadelphia regards this new outrage. The press seems confused by what has occurred. The Democratic *Age*, hitherto outspoken and brave, seems dumbfounded by the ruling of the Democratic Judge, and in reply to Judge LUDLOW'S amazing statement that "he has faith" in the Ring attorney, who promises to prosecute the compounded cases, intimates that such trials and the Greek kalends will be coincident. It looks to us a little as if the firm of MANN, MCMULLIN & Co. had taken in a new partner.

The unanimity with which the Directors of the Erie Railway Company yesterday declared a dividend of one per cent. upon the common stock forms a well-merited tribute to the skill and integrity of President WATSON'S administration. When we remember that the board includes men like LUCIUS ROBINSON, JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON, CORTLANDT PARKER, WILLIAM W. SHIPPEN, S. L. M. BARLOW, GEORGE H. BROWN, and ADRIEN ISELIN, and that all these gentlemen joined in yesterday's action, we see that such approval is no mere formality, and that the declaration of the dividend is no blind registry of any stock jobber's decree. They proclaim a confidence in President WATSON which they know to be justified, and they make a dividend which has been fairly earned. The Erie Company is fortunate in securing such ability and such devotion as Mr. WATSON brings to its service. It is evident that the time is past when the property of this great corporation existed only to be squandered or perverted by its managers, and when its stock was but the foot-ball of gamblers in the street.

The South may achieve an independence far more lasting and real than that for which it was fighting ten years ago. Georgia's farmers are proving that the South can be independent of the West by raising its own corn; and the profits of Georgia and Alabama cotton mills show that the South can manufacture its cotton without the aid of New England. Self-support is true independence.

An interesting libel trial was ended on Wednesday, August 20, in Los Angeles county, California. Col. GATEWOOD, editor of the San Diego *World*, was indicted at the instance of R. M. WIDNEY, Judge of the Seventeenth District, for commenting severely on Judge WIDNEY'S conduct. The *World* called WIDNEY a shyster, and charged him with having disgraced his position by undignified and unprofessional conduct. The editor of the *World* was arrested while travelling in San Bernardino county, and compelled to go one hundred and fifty miles from the city in which his journal is published to stand trial. Two indictments were quashed in the course of a year, and the case at length reached a jury two weeks ago. The sympathy of the public was with a free and outspoken press, and although the counsel for the defence, the Hon. JOHN R. MCCONNELL, made no objections to any of the panel, a large number were disqualified on account of having formed opinions. Judge WIDNEY was put on the stand, and defined the word shyster to mean "a man who hung around the courts of police magistrates, with little or no qualifications for practising law, who obtained what money he could on fraudulent pretences of aiding poor devils of prisoners, and who generally did nothing—in fine, a Tombs lawyer." Mr. MCCONNELL, in his argument for the defence, pointed to the recent attempt made to drag CHARLES A. DANA of THE SUN to Washington to answer a charge of libel. Judge BLATCHFORD, he said, put down his foot firmly in that case; and hereafter, when WIDNEYS want to pursue the editors of independent journals, they should be compelled to bring their actions in the county in which the alleged offence had been committed. The jury promptly acquitted GATEWOOD, and another is added to the chapter of unsuccessful libel prosecutions.

The members of the St. Louis County Court have been making an examination of their new county jail, recently completed, and are of the opinion that it does not contain a single cell from which a prisoner of ordinary mechanical ingenuity and adequate perseverance could not escape. This jail was built under the supervision of one THOMAS WALSH, and a responsible committee of the Taxpayers' Association, which had previously investigated the circumstances attending its erection, reported that he had pretended to expend upon its construction $104,000 more than its actual cost. This is the same THOMAS WALSH who with such charges standing against him has been appointed local architect of the new St. Louis Custom House, for which Congress has made an appropriation of $4,000,000. That WALSH should receive such an appointment has excited some surprise; but the matter is fully explained by the fact that he is a personal friend of President GRANT, and has so arranged matters that the President's brother, ORVIL L. GRANT, is to receive a salary of $5,000 a year as clerk to the contractors who are to furnish the granite for the building, besides a commission which will yield him some $80,000 more. What WALSH is to make can only be guessed at from his success in the county jail job, which was comparatively a small affair.

Gen. SANBORN, who during the war was in command of the Southwest Department of Missouri, and in 1867-8 was a member of the Board of Indian Peace Commissioners, which included Gens. SHERMAN and HARNEY, has recently had a conversation with a reporter of the *Missouri Republican* on Indian affairs. He denounces unreservedly the Teton Sioux swindle, and says that the attempt to force the Winnebagoes from their homes in Wisconsin is a shameful disregard of the faith of treaties. These Indians are civilized, and have exercised the rights of citizenship by voting like the whites; yet it is proposed to drive them out of the State at the point of the bayonet as if they were noxious wild beasts, a policy which, irrespective of its injustice, is calculated to cause their relapse into barbarism. Gen. SANBORN thinks the recent fight between Gen. CUSTER and the Indians might have been foreseen, as by the treaty of Fort Laramie made in 1868 with the Northern Sioux all the country north of the Platte river and east of the Big Horn mountains was held to be conceded Indian territory. The Sioux nation now numbers over thirty thousand, and if by the mismanagement of the Government these Indians are driven on the war path, their country, even if it should be occupied, would be rendered unsafe and valueless.

Gov. LESLIE of Kentucky is a man who has been honored above his deserts by the citizens of that State. He has now an excellent opportunity to repay that obligation by immediately resigning his office and giving place to somebody with brains and nerve enough to exterminate the handful of Ku-Klux who for years have defied all authority. The sooner the Governor vacates the position which he is manifestly incompetent to fill the better it will be for the good name of Kentucky.

The Milwaukee *Sentinel* says that it is the settled practice of the Republican party to cast out its evil doers. Yes, BINGHAM was cast out to Japan with $10,000 a year, and that is the way most of the casting out is done.

British Ladies that Hit Out from the Shoulder.

Miss Rudman and Miss Tregloan kept a hotel at Bristol, England, where they made money enough to purchase a snug little piece of land near Melksham. Here they settled down. A Mr. Frederick Smith, who lives next to their new residence, has a meadow lying contiguous to some of their land; and by his deed of conveyance he claims a right of way through a field of theirs in order to gain access to his own. The ladies stoutly resist this claim, and when he attempted to force his right the other day by bringing a load of straw to the gate, they challenged him to produce his deed. Then he put his arm through the bars to attempt to unhinge the gate, when, to use his own words:

Miss Rudman hit straight out from the shoulder with her clenched fist, and struck me in the face. She repeated the three times. She also raised her foot, and kicked me more than once in the arm—that was through the gate—bruising me very much, and making me sore for a week. She then seized my walking stick, wrenched it from me, and struck me several times on my back and shoulders. I never touched her, but told her if I was doing wrong she had her remedy.

George Alford, farmer, who was driving the horse and cart with the straw, shared no better fate, for he while assisting Mr. Smith received "one straight from the shoulder of Miss Rudman on the mouth." [Much laughter.] "Do you know who you be hitting?" said the farmer. "Yes," said the lady, "'Twas me." said the farmer, "I know it," said Miss Rudman; "you have no business here; I'll give you another if you don't go." [Renewed merriment.] Mary, go and fetch my big knobbed stick; I'll show them whether they have a right here." [Peals of laughter.] They did not wait for the knobbed stick, but retreated from the position, and left the ladies victors of the field.

Mr. Smith brought an action in the County Court against the ladies for interruption of right of way, and for £20 damages for the assault. The first part of his case he did not make out to the satisfaction of the Judge, and was nonsuited; for the assault a verdict of 40s. and costs was given. The case lasted all day, and excited the liveliest interest in a crowded court.

The Duke of Brunswick Leaves his Fortune to the City of Geneva.

Correspondence of the London Morning Post.

It happens to fall within my knowledge that years ago that eccentric prince, the late Duke of Brunswick, made the Prince Imperial his sole legatee, thus leaving his millions to the heir of a civil list of a million a year. He informed the Emperor of this intention, and forwarded to him a schedule of his many investments. It was this schedule, found at the Tuileries among the Emperor's private papers by the insurgents of the 4th of September, that gave rise to the fable of the hoarded wealth which Napoleon was said to have placed in English, Dutch, and other securities. Since the Emperor's death it has been proved how poor a man he died. Not the least singular part of the story is that immediately on the fall of the Empire the Duke of Brunswick revoked the disposition of his vast fortune—which would now, indeed, have been invaluable to one who has little more than a great name for inheritance—and cast about for some other object sufficiently and securely wealthy to justify the demise of further riches. He was residing at the flourishing city of Geneva, and it seems to have struck him that the ancient Swiss republic was possessed of a vigorous and stable existence, and Geneva of abundant resources. Accordingly, on the 5th of March, 1871, carefully excluding all his relatives, he devised the whole of his real and personal estate to that city, subject only to the charge of a princely funeral and the erection of a magnificent mausoleum in which his embalmed or petrified remains are to be entombed amid statues of bronze and marble.

Singular Discovery of a Lost Will.

From the Lexington (Ky.) Press, Aug. 29.

The will of the late Colonel W. W. Jacobs, of this county, was misplaced after his death in a very mysterious manner, which circumstance laid the foundation for an extensive lawsuit. On Thursday, the day of the sale at Colonel Jacobs's place, a poor Italian boy named Louis Perry, in the employ of Mr. Wm. Gunn, unearthed the important document while employed in removing some old papers from a secretary. Five hundred dollars would have been freely given for the valuable instrument, which fact he well knew, but he immediately surrendered the prize to the proper parties. Mr. George W. Darnall the curator of the estate, properly rewarded him with a prize of $100.

An Old War Horse After the Mail Service.

From the Cincinnati Enquirer.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31.—Hon. B. F. Wade, Mr. Meade and C. C. Coffin have been here on a raid in the interests of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Their little job was to get a contract for carrying the mails from Bismarck to Helena, in Montana Territory, a distance of some 800 miles. Their idea was to divert passenger travel to the Territory from the Union Pacific Railroad, and to make this a route for the general transportation of all mail matter for the Northwestern Territories. They offered to do the service for $150,000, but the job was too barefaced even for the Post-office Department.

What the French Pilgrims Say to the Pope.

From the Paris Univers.

The following address to the Pope is being signed by those who have joined or are about to join in the French pilgrimage of 1873:

MOST HOLY FATHER: Rome and France could not be separated. In renewing the consecration of France to the Virgin Mary the pilgrims to all our holy places think of their Pontiff and Father. It is because their country has forgotten its mission that it is now humbled, and it is also because it has forgotten its mission that you are a captive. Our crimes are the cause of your suffrage, and our misfortunes are bound up with yours. Your triumph will be our triumph. You alone can show us the road to victory. Continue to enlighten our course by your infallible teaching, direct us in the way marked out by the great and glorious Syllabus; present France to the Immaculate Mary; obtain our conversion and our salvation. The salvation of France is the triumph of the Church. The salvation of France is your deliverance. To you belong our hearts, our minds, the power of our country, the blood of our children. *Ad multos annos, Amen.*—August 15, *Fête of the Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin.*

Watering Place Extortions—The Other View of the Case.

To the Editor of The Sun.

SIR: In THE SUN of Aug. 30 there appeared a card from Mr. Arkell, charging Mr. E. Darrow with extortion.

Mr. Darrow takes boarders in summer, and does not keep a hotel. Mr. Arkell and family arrived on Thursday evening, and expected to remain several weeks. The ladies became dissatisfied, and left on the following morning, and Mr. Darrow charged them, as is customary, one week's board, and retained their baggage until Mr. Arkell returned from the city to pay the bill. He refused to do this, went for two constables, broke into and through a boarder's room, and carried off his trunks. Mr. Darrow has sued him for trespass, and Mr. Arkell will probably learn that a man cannot walk into a private family, turn up his nose, and flounce out again for nothing.

OCEANIC, Sept. 1. C.

THE SADDEST REVELATION.

PECUNIARY CORRUPTION IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

An Illegal Private Secretary and Confidential Agent of the President Defrauding the Treasury Through False Vouchers and Fabricated Accounts—Shocking Indeed.

Correspondence of The Sun.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 1.—The condition of the streets and avenues of this city at the present time is frightful. The reckless manner in which the Board of Public Works are proceeding with their work of destruction is unprecedented even in their past notorious history. Great changes are made in the grades of streets and avenues; large contracts are daily awarded. Miles of new pavements laid under the direction of the board are torn up, and replaced by others equally bad. Extravagance and recklessness are everywhere visible. All this is in direct violation of the organic act which expressly forbids the Board of Public Works from contracting debts for improvements, and explicitly declares that no contracts shall be entered into or work ordered to be done until appropriations shall have been made therefor.

Not a dollar (except the $913,000 appropriated by Congress for work around Government reservations) has been provided for the vast work now under way—work that will require many millions of dollars to complete. The District treasury is empty. The eight per cent. certificates of indebtedness issued by the Board of Public Works have no market value abroad, and are offered here on the streets at seventy and eighty cents, with no buyers. The police have not been paid a dollar since November. The school teachers have three months of last year's salary still due them. The poor laborers who work in the hot sun cleaning streets at $1.50 per day have not been paid a dime for more than six months. The ten million limit to the debt of the District fixed by a special act of Congress was long ago exceeded by at least seven millions of dollars. A floating debt of several millions of dollars also came over from last year, and is dailygrowing in magnitude.

Yet with this state of things staring them in the face, Gov. Cooke and Boss Shepherd are contracting debts as if they had the treasury of the world to draw upon for their redemption. Much surprise is expressed by many at the boldness of these men in violating law and squandering money. But there is no mystery about it to those who have watched the course of events at the Capitol.

THERE IS A POWER BEHIND THEM

from which they derive their official existence, and upon which they rely to shield them from investigation and punishment. That power is none other than the President of the United States.

But how have these men ingratiated themselves with the President and entrenched themselves so impregnably within the White House? The answer is easy. They have a mediator—a go-between in the person of a member of the Ring who holds the triple positions of Engineer in the Regular Army, Illegal Private Secretary to the President, and Commissioner of Public Buildings and Grounds, besides minor offices and honorary positions too numerous to mention. His name is O. E. Babcock. He was the confidential agent of Gen. Grant to San Domingo. He is a copartner of Shepherd in building houses and also in real estate speculations where tens of thousands of dollars are invested. He is, all things considered, the right man in the right place—for the Ring.

It is with this tool of Cooke and Shepherd that I propose to deal in this letter. It will be remembered that when the annual report of the Board of Public Works was transmitted to Congress last December by the President, it was accompanied by a bill against the United States amounting to the great sum of $1,241,920.92 for work alleged to have been done around Government reservations. It will be remembered also that this bill was discredited by several members of Congress. The impression very generally prevailed that the charges were excessive, many of the items fraudulent and the prices exorbitant, and more than one member so declared his belief in plain and vigorous language. The advocates of the Ring, at the instance of Boss Shepherd, proposed to submit the bill to Gen. Babcock and accept his measurements of the work as correct. This arrangement, which, as I shall show, was equivalent to submitting it to the Boss himself, was finally acceded to, and a bill appropriating $1,241,920.92 was passed and approved on the 8th of January, 1873. One section of this act provides that no payments shall be made except upon vouchers approved by Gen. Babcock, *and not till after all the work has been remeasured* and the prices approved by him.

While this bill was pending, the annual report of the Board of Public Works was reviewed by John H. Crane, a citizen of Washington, who, in a letter to Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt, pointed out

NUMEROUS FRAUDULENT CHARGES

in the account which the Ring had preferred against the United States. He showed that out of $60,000 charged for work done around Judiciary square $29,000 was fraudulent—the work either not having been done at all, or done and paid for years ago by the Government. So perfect is the Ring's system of espionage that the proof sheets of this letter were read by Boss Shepherd and Babcock before it was issued from the press. The work around Government property was then being measured by Gen. Babcock. It would not do to let these fraudulent items stand, and they were stricken out. The Ring, however, wanted all the money appropriated, and to obtain it it was necessary to substitute fraudulent charges in other portions of the bill where detection would be least likely to follow. That this was done has been the general belief. How it was done I now propose to show, and that there may be no ambiguity, as well as to keep this letter within reasonable length, I will select one only out of 286 measurements made by Gen. Babcock, promising to hereafter submit many more equally fraudulent.

I have before me a copy of the vouchers for this work obtained from the Treasury Department. They are certified to by Gen. Babcock as follows:

OFFICE OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS, WASHINGTON, Jan. 10, 1873.

I have had the proper examinations made and the measurements verified, and hereby approve them and the prices claimed therefor. O. E. BABCOCK, Major of Engineers in charge of Public Buildings and Grounds.

These vouchers passed the First Auditor's office the same day. The amount approved by Gen. Babcock was $1,240,920.84. From this there was deducted by the Auditor errors as follows: On page 2, $9.40; on page 24, $114; on pages 57 and 61, $45—making $168 in errors, which after being deducted left $1,240,752.44 as the amount approved by the Auditor. To this the sum of 70 cents was added by the Comptroller, making the total amount drawn by the Board of Public Works $1,240,753.14. The correctness of the copy before me is certified to as follows:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, Feb. 11, 1873.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the original on file in this office. JOHN ALLISON, Register.

Then follows the official seal of the Treasury Department and the signature of George S. Boutwell, Secretary, vouching for John Allison and the correctness of the copy.

I have been thus particular that it may be seen that the figures I give are official, as well as to show that while our Government keeps a large corps of clerks employed to examine and detect 70 cent mistakes, it is being robbed of thousands of dollars in the very bills where these trifling mistakes are discovered.

It will be observed that the time intervening between the approval of the act appropriating the money and the date at which Gen. Babcock certifies to the correctness of the vouchers for the same was but two days—a period entirely too short to have enabled him to comply with the strict letter of the law. He could not have had the work measured and the calculations made in that time.

ONE OF BABCOCK'S FALSE VOUCHERS.

On page 36 of these vouchers I find the following charge:

For Grading around the Winder Building,
26,246 cubic yards at 40 cents.
Less 1-6, 4,381
21,905 cubic yards at 40 cents.....$8,762

A glance at the locality is sufficient to convince the least skeptical person that this charge is excessive. That amount of grading could not have been done. But to be just, and at the same time certain, I have had the work measured by W. W. De Maine, Esq., an able and accomplished engineer and teacher of mathematics, who is thoroughly acquainted with the grades of the city, and who has had twenty-seven years' experience in measuring street work. The following is his certificate, sworn to before Amos Hunt, Justice of the Peace in and for the District of Columbia:

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, 1873.

I hereby certify that I have measured the excavation done by the Board of Public Works around the Winder Building on F street north and Seventeenth street west, and find the following quantities have been done. On F street, 3,503¼ cubic yards, of which 1-6 is chargeable to private property, and on Seventeenth street 2,310 cubic yards, of which 490 yards are chargeable to the Metropolitan Street Railroad Company, and one-half of the remainder to the property of the United States on the opposite side of Seventeenth street, leaving to be charged to the Winder Building 2,586⅓ cubic yards. According to the certified measurement of Gen. O. E. Babcock, the amount of grading chargeable to the Winder Building is 21,905 cubic yards, a quantity which would require more than 24¾ feet of average cutting through the whole surface of grading, whereas the greatest depth of cutting at any point in the work is not more than five feet. W. W. DE MAINE, Surveyor and Civil Engineer.

It will be seen by this certificate of Mr. De Maine that it would require a cut 24¾ feet deep on F and Seventeenth streets to make the amount of grading certified to by Gen. Babcock. It would require three horses and carts and six men more than two years to remove this quantity of earth. In order to leave no loophole through which Gen. Babcock can even attempt to escape, I requested Mr. De Maine to measure all the grading done on Seventeenth street, from Pennsylvania avenue in front of the War, Navy, and new State Departments. The following is his certificate:

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, 1873.

I hereby certify that I have measured the grading done by the Board of Public Works on Seventeenth street west, between New York avenue and Pennsylvania avenue, and find the whole quantity to be 7,148 cubic yards, of which 1,047 yards are chargeable to private property, and 1,193¼ yards to the Metropolitan Street Railroad Company, and 180 yards to the Winder Building, leaving 4,728¾ cubic yards to be charged to the property of the United States occupied by the Army, Navy, and new State Departments. The whole quantity chargeable to the United States, including the Winder Building on both sides, being 6,867 cubic yards.

I observe that Gen. Babcock in his measurements of this work has deducted one-sixth of the whole amount of grading as chargeable to private property, which is not correct, as the United States owns on both sides of the street a portion of the distance.

I find that it would require an average cut of nine and a half feet over the entire surface of Seventeenth street, between Pennsylvania avenue and New York avenue, and on F street fronting the Winder Building, to make 26,286 cubic yards of grading, the total quantity certified to as correct by Gen. Babcock; whereas the average depth of cutting over the said surface will not exceed three feet, and, according to the rules of the Board, two feet of this depth is required to be done by the contractor putting the carriage way without extra charge, leaving only one foot properly chargeable to the United States and private property. W. W. DE MAINE, Surveyor and Civil Engineer.

MORE PROOFS OF FRAUD.

The earth marks still visible on the foundation walls of the Winder Building silently refute Gen. Babcock's figures, which would require a cut of nine and a half feet over the entire surface of Seventeenth street, from Pennsylvania avenue to New York avenue, and of F street fronting on the Winder Building. A cut of this depth would undermine the foundation walls. On this point I will call another witness who unconsciously gives the lie to Babcock's figures quite as emphatically as Mr. De Maine does. I refer to a letter from James Eveleth, Superintendent of the Winder Building, to the Secretary of War, dated April, 1872, submitting estimates for the repair of that building. Mr. Eveleth says: "From the original pavement line to the line at which the mastic commences, a height averaging four feet, the building is cased with marble of an inferior quality, several of the slabs of which are broken by the superincumbent pressure, and *below this marble belt is the rough blue stone foundation recently uncovered to conform to the new grade* TO THE AVERAGE DEPTH OF THREE FEET FOUR INCHES, which, under any system of modification or repair, will need to be covered." (See Ex. Doc. No. 5, 42 Cong. 3d Sess. P. 181.)

If Babcock's figures were correct the foundation walls would be uncovered or undermined to the depth of 24¾ feet instead of three feet four inches as stated by Mr. Eveleth!

Mr. De Maine points out an important error which Gen. Babcock has made in deducting one-sixth from his measurements as chargeable to private property without reference to the fact whether the Government owns on both sides of the street or not. I notice that he has made this mistake in several of his measurements which cover 66 pages. This mode, adopted by the Board of Public Works, and acceded to by Gen. Babcock, of assessing five-sixths of the cost of improvement equally bordering on Government and private property, to the United States, has neither law nor equity to support it. But if adopted it should be strictly adhered to. Such, however, is not the case. Five-sixths is charged just the same whether the United States owns all the property or one side and part on the other, or only on one side. This proves that Babcock's figures are worthy of no credence whatever—that they were made to suit the Ring's necessities.

The report of the Board of Public Works furnishes proof also of the falsity of Gen. Babcock's measurements. On page 30 of their annual report the following appears:

UNITED STATES TO BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, Dr.

Winder Building, Seventeenth and F streets,
12,000 cubic yards grading at 40 cents.....$4,800

Although this amount is more than three times greater than it should be, it will be observed it is about half what was allowed by Gen. Babcock for the same work. But here is still more unanswerable proof from the same source. In tabular statements Nos. 14 and 31 appended to their annual report, the Board of Public Works give the cost of grading F street from Seventeenth to Twenty-third street, and Seventeenth street from New York avenue to M street north, an aggregate distance of one and a quarter miles. This of course includes the grading around the Winder Building, on the corner of F and Seventeenth:

F STREET.

1,046 cubic yards grading at 80c.		$812 00
10,240 cubic yards grading at 33c.		3,072 00
11,418 cubic yards grading at 40c.		4,567 20
25,398 cubic yards grading at 20c.		5,079 60
Total 48,102	Average price...37c.	$13,024 80

SEVENTEENTH STREET.

955	cubic yards grading at 20c.	$191 00
8,092	cubic yards grading at 20c.	1,618 40
7	cubic yards grading at 20c.	1 40
1,568	cubic yards grading at 20c.	313 60
364½	cubic yards grading at 20c.	72 90
364½	cubic yards grading at 40c.	145 80
294	cubic yards grading at 20c.	58 80
218	cubic yards grading at 20c.	60 40
540	cubic yards grading at 30c.	162 00
2,851	cubic yards grading at 30c.	855 30
169	cubic yards grading at 30c.	50 70
Total 15,169	Average price...27c.	$5,533 80

APPROVING ILLEGAL CHARGES.

Thus it will be seen that the total quantity of grading on both streets is 61,105 cubic yards, and the total cost of the same $16,557.86, only a fraction over double the amount allowed by Gen. Babcock for the grading around the Winder Building alone. That is, the Board of