SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS. UPON CUBBERT TOPICS-COMPILED EVERT DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

The Business of the Country.

From the N. Y. World.

The recent failures of two of the leading firms in the dry goods trade lead to reflection on the business of the country. It is very evident that those who favored the election of Grant on the plea that his success would make trade more brisk, have not found their calculations realized. The fact is, the wholesale houses are experiencing a duil trade at the very time that they anticipated it would be brisk. How this can be, when the country has been blessed with better crops than at any time for years, is, to most people, a mystery yet it is easily explained.

The prospects of an enormous crop led the merchants to believe that the demand for goods would be increased in proportiou, and to make preparations accordingly. But when the farmers of the Northwest saw the price of spring wheat, the great staple of that section. fall from one dollar and seventy to one dollar and six, they were less inclined to make large purchases, notwithstanding their large crops, than they were when receiving high prices for breadstuffs, while no doubt many refused to sell, and thus, instead of paying cash for goods, are merely buying when necessity demands it, and that on credit. The Western merchant thus finds it difficult to make his remittances, which, taken in connection with the money pressure here, the high rents and heavy expenditures necessary to carry on a large house, falls with peculiar severity on those competing for trade in this or the Eastern market.

That the mercantile embarrassment which those failures indicate is not caused by the failure of the farmers to sell their grain, is made evident from the fact that there is now twice as much wheat as there was last year at this time. The well-to-do farmers and those who are not obliged to sell their crops may be holding back and refusing to sell; but the very fact that there is such a large stock in the warehouses at the great centres, and the present liberal receipts at the points referred to, show very plainly that the mass of the farmers are disposing of their wheat. Finding it, however, impossible to obtain the prices which they have been in the habit of receiving for several years past, their crops, although larger, do not bring them as much as smaller yields did during high prices. This leads them to the reduction of their purchases, and makes them more slow in meeting their bills at the retail stores in their immediate vicinity. The result is, the coun-try merchants or those in the interior cities and small towns find their calculations at fault, and this in turn is felt by the wholesale dealers in this city. They find themselves now the victims of overstocked markets, too great competition, and too large expenditures for the amount of business done. This is the lesson which these last failures teach. The fact is, the business of the country has been too much on stilts, and the shrinkage of values which of necessity follows the return to a more safe and sound basis must of necessity affect all of those houses which have made no calculation on this readjustment of the business of the country.

General Grant and Reform in the Civil Service-The Tenure-of-Office Law. From the N. Y. Times.

It would not be at all surprising that General Grant should want the Tenure-of-Office bill repealed before he takes executive charge

The framers of our form of free govment." enment thought it wiser to restrict both, and define the limitations of their power. To the define the limitations of their power. To the Legislature they gave the making of laws-to the President their execution. As the people choose both President and Legislature, there would seem to be little danger in this distribution of power-far less than is likely to follow an attempt to break down the bar-riers established by the Constitution, and confuse the duties and responsibilities of the two departments by mixing them together. Mr. Johnson has tried to dictate to Congress; and Congress, in return, has taken from him part

THE DAIL . EVENING

of his legitimate power. If a similar distrust is felt of General Grant -or if he gives similar provocation-then the law may be required. But the people demand no such precautions, for they feel no such distrust. They look to General Grant for a thorough reform of the civil service. Congress, we trust, will not respond to that de-mand by so fettering General Grant's hands that he cannot possibly make the changes which the good of the country requires. We hope that General Butler will press the bill he has introduced to repeal the Tenure-of-Office act, and that it will become a law.

Revenue Frauds-New Orleans Ahead of New York.

From the N. Y. Herald.

There is evidently some necessity for reconstruction in the revenue service in Louisians. if it be true that with forty distilleries in operation the tax collected on whisky is not sufficient to pay the storekeepers. We can readily believe that the department is very corrupt in that quarter; but we had scarcely supposed it could be worse than in our own city. How-ever, anything may be true of the whisky thieves, especially in a disorganized country-mere especially in Louisiana. Let us console ourselves with the reflection that there is a good time coming. Already General Grant has sent two of his staff officers down into Louisians and contiguous places to look into the practical working of the Government machinery there, and it is, therefore, probable that he will go into the Presidency with some positive knowledge as to what ought to be done; and no one can doubt that he will do it. The real difficulty the administration has to contend with in regard to whisky corruption is the astonishingly positive declarations that are made both ways on any given point. There is a general notion in the human mind that when both sides of a story are told shrewd people can give some guess as to which side is telling the truth, but this notion never applies in the whisky business; and we doubt if the President is not now the most absolutely bewildered man in the world in regard to who are the honest men and who are the whisky stealers in any district. General Grant starts well in going at the facts in his own way, and will not be compelled to choose for his information between the stories of the two sides.

Sumner and Butler on Specie Payments. From the N. Y. Herald.

It is said that Senator Sumner is preparing a speech in favor of immediate resumption of specie payments, and that General Butler is preparing one to show that speedy resumption is impossible. Thus we see Massachusetts is divided on the question. In this contest Butler will win; for he is practical and brings a large amount of common sense to bear upon the subject, while Sumner is a mere theorist and compounder of high-flown sentences. We suppose there will be a vast amount of speechmaking the present session in both houses of Congress on this question and the finances generaliy, and the more because few under-stand these matters. It affords a fine opportunity for getting off Congressional platitudes with which to astonish the ignorant. But we have no idea that anything practical will be accomplished. There is too great a diversity of opinions and too little time to work up and pass any useful law between this time and the 4th of March. And in the present state of the public mind and ignorance of Congress it is better, perhaps, that it should be so. Con-gress should let the currency and the question of specie payments alone, and spend the re-maining time of this short session in reducing expenditures and taxes, in providing for the flicient collection of the revenue, and in clearing away the Tenure-of-Office law and other obnoxious laws for the incoming administration. We recommend Sumner and Butler to reserve their fire for a more opportune occasion

large the authority of the legislative elethe same service, which in this case it has taken a whole year to ascertain ?

Next, our efficient Clerk receives the small sum of \$3000 for compiling the Manual, when it is notorious that the labor attending the production of this "useful" or "aseless" (which i) book is performed by his assistants. Happy Joe also comes in for \$500 extra for procuring copies of bills passed by the L-gis-lature affecting the city. This amount would be anficient to pay the freight of several car-loads from Albany, or would pay the expenses of about fifty measurements to and from that of about fifty messengers to and from that city. But this is not all yet. He and all the city. But time is not all yet. He and all the clerks and messengers, to the number of thirty-one, receive \$350 each as a "Christmas present," for extra services to committees. We would ask, in our ignorance, for what other services they are employed and paid a liber allow? But addition to the services of the services and the services are employed and paid a liberal salary? But softly it is whispered that the early education of our City Fathers has been neglected, and it therefore becomes necessary so have an amanuensis to sign their reports.

The chairman of the city canvassers (an alderman with a salary of \$2000 a year) re-ceives \$750(1!) for service in that capacity. Only \$75 per day for sitting in the big easy chair about two hours each day, smoking and chatting while the clerks are taking down the figures, and the other canvassers eating the fine dinner provided by the gentlemanly Geo. Roome. Here, again, these poorly paid clerks come in for extra pay, for we observe that the Controller is directed to draw his warrant in favor of the "persons" and the "amounts' respectively as passed by the city canvassers (Dec. 14, 1868), for services to said board; also, that he pay the bill for refreshments furnished them.

It is currently reported that the City Hall has been turned into a hotel, whore impeon-nious aldermen, councilmen, and heads of departments feast daily at the public expense. So the keeper of the hall and proprietor of the hotel, at a free rental, has his salary in-creased to \$3750 per annum, besides a slight appropriation of \$1000 by way of a New Year's gift.

Thus we might proceed to enumerate cords of resolutions donating the people's money right and left without stint. Truly, "the ring" at this time have fall swing.

One would suppose that there was some of these legislators who would boldly denounce the plunderers, and show up their robberies to an indignant public; and surely there are two or three to whom the people have a right to appeal to take this course; but it is a fact that, by cajolery or flattery-or shall we say some other appliances? their names often appear in the affirmative, and seldom in the negative are they recorded on these barefaced schemes of plunder. We much fear that, when an indignant people through a vigilance com-mittee shall arouse in their might and hang these villains at the portals of the City Hall as a warning to evil-doers, spite of the protestations of uprightness on the part of these "honest" ones, they will likewise suffer for their deeds of omission and criminal neglect.

We Ask for Information.

From "Brick" Pomeroy's N. Y. Democrat Indiana is a loyal State, a majority of her voting population, as election returns show. being Republicans, and, therefore, members in good standing of the God and Morality party. In the vicinity of Seymour, Indiana, for a long time has existed a band of desperadoes. thieves, robbers, house-breakers, horse-steal ers, plunderers, and gatherers up of the property belonging to other people. At last the citizens of Seymour and the surrounding country organized themielves into a vigilance committee, and determined to do for their protection what the law could not or would not do.

The result has been the hanging of thirteen ersons charged with var



of the civil service. Whether he does or not, as a matter of fact, we have no idea; but it would be strange if he did not. He is about to enter upon the gravest responsibilities that ever devolved on a single man in time of peace, and under circumstances which greatly enhance the natural difficulties of his position.

He finds all the offices of the country filled by men appointed by Mr. Johnson and con-firmed by a radical Senate-who must of necessity, therefore, have got their places by double-dealing and political trickery, by making one set of promises for a nomination and precisely the opposite for a confirmation-and who naturally end by cheating both parties and consulting solely their own advantage in the offices they fill. Partly as a result of this state of things, the condition of our civil ser-vice is probably worse than it has ever been. As a general rule, the office-holders of the country are more incompetent, more corrupt, and less efficient than ever before. The taxes which the laws impose are not collected. The public revenue is wasted and stolen. Jobs debase every branch of the service and degrade every class of office-holders. Places under Government are no longer sought by men ambitious of performing their duties and of making for themselves a reputation for integrity and efficiency, but by men eager for personal gain, and skilful in using opportuni-ties for filling their pockets. General Grant's first duty is to reform all

this. The people expect this at his hands more confidently than they expect anything else. It is the first of his duties, and the most important and imperative, because it lies at the basis of them all. Without a thorough, rigid, relentless reform in the personnel of the civil service, nothing can be done toward increasing our revenues, retrenching expense, or restoring the country to prosperity. Yet, in any attempt he may make thus to reform it, General Grant finds himself confronted by a law which forbids his dismissing a single officeholder without consent of the very Senate which confirmed every one of them. No matter how flagrant their offenses, or how glaring their incompetency, the Senate-already committed by having put them in-must first consent before General Grant can put them out. This law was made avowedly to fetter Mr. Johnson in controlling the patronage of the Government. It was passed as an open de-claration of distrust of him. Whether it was needed or not-whether it worked well or illwhether it really compelled the appointment of better men, or only made necessary the selection of men more adroit in lying and double-dealing, are questions upon which men may differ. But nobody will pretend that the same reasons which passed the bill make necessary its continuance. The distrust of Mr. Johnson is not felt of General Grant. No one pretends that such a law is needed to prevent him from making war on Congress, and from filling all the offices of the country with its enomies and the enemies of the party which controls the Government. Whatever may have been the case with Mr. Johnson, nobody pretends that it is necessary to fetter General Grant, or to hamper and weaken him in the discharge of the legitimate duties of his de-

The Smaller Rascals and Rascalities of the City "Ring."

From the N. Y. Tribune.

While a contemporary is engaged, through its "Commissioner," in the very commendable work of showing up the impositions practised upon the people of this city in giving short weight and in selling adulerated eatables, would it not be well for it to employ likewise a "Commissioner" to investigate the doings of the Common Council "Ring" at the City Hall ? He would there ascertain that, instead of swindling the public in almost infinitesimal doses, such as "the one-sixteenth part of an ounce" in weight, or the "adulteration of ground mace by pulverized crackers," they carry off their plunder in weights something less than a ton, and adulterate the tax-levy to the extent of about one-half of the whole sum annually wrung from the people of this metropolis,

"Where rats and mice and such small deer Have robbed and reveiled many a year."

This Commissioner, when appointed, is requested to ascertain why it is necessary, just at this inclement season of the year, to rebuild the public piers along the east shore of the city "without contracting therefor," while express provision is made in the charter that such work shall be done by contract?

He would doubtless get some light with reference to the repairing of many of our streets with wood (Brown's, Smith's, or Jones' patent) or with stone, by contractors who have a peculiar style of pavement; and while the resolutions provide that the price shall "not exceed" \$5 per square yard, it will be very difficult for him to find that in any similar case such work was ever done for \$4-99 or any such economical price.

It would be well also to inquire into the means by which a "three-fourths" vote is procured for all these projects, when there is a minority sufficient to prevent it who were elected by the tax-payers of the city; how it is that they manage, by the same vote, to share among themselves and their subordinates such a liberal distribution of extra pay. They absolutely "spend other people's money as if it were their own." Let us cite a few instances:

The Presidents of the Boards of Aldermen and Conncilmen each receive a plum in the pretends that it is necessary to fetter General Grant, or to hamper and weaken him in the discharge of the legitimate duties of his department. Wendell Phillips, in an article we copied recently, demands the continuance of the law, on the ground that it is one step towards depriving Presidents of power. Next to abolishing the office, he thinks that curbing and checking its incumbent is the one thing need-ful. "The tendency of all free States," he says, "is to depress the Executive, and en-

hanging being done by the committee, without putting the county or State to the expense of trial and board for convicts in prison. The effect has been to purify that section of country, to purge it most completely of the characters which so long have infested it at the expense of honest men. At times a loyal paper mildly protests against this attempt of the citizens to defend their property and their lives, but, as a general thing, few are the words said by the radical papers in condemnation of this outrage upon law. In the South, which is now, as it has been

for a long time overrun with thieves, black and white, natives to the soil and former resi-dents of New England-if a citizen or a number of citizens, actuated by the same motives which governed the people of Indiana in their determination to protect themselves, defend themselves and their property from these robbers and plunderers, the entire loyal press of the North sets up a howl about the Ku-Klux Kian and calls for military interference -not, mind you, for the protection of the people, but for the protection of the robbers ! Loyal Indiana men may hang citizens who may or may not be guilty; law may be set at defiance; the dignity of the State may be trampled upon, the fair name of a sovereignty be blurred, blotted, and marred, but there is no demand for troops to be sent there !

In the South it is different. First driven to war for the preservation of constitutional rights and liberties; then stolen poor by the minions of tyranny, who w re there wander-ing with arms in their hands and murder in their hearts for the purpose of plunder; then placed under the heel of military despots and unprincipled adventurers, while a horde of black and white thieves by nature and profession were let loose upon them-for an honest man to protect himself, his family, and his property from those who pray by day and prowl by night, is a crime, and one that calls for more despotism, more interference with labor, more transportation of troops to annoy and wrong a poverty-stricken people, more chances for contractors to make money, more of a demand for that reconstruction which brings not peace but discord and suffering in its train. A hundred citizens of Indians, masked and armed, hang at a time one or more persons who have been robbing them, and it is all right! But for one man, assisted by his wife and family, to fire upon a band of black and white negroes in the South, or attempt a defense of his life and property at the hands of midnight maranders, is a crime; and not only himself, but his neighbors for miles around, and even the States where this defense of the right is made, must be punished by the despotic party now in power.

With thieves and robbers in office, with paid murderers wandering over the country in the interests of the Republican party, with bad men, reckless, unprincipled adventurers, to make laws, with the army and the energies the nation to defend those who war upon the right for the benefit of wicked men, it is no wonder the people are fast losing faith in a republican form of government. Congress is now but a den of thieves. The

law-makers there are but a set of unprincipled cowards. The army of the United States, created for the protection of the States and people, has now, under the management of the Republican party, become a most terrible

engine of oppression. Will those who make arguments against Democracy and in favor of Republicaniam please tell us wherein lies the justice of all this! And if they tell us that it is right for a

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IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELP dia, ESTATE OF JOHN HOCK. The widow of said decedent, FRANCIS JES HOCK, bas flid her petition with appraisement of personal property to the amount of \$295 which she elects to retain moder the act of April 14 1851, etc., and that the same will be approved by the Ceurt on SATURDAY, January 9, 1889, unless exceptions be flied thereto, THOMAS J. CLAY FON, 12 24 thatu St Attorney for Petitioner. IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY	OF WATCHES. JEWELRY AND SILVERWARE. HENRY HARPER, 1212141 No. 520 ARCH Street.
AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA Estate or WILLIAM EAGER, deceased. The Auditor appoint ed by the Court to rudit, settle, and adjust the account of GEORGE W. FRANKS and JOEEPH F. SUBLERS, Executors of the Estate of WILLIAM EAGER, deceased, and to report dis- tribution of the balance in the bands of the account- ant, will meet the parties interested, for the purpose of his appointment, on MONDAY, January 4, A. D. 1860, at a o'clock F. M., at his Office, No, 405 WAL- b UT Street, in the City of Philadelephia. 1224thstudt* WILLIAM D. BAKER, Auditor.	E. P. A D A I R (Late of the firm of Smyth & Adair, No. 1120 Chess- nut street), MANUFACTUREE OF SILVER PLATED WARE,
IN THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR THE CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA. Estate of JOSEPH and THOMAS WOOD, de- CRAMED.	No. 124 S. ELEVENTH St., 12 17 18trp PHILADELPHIA
The Auditor appointed by the Court to audit, settle, and adjust the account of THOM AS S. and JOSEPH WCOD, an viving administrators of the estate of MARIA WOOD, deceased, and of MARIA WOOD and THOMAS S WOOD, deceased, acting as agents for the beils of said estates, and to report distribution of the balance in the hands of the accountant, will meet the parties interested, for the purposes of his appoint- ment, on MONDAY, Japuny 4, A. D. 1869, at sleven (11) o'clock A. M., at the office of Wood's Katte, No. 18 S. THRU Sirce', in the city of Philadelphia. 12 2'thatust" WILLIAM D. BAKER, Auditor,	HOLIDAY PRESENTS. JACOB HARLEY JEWELLER, 121 1mrp No. 622 MARKET Street.
12 2 theust WILLIAM D. BAKER, Auditor,	DRUGS, PAINTS, ETC.
LITTERS TESTAMENTARY UPON THE having been granied to the undersigned, all persons indebted to the said estate are requested to make psyment, and those having claims or demands ; to make known the same without delay, to B. TROUBAT, M. D. Amilistrator, B. Studt No 1694 WALLACE street.	ROBERT SHOEMAKER & CO., N. E. Corner of FOURTH and RACE Sts., PHILADELPHIA,
ESTATE OF JOHN DUBOIS, DECEASED, - Leitters Testamentary upon the ab.vs Estate having been granted to the undersigned, all persons indebted to said Estate will make payment, and those baving claims will present them to ELIZA DUBOIS, Ezsecutrix, 12 1 tugis No, 603 TABE ER Street,	WHOLESALE DRUGCISTS. IMPORTERS AND MANUFACTURERS OF White Lead and Colored Paints, Putty Varnishes, Etc. AGENTS FOR THE CELEBRATED
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