THE PLUNDERED DISTRICT.

ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE OF THE RING'S GUILT.

Property Holders Forced to Pay for Unfinished Improvements—Sewers Constructed without Contract—Extravagant Prices Charged for Grading and Sodding.

WASHINGTON, March 31.—The District investigation was not intervened to-day by any particularly startling developments. It was, however, a solid day's work, and sums up with telling effect against the Ring. The evils under which the people of the District have been suffering for three years are so manifold that to investigate a few of the worst necessarily requires the calling of many witnesses, and the consumption of a great deal of time. Some of the cases of oppression and fraud testified to by different witnesses are apparently trivial considered alone, but when aggregated they make mountains of iniquity. Quite a number of witnesses were called to-day to prove that frequently property holders were assessed for one-fifth of the whole cost of improving streets and avenues before the work was completed. This was one of the charges preferred against the board by the memorialists, and several witnesses testified that they had received bills for improvements before the streets or avenues were completed, and that certificates of indebtedness had been issued against their property. Some that this charge would be fully sustained, and feared that it might so prove to be worse than counsel for the memorialists alleged it was, the Ring attorneys concluded it would be best to plead guilty thereto. They accordingly admitted that in many instances the board had made bills when the work was unfinished, and that over fifteen hundred per cent. interest had been issued against the property which was not finally assessed.

A PLUCKY WITNESS.

Samuel Sludge, a large property holder, testified that he had repeatedly refused to buy the bonds of the committee, but in consequence of a morning. He was sharply questioned by the Chairman as to his delay in complying with the order of the committee, and gave as an excuse his fearless evidence which had caused him to be repeatedly sued and to the memorialist since he was summoned two weeks ago that he was staying away for the purpose of effecting a settlement with the board, and if they would only induce him he thought he could succeed. He said he did not sell unbosom himself and blow the boss and everybody about him sky high. He has intimated to various persons during the last few months that he had bought the attorney of the board, or, W. D. Cook, and for each claim that he had, he had made a favorable opinion from this legal light of the board; but when Mr. Strong was put on the stand to-day he stoutly denied that he had paid Cook for any such services. He admitted, however, that he had given Mr. Cook a good deal of money during the last three years, but it was for legitimate legal services. The committee directed him to produce all books and papers, especially the stubs of check books, showing transactions with the law firm. He was recalled in the morning the business of the day, but failed to put in an appearance. It is extremely doubtful whether he will comply with this order until he is compelled so to do. He has been

A VERY EXTENSIVE CONTRACTOR

for sewer building under the board, and has received the largest sewers yet constructed, a lower end of H street intersecting Seventeenth Street, Pennsylvania avenue, Besides these he built a number of sewers. On G street he built without a contract, on a mere verbal order of the Commissioner, and the arrangement was made with the consent of the property holders on the ground that he was to receive a percentage of the total cost of the same. This was to be determined on his own report of material used and time of workmen kept by his own superintendent. The sewer was 6 feet long, and his figures showed that he was entitled to receive fifteen per cent. A special superintendent of the board, Mr. Sawyer, who was placed over this work, testified that he frequently remonstrated to officers of the board against the manner in which this work was being done. He received from the contractor a letter from this, making it cost too much, and that he was defrauding the board by carrying men on the pay roll who never appeared at the work; that he had insisted on having a roll call every morning, but Mr. Strong's foreman refused to do this. No attention was paid to his remonstrances. On the contrary he was admonished to raise no more cautious objections. After the work was completed he refused to approve the application of the contractor to the board for money. When the application was made he would not sign it according to the rules of the board. The contractor's son

PUT A JOB ON HIM

and got him drunk, and while in this state induced him to sign the papers. When he recovered his senses he found $10 of Rheperecent. Mr. Sawyer, after this, refused to sign any bills of signing papers the night before came to his house and sought Mr. Sawyer and demanded that he should take the papers, and he refused to do so. Strong would not take the papers back, and thereupon Mr. Sawyer put the seam with a full statement of the facts to the board. He was soon after dismissed for his trouble. He wanted the board present. Mr. Willard, to be present when he made his statement, but he was in attendance to testify against Mr. Sawyer, and said they did not want to testify any further. A Mr. Wilson, who was employed by Sam Strong in Judge Carter's office, testified that he made bills for the work to pay roll at the H street sewer and he was never there—never did any work on the sewer. The superintendent testified that there were other men counted on the rolls who were never present. The object was to swell the cost of the sewer.

N. G. ORDWAY'S TESTIMONY.

N. G. Ordway testified that the Board of Public Works commenced to excavate in front of Central Market House for a proposed new City Hall. That half a dozen cart loads were removed and then the work was stopped. He understood that the Ring had obtained the money appropriated by the United States for the purchase of one-half of the old City Hall, the terms of the law required the money should be used for building a hall and for no other purpose. They had to make a province of building which he had seen and knew the same. Mr. Ordway said he was familiar with the manner in which sodding was done under the board. There was not two inches of soil used under the sod. He had observed the sod was laid on the ground the week before it was put down. He had frequently seen the sod put down without any preparation for it. He had a good deal of sodding done, and paid from twenty-five cents per yard down to 12½ cents per yard. Mr. Ordway testified that he was a democrat.

A Mr. Robinson testified that ten years ago a man by the name of Carter had not employed any laborers. He had employed no laborers. He was employed to repair the tool for some time but did not benefit them in the slightest degree.

A COSTLY FENCE.

H. V. C. Bon, who was examined yesterday in regard to the contract for wood fence along the avenues, was recalled. He produced a bundle of papers, which he said he had obtained from Mr. Frank Smithson safe. The vouchers showed that the fence was not in the intention of this house is little as fence. If, however, the committee were able to ascertain the exact cost of the fence, it would be found to be at least half a million of dollars. Mr. Bon, later, and other expenses, fixed by the board at the rate of $1 per yard for the remaining 120, is fact he received, for the whole fence, the sum of $57,362 2, making a total of $3,362 25. His profits were therefore over four hundred per cent. Among the items were found the following:

Paid for hauling two loads of sand, transfer to Frank Smithson, $1 50; paid for hauling two loads of sand, $1 50; paid for hauling two loads of sand, $1 50; paid for hauling two loads of sand