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(Issued March $10 t h, 1876$. .

## PROSPECTUS.

# The Commercial Agency System of the United States and Canada Exposed. 

## Is the SECRET INQUISITION a CURSE or a BENEFIT?

H. 'THOMAS FRANCIS MHAGFHERE.

A Partial epitome of the special and wholly novel information conveyed by this Volume will show its great value to Merchants and Traders, who have so long aud so fruitlessly borne the Agency tax and suffered from the Agency System's mis-reports, malice, and misrepresentation.

The following Sexsmae Reasons will convince all business men why the Work shank be real by them and circulated for their own protection.
I. Is shows how pretended Agency information is collected. -How unblemished Chameter may he smirched ami abundant Capital depreciated by Volunteer Masked Correspondents, Shyster maid Lawyers, and worthless, malicious, null jealous Rival Traders. 'The Grand Inquisition of the Churches-'Ithe effect of Religious bigotry and I'olitieal bias. Instances. Pages 13, 24, 2\%, 41, 62, 71, 72, 106.

If It hows how " Ratings" are made np nut " Doctored "--How Agency Managers "borrow " from Merehants-How Misdemeanant clerks pass from Jails to the Computer- How Creditmen live like Secretaries of War on ostensible salaries of \$15 per week. Pages $35,39,41,43,44,45,53,96$.
III. It shows Low ". Bogus" Capitalists are created and bolstered nu-How real ones refusing to bribe are rim down-How suits for Libel are terminated. Figures and Facts, circumstantially stated, with Names and Dates. It also shows the Danger of imparting any Information to agencies, or entering into the League. Pages 39, 17 $49,51,52,62,63,66,67,104,110,115,165$.
IV. It nhows how subseribers are systemntically befrysed to their Castomers; how their Inpuiries are disclosed to eompeting Traders; how subseribersure openty Rated mad privately Traduced; bow Family Suntals are made merchandise of; how ('rimes me imputed and Immomities nsserted and sprend on record to gratity Matice or serve " Business purpose. How to Reform the "System" without Atolishing it. Duges 48, 71, 72, 0\%, 99, 100.
V. It shows how Frandulent Contmats are made wioh sinberibers; low Liability for False Information is sought to be secretly guarded nguinst; How Nepret direnars wre insmod privately to Ageney Manarets, temehing them to Deep ve Subseribres; how Subseribers may recover lireet from Agencies, for Lossem und Wat liuth, I Test Case is given emataining:--Evidence of Witnesses : Arguments of 'ommsil; Charge of the Jnlge and Verdict of the Jury-mad Comments of the l'ress, Dee. 9, 1875. Pagen $56,58,59,60,141.146,153,155, \mathrm{~J} 5 \mathrm{i}$.
VI. It shows how the Legishtures of the Different States and Dominion Parliament have been prevented from passing Laws to sippress the systems of Fipionage and betmetion ; Moncy for the Black Ilorse Cavalry of Legislation. It nlso shows the

VII. Ir sutows The "Seeret Black Jists" containing the initials of ton thonsand merchants' mames well Rated in tho Reference books, aml lograled in the Necret Reports: of other thonsands deserving high latings, and Depreciated to Zoro, Private character as a Stock in Tralle. How the Trathe may be prevented. A permancht Remely and costless Detense. Puges 107. 15:, 162, 16ti, 147, 16:3, 170, 171.

Vili.-Ir suoss how Trude l'nnies are lronght abont; how the Agemeies are the prineipal Disturbers and Fubsitiers; how hameds of thonsamds have heen lost by a few Fatse Words-Faets. How Setted Commere or Sute 'rading is impossible where the system exists without Lodal Restraint; ILow lending Morchants and Bankers

pUBLIC OPINION.


 teresting."-The British IVhig, Klagsion, Canalla, Feb, 2th, 1 siti.

Mr. Meagher writes ins if fully in earnest, und gives names, tates and detalls in support of his asserfons. Ills book is one which is bound to ereate a great sensition in every bustacss menter in the combtry, as every Merchant, Mamficturer and Truter is lecply interested in the subiect of which lie treats.-Ther Pittsharyh Commertiot, Fels, 24th, 16its,

Ifs table of contents if very finteresther, especially so Jts prpose of the Secret Black lists of thu sysiem. We have no doubt the whirk will be mbeh somght after by Merehnita amb all others engage in business. - The Norfolk Virginien, Fetb. asth, wits.
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 our opinlon of the work is well expressed in the author's preface." (Here follows an article too long to quote). Chiengo Times, Mar. Ith, 18 in.

The charges made against these institutions are of a very serions nature. Cortaluly the expose seems to bea complete one, and will no cloabt oceamon the compmales at whom it is leveled conshlerable dillenlty to elear up.-Thw Choniete, Wuabington, J. C.. Mar, bith, isiti.

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The book is fuvaiuable to the husiness publie whose credit has been an artlele of trade and barter with Commereial Agencies for years past.-Arkomsth Guzelte, Jitlle Rock, Fels. esth, 1 sig.

Mr. Meagher strlkes right anm left at the Agencles, atticking, however, the system more than partleular firms enguged in it. The great number of persons who lepend upon the $A$ gencles for Information will donbtless thal thls book interesting. -The breathg Mail, New York, March 9th, 1876.

The Secret Hack Lists of the system, are published in part, exhbiting the concerus whileh are continually underrated and misreported by the several agencles. Certalnly, Mr. Meagher makes out a wima ficir case, and his eharges cleserve, in all propriety, the attention and answer of the system he attacks.-Sprinuthll (Mass.) Rrpubtiean, March 10th, 1576.

Thousunds of commendatory tetters have been recelved since the publlation of the book, from Ifading Derchants, and several distingulalied lank I'residents and others inve verbally stuted: "Our thalness and business like oms Is dealing in eredit, mol it is a part of hat husiness to read everything alfecting conmmercial crolil on a large seate, like this book."

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## THE COMMERCIALAGENCY "SYSTEM" . OF TIIE <br> UNITED STATES AND CANADA <br> EXPOSED.

IS the secret inquisition a curse or a benefit?

# THE <br> <br> COMMERCIAL AGENCY <br> <br> COMMERCIAL AGENCY <br> "SYSTEM" <br> OF TIIE <br> united states and canada <br> EXPOSED. 

IS 'THE SECRET INQUISITION A CURSE OR A BENEFIT'?

BY
THOMAS F. MEAGIIER.
"I love agitatiou; the tire-bell which ularms the inhabitants of a city saves them from being burned in their beds."-Edmund Birke.

NEW.YORK.
1876.

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or the
Oluted States and Camada,
whose chidracters and commeicial credit have been so long and so unsparingly trafficked in, and so many
of wiom have been financially crippled of ruined by the system herein exposed,

THIS BOOK,
written in tieir interest, desianed for their infoumation, and intended to prevent greater inJURY to honest commerce in the future,
is respectfulity dedicated
BY THE AUTHOR.

## TO MY READERS.


#### Abstract

An intelligent examination of the :laims of the Commercial Agency system, now seeking permanent incorperation into the business life of the United States and Cunada, and refused hospitality or encouragement everywhere else, has been a want long felt ly the business men of botlo eountries. Up to the present moment, no one, whether from lack of facilities or deficiency of information, or a prudent disinclination to enguge in a lubor so certain to be onerous and so sure to be followed by bitter controversy, has seen fit to satisfy the general desire ; and the writer, conseguently, is not alone the first in an untried field of investigation, but has lud to undergo the treble work of exploration, classification, and commentary. As he progressed, the dimensions of his subject seemed to expand, and he found himself quite as much emburrassed in choosing what he should exclude as in selecting what he should publish. This difficulty, inseparable from the topic, is relied on to explain and excuse any defects of style or method. For the rest, he believes he has kept within the limits of legitimate controversy, and prevented his unpleasant task of exposure from tuking the objectionable and customary form of a rancorous criticism or a splenctic pasquinade. In essaying to set forth clearly the cardinal tricks and devices of a scheme of business of elaborate pretension and ramification, three conditions are essential : practical knowledge, a painstaking collation of evidence, and a disposition to draw just conclusions from proved facts. The nuthor submits his work with confilence as an illustration of the first two. The reader must determine whether or not he has kept within the seope of fair discussion or substituted sophistry for reasoning. From the men who find their profit in the Agency system, favorable opinions are not expected. Indeed, their bitter opposition is desired, and, so far as possible, antieipated. The silversmiths of Ephesus naturally favored image-worship; and the iconoclast need not look for reward or commendation from the devotees and beneficiaries of imposture. But just in proportion to the violence und unreason of deeply and selfishly interested persons should be the desire of the press and the general public to assure the writer a fair and full hearing on the merits.


The author would be unjust to his own feclings if he omitted to acknowledge the many kindnesses of the press and leading merehants when the work was first announced. His bearty thanks are due to over a hundred daily newspapers published in English, German, and French, and over
five hundred weeklies, literary, religious, and polemical-several being addressel, in the vernacular, to small constituencies of Welsh, Boheminns, Scandinavians, etc., etc. Their considerato und elaborate encourngement, following quickly and spontancously after the publication of our Prospectus, in addition to privato letters from editors, convinced us, more than may thing else, that our purpose would be fairly judged, and induced us to enlarge our original plan from a mere collection of evidences of wrong-doing into a ready handlook of means for reparation. We felt it was not anough to put the trading public on its grurd, and that we should go farther and place it in a position to retricve loss and assert the rights of reputation. Beside the faets given in the text, a first instulment of the names of merchants depreciated in capital or charncter will be found in the Appendix. This list will be incrensed in future editions. A complete one would entail the publiention of a beok ten times the size of the present one, and placeit at a price which would grently curtail the circulation (for the present, nt least) of the more im. portant purt of the publication. To the trading public, more than to any specinl eflorts of our own, the results of the agitation inaugurated herein will be mainly due. The individunl merchant who discovers in the following pages, for the first time, his best defence ngainst attempted or successful libel, will maturally assist in circulating the book in self-defence; but it is respectfully submitted that what would be a wise self-interest in the instance of such a person is a just precaution or a judicious preventive for every one who expects to lead a successful commereial career, and to enjoy the unimpaired confidence and esteem of his fellow-citizens.

Tite Autior.
New-York, Junuary 3, $18 \% 6$.

## NOTICE

## TO THE VOLUNTEFR CORRESPONDENTS

0

## TIIE MERCANTILE AND COMMERCIAL AGENCIES.

Wien he commenced the publication of this work, the writer proposed to insert in the Appendix the names of the known correspondents of the neveral Agencies. Whilst it was passing through the press, he learned that largo numbers of these persons were aiready ashamed of the business, fearful of ex. posure, and, for other reasons, dropping out of association with tho Agencles. It occurred to him that great injustico might be done and needless annoyance given to theso conterts to self-rexpect by a publication of their names after their rithltrucal, and that some more time alould be given to permit the remaining libellers of neighlors to reflect, repent, und sever their connection also.

As his purpose is reformation rather than exposure-the permanent destruction of the detestable linbit rather than the punislument of its dupes and acces-sories-he has finally determined to withlold the names of correspondents for the press or a future rdition. Wheever desires to drop his connection with the system meantime, can inform me by letter, and his name will be takon off the list. The incorrigible or negligent can not complain if they find themselves duly announced as in the active exercise of a disreputable practico.

Thomas F. Mesoier.

Post-Office Box 4300, New-York City.

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## THE COMMERCIAL AGENCIES.

## CHAPTER I.

## PRELIMINARY.

"Business Society"-in the largest sense, the inter-commmication of civilized man for admitted purposes of protection, profit, and culture-is a phrase representing an infinitely complex activity; but its definition, for the purposes of this work, may be properly expressed by calling it "that body of men who live by traffic in each other's groods, and profit or lose by reliance on each other's integrity."

The earliest recorded commercial transaction, involving moncy, is that in the Book of Genesis, $33: 19$, where Jacol is reported to have bought "a part of a field from the children of Hamor for a hundred pieces of money." Barter, exchange of commodity, must have been general, however, during the lifetime of $\Lambda$ dam, and, either toward the close of his life, or very soon after it, must have reached a condition of fixed valnes suited to the wants of his immediate deseendants; for we begin to find the word lesitah-which means, indifferently, "a lamb" or a "por-tion"-used as a standard among them: so many lambs, so much laud. When the purely shepherd eharacter changed into the more fixed patriarchal form, "flocks" came to be a means of comparison with " herds," and cattle and oxen signified relative values. From the thing itself to the symbol was the next step. One piece of money was marked with an ox; and thus money, as a representative and medium of exchange, took its names and devices from the first subjects of commerce.

A circulating medium may be anything, provided it be a current representative of value. In the Birman Empire, tin ; on the coast
of $A$ frica, shells; in the interior of the continent, salt; within the territory of the oldest Asiatic and European monarchies, grold and silver-each became a medium; but since Jeremiah bought the ficld of Hanameel, his uncle's son, that was in Anathoth, and "weighed him the money, seventeen shekels of silver," or the later time when David bought "the threshing-floor, cattle, and angricultural implements of Ornan the Jebusite, for six humdred shekels of gold," silver and gold have been the principal media of trade for the far-scattered descendants of Shem and Japheth.

The modern trader, milike the ancient, or even the mediaval one, need not bring gold or silver with him to effect purchases. All he requires is to have the reputation of possessing enough, and of being willing and able to discharge his obligations punctually, This reputation is called Commercial Credit.

As the first act of monetary trading was an Exchange, the latest one is neither more nor less. An executed exchange leaves undetermined merely questions of False Representation, Guaranty, Warranty, etc., as to the things exchanged. An executory exchange, bargain and sale, etc., turn almost wholly on the reputation of the persons proposing it, either in the sense of means to respond in damages, or, wanting adequate means, their assisting reputation for honor and integrity.

In ordinary dealings between men, executory traftie proceeds on a belief in the sufficiency of the means of the buyer; in exceptional cases, on their personal character, cum their means; but it is safe to say that socicty, in the commercial and trading sense, is constantly enlarging its demand for the seemrity of tangible and executable goods, and rolying, less and less daily, on the mere moral character of the owner. Whether this tendency be wise or un-wise-whether it indicate a lowering of public morality, or a mere extension of relations incompratible with opportmities of personal knowlenge of men's chamaters for lonest dealing-is nothing to our purpose. It shows that a just estimate of the trading resourees of indiviluals, firms, or corporations is a first condition of traffic, and that a false one endangers, limits, or destroys the opportmities of traffic, and either suspends, or canses to be withheld from business effort, the chance of honorable competition and the meed of appropriate suceess.

Since a correct estimate of men's means to fulfil their business
salt; within the archies, gold and miah bought the in Anathoth, and silver," or the floor, cattle, and for six hundred principal media n and Japheth. en the medieval effect purchases. sing enough, and tions punctually,
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obligations is a first condition of suceessful business, a false estimate, either because of its being a wrong conclusion from true data, or the result of reasoning on an insufficient collection of data, is, to persons engaged in traftic, an injury and wrong of prime inportance, which ean only result in restrieted trading, or inadequate profit, or final ruin. Either consequence is to be avoided and dreaded. For what do men work, from year to year, if not for the probability of greater growth in confidence and multiplied profits? And, even if their capital be so large and assured as to render criticism or misrepresentation comparatively non-destructive or non-ruinons, is the escape from failure to be solely regarded, and not the unjust and exacting struggle which they have been compelled to wage when fully entitled to a prosperous peace?

In the United States and Canada the trading publie, for the first quarter of this eentury, had no settled terms of eredit, as now understood, which they applied indifferently to all whom they eredited ; and none which depended, in any noteworthy degree, on what we may eall extrinsic knowledge. Men trusted on the basis of their own estimate of purchasers, whether as to morals or means, assisted, perhaps, by the friendly advice of some local trader who had experience of the habits of the particular applicaut for credit. Where their knowledge was insufficient to justify dealings, or they could not quickly get reliable eorroboration, they contented themselves with their stock, and allowed the proposed trader to go elsewhere. A secret inquiry was a wound ; and while the seller felt "aloore it," the buyer was too high-mettled to purchase from the inquirer. Such a state of business was, of conrse, a healthy and safe one, but it was also restricted. It was not suited to a homugeneons politieal society like that of the linited States, where some States of the Confederation produced rice, sugar, tohaceo, and cotton, and others wheat, wool, iron, and leadmatural exchangos-and the citizens required the facile sul)stitution of products to attain and enjoy the benefits of their climatic advantages, their inter-State frec-trade, and liberal political institntions. The steanboat, the railroal train, the telegraph, the tidewater cunals, all conspired to quicken enterprise, to enlarge commercial relations, to make one seat of special activity promptly respond to the excitements and fluctuations of other seats of energy or capital : and hence arose the necessity, with inereased pupulation
and production, for more extended markets, for more intimate acquaintance with the resources of traders and the character of gobetweens; and with these came the want of some authentic, or approximately authentic, substitnte for the old-time restricted and personal inquiry of the individual merchant into the integrity and means of his proposed customers.

When Astor's agents bartered for peltries with the Indian and French habitans, he drove a cash business, and his agents had no occasion to inquire into the existence of a capital which they could see and tonch whencver they chose; but when checks, bills of exchange, and promissory notes passed into general vogue as commercial substitutes for the issues of the First National Bank, and indicated the expanding energies of invested capital in foreing a market, it became the interest of producers to acquire a knowledge of the resources of the makers, drawers, and indorsers.

The earliest effort in this direction was by means of what are now known as Commercial Travellers-persons in the employment of a particular house, and accustomed to give the result of their investigation to the particular merchant for whom they worked. This method was expensive. It compelled two or more business firms in the same city to pay twice within a year for practically the same information. It had a further drawback in the eagerness of these travellers to sell under a risk, and so deserve either an increase of salary or an increased commission on sales. These allowances made, the device was sufficient for the occasion. While the American IIcrenles was yet engaged in his earliest feats of conscious power and beneficence; while the internal seas, lakes, and rivers of the country were throbbing with new forces, and distant commmities coming together to traffic in the long and slowly-accumulated wealth of the Areadian age; when to go or to be in debt, except for a bricf period, or without resources treble its amount, was accounted madness or dishonesty,-a post-office address was as assuring as a deed of trust, and a man's full Christian name almost the business equivalent of a chattel mortgage. In such a state of society the casual traveller served his purpose well enough ; and what he failed in was amply compensated for by the strict old-time determination to pay the last penny in satisfaction of an obligation. Even the law was rather a reserved than a used corrector and collector of unsettled accounts.

The East (there was, properly speaking, no West then) sold and the Sonth bought ; and the year's end found the balances adjusted and the temporary debtor a desired enstomer for the next year. What has more recently come to be called "Southern honor" had its origin in these justified confidences, and the commercial traveller was quite sufficient for all the demands arising out of them.

But the spirit of change entered into the people with the new discoverics. It soon seemed barbarons to imprison for misfortune in business, when speculation and energy, in tossing the diee of desperate chances, came to be regarded an individual honor and a national characteristic. The statutes in reference to arrest and imprisonment sensibly relaxed in several Statcs. A bankrupt law followed. The introduction, outside of cities, of doulle-bolted doors, of burglar-proof safes, of a more general carrying of arms on the person, typified the growing sense of insecurity and the recedence of contidence. Some new contrivance had to be improvised to meet the new conditions of socicty. The formation of an association of merchants in New-York was the first step; the next was the joint appointment of a common agent, S. P. Chureh, to seenre and forward weekly reports of the condition and business relations of merchants dealing or proposing to deal with the metropolis. His letters were copied and distributed among the members; were afterward printed, for greater expedition; and, finally, were bound and preserved under the title of "Church's Reports." Mr. Church was suceeeded in the business by his brother, John R. Church. Lewis Tappan followed John R. Woodward and Dusenberry next entered the field; and in 1842 the feeble voices of two competing burcaux of Business Intelligence might be heard in New-York, only to be inereased, some years later, by the addition of Bradstrect's, piped for a time on the banks of the Ohio, and trausferred to the Hudson in the faith and trust of attaining a lustier pitch and more profitable perfection.

We have traced the need, and introduced the applied remody. We admit the need. We deny the efficacy of the remedy.

## CIIAPTER II.

TIE PRIMA-FACIE DIFFICUSTIES OF SAFE INQUIRY-TIE SPECIAL DEFECTS OF INVESTIGATION BY BUREAUX OR IN MASS.

Lrfe insurance is based on the certainty of death to a particular number of men in a particular period. The Northampton tables are found, loy long experience, to be equivalent to a mathematical demonstration of this number. But who can formmate solvencies or insolvencies? or, if this can not be done in the mass, who could affix the term of either to any partienlar man or firm?

Quetelet, in his Sur thomme, has shown a recuring series of crimes, preserving a close approximation to uniformity of number in a given period, but he reaches the result by considering erimes as deeds of violence and, of comrse, the effective canse of death, and not as mere breaches of moral or statntory law. In other words, he takes the same known certainty of death as the Northampton tables, and merely differentiates, with the aid of census and prison reports, from the result of violence to the varicty of methods of its ilhstration.

But there never can be a Table of Frand compiled or logarithms of insolvency perfected. In its very essence the former is elusive, and, resting in intent more than in consequences, hmman ingenuity would be taxed in vain to seize it, in any stage of progress or development, in the individual or in the community ; whilst the latter, as it may be the result of a single bad bargain, as well as of a succession of bad bargains, or the incalculable acts of others, is no less incapable of calculation. No system can be devised, therefore, to overcome, or accurately anticipate, conditions and circumstances so complex and variable. In life insurance, besides, the insurer proceeds not only on the proved average or deaths in a community, but he secures a scientific opinion of the state of health of the applicant at the time of his ap-
plication. Coustitutional maladies are readily discovered. Aptitudes, or conditions specially favorable to the arcquisition of contagious diseases, are noted ; and a simulated health, or a fraudulent withholding of indientive symptoms or facts, is made sufficient to avoid the policy. Tho insurer, too, is in receipt of benofits long before he is called on to discharge obligations; and during the rumning of the policy, as well as afterwards, he has opportunities of detecting whatever might be used to defeat his liability. The merchant, on the other hand, must aet at once, and give or refuse credit within a brief period. He must judgo of appearances without scientitie nssistance. If he inquire personally and at the moment, he may either receive correct or false information, the value of which can only le truly determined when the time of credit shall have expired; and if he inquire through third parties-like the Agencies-he is only substituting their presumption for his own. Anything approaching a basis for a credit formula is plainly out of the question in commereial transactions, however recent may be the examination or however thorough the examiner. Wanting a basis of certainty, or method of averages, all attempts to define what are and what are not judicions estimates of eredit must drop from the pretence of system to the plane of guess-work, with less or more chanees in favor of or against the guesser. Whoever can best acquire the greatest amount of proximate truth in referenco to the condition of a trader ean (other things being equal) best determine whether credit should be given or withheld; and as the most recent and thorough investigator is most likely to arrive at a wise conclusion by procuriigg the latest information attainable, the individual who is incited by the greatest pressing interest is more apt than any one else to guess with less hazard of being every time, or in the muijority of eases, mistaken. All men do not fail in business; the majority of traders pronger; few of the prosperons become fraudulent to become more prosperous temporarily: these are the rules for guidance possible, in all events; and these leave the whole inquiry of the application of eredit to particular individuals to be only safely prosecuted by the person who might suffer personally through negligence, or by some one who bears an almost identical relation to the credit-giver.

In a later chapter we shall apply agency estimates to indivi-
duals, comparo ageney estimates with each other, and demonstrate, from the comparison, the infinite superiority of individual over areney guesses; but, meantime, we proceed to notice the sulient elements of business life on which both must proceed to form and express opinions. The prime causes of business failmes are, besides overtrading or illegitimate speculation, personal and family extravaganee, granbling, aud harlotry. We do not mention drinking; for it is, as a rule, the effect of failing fortunes, and not the efficient caluse of them; whereas the other operative vices usually spring from excessive hopefulness or a luxury begotten of success. It might even be donbted whether or not indulgence in urdent spirits-short of habitual incapacity to do business-has ever, of itself, prodnced a business failure. Commercial honor never stood higher in this comentry than when the act of trading was opened and closed by a social glass in the very temple of Juno-Moneta. This habit led to intimacies and oftices of hospitality and friendship. The fact of barter was only one incident of a social interconrse which the veriest cheat could not bring himself to disregard with impunity. Individual honor was plodged as well as commereial fidelity; and if reverses followed and the latter was not redeemed, the seller had no occasion to expect tho pretended unfortumate had only passed from formging on friends to an opulent privacy. The shamefaceducss which now drives tho professional g.mbler, and almost hin nlone, ont of a socicty in which his word has been broken, was then so potent with all classes of men that our oldest merchants camot recall an instance of one of their eraft flamenting the profits of a fraudulent failure in the faces of his victims. Suicide or exile removed the dishonored ; and public opinion enfored the alternative with greater vigor and remorselessness than courts or juries have since been able to exercise.

The fir-reaching and secret habit of speculation with business eapital in grold and stocks-_" operating," as it is called in the language of the street-presents, in itself, an obstacle so great to the attainment of any sort of average certainty in calculating business risks, as to be practically impossible for the Agencies. It is no longer confined to the avowed brokers and speculators of our money centres. The artisan, the farmer, the merehant classes, all contribute their quota of enthusiasm and supply their share of margins, and
and demonf individual o notice the proceed to iness failures personal and not mention mes, and not erative vices begotten of adulgence in usiness-has ercial honor ct of trading y tenple of ces of hospione incident ld not bring or was plodgfollowed and on to expect foraging on 3 which now ne, out of a en so potent camot recall of a frauduxile removed ernative with es have since
with business od in the lano great to the ting business It is no longer r money cenall contribute margins, and
the merchant class, notably mul naturally, more than all the rest. With a broker in Wall street and a stock indicator at his elbow, the trader has every opportmity of taking a hand in that immense trattic in gold and stoeks whose nnmalal sale by means of the Gold Room and New- ${ }^{\circ}$ ork Stock Exchange alone is computed at $\$ 22,000,000,000$. $\Lambda$ fortme may be mado or lost in a day. $\Lambda$ third, one half, all the capital and eredit of a firm may be risked and swamped in less time than it wonld take to remove the shutters or open the safe.

The temptation afforded by this kind of speculation is not limited to any class of persons or any kind of busines. It reaches everywhere. The clerk and his employer, the confidential manager and the senior calpitalist, the company's secretary and the bank-ing-house cashier, feel the insidions influence of the rise and fall of gold and stock in Wall and Broal streets. It has become so miniversal that its results can no longer be sepramed, with nuy aecuracy, from such heretofore controlling processes as the procession of the Seasons, the growth or failure of Crops, or Peace or War at home or abroad. Outside specilation is no longer an exeeptional fact in the lives of our business men-a 'Tulip-Fever or a CochinChima madness; a "put," a "call," or a "turu" have become a general language and express a general activity. In the era of knee-breeches and silver buckles, peoplo pointed at a wagerer in the few stocks then in vogue as a man apart from the ways of men. Tu-day the difliculty would be to show a man who is not a wagerer on the possibility of a possibility-a secret thrower of the dice of chance-a tossing Bull or a squeezing lear of some State or municipal security, preferred railrond, mining or manufacturing stocks. There may be no accomnt of his transactions in the ledger. They may be-gencrally are-kept secret from lis business friends. But they write themselves in his care-worn face, and either lift him to snden afluence or precipitate him into as wondrous poverty.

How can a mereantile or commercial Ageney learn, ealenlate, or approximate the extent of this miversal habit on business men's capital and credit? How can it foretell by an hour, a month, or a year, whether an unknown investment shall prove fortumate or unfortunate, when the investor himself is so often mistaken and deceived? Many times the whole available floating capital of
the country is turned over in Wall and Broad strects within a year. Who can predicate of any particular part of it that the places which knew it once shall know it any more forever?

We do not ask how it is possible for the Agencies to anticipate a Black Friday or some lesser calamity at any time-for prescience like this could not be pretended ; but wo inquire, what can they know of the ordinary daily dealings of any single man in the Stock Board or in the Street? Absolutely nothing. The reader versed in the names and fortunes of Wall and Broad streets need only look at the ratings of any dozen of his aequaintances to learn the consequence. A more perfect bal masqué cannot be conceived. Every one will be found to have a different character from what the reader knows him to possess, and one just as different from his "street" character as it is possible to be variant. Relations find poorer relations, who could not control one thousand dollars over and above the value of their seat, rated in the hundreds of thousands; others, with hundreds of thousands, not rated, or despit.fully used. It would occupy too much space to give instances which must be at the finger-ends of every banker, broker, and operator. While we pay from $\$ 150$ to $\$ 5000$ yearly subscription, we must not be surprised to find IIenry Clews \& Co. standing as high in credit as A. T. Stewart \& Co. when the firm was not worth one tenth of its liabilities, and Jay Cooke \& Co. exalted to the skies in credit and capital at the very moment when courts of Common Law and Bankruptey were contending, preliminarily, which should dole out his shrunken values and appease the eries of speculating widows and investing orphans.

Harlotry and concubinage are just as difficult of estimate as secret speenlations. They are mainly modern in our commercial classes. The leman and the kept-mistress were, forty years ago, the luxuries of the professional elasses and the hereditary eapitalist in lands or slaves. The growth of great commercial fortunes, and the decreasing horror of libertinism, transferred the custom of two honseholds to the sons of trade, proper; and investments of this kind are now, very generally, elements of disturbance and doubt in the computation of business risks.

Whilst we think the moderate use of ardent spirits should not be weighed, if it could, in credit ratings, we concede that the dual family establishment is of prime significance to the creditor class.
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1ticipate a orescience ; can they the Stock ler versed need only learn the sonceived. rom what tfrom his tions find ollars over $s$ of thonspiufully ces which operator. must not n credit as e tenth of s in credit Law and d dole out ig widows
timate as mmercial rs ago, the pitalist in unes, and pm of two thts of this and doubt
rould not the dual litor class.

Its progeny are recklessness, desperation, shame, and ruin. Indulged in, at first, as a contrast to the even tenor of conjugal love ; persisted in afterwards from a sense of choosing between the evil of loss and the disgrace of exposure, but always a source of present prodigality, and an inducement to hazardous ventures promising large returns, the meretricious relationship affects the business community more than all other causes combined. The expenses of the admitted home may be estimated by the careful creditor at all times, and curtailed by the debtor in emergencies. The exactions of the hidden hospice of lust are under the direction of the imps of whim and caprice, and are only certain to be uncertain, sure to be selfish and profligately persistent. Worse than wine, worse than faro, the hidden liaison corrodes and erushes the man of business. Faro may select one from thousands to load with a special luck; wine may make friends who shall prove of service in the day of trouble; but Lais, never compensative, hastens to plant the poppy of forgetfulness over her latest victim, and celebrates his ruin by advertising it to his successor.

Personal and family extravagance in dress and living is another subject of consideration in estimating business risks. It is undoubtedly ces ried to great excess, but it is under the restraint of publicity, and therefore subject to approximate computation. It is not always voluntary or a proof of poor business habits, the thriftiest and mosi prudent often submitting to it from necessity, and making up for prodigality at the house by parsimony at the store. $\Lambda$ gain, is not this the era of show? and how can wo always be positive that the front pew at the church, for a falbulons price, or the sumptuous entertainment, or the costly equipage, are not so many judicious advertising tricks, and well calculated to lead to business advantages in extremity, or even go far to compensate for restricted capital?

All these subjects innst, in one form or another, enter into the calculations of the circumspect seller. They should be considered carefully by the agencies, if agencies are to attempt supplanting individual investigation. In this connection, inquiry, to be efficient, must be impersonal, dispassionate, direct as possible, ind thorough. Is it ? Not at all. The chance phrase of some chanee aequaintance is picked up by the readiest or most attentive ear.

It may mean a fast life with abundant means, a fast life without means, or a fast tendency, with the highest commercial standing and integrity. To Deacon Sniveller, of the basement, a Park outfit is proof of coming bankruptey in the case of Solomon Lightheart, of the first floor front. An equal expenditure for the support of "The Home for able-bodied Pharisees" would insure a very different interpretation. What is mere energy and dash to the critic of forty ycars is dare-devilism and recklessness of the worst kind to the eye of sixty or seventy years. Weston, without explanation, is only a " tramp," and Bennett unexplained, with his yachts and wagers and walking matehes, is only a younger Jin Mace, with the Merald newspaper thrown in. So controlling and important are these shallower judgments of the tattlers of trade, which the agencies represent, that the heartiest, the purest, and the financially strongest men are obliged to resort to a selfprotecting lypocrisy and make-believe in their exterior life and bearings. From these persons, too, rather than from the straightlaced, churches receive their best aids and charity finds her most munificent benefactors. By a further and parallel necessity, almost every great business scandal and fraud recently broached and practised has had a religious phase to it. Howard's Washington Steeple rested on the empty vaults of the Freedman's Savings Bank. The Clergyman's Retreat in Lake Erie prefigured the bankrupt glories of Ogontz. And almost all the wildest or least-principled of the disciples of Mammon, from Fisk and Gould to Cooke and Clews, raised temples to Christ in veriest mockery of the Nazarene.

We have indicated a few of the obstacles to any kind of acenracy in business estimates; we proceed to notice the one above all others which produces inaccuracy and injustice. Any one who has read the reports of the agencies knows that they are suffused with the essential essence of the spirit of Cant. Liquorish praise or deadly ichor distin!guishes them. That set of men who mily be classed as the old maids of the sex, whoso spleen is greater than their judgment, and their active malice greater than both, are the fact and surmise gatherers and the true authors of these under. mining commentaries. Their test is a simple one: Is he a church member in good standing? Does he subseribe to the Tract Socicty, direct a Sunday-school, help in a choir? In cither event a
fe withont ll standing tt, a Park f Solomon aditure for es" wonld energy and ceklessness

Weston, aexplained, a younger controlling tattlers of the purest, t to a selfor life and te straights her most sity, almost ached and Vashington 's Savings d the bank-lenst-prinGould to nockery of d of acenone above $y$ one who e suffused rish praise ho may be eater than th, are the ese under. e a church Tract So. er event a
cheery certificate passes. Lesser clains to piety are also recognized, but in a descending scale. An " $\Lambda 1$ " heathen will generally be found to bear, in the private archives, a worse financial character than the struggling " brother:"

It is not alone the tendency of the shrewdest and most politic business men to auticipate hostile cant by acquiring a elurech membership. The owners and city and country reporters of the agencies affect the same judicious show of moral pretence. Mckillop, of MeKillop \& Sprague Co., acts as pastor to a congregation at Flatbush, L. I., in a church partially erected and wholly supported by him. The admitted reason of his ministration is to save the expenses of a regular clergyman. The profane allege that it is to preserve, in fullest opportunity of weekly iteration, the standing advertisement of his own godliness and contribations. Tupper, of Dun, Barlow \& Co., carries his mortified body-attenuated by many fasts and vigils-across the rapt visions of the Seventh Avenue United Presbyterian congregation. Anderson, of the same agency, is an active Methodist and hot revivalist. Wiman was a rigid Presbyterian in Toronto, a Baptist in Montreal, and is now an Episcopalian on Staten Island. It used to be the pride and boast of Tappan, the foster-father of the system, that he retained no man in his employment who was not a clurch member, and who could not give the text of the Sunday sermon.

The device is a natural one. In all agos the shrines of piety possessed a special attraction to the most adventurous spirits. Silly nobles, weak kings, here and there, attempted to essaps oblivion by a stained window, a tapestry-lined chancel, or an enduring sculpture ; but the most lavish givers have always been the boldest getters, from the Borgias of Florence to the churchbuilding Plantagenets and Tudors of England. The comment holds good in our owa time. The chureh not raised on the profit of adulterated food, watered stocks, or a well-timed "corner" seldom or never rises outside the granger distriets of our God fearing society. Science is the beneficiary of the successful literaty or professional man. ILumanity or philanthropy attracts the ingots of the honest and humane. The religion of rewards and punishments secures the greater portion of the deceilful favors of the profitably time-serving and advantageously corrupt of every trado and calling.

In these chureh associations, mainly, the agencies procure their private history of business men. You may live long next door to a city merchant without knowing his private history. Belong to the same chureh with him, or know a brother who belongs to it, and your greatest difficulty will soon be to cut off or lessen the flow of scandal which the connection pours by unknown processes out of his home and into yours, and vice versa.

The agencies dabble in these waters of bitterness for want of better. They must aecept the measures in which they are meted out or go unrefreshed. The blind, the halt, and the lame, in the outside world's opinion, here drop their defects and erutches and go forth new men. The hearty, and upright, and straightforward, in the outside world's opinion, are admonished and soon made to feel their unworthiness. The results to character are astounding judged from a non-church standard; but they are certain, and contribute more to the tone and temper of agency opinion and literature than the inquisitiveness of the press, the disclosures of tho courts, or the loquacity of traders, combined.

Let us not be misunderstood: we make no war on the grand inquisition of the churches. We merely inquire of the business men of the country if they are content to be judged by the knaves and hypocrites who may enter into these leagues for the purpose of more recondite fraud or the more facile satisfaction of malice.

The truly good members are not the tale-bearers and slanderers. They are too busy serving God to injure their fellows. But the splenetic, the suspicious, the sore-headed press forward in the work of slander and detraction, and assume and hold the places fitted for modest merit and true piety. The narrow-minded zealot; the addle-pated professor of some pet social fanaticism ; the knave who fawns on the prosperous only to assail the aspiring with more successfnl malignity: who would, who should, be content to be judged by these? or, being judged, who would submit to lave these horned beetles and stinging wasps of the soeial hive pass current for the correct in conduct, the best in manners, and the highest in business dealings? Into these church reservoirs of news, backbitings, profitable maliee, and passionate pharisecism the agencies go for material for opinion. They contribute the "facts" often, the "tone" always; and the agencies, from neces-
rocure their 5 next door ry. Belong clongs to it, - lessen the vn processes
for want of are meted ame, in the rutches and ghtforward, on made to astounding in, and conand literaures of the
the grand the business ged by the ues for the satisfaction l slanderers. s. But the in the work places fitted zealot ; the the knave piring with be content $l$ submit to social hive lanners, and eservoirs of pharisceism itribute the from neces-
sity or design, receivo the darkest pigments in their reports, and the most bleaching lotions as well, from the dripping of the sanctuaries.

The reader can estimate the chances of aceuracy in the presence of these complex difliculties resting in the very nature of the agencies' investigations, or arising ont of the initial efforts to prosecute them. He can, we think, already agree with us in our first proposition, that the agency pretence of aiding trade by correct estimates of credit and capital is sadly marred at the very threshold of our criticism; and that between elements which would embarrass and deceive the very best individual examination into a man's circumstances, and others which go merely to disturb the transmitting medium, the agencies are powerless to intelligently advise risks or to regulate credits.

## CHAPTER III.

## FURTLER DIFFICULTIES OF THE SYSTEM CONSIDERED : TILE agencies creating them.

Giver a perfectly honorable managenent, a mereantile or commerciai agency such as McKillop \& Sprague Co., Dun, Barlow ©心. $\quad 1$ J. M. Bradstreet \& Sons possesses certain inherent defect a io an can serve two masters. An agency cannot, in the nature of the thing, take pay from the buying and selling classes and do full justice to both. Itmust be two-faced, under the operation of it contling purpose. The Western subscriber who purchases imported grods on credit in New-York finds the seller a subseriber here. The New-York subseriber who goes to Boston, Lowell, Philadelphia, or Cincinnati for particular lines of manufacture, finds the seller a subscriber in those cities. Vendor or vendee, both pay the agency, and the ageney must strike an accommodating mean to secure their support, or, to be fully just to one, must take the other's pay while it depreciates or destroys his responsibility. The first consequence is a natural and inevitable one. To get and keep subseribers the agencies must approximate their opinions of themselves (when it reports them as they really are) ; and, efficiently for others, it must depart from what they conceive themselves entitled to, and incur the loss of patronage. Between the caution of the seller, which always exacts a large allowance of surplus assured assets, and the halcyon opinion of the buyer, who always places a flattering ratiug on his own resources, the agency finds its first difficulty, and enters, in self-defence, on its first deception. As it takes pay from both it endeavors to satisfy both. To cater to the seller's sense of cantion it indulges in cheap generalities and crams of business wisdom. To a grain of even hypothetical statement it adds a pound of flimsy phrases which may mean anything or nothing to the eager and suspicious inquirer. The ratings dance up or down like colored balls in a toy fountain, as the
stream of drivel rises from "good for a redsonable eredit" up to "good for all engragements, but of litfle reputation in the trade, and worth watching," and falls again to "the man has capital to *ome amomit, which eamot he ascertained," or "pays promptly, but the money is presmmed to come from his father, who failed in business last year and is supposed to work on a salary."

To add to the Delphie doubtfulness and wary inconsequence and
mnot, in the alling chasses ar the operaer who purthe seller a s to Boston, of manufacador or venin accommojust to one, troys his red inevitable approximate s they really lat they cononage. Belarge allow1 of the buyesources, the ce, on its first satisfy both. eap generalen hypotheth may mean er. The ratntain, as the
attennated meanings of these reports, a language of symbols is adopted, where the Arabian Aphabet and Roman Numerals do service in aflording lurking-places for ignorant gnessing ; laborinths of inference where the secker of information may wander in endless mazes, lost; corered ways where character and eredit may le " knocked in the lead "or not with sublime indifference and benign impartiality-the emdand object of all the finesse being simply to shield and shrond in a twilight haze the tricks and devices by which wholesalers and retailers, buyers and sellers, are all expluited, and neither benctited, intelligently rated, nor intelligently advised.

This is not merely an intermittent vice of the system of attempting to reconcile two irreconcilable interests ; to extend and preserve a chentage in practically antagonistic elases: it is the first and insumomitable consequence of the enlargement of the system beyond the service of the selling classes, and its perversion, for the simphe pupose of clear gim, to every one who will buy a reference-book and advance a subseription.

A second intrinsie and insumountable diffienty of thesystem is the remoteness of the persons affected, whether as seekers or givers of eredit, from the information giving and receiving centres. We do not me:n remoteness in space-for the telegraph, if parsimony did not prevent its nse, might be made to owereome that element of inconvenience-bit remoteness, in degree, from the original someses of information. The chief office or clistrict one, or the manager of either, has never personally met five homdred of the lundreds of thomsands of persons who figure in the agency pages and reports ; of this five lumdred the tere financial position of a vimple one has never been prersomally inquired into and determined ly the person in charge of the chief oftice or district offices. The collection of mames and pretended data in the agency hooks is simply the result of chance contributions of intelligence from, grenerally,
the least self-respecting and least-liked man in his own commmnity : self-reporting, which is taken for granted, if joined with any professed interest in or service for the agency, or is aceepted with thanks because costless, and merely toned down with a judicious respect for the benefactor ; or the reprinted and revamped accommatated odds and ends of business directories and former or other agency reports, of ten to thirty years' standing. Not a $\mathrm{p}^{\text {mar- }}$ ticle of this agglomerate of nanes, figures, guesses, self-praise, dispraise, malice has been subjected to critical examination by the agency managers, in the first instance. They collect it in NewFork from the country, receive and dimp it into print, and trust to luck whether it shall ever be inquired into ; or, if inquired abont, shall be powerless for good or evil becanse of its vagueness ; or, if erroneous and harmful, that it will be viewed as an attempt in the interest of trade to be commended or overlooked.

Now, while it is manifest local somrees of information are the very best and the only reliable means of date, persons in the vicinage, eren if in ligh standing, are the most likely to be passionate and prejudiced estimators of its value and importance; and the reader can readily judge of the original value of clutu furnished by mupaid rolunteer censors, inquisitors invited to judicial functions by haphazard selections from a lawyer's directory and their own referenee-books, or the eager witnessing of some competitor in the same line of business "over the waty." The volnnteer informer is sure to have a reason of his own in meddling with his neighbor's affairs. IHman experience disqualifies him as an unsupervised collector of facts or opinions. The substantial men in a commnnity never sink to this work. It can only be performed or tendered, therefore, by the ill-at-ense, struggling, acrid spirits of the place -the meddlesome, mischief-making busy-bodies, whose movingsprings are eury, greed, uncharitableness, or disuppointed ambition.

The refuested legal inquisitor generally bears the same relation to his profession that the voluntecr informer bears to society at large. ILe is never the leading man, never among the leading men of the local bar, if the town have three thousand or over inhalitants. In small phees, he may be among the least engaged of the two or three who can survive in such restricted pasturage. But he is sure to be asked, either because he is not engaged in lucrative litigated practice (for such a man would be too much related to
ommmity : with any cepted with a judicious ramped aced former or Not a par-f-praise, disation by the it in Newnt, and trust if inquired :s ragueness; s an attempt d. ation are the is in the vicibe passionate see; and the d furnished by cial functions nd their own petitor in the er informer is is neighbor's unsupervisel in a communed or tenderts of the place hose movingited anbition. same relation to society at e leading men r over inhabingaged of the sturage. But d in lucrative ach related to
and associated with the business men, and too self-respectful to speak), or because he is engaged in some accessory employment. like that of a notary, commissioner, etc., which indicates in itsclf, to the legal profession, a struggle for life on the stray planks and spars where some higher purpose, some nobler ambition, went. down in storm or darkness; or, finally, becanse some satisfactorily rated subscriber engages him for cheap collection work, at low prices, knows him best, relies on his friendly obsequionsness, and refers to him in furtherance of his own ends, and, perhaps, for better injury to his most hated competitors. P'ostmasters, postmistresses, and medical doctors, whose names are readily fomm in the post-oflice or town directories, are also picked ont at random, and triansferred by the agencies to what they term their " Correspondents' List," which is drawn upon when necessary. As these persons act without pay, their punctuality is the only qualification regrarded. These are the only sources of supply possessed or used by the agencies outside of New- York and the larger cities. Their only recommendation is their cheapuess, for they cost the agency nothing; and it is from these sourecs, and long acemmations of their tinged, muddy, and credit-destroying contributions, that the agencies pretend to dole out, at from $\$ 150$ to $\$ 5000$ yearly, the elixir of a lusty business life, and the healing water of business salvation :

The agencies, in fact, do not know the people inguired about; they do not know the persons from whom they incuire about them ; they do not know, and can never learn, except throngh the intelligence of a libel-suit or the crash of a bankruptcy, whether or not these persons report falsely or only a tittle of the truth; and it is this mrevised, manthenticated hearsay of hearsay, this secret cloaca of the most distressed and desperate of the commmnity unfiltered, undeodorized, and infected-that the agencies pretend to be the product of their paid attaches, examination of original records, and the impartial judicial result of a process of searching examination pursued under their own painstaking and ispassionate supervision. Judged by every personal test, it is just the antithesis of their representations. Indeed, it may be conceded that the agencies conld not do otherwise; the expense of becoming acquainted by record, and keeping acquainted weekly, even with the thuctuations of business men in the city of New-York alone, would exhanst the resourees of the strongest ageney. It is not attempt-
ed ; it conld mot be cffected, if attempterl, hy less than a million of capital, confined to a single city; and hence the second radical and insmmomatible difficulty results, as we have noted, in not alone a necersarily vague and indefinite, lint a prejudiced, passionate, and purely haphazat expression of what one person, with motives all mknown to the agencies, says of one or more other persons, with means or chanacter manown to the ngency or its office employees, who cook the books and dish up the reports. The work of revising the fimancial standing and eredit of the business men of the United States and Canada, which Dun, Barlow \& Co. claim to be done by their own travellers foure times a year, so as to render their fuartedy reference-book of some value, would require the aid of $142+$ men constantly employad as travelling reporters only. If their entire staff of paid employees (mmbering less than 500 ), from errambboys to managers, in all their braches in America, worked in that capaeity twelse months in the year, a period of not less then three rensentioe yeurs must clupse before the affairs of each trader conld modergo a single personal investigation! During all this time their oflices should be deserted and closed, and the work of soliciting subscriptions wholly abandoned. The sameargmont is relatively true of the other agencies. Besides these inherent diftienties, the arabice of the proprietors of the agencies, assisted and encomaged by the indifference or gullibility of the trading public, has fastened several additional canses of difticulty and embarrassment on the original projeet. The publication and sale, for profit, of yes"ly, half-yearly, and quarterly reference-books, is one of the first and worst of these. This is a plain temptation to the dishonest or doubtful trader to secure the agency for his own $\mathrm{p}^{\text {urposes, since }}$ ho is "pmpised of what he is rated at, and is naturally anxions to propitiate the critic of his solvency, or actively mislead the impugner of his integrity. When the rating is an agrecable surprise, the trader maturally encomages the enterprise. When it is not favorable. he sets to work to make it so by propitiating the pretended arbiters. Failing in this, by oversight or otherwise, in one year, he turns to the pmblications of some of the empeting agencies for the next. The conserfuence is seen in the contradictory ratings given of the same person or firm by two or more agencies for the same year or a series of years. When the ratings are not copied from each other by the rival companies, the fluctuations of
a million of d ralical mud I) not alone a ssionate, aul 1 motives all ersons, with e employees, ork of revis; men of the , claim to be o render their ire the aid of only. If their ), from errand:orked in that less theen three ll trader could this time their : of soliciting it is relatively difficulties, the nd encountged ic, has fastened sment on the ofit, of yen ${ }^{-l y}$, f the first and dishonest or purposes, sine ally anxious to id the impugncable surprise, When it is not iating the preherwise, in one mpeting agene contradictory more agencies ratings are not fluctuations of
reported standing and credit are largely produced by these active methods of interference. The olserver sees one needle violently revorling clanges of direction, while the other is fixedly pointing to a settled contse of prosperons voyaging ; while one pilot shonts "all's well," the other shrieks " breakers alead;" and white the interested impuirer watches the whirling indicator, and listens in donht and amazement to the confusing assinances, he becomes only certain of one thing-that he has learned mothing more valnable tham his conviction that "all hambs", except himself and others finameially interested in the outcone of the venture, are busily and protitally acenpied in trading on its purely speculative features. As a prindent man lee will trust to neither; as a cantions man he will treasure his experience in his own lreast ; as both, he will take care not to attrace attention to his diseovery, but leave the public to find out the secret for themselves by a saldening realization of the assault on their judgment and pockets. He may be pleased to read the truth in these pages; but if he he wauting in pullice spirit and a leek-ater, he will renew his sulbseription and buy the next reference-book; and the agencies will go on making money by the yearly traffic in the fears or crelulity of the trading pullic.

Another indication of the determined greed of the agencies. and one also largely injurions and destructive to any policy of learning the true standing of lonsiness men, is the development of Collection bureanx in comection with them, and owned and controlled ly them. J. M. Bradstreet is Son, alone, have not yet adopted this specialty. The subseriber who entrusts his elaims to the agency for collection uiluertises, by so much, his doultful or rulucless credits; suffers from having them placed in the hamels of the cheapest, least expert and self-respectfnl lawyer, such to we lave indicated ; and in very many instances, in the hands of the attomey recommended to the ageney by the erelitors debtor, on only self-introduced to the agencies hy his own necesities :mbl want of responsibility. Friendly delays, ineflicient prosecution, the need of employing alditional comsel in case of litigation, are a few of the earlier consequences to the creditor. The later onss are : compromises, cooked up by a man capable of becoming :n eavesdropper on his neighbor for the mere love of the employment, and, therefore, eapable of being luribed to produce them: hankrugitcies precipitated, in which the attorney, as attorney for the
moving creditor, will be paid out of the debtor's estate three or five times as much as he could have collected from his client, the creditor, in cuse of collecting the full amount of the claim; or a return of the claims, particularly if unliguidated, with the purchased assurance that they would cost more than they are wort The schemo of collection, however, alihongh of no value to erc tors, except in cases where the debtor is eager to pay, und the laughing-stock of the har in every other case, serves one purpose for the agency. It enables them to call on the attorney, who hopes to secure any chance patronage which they may lave to dispense, for his opinion of any citizen in his vicinity, suddenly inguired about, and, as it costs nothing, this is reason enomgh with the agencies for its introduction and existence. Its damaging influence to the selling classes is easily traced. Whom this incompetent and always minthential limb of the law is acenainted with personally or through the medimen of a douceur are discovered to be sated far above their means; whom he dislikes or is not on profitable relations with, are marked down ; and the business public have to bear the consequences of the latest devices of agencies to secure the opinion of the only man in the commu who sets no value on his pretended knowledge except what he can mule out of it by indirection. "Like master like man." Why should lie tronble himself, for a possibility of patronage, to acquire by a laborions scarch the true resourees of a merehant, when he knows that the agency, which receives immense remmneration, dues not condescend to pay ont any portion in seeming it? He forwards his gratnitous gress, or his bribed opinion; finds satisfaction in gratifying a spite or making a point for a crony; and turus to negotiate for some fire or life insurance company, which might occupy the talents or reward the industry not illnstrated so mach in contests in contt as in applications to the Governor for vacant notary hips, or in wire-pullings for some justice-of-thepeace nomination.

We have sketched the intrinsie difficulties in the way of the uscfuness of any mercantile or commercial agencies whatever; indicated the accidental impediments to usefulness added by the avarice of their managers; and cleared the road for that detailed and more searching analysis of their interior workings which it will be the provinco of the following chapters to enforee by precept and example.
ate three or is client, the clain ; or a ith the pur$y$ are wort' lie to cre nay, mud the one purpose ttomey, who nay lave to suldenly inenough with lamaging in, this incommainted with liscovered to or is not on business pubwices of commu cept what he man." Why onage, to acrehant, whon emmeration, ring it? IIe ; finds satisa crony; and upany, which illustrated so Governor for justice-of-the-
c way of the os whatever; added by th:e that detailed $s$ which it will co by precept

## OHAP'TER IV'.

WHAT THE AGENCHES RECEIVE: WHAT THEM DO FOR IT, AND HOW IT IS DONE. HOW THES TIIRIVE WTTIOU'I DESERVINU. "'THE HEALTH-LIFT'" AND " MOTH-EXTERMHNATOR."

The three agencies, J. M. Bralstreet is Sm, Mekillhp of Sprague Co., and Dun, Barlow © Co, having their principal oflices in New-York, cham, together, some $1: 50$ branch oflices in the United States and Cumadi. Eath euleavors to, start as many self-supporting and paying branches ats it can; neither ever continues a losing brauch "for the promotion of trade," that is, the alvantage of subseribers in other places. In all the principal cities the agencies are found competing for local subseriptions; in those of sumall population they sometimes try the experiment, but desist when the receipts fail to justify the expense. The three institutions extract nearly $\$ 8,000,000$ yearly from the merchants, mannfacturers, and traders of both countries.

This enormous drain on the resources of the business community has not been going on for more than a few years; lut it is safe to say that since 1841 more than $\$ 00,000,000$ have been collected ly the present agencies or their predecessors in the same line of effort. Allowing for the payment of salarice, printing reports, rents, etc., a net profit of between $\$ 20,000,000$ and $\$ 30,000$,000 must have been received and divided among the proprietors:

One would expect to find some very heary items of disbursoment for proenring the information which produces this royal revenuc. Surprise will become womder when we assert that, outside of the city of New-York, where reporting and subseriptiongetting go hamd-in-hand, the agencies, together, have not spent $\$ 50,000$ for collecting information which they dispense with such maguificent profit, and that even this sum was largely spent in the effort to get subscribers, and not a dollar of it, purely and simply, to learn the business standing of business men! In other words, the
whole aim and ohject of the agencies are to expend only to profit themselves, and they care nothing for the acquisition of true and useful information, if it must be costly, for its own salke. Their expenses are incidental to the receipt and disbursement of their reveme; nothing, or next to nothing, is applied, ontside of NowFork and the principal cities, to eaming or deserving it. If a sulseriber wants definite intelligence, he must pry for telegraphing: the agencies will only pay for postage if the applicant can afford to wait from five to thirity days for an answer by mail. Whatever they cun get for nothing they sell ; what they would be required to pay for is never purchased.

For instance, if II. II. Shufeldt \& Co., of Chicago, or Smith, Angus \& Co., of Milwankee, desire to ingrire about the eredit and standing of M. J. Cummings or Trwin \& Sloan, grain merchants in Oswego, N. Y., the agency's part in supplying the information entails an expenditure of exactly 12 cents. The applieation is first made to the Chicago or Milwankee offices, which pay each from $\$ 20,000$ to $\$ 70,000$ yearly profit on subseriptions alone ; either oflice posts a letter to the Syracuse branch, which office either replies by returning the information on its record (which may be one ormore years old), or mails a query to E. M. Fort, the unpaid Oswego correspondent, whose particular qualification for answering is that he is a coal dealer, doing business only as agent, having recently no business of his own, for reasons currently mulerstood. If the letter is sent to Fort, he replies at lis leisure to the Syraense oflice, which, in tmon, mails its opinion of Mr. Fort's opinion, concealing his mane, to the Chicago or Milwanke branch, as the case may have been. After this pilgrim's progress the wise result is commumicated to the original inquirer, who meantime may have had the luck to either have lost a grool enstomer or to have eseaped the possibility of being deceived into trusting a bad one. In this process, it must be apparent to the reader, that the ageney would not presme to inquire from a person or firm of first-class business principles, and only imposes the loss of time on one whom they have already farored herond his deserts, who expects they will do so. This illustrates the role of the commercial Volunteer correspondent.

Now let us take the enmse pursued in the instance of the $\Lambda$ t. tomer-detective-correspondent, whose sole compensation is the true and Their t of their of Newit. If a celegraph ${ }^{\text {li }}$ licant can - by mail. rey would
or Smitll, credit and merehants formation lication is 1 pay each me ; either either remay be one id Oswego ing is that g. recently d. If the e Syracuse inion, conas the case result is may lave ve eseaper e. In this would not ss business Whom they 5 they wi!l unter cor-
of the $\Lambda t$. ion is the
lope of laving claims sent to him for enllection, and being represented by the ageney as the most reliabie and brightest legal luminary of that neighborhood. Suppose Richardson it Co., of St. Lonis, or A. Thomson i- Co., of New-Orleans, or Drexel, Morgm © Co., Eaton \& Cole, and J. M. Thorburn © Co., of New-York, impure in the New-York or local offices for the antecedents of Martin F. Braisted is Cu, Dankers, New-York City, and it transpires that one of that firm formerly lived in Westehester Comenty, N. Y., the agency drops a letter (return postage, 6 cents) to James P. Sanders, of Yonkers, N. Y., their reliable attorney and legal luminary aforesaid, who, in reply, retails whatever the ghibhest tongue may tell him or the least lahorions investigation may result in. Of course, an examination of the county records is mot thought of, nor is any other soure than rumor consulted ; for remitted claims are few and far between in Yonkers, and shoeleather must be savel for respectable intermittent appearances in justice courts.

Just here it is proper to add that the agences' habit of recommemation euts both ways. No attorney is recommended to sulbseribers or others, who is not a correspondent, although the ageney will unblnshingly deny the fact, and the inguirer is refused the opportmity of choosing the generally letter and abler men at the loeal bar, who will not condescend to resort to such an association for a practice.

It may be said this conree is not in accordance with a troe economy, for they must expect to be found out some time, or become generally discreditel, and business men are not apt to contime paying for nothing. The suggestion would lave force if applied as a test to any business involving an exchange of a real commonlity whose defects could and wonld be discorered ly every buyer in every place; but it has no analogy to the calse of an enterprise which possesses the cocrcie power' of reting every man in the commmity as its manayers or clerks may sce tit.

To fully moderstand the agencies we must always lear this fice inmind:-that they practice an exceptiona! bosines, with exeeptimal means of affecting the purse or the pride of every man whose mame they choose to put into print. To appreciate the consequences we must remember that human nature is a limited chantity, and that whoever call do what the agencies can do hes
rating and printing-to say nothing of private reports-will always find more drpes or syeophants than assailants.

If a dozen palpable errors are discovered in the reports by a business man in an interior town, he conclndes that they oceur throngh the partiality or eupidity of the local correspondentobjects to apply the experience to the whole field of agency re-porting-and determines that, since error and falsehood are so easily passed for truth and aecnracy, he lad better join the enterprise, and purchase a favorable rating or guard against an arrantly false one. He docs not buy or sell on the agency dicta; but he detemines to join the vast array of approved souls whom he finds translated ly a subseription into the higher heaven of business beatification, and to avoid the fate of the less thoughtful and prudent, who are sent to the limbo of mereantile discredit.

The errors of the agencies in this mamer, far from being deterents to patronaen, are mosit urgent and active inducements to patronage. Thousands of honest and reliable men subseribe in self-defence; other thonsands subseribo for utilizing the aids which such a system supplies to contemplated fraud. Between both classes, the lists increase with a growing rapidity, and the example is only lost on the strongest minds of the strongest eapitalists. Suppose a business man is convinced of the inutility of the institutions, and carcfully avoids contribuing to them. They rate lim notwithstanding. They rate his competitors. At some point his interests will be fomnd to conflict with his opinions. The agencies have an additional subscriber, if not a convert.

Another consideration is also operative. As business frand is best effected by means of a credit-giving agency which pretencl. to be indifferent, and eireulates largely where applicants are otherwise mnknown, the knave and swindler know where to find an ally moler the mask of an enemy. Their own opinion of themselves would not go far or yield fruitfully. A single false representation might cut short a career of iuguery by giving occasion and justification for an order of arrest and puttiag in of bail. If the rogue can keep his tongre quiet, and have an agency to do his talking, the danger is averted; opportmities are multiplicd ; and a scheme, which might otherwise be rendered futile after a single effort, in a single eity or town, is enabled to achieve an elaborate and far-reaching failure with comparative immmity.

It may well be donbted whether any plan wats ever devised ondentrency reso easily interprise, utly false it he dehe finds busincss htful and lit.
being deements to becribe in the aids ween both te example capitalists. the instiThey rate some point ions. The
ss fraud is h pretends. 5 are otherto find an n of themfalse repre1g occasion of bail. If cy to do his iplicd ; and ter a single in elaborate
ver devised
appealing to so many of the worst and lowest human motives at once. The quack-medieine business proceeds on one principal national weakness: the known peculiarity that almost every one considers himself or herself ailing, in some way, in a country whose prevailing sickness is dyspepsia and the attendant lypochondriacal affections. The patent-right fever appeals to the wellknown traditions of suddenly acquired wealth, by means of even simple inventions in an era of inventions. The New-Eugland (Eenealogical Burean was never a real success, although it flattered fanily pride in a particularly sensitive portion of the comntry, enx:ons, somewhat, to compete with the untabulated pedigrees of the Southem chivalries. But the agencies tonch the weak, the vindictive, the muscrupulons, in their greeds, their fears, their rivalries, their passions, their hopes of betterment, their anxieties to gurd against loss, and, at every point, present an inducement or excite a sense of danger or insecurity:

Deeply considered, the wonder is, not that they have succeeded sn greatly in procerring wealth from the community, but that, assisted by the supineness of their vietims and the prevailing love of ease, they have not yet passed beyond the pale of damaging eriticism and deserved and adequate exposure.

Whatever may be thonght of the agencies, their own conduct letrays a conseionsness of weakness. Their latest device to give something for mothing is apt and illustrative. They have canght at the conceit of a IIealth Intelligence Burean, wherely insurance agencies and others may learn the condition of health of any person in a neighborhood for two dollats-one for the agency and one for the medical diagnoser. This small sum, we are to suppose, insures valuable medical information-as valuable in proportion as any furnished in regard to men's commereial standing. The reader can conceive the social and medical "rating" of a doctor whose restricted practice or estimate of the rahne of his own opinion induces him to examine, certify, and report a patient for one dollar, and can also approximate the cantion of an insmance company which would aceept a life risk on the recommendation of so cheap-priced and remote an Asenlapins. "All premimns, no responsibility" must be the motto and purpose of such a company, just as "all subscriptions and no aceomitability" is the true shibboleth of the agencies. The revenue derived from this experiment is not large, however, and we only allude to the matter to show the mean
mimuteness of rapacity which actuates the policy-makers of the institutions. Jy a natural sepuence, projects known to their anthors to be hollow and musubstantial are constantly acceeting accessories and helps to boyancy. The "seventh son of a seventh son, bone with a canl" is the natmal progenitor of the boy who invents an insect-destroyer or becomes a com-loctor, and supplements his precarions husiness ly the sale of mot-paste. Credulity may have an end in one direction : and it is the part of conscions insolvency of merit to devise a change of base which may enable the old furniture to be applied to new nses.

Following ont this idea, the gentlemen of the agencies may in the end drop on something useful. Why would not a matrimonial burean, with its tin photos and weekly circular, graced with chatrades and rebuses, be an appropriate adjunct: Next to the need of being maried is the need of being married well. Itow many aspiring widows and lamgnishing young ladies sould spend it dollar or two privately in the delnsive hope of exact information in reference to the affains of Mr. Seroggs, of the Swamp, or the expectations of Adolphas Bogge, of Madison avenne? Neither is the exchange of love-tokens in hair trinkets and cheap jewelry* an exhansted fied for profit. Arrangements for private interviews would justify extra charges. The distribution of garden-seeds might also be adopted, at slight additional expense. Cures for the toothache, salves for womds, recipes for cooking, phrenological charts, adapted to any hem, might all be dispensed from the principal and branch oflices, with the special advantage that the present clerical foree wonld not find the employment beyond its capacity. As for fortme-telling and pahnistry, that wond entail the hiring of a madam; but could not her salary be readily produced by rating down one or two young merchants and calling their attention to the change ?

We throw ont these hints. They are suggested hy the idea of the Ilealth Burem, or "Health Lift," as we prefer to term it. If the agencies have not determined to act on all of them already, they will be pleased, we are sme, at the appropriateness and timeliness of our suggestions.

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cidea of it. If the ady, they timeliness as reference,

## CIIAPTER V.

THE KEYS WHICH UNLOCK NOTHING-HOW BUSINESS CONFIdeNCE IS REGULATED.

The methods adopted by the agencies to decrease the chances of exposure of their ignorance and ararice are momerons enongh to be chassified and noticed separately, namely: those relating to the "key"; those arlopted in the printing of their cuarterly, halfyearly, or yearly reference-books; and those interposed by the deceptive form of contract made vith subscribers. We shall devote a fitting space to each in turn.

As to the first class: the reader who will turn to the fly-leaf for the "key" of the three agencies will notice the exceeding rugreness. of the sale of imputed rapital and the looveness of the associate alphabetic or mmber designation, in themseles amsidcect. For instance, the Dun, Barlow de Co. "L," meming " $\$ 1000$ and under" of capital, if correctly used, may eonvey an idea of some definiteness, but when you go birkwards and reach "I',"\$10,000 to $\$ 2.5,000$, you hree a murgin of 's's,000 associatcel with a pretencel fuct of $\$ 10,000$ ! Take " E ," $\$ 25,000$ to s.0,000, you find a margin of donbt equal to the allegation of capital! In " 1, ," 850,000 to 8100,000 , the mathematical relation of the eapital is not changed ; but it must he in "D's" ease of greater inportance to know whether an amome efnal to the original $\$ 80,000$ would bo fortheoming if required. This is evidently not the opinion of the agener, as it proceeds at once to show in the very next letter, "C," which, it informs us, may be reliel on any where it is fomul in the book as showing a eapital of from $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 150,000$ ? No! $\$ 175,000$ ! No! $\$ 200,009$ ! No ! but from $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 250,000$, or a marrin of donlt turice and or haff times greater than their pretence of certainty

One would think this fluctuation of their testing standard ought $t^{\circ}$ satisfy the agency and afford it room and verge
enought, whatever thoughts it may evoke in the minds of the seeker for truth. Not so. It phumes its wings for a higher flight. "IS" stands for $\$ 250,000$ to $\$ 500,000$ ! " $\Lambda, " \$ 500,000$ to a million, and $\Lambda+$ is equal to " $A$," that is $\$ 500,000$, but, strange anomaly, it is also equal to $\$ 1,000,000$ and as many millions over as you like! At this point- $\Lambda+$-the accurate series of mathematical progression of the agency gives out. Precision can go no further. The millionaire and the $\$ 20,000,000$ millionaire are "all one" to the agency; and the theretofore painstaking and deliberately precise ealculator may be regarded as overcome ly the algebraic term and its portentons meaning, "mulimited eredit"! How strange it is that the deft processes of the mereantile ageney ratings and those contrived to express the higher matheniatical processes should yet illustrate the finiteness of hman ingemity. At one million the agency loses its power to calculate capital, or considers it immaterial whether a man have one or a dozen millions to fall back on. At a certain mmber in the trillions Babbage's brass and iron calculator ceases to record logarithms, and indulges in every kind of mumerical freak as if under the dominion of a frenze: But there is this difference. The brass and iron mathine is capoble of giviny certainty ; is orereome, for a time only, hy some law of nmmbers not yet diseovered; and returns to aceuracy again as if animated with assured eonfidence in its own powers. The agency, on the other hand, glad to be rid of even this wild use of its crucial and metrical standards, at the first decent opportunity drops them, and never returns to their use. It is eandid for the first time. It makes no pretence of applying them in the higher altitudes of eommercial life-the very $\Lambda l_{p}$ s where the storms sweep most destructively; where the wild beasts, Speculation, Peenlation, and Preach of Trust, choose their most inaccessible lairs, and from which pom down on society the revy direst calamities and most permment disasters !

To the rapt vision of the ageney, one million and over means mulimited eredit; and yet, if we consider of mistakes in these higher altitudes of financial speculation, a single one affecting them would naturally lead to consequences more to be deplored than a thonsand errors in the ordinary fields of enterprise.

But taking the limit of one million, set by the Agencies as the extreme within which they pretend to approximate the eapital of

The to the recise - term mge it gs anc should million it im11 baccl: ass and nevery frenzy. is cipicme law ugain as The 1 use of ortunity for the higher storms culation, ceesible y direst
r mealls in these affecting deplored (es as the apital of
commerecial men, how dangerous and visionary and haphazari must be the collection of surmises on which the Agencies hise eren these widely divergent values! Have they no knowledge or duta from which they could eafely conclude the $\$ 100,000$ merchant to le only worth $\$ 125,000$ and not worth $\$ 250,000$ ? If they have, why do they leave the matter of his means so horribly in doult? If they have not, what security has the public that the Agency knows he controls even 8100,000 capital, or knows he is possessed of any? On an catreme limit of a duarter of a million, they are uncertain as to two thirds of it. By what process of reasoning are we assured that, starting with the minimum limit of $\$ 100,000$, they know any more positively whether it should have been $\$ 20,000$ or $\$ 50,000$ instead of the $\$ 100,000$ selected? Is not the liberal latitude selected ap pain proof of the known necessity of adopting it? Is it not reasomable to argne that, when they camot presume to set up a fuller code of denominators, and graded to express responsilifity in the all-important matter of capital more closely than from one humdred thousand to a guarter of a million, they are equally inceapable of telling us whether the $\$ 10,000$ minimum should not have been $\$$ ju00, or the $\$ 50,000$ maximm should not have been sen,000? Why, between these extremes there is, necessarily, in any given mumber of instancen, a demonstrated ${ }^{\text {nereponderance of incertitude so greit as to exchude the pos- }}$ silility of safe trading !

When we turn to the Themericel symbols of eredit, we find "confusion worse confounded." By referring to the fly-leaf in which the "Keys" to credit are given, it will be seen that Dun, Barlow it Co. confine themselves to four designations, "Unlimited Credit," "IIigh," " Good," " Fair," and that these are moditied ly seren mumbers, A $1,1,1 \frac{1}{2}, 2,21,3,3 \frac{1}{2}$. That is to say, "Fair 3" with " 38 " alded is less than "Fair"; "(rool 2 " with " $2 \frac{2}{2}$ " added is less thinn " (iood"; " high 1" with " $1 \frac{1}{2}$ " added is less than "IIigh"; and " A 1 " is without limitation. If we consider that " Itigh," " (iood," and "Fair," with their numerical depreciators, cam only represent seren states of eredit, ranging from $\$ 1000$ to $\$ 1,000,000$, we see at once that the tusts of credit are as lax and inexpressive of any fixed and ascertained condition as are the characterizations of capital. Seven symbols to express the credit of capitalists ranging from one thonsand doll:urs
to one million or ten millions ! Fonr numerals and three fractions to designate the ahmost infinite varicty of estimation in which the possessors of credit really stand in the eves of the trading word! "31 "—less than "Fair"—associated with, say, "F"—\$10,000 to $\$ 25,000-m$ mst consey the stme meming as " 82 with "E"-\$25,000 to $850,000-\mathrm{or}$ with "D "- 850,000 to $\$ 100$,000 -or with " C "— $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 200,000$. It can mean, in itself or its use, no less or more in the one case than in the others. The same criticism lohlds good in resurd to "2," "2冞"—" Good" and less than " Good"-and " 1," " 112"-_" IIigh," less than " High "--which, to mean anything, must me:n less than " 1 Iigh" and not " Good"! Was ever a more deeeptive and self-confuting method adopted to express, or aid in expressing, the grades of basiness confidence? What comdition of credit cem that be which is less than "High" and is not " Good"? Which is less than " Good" and is not "Fuir"? which is less than "Fair" and not unworthy of credit?

But these self-confusing and self-convieting symbols are not only absurd on their face : they are rendered supremely ridiculous When it is considered that they pretend to be the product of proscesses of reasoning from such complex and involved clete as the personal habits of traders, or, as McKillop \& Sprague Co. express it, "the chanacter and labits of each member of a tirm; the "nature of the business, hazardous or otherwise ; business capa"city and promptnes in payment; capital or worth in propor"tion to business done, and negotiability of acceptances." To carry out the load of this exateting amomecment, McKillop is Spragne Co. call in the aid of a donble line of symbols, and instead of the adjective of number "less," affected by Dun, Barlow \& Co., use the adverb " very;" to give point to " IIigh," "Cood," "Fair," ete. But phrases do not change things, and we illustrate this truth by asking what com be the state of a trader who is in "very high," and not in "undoubted," credit, and who is in "good," and not in "very good," eredit; who is in "rer" good," and not in "high," credit; who is " fair for small lines," and not "a F'air Pusiness risk" in those lines? Is not a person in "grood credit" a fair business risk? Is not a person in." high credit" in "very good" credit? Where does his title to the one begin and to the other end? Can it be rationally pretended that a distinetion so purely artificial and gossamer in import is fombled on a
discovered balance of probability of credit arising from a calculation of the always variant labits of varions members of a firm, their respective eapacities, the constantly changing hazardomsness of their business, and the no less constantly changing proportion of eapital and worth compared with the business done? Of three members of a firm, one is abstemions, another drinks, a third plays poker at evening parties. Does the ahstemions man nentralize the poker-player, or the drinking man nontralize the abstemions? From the contlict of characteristics, what is the final resultantthe true coput mortuum of the seers and alehemists of the Agencies?

Go a step further: MeKillop \& Spragne Co., and the other Agencies as well, although not on their title-pages, assmo ne, or desire us to be assured, that every "deficiency" in groed habits of every member of a firm, every deficiency arising from varions kinds of trading in the sense of increase of hazard, every modification or departure from effective lomsiness capacity, every clange in the propertion of eapital to trading done, is recognised and ablowed for in applying these few designations to trales. The problem now becomes more intricate: "allowed for" as well!

I few letters and figures are dechared equal to the work of convering the wisest conclusion to be drawn, not alone from variations of habits, of capacity, of risk, of cepital, not in a few cases, but in over 500,000 cases, althongh, as we have just shown, the same letters and figures are incapable of convering any chear idea of one man's credit so as to distingnish it " less than high." and not "good" ; less than "grool," and not "fair" ; "good," and not "very good," and not " high," credit. In the smallest town the wisest trader makes bad debts. In the same city and street the most alert speculator in others' eredits gets taken in. Of one humdred individuals exercising their personal judgment at its hest, all are daily more or less mistaken, and a large percentage greatly deceived, in business transactions and prognosticutions. . And ret the Agencies have the effrontery, amb their whole theory of right to exist is based on the presumption, to clam that their few vague phases are a substitute for the agerregate business varictios of opinions aml judgment of all the losiness men of the States and Canata, and are sufficient for the purpose of effectually advising the husiness commmity whether eight hundred thousand traders, mer-
chants, and manufacturers are in eredit, what kind of eredit they are in from day to day, and to distinguish its shades and fluctuations with suflicient aceuracy for wisely influencing and controlling dispositions of property!

We have seen the worthlessness of these Keys of capital and Keys to credit separately. Do they acquire a new virtue by being put alongside each other and attached to a name ?

Separately they are indefinito and ummeaning eriteria. Putting them together only multiplies their indefiniteness and induces greater perplexity. What can be understood of a man with from 825,000 to $\$ 50,000$ eapital who is in "good," and not in " very grood," credit? Is he fit to be trusted to the extent of $\$ 5000$ or $\$ 10,000$, more or less, becanse of the eredit rating indicating the one condition and not the other? or, indicating either, does the indication denote that his ercelit as to capital shonld be exhausted at a presumption of $\$ 20,000$ and not at a presumption of 850,000 ? How can any sensible conclusion be drawn from the fact that a firm rated " C "- $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 250,000$ capital-is rated at " very gooul," and not at "high," credit? Does the donbtful \$150,000 of capital bear any secret relation or give any particular significance to the one credit rating and not to the other ? Is not the expresed possibility of a capital even twice as large as the presumed eapital sufficient to convert "very good" into " high" eredit, or vice versa? If not, why not? One would think that a man " very good" with $\$ 100,000$ would be in " high" eredit with $\$ 200,000$, higher with $\$ 250,000$. The $\Lambda$ gencies know better. They can tell us just when a person having a capital of from $\$ 500,000$ to $\$ 1,000,000$ is in "very high" eredit, and just when he is in " undoubted" eredit, when with $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 250,000$ ho is just less than " high" and not "good." If this be not a chaim of measuring water accurately with a sieve ; of producing certainty, or an approximation to it, by increasing the elements of mecertainty ; of regulating business confidences by entarging the doubt-producing combinations whose fewness is the only passible basis for even propheey, we do not know what to call it. The Bradstreet "Key," with its 93 letters and S0 figwes, is better graded to represent presumed fact tham either of the other two ; but it does not pretend to give eapital, avoids estimates entirely, and is not appliod with any regularity to even the states of
they tions g dis. 1 and oy be-

P'ntduces from - very $\$ 5000$ cating , does be exion of fact ated at $\$ 150,-$ signititot the te prehigh" ak that credknow capital t , and 000 to this be producements larging c only to call gures, is te other ates enstates of
circumstances indicated by the " Key" itself. Of course, the system proceeds on the same inexact information and misinformation, and the sliding seale becomes a toy, instead of an instrument, ineritably. The firm appreciates the pancity of terms and conditions of the other "Keys," recognizes their looseness and insufficienes. and tries to hide atu equal batrenness under a deeper festoon of words.

We have referred to the "Keys" simply as instruments of relative calculation. Their actual use in the Reference Books of the $\Lambda$ gencies deserves a separate chapter.

## cinapter vi.

how the "Kers" are played and hatings made dp-who SIT IN JCDGMEN'T AND DISPRESEE AgENCY JU'STLCE.

Tus best and most experienced business man in the world, personally informed, so far as one man ean ever be, of another man's affars in lis immediate vicinity, would be in some diflienlty to fix a true capital and designate a safe eredit rating. Proceeding from the point that these ratings and "Keys" of ratings are necessarily false and ineflicient as such, wo come to the question, who affix them? The persons who do it are:

Firstly: Outside of sixty ofliee centres, not persons of the neighborthood, but elerks to whom the letters and reports aro sent from the neighborhood.

Secondly: In the cities, where the sixty offices are situated, reports concerning residents are first received by the managers, pigeon-holed until the conveniont opportunity of copying has arrived, and then turned over to clerks, who affix the ratings. The managers attend to the more usefnl work of increasing the sub-scription-lists. The writer, with three others, was lately engaged for a period of six weeks afflixing such ratings as he saw fit to the names of several thousand New-York merchants, the latest reports of whom (and on which the ratings were predieated) were in some instances eight years old, in the vast majority of cases four years old, and not a hundred less than one year old! This habit, originating in choice and recklessness of the principal offiec, wh on ${ }^{1}$ responsible managers and proprictors are supposed to :- ell judgment and experience to their work, is followed, ${ }^{1} y$ issity, in smaller places, where ne.e of the company resides ; and jombre men who never did business themselves, and boys who by reaso: of nonage could not do business, are the arbiters of the capital ratings and the affixers of the credit-marks of merchants longer in business than the lifetime of their inquisitors and judges. It was
this sublimeabsurdity-if the agencies were sinere in their clamsand this sublime indifference to results-if they were not so-which set the writer first inguiring what enabled him to extract truth as to the present condition of a merchant from an old report, or a now one, aftording no suflicient elements for even a wild hypothesis. An intimate ace fantanceship, extending wer twelve years, with the business:-commencing as an errand-boy, prorgressing to an assistant mamagership and eashiership of two leading branch offices-grve him facilities, with increase of ure, to leam the grosiness and hollowness of the pretences of the $\Lambda$ gencies in this regard, and ecertainly enabled him to follow the system and apply the ratings as well as others of shorter experience in the business and his jumions in are. What womder that, when he beeme conscions of his own incapacity to give any reason to himself why one man shonk bo mated in poor credit and mother in high eredit; when le fonnd himsclf doling out anathoma from secret reports when the leference Book ratings indieated large eapital and high aredit, of giving rosy pictures of men whom the Reference Book rated poorly on hot at all; when he satw the victim of the latest report coming in and paying his moncy to be meonscionsly destroyed, he determined to inguire whether the whole system was not a eryins frand and injury to the lominess communty. Itis opinions, he further fomb on examination, were the same as those of nearly all the other employees. They enjoyed the joke and took their salary. Thit none ever pretended to believe that the information sent ont shond determine the propricty of entering into a single largain or executing a singlo sale! They simply profited by the system, and held their peace.

There were potent reasons for this conduct. The merehants aflected were not their employers. The salaries paid were so mengre, averaging ten dollars per week, that only persons of pressing necessities and slight self-assertion were employed. The injury done to business hopes and reputation did not come immediately under their observation so as to exeite sympathy, or, if it did, situations were hard to get, and labor was going a-begging for employment. The agency fed them, whoever else it hurt or betray 1. They did tho work assigned to them, and cared nothing for the consequences.

Imagine a ten-dollar clerk poring over ten or twenty lines of
mannserpit withont a figure in it, and determining ratings of rapital and eredit in the case of merchants doing a business of two or five millions a year! Take an instance from the New-Tomk grocery tade. 'luper-Dun, Balow \& Co's seperter of this line-is notorious for seldom giveing an estimate of means. The business in which he is cunployed engages the second hargest capital baring the dry-goods trade--invested in the metropolis. The mumber of merchants and traders maty be safely set down at 5000 ; and yet, during seven years or nearly seven, Mre. Tupper has either never secured information enomgh to commmaicate estimates, or, to guand against the eomsequences of his ignomance, hats seldom dared to do so. Yet it is from the vague statements of this gentheman, comeled in language which fits 'Talleyrand's ideal in its capacity to hide thonght, that the boys of the $\Lambda$ gency sit in judgment and award sentences which, within an low after biterance, may imperil a prosperous businces or elevate a sinking firm into a self-surpmising eredit.

In the city dry-goods trade Mr. Chase holds the like office that Mr. 'Lupper sustains in the grocery line. Tupper's excessive tendency to cantion is not Chase's sole characteristic. lle is a somp, lymphatic old man, whose croos lie in the other extreme. Ife junps at conclusions withont what we regard necessary information. The derks lave no difliculty in dealing with his statements. He decides smmarily, and the reports indicate in what - pirit, where his euriosity has not been gratified, where his feelings incline, or where he has been treated as an impertinent intermeddler hy houses of known respectability. Indeed, Chase relieves the clerks from superintending his estimates, just as le relieved Edwards, his assistant, from presuming to have an opinion of a mer chant's credit adverse to his. If Chase likes a dry-goods honse, or has had reason to like it, that house will get to the public and trade throngh the agency in ghowing colors. If any homse competes with Chase's favorite, thet honse will learn the result in the next Teference Book, or earlier, if called for, in the seeret reports and in the best words of Chase. This peculianity was generally known and commented on in the oftice. Two effects of it are suffficient to illustrate its consequences. Vyse © Co., an old Einglish lomse, importing straw-roods, and mated by Chase in the Roference Book equal to A. T. Stewart © Co., $\Lambda+\Lambda 1$, was a favorite with
this gentlemen so late as February, 187.., and his friendship or admiration for it cansed the honse to be reported to the 'lenth National bank in that month as in monestionable credit after the home harl failed! Of course the Tenth National Bank wats only pactising a joke on the Agency, for it knew of the falume when making the inguiry, and made the request in that spirit. How the Central National Bank of New-York, if it had condidence in the $A$ gency, was misled by the same favorable report, obtained a few days previons!y, can be best told by Mr. Willian A . Wheelock, its president.

Take another case. Alsberg © Jorlan, hosiery, ete., having. like the Tenth National Bank, little or no fath in the $\Lambda$ geney information or in Chase, refased to make any statement of their affairs to him in Jannery, 1875. They had been mated perionsly in "good credit." Forthwith they became "doubtful." The Dry Goods Bank marle inguiries in anticipation of discounting their paper in the usnal course. Chases report stopped the chance of legitimate discomit. The honse still survives, and is in better credit than ever, if possible, from haviag weathered a test which a single man's repelfed inpertinene might have rendered fatal in the case of firms not so genorally estemed or of less mohile mems. Still anothor instance. Shackman Katki, cloths, ete., 299 Church street, New-York City, al hough solicited to become subserihers and pay $\$ 1: 00$ to the $\Lambda$ genere, reclined ; they were rated down aceordingly. Paine, Goodwin \& Nowell, wholessle woollens, clothe, ete., advised Mr. Shackman to call at the $\Lambda$ geney, subseribe. and "fix lis mong," and they would sell to the firm, being willing to sell if shackman \& Katcki could buy fom others. Shackman nived on his right, did not go to the Agency, and is pursuing business on the joint eapital of his own merit and the prevailinge leclief of the general ineorrectnes and pliability of the Agency's opinions.

The person in general charge of the New-York City department is Mr. Wiman, who begm business about cielheen years ago by keeping a paper-stand and stationery store in Tormot, and by a series of jurficions manomeres suceeded in passing from a clerkship in the business at 'Toronto to a partuership interest and a residence in New-York, in the principal office. He is practically the controlling pirit of the institntion. Ilis fitness for presiding
over the commercial credit of the old and young merchants of such an emporimn as the Empire City can readily be detemtined. On the 9th of May, 1868, Erastus Wiman was compelled ly process to depose before IIon. Charles Mondelet, judge of the Superior Court in Montreal, Canada East, that one Jay Ligsinin, who had been manager in that city from September, 1866, to March, 1868, "was rischerreged berause he borroved $\$ 500$ frow Andrew Mac"furlom d: Co., St. I'aul strect, and neglected to arlvise the Lon"don office with information about the firm until the information "hat hecome valneless." The borrowing took place in February, 1567 ; the information was held back mntil 25th July, 1867, when the Macfarlans had effected all their foreign purchases. The Macfarlans became insolvent in the spring of 1868 ; and the remoral of Lagsedin did not take place until the Insolvents had been bronght into conrt. Dum, Barlow \& Co., fearing the effect of such a transaction, songht to clam credit to their $\Lambda$ gency for having " discharged" him ; but the falsity of this pretence was soon evidenced by the appointment of Lugstin to the managership of the Philatelphice affice, and his subsequent promotion to San Francisco, the heal-rparters for the Pacitic Coast States, with the Portland (Oregon) Brand under his supervision-a position vhich he still holds. It was not the borrowing therefore, but the beiny fueme out, which stirred Dm, Banlow \& Co.; it was not the leeping lack of injurions information relutice to a subseriber, and withholding it from other subseribers entitled to it by having pairl for it in alteence, which touched Dun, Banlow \& Co.'s conscience most severely : all this conhl have been borne with; had been bone with one year, and wonld have been borne with longer if the ficcts had mot got into comert, and compelled Dinn, Barlow \& Co. to transfer Mr. Sagsdin's approved capacity to new fields. Nor is this surprising. Mr. Wiman himself had been a manager in Montreal, and had learned from personal experience the efficien(ey of his position to procure aid in difficulties from the merchants of that city. In the every years when Lugedin was operating with the Macfarlans, Wiman was borrowing from R. J. Dallas, manager of the Montreal branch of the Pank of Toronto (wh:o subserpently alsconded with $8 t 0,000$ ), and from P. D. Browne, Exchange Broker, and getting the indorsements of David Morrice and others on motes discomed for his individual benefit by the

Bank and lirown! This Browne was also indorser on the onte given by Lagselin in the Murfurden treasection, and evidently appreciated the necessity of aftixing his name, on rerguest, on the lack of either Wiman's or Lugslin's promises to pay, although both Lugsinn and Wiman were merely salariad persons, without property, eapital, or business-besides reporting on the commercial standing of gentlemen who might refuse to afforl them these convenient faceilities of local credit. In the light of these fact , within the writer's personal knowledge, Wimamis exhitition of a testy sense of Merchantile Agency honor in the Superior Court was one of the coolest exhibitions of the season even in that climate, and gives pith and point to his further declaation, on coming to New-York, that he would never leave the broader and richer domain of $\Lambda_{\text {gency effurt afforded by the Metropolis, without a elear }}$ million to his credit.

It is not for us to say whether he proposes to attain his object by wortly or unwortly means; but the reader may draw such con(lusions as he shall see fit from the following data.

Edward Mathews, Nos. 4 and 6 Proad street, New-York City, is a real-estate owner worth, ly the affidarits of half a dozen experts, $\$ 6,000,000$ or more, aul in receipt of $\$ 326,000$ a year from it, clear income, over and above Taxer, Assessments, ete. Dm, Barlow © Co. rated this well-known capitalist as worth only from 8500,000 to $81,000,000$, with a credit rating such as is g'ven to a man with from 885,000 to $\$ 50,000$ capital ! This rating appearred at a time when Mr. Mathews was abont to negotiate a loan in England on property situated in Wall and Proad streets. The NewYork City Department manager contrivel to put himself in communication with Mr. Mathews by asking for a statement and sending a cemrasser for a subscription. Mathews received the Gospel lout dismissel the Missionary ; that is, he called on Dun, Barlow © Co., made his statement, showed his proofs of value and lialdilities under the oath of the best authorities in the eity as to real estate, and told them that he would not subseribe ; that the rating must be changel to represent the facts, or that lis name must be wholl. suppresed to avoil legal proceedings. No sulsecription or other inducement appearing, an minforable report was made and circulated. The name was suppressed in the lifferenere Book in view of the threat of legal proceedings, and the London Times,
getting its misinformation from some American somrec, has lately been obliged to publiely retract its misstatements about Mr. Mathews, and to do justice to a man whom a subscription, or a judicious recognition of 1 mm, Barlow \& Co.'s position, might have suwed from all the annoyance and possible injury. Dun, Barlow \& Co., we linov, received nothing but the statement from Mr. Mathews. The uncharitable may say the fact accounts for the preservation, in the $\Lambda$ gency and private circulation, of the unfavorable report up to the time of writing. At all events, Morrice and Browne, of Montreal, with a respective capital of $\$ 75,000$ and $\$ 50,000$, stand in higher credit, conceded by Dim, Barlow \& Co., than Mr. Mathews, although MeKillop \& Sprague Co. rated Mr. Mathews " $\Lambda 1, \Lambda 1, \Lambda 1$ "-the highest capital rating and highest credit-and Bradstreet \& Son at " $\Lambda, \Lambda, A$ "-the most undoubted capital, business character, ability, and credit.

Query. If a capital of $\$ 50,000$, with a liberal habit of indorsing paper, produce "Iligh Credit," what would a capital of $\$ 6,000,000$, with the like hubit, produce?

## Answer. "Unlimited Credit," at least.

The final moral remains to be drawn. Since the time mentioned, P. D. Browne has had his rating increased to an extraordinary amome within a short period. But all is not gold that glitters mader the fructifying rays of friendship. Nathless the $A$ gency, Browne incoutinently failed in June, 1575, owing $\$ 60,000$ and over, or an unount about equal to his last false increase of pretended capital and credit. These three gentlemen, Tupper, Chase, and Wiman, with a varying number of cheap assistants, are the reporters and raters of the Merchants, Mankers, Manuficturers, and Traders in and out of New-York for Dun, Barlow \& Co. Of comse the Agency must make a show of activity somewhere, and the chief eity is the most profitable place for making it. Hence fine offices, a large array of old Books, a majority of illiterate clerks, and an increasing system of canvassing for subscriptions. Talk of the curse of the Locusts of Egypt or Kansas, of the infliction of the Sewing-Machine travellers and LightningRod men: these $A$ gency canvassers are to the business men of this country equally persistent and far more exacting. A new firm is engaged in taking down its shatters for the first time. Einter a canvasser. An old one is in the labor-pains of bringing forth a
new Special. Finter a canvasser. I partuer is retiring, fund the rest of the firm are entitling their new books and repainting the sign. Inter a canvasser. An mureported local house is incuired for at the Agency counter, in Broadway, or any of the Bramelies. While the inguirer is waiting for information the camsasser crosses a theshold in one of the down-town streets, and demands information and a subscription.

The amome ranges from $\$ 150$ to 5.5000 yearly, as testified by Wiman in $\Lambda_{p r i l}$, 1575 , in the New-York Supreme Court, on trial of an action entitled "Robert G. Dun and others zes. J. Arthinr Murphy"; but where $\$ 150$ cimmot be got, $\$ 50$ placates or mollifies the itinemant. Even at the latter rate the profit is enomons and justifies all the effort expended by the Agenes.

Outside of New-Fork, as the opportunities of getting Sulbseribers decrease, the efforts to get information decrease also. The Principal Oflice makes the subordinate ones self-supporting at least, or ecases to indulge in them. The Syracuse Office was started in this wise, in May, 1572. Two clerks got half their travelling expenses to that burgh. One resident Merchant, Juguid, of Duguid, Wells \& Co., saddlery, ete, advanced the use of his rooms in place of a subseription, and got rated with unction. Another firm, Cooke, Carpenter, Coleman © Co., gave the fumiture for the same consideration and with an abiding faith that their bread " wonld cone back after many days." Less than 850 sufficed to impose on the people of that city an institution which now eosts them ammally $\$ 12,000$, mader the direction of a mere youth named Cargell, whose services ats a Commercial Rhadamanthus of a large contiguons District are rated by the $A$ gency at the weekly value of 815. . It is lui just to ald that this compensation is fully commensurate. Cargell will admit he cond not ean \$10 a week manking boxes or: in any other employment requiring special adaptability. It must be worth $\$ 5$ more to calculate the awerage risks attending the investment and use of 500 or 600 millions of active capital within the radius of his District. Twelve dollars per week satisfy Marshall, in Erie, Pa. Nevili is content with the same stipend in Scranton, Pa. Pratt makes Cincinnati profitable on an infinitesimal portion of the revenne derived from the Porkopolites. Brock lives and flourishes like a Prince in Chicago, on a salin y
sufficient to justify his resthetic tastes and open-handed expenditure in that fastliving and energetic commmity. In the staider City of Buffalo, John II. Smith has labored these six years past on a stinted compensation, and contrived, with a genims not midue in this business, to set aside savings variously estimated at $\$ 60,000$ to $\$ 70,000$. In St. John, N. B., Augustus P. Rolph performs the duty of Sweeper, Errand-boy, Reporter, and Manager all together for about $\$ 20$ per week, and does not repine at the ways of Providence. Onr friend Lagselin disports by the Golden Morn on a light apparent capital ; but who can say how many Macfarlans he may have met to lighten and brighten lis Pacific exile?

But we are not restricted to generalization in judging of the arerage fitness of the managers and credit men of the institutions. The records of courts in the United States and Canada smpply us with almudant proof of particnlar escapades; and even the instances of wrong-doing "hushed up" by the $A$ gencies, in self-protection and as the better wisdom, are matters of common report. One of Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s men, appointed through the influence of Erastus Winm, alsconded from Rochester in 1570 with about $\$ 4000$, went to Canada, and was employed there by Bradstreet \& Son. Another of Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s defaulted in Mobile in 1873, was convicted, and imprisoned two years. $\Lambda$ third, of the same Ageney, embezzled at Evansville, Indiana, in Mareh, 1575, and was not proseented, as we judge from a statement of an Evansville newspaper. In Pittsburg, a fourth depleted his friends $\$ 6000$. A fifth. absconded from Montreal, and subsequently entered the employment of MeKillop \& Spragne, at Chicago. 4 sixth is alleged to have depredated in Syracnse, in 1873. A seventh wats arrested in Albany, charged by Henry Brock with fraud, ete., and was afterwards appointed to Scranton, Pa. An eighth-a city department reporter-has just been exposed in the courts as the keeper of a honse of prostitution. A ninth, in Memphis, explained his deficiency in accomnts by saying he lost his money in a Farobank and is now probably in charge of a less tempting neighborhood. A tenth is amomeed, under date of October 18th, 1575, in a cirenlar issued in Honston, Trais, as having, within ten days, "practised divers fruds on some $i$ the best citizens by obtaining money, etc.," on accomnt of his Agency connection. The list might be increased ad libitum ; but we merely give these facts
to show the earelessness as to character evinced ly the Agencies in selecting their most trustel assistants. It is no wonder such aids turn out thieves or criminals, or are chosen from the criminal classes. No refcrences are required; no preliminary examination into the antecedents of an applicant is had. If he will work for low salary, the Agencies give themselves little concern what else he may lave done or may do. Indeed, one of the most anusing features of $A$ geney life is their utter liedlessuess of consequences in the case of credit men. The writer lats often been annsed at the return of credit men, after enforeed absences in jail or on the Island, for reinstatement and back salary. He never knew one of them to be refused renewed service on such grounds. Whatever they did, they semed to think they knew enorigh of Ageney methods to brazen out their transgressions and enfore a re-employment. And so far as the writer's experience goes, they never ealculated erroneously. If we only consider the seope for false, filbricated, or collusive reports given ly and to the persons whose misdeeds we have just noted, what a terrible mass of misrepresentation must have got alroud at their hands! If we consider that the Agencies take no precaution against the recurrence of like offences, we may naturally infer that the exposel crime bears but an insignificant ratio to the hidden wrongs and offences daily committed by persons chosen, by such mothods, for such work. Aud may we not reasonably ask the business clases : If the reputations of traders and the safety of sellers are both entrusted to earelessly or capricionsly selected men, out of whose ranks the foregoing offenders have come, what is to be hoped for from the mudetectel remainder?

## CIIAPTER VII.

FURTIIER ILLUSTIATIONS OF AGENCY IGNORANCE, CUPIDITY, AND AVARICE-DO TIEY CONTRIBUTE TO MISLEAD CONFIDENCE?

This remarkable disparity between the known salaries of the employees of the $\Lambda$ gency and their ostensible means and methods of living may have an innocent explanation. A man may be willing to carry on his shoulders, year after year, the responsibility of a Branch office in a leading eity, and acting over a large adjoining District, on a fixed salary of from $\$ 10$ to $\$ 20$ or $\$ 30$ a week. We know these men do so. But if they be not driven by stress of circumstances to take and hold such a position at such a price, they must be moved to the saerifice by other motives than those supplied by their salaries. Are there no perquisites? If Wiman hopes to make a million dollars-he has already got $\$ 200,000$-may not Smith aspire to one tenth thereof? If Wiman may have his stud and comitry villa and gorgeous retinue, why may not Brock look forward to the not far distant day when he may drive a four-in-hand instead of a team on Wabash avenue, nor excite the gall of the manager-makers? Whatever the true explanation, this argument results: the $\Lambda$ geney selects cheap labor hecause it is cheap, and pays aceordingly; and cheap labor is a dangerous inducement to poorly-paid men, whose position as raters and givers of commercial credit and standing is so grossly at variance with their stipulated income.

The McFillop \& Spragne Co. and J. M. Bradstreet \& Son Agencies claim to have as many Branch offices as Dum, Barlow \& Co., and employ relatively illiterate men and cheap ones, in preference to any other, for like reasons. For all practical purposes of comparison, their methods of receiving gratuitons information and, outside of New-York City, relying wholly on volunteer and mu-paid-for knowledge are the same as Dm, Barlow \& Co.'s. In NewYork: City they have a certain number of eredit men who either
solicit snbscriptions or give names of probable subseribers to canvassers, with whom they divide the Commissions. These eredit Reporters piek up such rumors as they meet with in the strects; apply to particular honses in a given line for opinions of other and rival honses in the same line; inguire from strongly-rated, that is, favorite, honses in the eyes of credit-givers, for estimates of the financial condition of less farored ones, but make no personct. critical ceraminution of the Records of the Comity Clerk's or Register's oflices for the purpose of proving the trme position of sole Merchants and Traders or individual members of Firms or Companics. Apart from the strect " say so," the statements of parties in their own behalf when given, and the Real Estate Record of current judgments, mortgages, liens, and foreclosures, these high-ly-paid Agencies do nothing to carn the libemal contribntions made to them yearly by the business men of the commtry. Now the Record does not give the business or addresses of persons against whom judgments have been obtained, or who have mortgatged or transferred their property, or who have created liens on it and hum them created in Law or Epinity. The value of this datily reminder is determined, so far as the $\Lambda$ gencies are concerned, ly this fact. The Smiths and Browns are mmerons in any large city, and hold their enstomary preponderance in the Empire State. If judgment is grot against Smith, some Smith is suspected of being the right one ; his nane is marked with a query ; but whether it be the particular Smith of Broalway, on the same-named Smith of Wall street, or another smith in the Swamp, is "all (ireek" to the Agencies nutil a distmbance ocenr out of it. The inspection of the Julgment is never attempted. What is wotse follows. No notice is taken of Satisfictions of Juldments, so that the doomed and suspecterl Simith contimes to be doomed amd suspected matil he either goes to the tronble of having in correction made, or goes to the grime in blessed ignorance of the camse and origin of many unacomatable basiness experiences.

An incident which oremred in Febmary, isto, in Dm, Bulow de Co.s New-York ofice, will illustrate the common danger in all other Agencies arising from the mistake of names. Th: witer suspected, ant ealled the Superintendent's attention to, an unfarorable report applied to the house of Schnyler, IFartley \& Graham, Military Goods, ete, Maiden lane, New-Iork City.

It was meant for another firm, but had been sent to and recorded, with all its injurions import, in six or eight Branch oflices. This error continued for more than a month, amb was only corrected after several day's of calling attention to it. It is of record in the branch oflices, owing to the negligence and carelessness of the Superintenfent, and will remain so milil this publication shall hatwe compelled correction.

Suother one ocerns to ns, as we write, where merrection hats been mate, and where one was prevented being made, to hide the ignomane of the Ageney. Kochler \& Kupfer are Distillers; IIerman Kochler is a Brewer; I. M. Kochler is a Banker in New-York. The reperts of each are mixed up with the others: One was reported mfavomble, althongh all are men of assured capital. This report was tacked to the most conspicnons cappitalist. The Dry Goods Bank got the had report of the wealthiest man ; and although the mesenger conld have been recalled or the correction made to the lamk, the Superintembent instructed the writer not to do cither, chosing the bank should be misled, and the citizen, it might le, ruined, rather than that the $A$ gency shonk be fomm correcting its mistakes.

Still amother. Fiobert Maedonald is a Wholesale Dealer in White Goorls, cte., at 4 HS Broadway, New-Fork City, aph a subseriber. Wiman dues not allow the elerks to read Macdonalds report to subseribers, but refers inurirers to himself for those tithits which he dare not place on reeord or within Maces reach.

What if Mac does drive a fom-in-hand, or has marred a diconcere, or failed in Belfast, or is disliked in Ireland, camot this he written down, if true, in a manly way, and the consequences horne? Do Dun, Barlow \& Cor fear to lose a subscription, or to incur a libel-snit, or to enrn a thathing from the man whose aerpantanceship is tmoned into a eommodity? (Of course whatever is offemsive in this statement is necessarily motroc, and we repeat it merely for the pimpose of rontradicting it, in whole or in part, and with infinitely better anthority for one contradiction than the Ageney could ever have had for its first statement.

The Schyler, Hartley \& Goham and Kochler © Kupfer eases are not mere derical blunders. Ther anise out of the purprosel neglect of all the Agencies to print the pleces of business in commection with the manes. In this course Brachetrect and MeKil-
lop © Sprague Co. imitate Dm, Barlow ('o. One would imatine that these imdiciot wond fiaditate references, amb womb, ronsequently, be adopted and used ly the Agencies. There is a better reason why they should not be med. The mmber of at street womld be an incfaceable sign and proof of the eqge or incomplitemess of the Agencies pretended knowledge. When the inguirer fomma firm lueated in Beaver street which be knew had movel two yeas ago to Barclay, or another put down in Wall strect which had long since taken up its posifim in William on Nitsom, What could he think of the freshess and valne of the intelligenere possessed ly the $A$ gencies? If so phan and apparent a ciremastance is found werdooked or mbnown, what wartant can he have that the asociated sylabuh of worls is mot gress-work of the veriest! Their plan is, therefore, to woid erery sign or token bey Which a tell-tale errom might have ready demonstation, mud to lessen the chances of discovery ly reducing the available tests of romparative aceuracy to the minimmo.

We reene again to Mekillon \& Spagne Co. They are in the same box with the rest, as a few examples will show.

Hawkins of Hanken, Builders' Materials, Brooklyn, were mated
 84000 " ; credit, "fail for small lines." [n Jnly, isti, we find them rated " $1 \frac{1}{2}, 2,2 "$-that is, capital, from " $\underset{\sim}{1} 100,000$ to som,000": credit, "very high and very good." Huw the fimm managed to jump' in one year from the extreme of $\$ 4000$ to the extreme of $\$ 200,000$ rapital is best known to themselves, and is still a sulpect of serions consultation with the Stockholders of the New-York Plater Works, who lost a romm sionot in a single tramsaction shortly after the appanance of the latter rating, and while Diwhins of Hamken were in the throes of monctary death!

Giroud Pros. © Co., Cubna Commission lonse, were rated in
 tal, from 8300,000 to $\$ 500,000$ : credit, " very high and umbubterl."
 quested a special report. It confirmed the rating. Within a fers weeks, and while the favorable report was still fresh in memory. Girond Bros. \& Co.'s first note, for asmall sum, went to protest. and all the others followed suit, to the comfinsion of the National Park Pank and Van Tuyl \& Co., the tonsting subseribers to

Mekillop \& Spraguc Co's mureliable information or mertmate gruesses.
T. M. Madstreet \& Son will afford us the next illastration of procering informution on which their subseribers are experted to make safe hargains and sales. M. L. Oberdorfer \& Co., Wholesale Liquors, Syarme, were inguired about, in November, 187:2, at the principal oflice, in Now- Vork. Bradstreet had then no oftice in Symanse, a city of 50,000 inhabitants and controlling one of the greatest stiple products of the State-Salt. In the emergeney they wrote-not telegriphed, for cheapness is everything-one WilLian O’(omor, comer Fayette and Sonth Salina Streets, the keeper of a small basement restanmant, who, althongh otherwise an cesedlent man, was as wholly manequained with the standing and eredit of Oberlorfer \& Co. as an $A$ borigine may be presmmed ignomat of the Tramsit of Vems. O'Conor neel to show the inguiry with eommendable pride; joked his anstomers on the devions wass of commereial eredit, and relied on the comptes of some one to write an answer, whid he conld not do liniself. To add to the value of the epistle, it onght to fo sald that neither ( $)$ (omor now the writer ever heard of oberderfer matil the arriwe of hadstreet's query !

One of the dangers of this method of repeating inguiries and trusting to matom in the affair of an answer may be noticed in this commeetion. Bradatrect \& Son were called on for a report of one Josiah Tasker in the same fear. They fent by pust two homdred and fifty miles for the material for an opinion-fo Tasker's son-in-law! The New-York ereditor prohalhly mulerstands by this time the old gentleman's notions about his own standing. $A$ s to Bradstreet \& Som, they will, of course, be ohliged to the writer for perting them $\quad$ p in the Tasker family history, and hinting that a dight rebate of subseription onght to he allowed, in this case, to the inflining firm.
(iving hack to Dum, Batuw © Co., we close this chapter with fome preanat examples of the consergences of their negligence or complicity, the reader can decide which or neither.

In Din, Barlow © Co.'s Reference Book dated danuary, 1572, ocems the following:
"Oswego, N. Y.-W. H. Herrick, Sr., Agt. for wife', Com-
mission, ete." rated "K"-then the lowest rating, and meaning "weiller cupitel nor eredit."

In the moxt issue of the Book, July, 1si: the same person was


 of lemenal, fincidenif," as hes hether staten!

In this month of July, 1872, Mekillop © Spmane Co. left Iler-
 and whers, subseribers to the Dun, Barlow de Co. Agency, bitterly complaned of the eflect of such a palpable perversion of ink and piluer. They were Millers, and knew Herrick, sr., well through grain speculation. Herrick knew the $\Lambda$ gency, " went onc better," and promptly failed for a smm which ramot le called less than reprectable, and greatly enlarged hy the friendly "C $\because=$," on grounds
 rery small asets, and the estate is now in Bankruptey.

Abont the esenh $\lambda_{\text {pril, }} 18: 5$, the Toronto and Montreal subseribers of Dan, Batur it Co. enjoyed a startling surprise-if we call that a smprise which the commonest acemantance with Agencies should have taught them to expect. A fashionable young gentleman mamed Zevy, or rather quing by that mane, entered the City of 'Toronto suddenle, made his way to the Agency Oflice, amb, after it short prelude of engaging comversation, told Mathews, a partner's consin, in charge of the hameh, that he had just arrived from (iemmay, was about to open a Wine and Spice Ilouse in the City: and carried in his procket a letter of credit on whe of the local banks for $\$ 15,000$ "to pay daties on the first consigmments of stock of the parent (ieman Honse" to its Toronto protégé. Mathews duly gave the customary attention to tho statement, did not go to the trouble of verifying it by calling at the designatel Bank, aml wrote down Zery \& Co. ats a new tirm of umbubted capital and credit.

Whether from contidence in his arramements with Mathews, or in utter contempt of the $\Lambda$ gency's simulation of effective inquiry, Zevy did not deign to hurry himself in executing his swindle. Ite opened a Store; bonglit in Turonto, at his leisure; extended his speenlations to Montreal, where the Agency report stood him in stead of eapital; bought largely there; sold his pur-














































 (2)




 ". i", in, il lo, t, i.,

Being furdmer yurentanat:


 ". .f sum Xesthem! :"

He:mswered:






Finther on in his examintation the withers. sain! :


 "intitulimes"








 of the in litation-namely, "that it conld raise firmes willout an!! merteris.:"

Wedl, 11 in in mberting, whether we remsinger its candon or monality: "Raising firms willont means"! Is it mot deeoving

 a bhare of hhe "mase"! Aml get this oppromity was the


'These facta, reweted at rambon from thonsands weromping ail wer the rombtry, lave no romm to dondt-


II. That they are ofem ionmant and jufomally reekless.
111. Jhat thay are moned to these extmordinary freaks by
 and circmaspection of an ordinary cation or a politic silence.

## rHAPTER VHI.






Whas the agenties were firot introlured they asked for ennfiand patronate on the egromad of promoting safe trading by






 sulsembers in the linited States and Canalat Even Hhe, How
 ing sulseription- - hat namber of subseribere who have paid and Withomwn during the term, tired of the aflair of indignamt at its
 their axistence hats beca preareved, wot by the centinued support
 cume of the morite of the Institutiomex, but big the slowly foredured





 where the names, fimes, :







If we examine the fowering of the pretences in the :



 tenolency of hemest busitness. Whatever may happen to an wherstablinherl lantie, owing to vicissitules of tanle, it is always sure for

 :gromes, ats they grew in : starting into life on the pleat of pomoting thate ly er wing mediable

 reliable introligence:



 select the tiris-ataned firm in preference, becanse they have mane
 of their own mombls.

Here is a "opy of the fint, of whement, as it is known, mate hy the : weney:


## 

[^1]


 "of our cotablishment.


 " premons whaterer other han the mombers of one firm.






"I. W゙・ will pay, in alvan",
fir one yarm service iof



$\qquad$
 becomine the acents of subseribers merely to furni.h " for the hest







 tion mperion to these of a private indiviltal, and was in constant amb exclusive exereise of them, this strenerg pesmmption of heims
 went far an deence the paldie in the first instance. For a hons









might be ramied ont and pootitable wasom perpedmated. As time pased, lowever, some subseribers here and there were foolish emongh for rely whily on statements furnished; the eonsequences were, of combe, disastrons; the sufferest combume ad reclamations on the agonery, and the lattor whedded them
 leanling lexal minds of the combtry" for the purpese at devis-
 fermeithe to subseribere, withont rallsing the sulseribers to dierowe that they were hoing enomed out of rights alpenty paid fors. The frollowine is the result of the labored ronsultation between the " leading legal minds of the comitry":

## THF NEW AGRはRMENT.





 "as they may poncess concerniner the mercuntile ptanding and eredit of morehants,




 "the followiner rules and stipulalions, will which we, stoberibers to lhe uesery as " aforesaid, arree to conbرly fallhfully, lo wit:-
"1. All verhat, writurn, orprinted information mommandealedto lis, or tosuch monti-
 "ences Book hercinafter mamed, and the Sulitication sheel of rerrections of faid

 " jersult or persons whatever wher that members of our lirm.








 " comanmoleated was ahりlaimed.










"d. We will pay, in ulvanc", ................ dontars for one year's servites from the " datehereof, of kahl Dun, Barlow de Co, lagether with the use of add heferenee Boos,

"sande as maty be urped upen tretwern us vernally or otherwise, subject always to the "conditions and oblgations abwe monlomen.

 " fired portlon hecreof.
". day of $\qquad$ $1: 5$
This new agreement, if only nsed with new sulserilere, wonlat be simply an open comfersion that the agency hat diseovered, and was ranly to admit, in a rommbant way, its incombetency as a re-
 had paid their handreds on thomsands of dellats mater the ohe conbuct, it was mothing less than a grosis demit, repugnant to the minds of all homomble merehant, devised ly the "seven on eisht kending legat minds of the conntry" Fortmately we need waste no words in characterizing this comblact. The agency, ly the fol-
 benche wifiece, renders languge other than its own superthoms:
"THE NFW AGREFMFNT"."

> (ינchat:)
"To Manaciers:
"The exirencies of businces, fand the adaphtion of the Moreantide Ageney theren",









" noticr.


[^2]" We are lruly yours,
(Signed) " IHDN, BALIOW \& CO.
"New-Yobs, March !, 1sio."
This genemal order from the $\Lambda_{\text {grency }}$ to its clerks to enter on a srstenatic course of deception with the principals of both, is a rave and instructive lesson in $\Lambda$ geney momality and methods. Managers systematically tanght to afford their Co- $\Lambda$ gents " eflece tual protection" by lying to the man who employs both, must be safe and fit persons from whom to expect conscientions ratings or to withstand bribes! Low-salaried derks, far removed from the protecting morality of the principal ofice in New-York, and drilled with elaborate detail in tricks of sleight-of-hand sulstitution of one thing for another ; enjoined to the nse of tact and the finest phases of verbal dissimulation ; exhorted to appreciate the essential necessity, in this business, that the question of liability should not be drowen the the minds of subseribers: these smely mast be fit and proper ghatians of business men's repntations and gragers of commeretal homor !

But the foree of this circular lies in something else than its inenleation of deceit, and dissimnlation, and paltering words. It concedes away the whole iedison dider of $\Lambda$ gencies, their reason to be, or to be regarded as, boma-fite establishments. If the Agencies
 " ono can tell what anomit aly man is grool for on an individual "ramsuction withont knowing all his other transitetions at the
 enongh of them, to have an opinion: if they can only say they " have an impression" of a man, or the man is "thonght to be," or only "smpposed to be," geod, or in credit, what em the Agencies do to earn $8 s, 000,000$ a year? They concede their incompetency ly stipulating to evade responsibility. They almit their ignomace by providing for its expression in the most self-protecting worls. They say, in effect, all we can say of them: they are willing and anxions to get the publices money, but what to return for it except facilities for framb, hy third putics, mast remain a profomme mys. tery to themselves and the public, "prising understanding."

## OHAPTER IX.

## DSPENSATIONS OF PRGVIDEACE OR WHAT?--THE SECRET BLACK



A nemberes to the Seeret Reports and Black Lists, preserved, read, and circulatent on reguest bat never published, is now in order.

In Banking and negotiating Railroad Secmrities there are few wher or more stalhe houses than M. K. Jesup, Patom di Co., 52 Willian Street, New-York City. Their eredit has never been dombted. They are repurted in the Reference Books at "in min"doubted credit." Call on Dm, Barlow is Cos, and you will be forthwith prut on your gnard. The person in charge of their NewYork City Department will tell yon, with a knowing leer, "Jes"up has taken care of No. 1 all his life, and will continne to do so," If this be not sufficient to startle yom, he will add, "Ite is not "considered ly sone very reliable, not strictly reliable, and only be"lieved safe for engagements when strietly defined." What effect these sardonic uttermees may have had on A. T. Stewart \& Co., the Merchants' Bank of Canala, and the varions others to whom they have been retailed, we know not ; but they are strange things to sily or write of a gentleman whom the Agency is obliged to admit is urorth over one million dollarss and free of outstanding delts! We think it may be said, however, that A. T. Stewart has bought no exchange through Jesup of Co. since this cowardly and ummerited imputation was imparted ; and that Mr. Jesup hats continued to forward subseriptions to his secret assailants, without "caring so much for No. 1" as they wonld have people believe. With the information now first imparted to Mr. Jesup, is it too broad to advise that he inerease his subseription and await results?

Among the long eatalogne of merchants farorably reported in the Reference Book and subjected in the Secret Reports to such
anpersions on their hasiness ability amd imd imputations wh that integrity of chatacter, as whase notioed, if. © W. Neligman of Co., the well-known (icman Baking Honse, whose intimated
 lome hats stom above eriticism or sumpicion since its orymization. Paniss lave come and wone and left it matfecter. The rejectial farorites of Deremite and Commercial Agencies have sumk aromed it ly the hambed. Trial mey be sad never to hawe reathed it, for its lomations were had in the etermat verities of a practically inexhanstible capital operating on an mathaneably reliable German comstitnency. It comble not be assailed of depreciated openly without staltifiation to the assailant: yet it is seeretly represented ats "unt cousidered entirely reliathe," and ats a lonse "only believen safe for engigements when cleanly detined,
 Not reliable! Where did any Ageney find rasoln or anthonity for soswecping a (hanacterization! Only fit to be dealt with as a man would deal with a motorions rogne-on a "clearly definel" basis! Who has ever had such a thonght of the Soligmans? The busie fliug is withont the slightert pretence of truth, and mast have been indulged in for some parpose disereditable to the utterer. How can it have an honurable explamation :

The contrasted case of Duncam, Shorman © Con, is more recent and as sugrestive. William Butler Duncm, the Maecenas of NewYork Merchants, the exemplar of high business and personal honor-if the Agencies were to be tristed-was hopelessly involved when they eomplimented him as highest in credit and means; mul it somuds odd to leam now, from the Courts and Orders of Arrest, that his father was a seeret creditor all the time, holding the greater prat of the son's real estate in marecorderl Deeds, placed on tile fow the tirst time two days before the failure. It turns ont now that the firm was mily worth a thired of their indebtedness at the very hom when the Agencies were heralding their "moner-making investments" and advertising them to all comers as in "mblimited eredit," whon many merchants, taking their information from more reliable somres, knew them for be embarrased for years and in hourly danger of falure! In other words, the $\Lambda$ gencies rated them worth "one million and over;" that is, over all liabilities; so that, in sober fact, they were about


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three millions in error! Besides, it is now stated that, instead of having $£ 30,000$ to their credit in London, they really owed $£ 139,009$ to the Union Bank of that city-a further error or fraud of nealy $\$ 500,000$ ! Of course they subseribed to the Agencies and paid them liberally. How other subscribers were led into the catastrophe is lest known to the sufferers.

From these serionsly-meant accusitions of incapacity and want of reliability against the very best men and firms in New-York, and false and fulsome enlogies of the insolvent or fraudulent, the transition of the illiterate ghouls of the $\Lambda$ gency is easy and natural to the drivel of scandal and stutterings of doubt against less remarkable but equally solvent persons and firms.

One gentleman, prominently identified with a leading ILotel, and in excellent credit and standing judged ly the Reference Book, is amomed in the Secret Reports to have "no, or only a "doubtful, capital;" as a "frecquent borrower of money, largely in "delit to Mrs. James Fisk: from this somre he has facilities for "raising money; is of expenisive and extravagant, as well as some "disreputable, habits." We do not know what the commentator meant by collocating "disreputable habits" with the source of the means; but a more malignant and dangerous attack on the sacredness of private reputation, male or female, is not often made.

In the snceessful Publisher of some of the best, purest, and most enjoyable literature of the day, a man whose capital and credit are certified in all the Agency Books, and whose social life is certainly respectable judged ly any standard, the same ghoul has discovered a monster-" "a man of notorionsly bad claracter, a "free-liver, a keeper of fast horses, and an associator with males "and fenales of doubtful character." The gentleman so assailed never lad a fast horse, as matter of fact; but if lie had, Belmont has a dozen, Bomer more, and Vanderbilt enongh to deserve the stigma. The gentleman so assailed never associated with males and females of doubtful character any more than every one is compelled to do who passes through the world in any public position and is obliged, ly his daily duties, to extend the courtesies of life to those with whom he may come in contact. But there are men who, in pursuit of some hobly, go out of their way to associate with persons of whose "character" there is no doubt whatever, as that abused word is applied, and yet the Agency moralist is
exceedingly eireful to overlook matter of common noturicty. We can point to at least one humdred names, highly complimented by them for "character," who travel away from their ostensible business, whencrer an occasion offers, to frequent gambling-hells, to play " sport" on race-courses, and to lead a life of extravagrance, excitement, and conspicuons sensuality. How these persons have escaped censure when better-conducted men have been singled out for attack and condemnation, the experts in human motives must imagine for themselves. Did they strike their colors and lighten their coffers on sighting a piratical craft? Did they purchase exemption from the penalties of the proscription by a timely ransom? The mendacions details which enter into these infamons: records are not wortl further illustration. How some respectable and reputable business men are spoken of as "only fit for a public "institution where they could get their board and lodging for "nothing;" how family affarrs of great age and no value are made to serve a present resentment; how matrons' names are associated with fraudulent transactions of which they never heard, may be readily inferred from what has been written. It is sufficient for our present purpose to say: Over eight thonsand four hundred Merchants and Firms in the City of New-York alone are rated well and fatorably as to capital and credit in the Reference Books of the Ag gences, and seandalonsly assailed, to every applicant, in their honor, character, and business integrity in these Private Reports. Thronghout the United States and Canada over ninety thousand others are treated to the same public compliment and secret detraction. ls it possible to reconcile the printed report and spoken lie coming from the same origin? If the slander be true, or believed to be true by the slanderers, why do they lie in print? If the priutel statement be true, why do they asperse and falsify privately?

The mamer of these secret reports is as bad as the matter of them. The same hand can be traced in the same catel-phrases throughont. It is apparent to the initiated that ignomace amd assumption lave joined together to produce the worst possible kind of daracter-killing by the clumsiest possible kiwd of weapons. And yet is it not an additional indignity to be assaited in such sort by men whose own reputations have stood at zero, and whose first sucecss in life wais attained by obliging others, in self-defence, to
support them? We may forget that the assailers of Seligman and Jesup are the eulogists of all the most disastrons failures of the last five years down to Vyse © Co., Duncan, Sherman © Co., Allen, Stepliens \& Co., Menry Clews \& Co., Jowes ot Mary, Jay Cooke d Co., :nd innmerable others thronghont the entire country ; but how can we become resonciled to laving persons dispense reputation to our great and reputable Merehants when one of them waited ten years to anomee to the writer that he performed a wise amd honest act by not absconding once with is sum of gold entrusted to him by the Board of Trade of Toronto? 'The ancient Thersites was a low-minded and vulgar-faced ruttian. He hat hmman chameteristies and at least one qualitieation-exeellence in backguardiem. But to be trampled in the dirt by act of satyre whose lower passions might be typified by a Goat's extremities, and whose highest onnment is an Ass's ears-an hmman patience be asked to stand such an extremity of ill-fortune?

## CIIAPTER N.

##  SAY OF THEIR PATHENTS.

If the Agencies apperiate frimils like Marfar:m, Bowne, Morrice, Herrick, ot id omni gomus, the timorons merchant who visits them voluntarily to show his real means, or try to correct their misrepresentatom, must not alwars expert justive or secmrity as the complement of a subseription. The relle is thut subserriptimes mollify just in proportion to the criment peeid: but the volunteer needs also to remember that all the owners of the concerns have not equal control of the private reports. If, for instanes, gon confess your business matters to Dum. of Dm, Barlow id Co., you may look for reprovals from the City Mamer-for this person emnot suffer any one to think he does mot hold the ker to the innermost chambers of commercial erelit. The impertance of this hint is readily made manifest by the following facts:
R. W. Cameron, of R. W. Cameron \& Co, shiping and commission, carried his heart on his sleeve to R. G. Dun, in Jimmary, 1852. Ite satisfied the senior, who knew him well, that his resources were adequate for all needs, and his right to credit, if he desired it, perfect. The manager of the New-York (ity department, however, was not consulted, and he areorling? acted on the constructive slight. Mr. Caneron hats now for the firt time the mortifieation of knowing that, althongh his capital was Ethi,(1)0 ( $\$ 200,000$ ), the city-deprotment manager comd only find it comrenient to phace it at 860,000 to 850,000 while commmicatine with Charles Pratt © Co., Central National Bank, Bank of Britis! North-America, Hanower National Bank, and others in and out of New-York City; and that, "although standing high among his "friends, he had eonseyed the iden of unreliability to persons not
"so intimately comected with him;" that is, like the manager, who probally never saw him in his life. He soon learned "he was, in "the main, an enigma, and of doubtful reliability, althongh cer"tainly prompt, energetic, and capable." The mistake of calling on the wrong man in this ease shrmen $£ 60,000$ into 860,000 , and cntailed on a merchant and firm of indubitable resonrees and the highest commercial standing, who should never have entered such a place an ill-favored aroma still hanging, withont any intentional fanlt of his, aromed all lis enterprises. In the chosing words of the manager, "If he shomblget into tronble to-morrow it would " not create ac ereat deal of surprise, and the universal remark "would be, 'I told you so!'" This is what he gets from praying at the wrong shine, and not recalling that a brass serpent was the idol to nentralize the poisons of the pilgrimage.
O. R. Dorman, president of the Metropolitan Collar Company, doing the largest business in the line in the world, made the samo mistake as Cameron. Din and he were aequaintances of twenty years. Dun thonght him to be as he knew him to be. The city manager did not know him at all, but he saw through him in a flash-throngh him and his admitted half million capital-and gasetted him "as not the most reliable man in the world." He was not indeed "msafe," hut "your accoant with him onght to "he watched"-as if every man's account ought not to be watehed, only lis. These words of golden wistom did the manager indite and camse to be commmicated to $A$. T. Stewart \& Co., Wheelwright, Anderson \& Co., Minot, Mooper \& Co., and Kibse, Chaffie, Shreve © Co. what time R. (i. Dm, minder the softening thonghts and pressing daties of a prospective day's recreation after the manner of Isata Walton, committed his reparting friend to the mereies of the guardian of tho vestibule. Dom may have been hospitable for the hour: but why, when he left the shores of his ever-flowing Pactolus for Lake Simene, did he forget to whisper to Dorman, Cere comem-beware of the dog!

Even the paths of Liw and literature do not escape these perturbations. $\Lambda$ well-known lewist, over whom the shadow of the Tribunes tall tower erstwhile rast its genial shade, has committed (in $\Lambda$ gency opinion) some dire offence against the stringent rules of momity and conduct favored by the Ageney. He had had the fortme, or misfortume, to be retained and to plead

$\qquad$

el-af-ngonnd
for (say) a criminal and convict. We had had the further fortune, or misfortune, to be comsel (say) for an impeached judge. Both acts were in the due exercise of his profession; were, indeed, duties in a professional sense; but their due performance did not exalt hi:n in Agency eyes; relegated him to doubtful company, and drew down on his unconscions head these potent dicta: "IIe "is not very popular with some of the leading members of the " har;" is only "in some quarters regarded responsible for legiti"mate hasiness wants; is suspected of having no property in his "own name; is dabbling in outside operations, and cannot be re"commended to credit." It may be of slight inportance to the learned gentleman what "some leading members of the har," in opposition, think of him; less, how "some quarters" regard him; none, what the Ageney recommends or omits to recommend in his behalf; for his credit is mimpeachable. But we should really like to know whether lie lost the chance of a lawn-entter, a plough, or a client in consequence of the inguiry of Vanderbilt Brothers, or the ignorance, malevolence, or political or personal prejudices of this $\Lambda$ gency representative.
$\Lambda$ well-known lawyer, residing near Rye, with an oflice in Literty street, and estimated worth from $\$ 500,000$ to $\$ 1,000,000$, the owner of dozens of honses and the director of a bank, is another victim. He is donomeed as a "sharp, shrewd man, who will get "the best of a bargain, and rather menserupulons. Transactions "with him should also be clearly defined, and in 'black and "white." The iteration of the same phrase palls on the ear and indicates the poverty of language which may consort with sly maliee and devious detraction. What Mr. C. did to merit these opinions, complimentary to his legal, at the expense of his moral, character, we know not; but we would wager a ducat that their utterer merely spoke from his own inmer conscionsness to Cleveland and St. Louis inquirers, and wholly without a tittle of personal experience or other justification.

Passing from the legal fraternity, who are naturally measured ly the Agency's standard of professional ability and integrity itself indicated by their selection of one Whelp to superintend their collections, and bark, in return, at the citizens of Staten Island -we come to the treatment of literary men and literary ventures. In ilis category of Agency effort, the jealous nature of ignorance
and also the cantionsness of cowardieo assert themselves. Where there is great risk of discovery, the $\operatorname{Ag}$ gencies either omit to rate nowspapers as such, or mate them highly. This is a rule of the trade. But where the chance of discovery is lessened, and the publishers or editors come to be treated of in the private reports, they fare wonse than others, in proportion. It reems as if the acrimong withhed for prodential reasons were ponrel out with greater unction becanse of the rompelled restraint in regard to jomrnalism projer.

Onr first example under this heal will be tie tratment of a Dey street company of publishers. Their papers are dechared to be valnable property, and rated very lighly ; lout between the months of Pebramy and November, 157t, a remakible ehange must have come over the men engaged in the publications. In February they were "smart fellows "-a favorite term with the faniliar bumpkins of the agencies-and, " on the whole, sat"isfactory." In November the s.me grentlemen are persons " in whom little confidence is felt;" who "will take care of their "own interests, "t all risks," and who "are managing the "—_much to the dissatisfaction of the proprietors," although " paying promptly and making moner." It is not for us to reconcile these sulden contradietions of feeling and ciremmstances. But it is fair to ask how the same gentlemen, " satisfactory" ia Fehmary and "making money" up to November, came, in November, to be withont public confidence and posessed of ro little moral sense ats to " take eare of themselves, at all risks" ? And it is also fial to ask whether or not these gentlemen, and men like these, comected with the homorable profession of jommalism, are pleased to find the boobies of the ageneies presmang to sily what is amd what is not " groodmanagement " of one or more leading newspepers! We do not know what effect the wise-saws of the Agence may have had on II. C. Hulbert © Co., F . G. Green \& Co., J. F. Anderson, Jr., \& Cu., Bulkler, Dunton \& Co., W. II. Parson \& Co., and others. We do kinw that the assailed gentlemen could graphically resent the impertinence if they saw fit.

The publisher of another daily newspaper, and known to possess a great deal of wealth, varionsly estimated from $8,000,000$ to $81,000,000$, a member of the Manhattan Clinh, and a Director of the Associated Press, is denomued in the severest terms as a
" slippery, mireliable man, matitted for eredit exeept on the basis of "net cash." 'This is said of a persim whase word of honor passes current with all who know him for any amome of moner ; whe has never conterted at ilaim muless he believed it framdulent, and who is rated in the Reference Book in "rery good" eredit: We learn his libellers are ansions to retrat their anersions now that thein secret defamation is expesed ; but we shombl think as little of the person whe would be satistiend with such at repuital for so grievons: wrong as we do of his traducers.

The family cirele is mo safer from attack than the bar or the Press. Thas we kearn of one 11 - that "he takes toe munds " wine, and is prosessed of :an catrocatumt wifit and fast homes." Of another " II --," that "he has reeently been made no"torious by his love for the drama; by being sud for divoree

 " "iffe is alllticiang in Broullym." The secome " 11 ." is coneeded tole in " execllent credit," but the "plommity of recording the es nedes details in a reverd comblat be misad. Of :another semHeman it is told that $"$ he is doing a large business and thought th "he making money, but is intolded in as wit with the weidnar or" "" man he is setid tw here kitiled in a mitic." Of amother, who
 he is "amply safe and responsible for all contracts, but was at me" "time :on inmate of the Binghanton Inebriate Asclum." An other will he surpmed to learn that his danghters, living in his house since their birth, " left him on aceome of a seemi marriage."

Indifferent to the reserve of home, the arencies are al-m indifferent to the sanctities of consenence, and betray the highem propion sessions, of erery temporary manarer, in the record. Charles II.
 and associated as partuer with a honse peputed to be worth semoma, is made the scape-ront of a marow reigions prejubice. He is denomed as ":m ardent Ma therlist, erratic, diflientt to phace cansily
 reetain amome of business qualitication in pronertinn th their ardor of religions belief and their eagernes in practising it:

The editor of the "Quebee Saturday Badret," quotel in the Montreal Sun of September [ t h, 18 Fi , is our anthority for :un-
other instmace of offensive bigotry. Writing of the agencies under a recent date, he says: "We well remember an occasion when, in "reply to an intuiry concerning a certain honse in Quebee, one " of the agencies flashed back the reply by telegraph, "They are "Roman Catholics; do not give them any crodit." The deseent from bigotry to dirt is natural and inevitable. On the record of one of the agencies in Albany, mul New-York, is this entry in reference to Potsdan Junction, St. Lawrence Connty, New-York: "Miss L. E. K--k. Is an orphan, twenty years old, comely, "residing with the widow $A-y$, who is a woman of wealth "and has no children of her own." And of another laty in NewJersey it is eaid " she has a nest millinery store, with a cozy room "in the rear, and an inviting lounge."

Two others-partnets-will find something more surprising still in these ruftianly reports, nancly: "that euch enjoyed the "companionship af the other wife's with her husbamis romsent."

We stop here. It the reader has any patience left after pernsing these examples of agency literature, we must ask him to exereise it over a fow questions which we submit to him in perfect sincerity.
I. Are men moved by the impulses. displayed in the foregoing examples fit to be associated with on terms of equality, or any terms, ly self-respecting citizens?
II. Are men who live by the sale of the false-where not puerile; seandalons, where not iname; malicions where not in-consequent-reports, hints, surmises, guesses, criticisms, and downright blackguardisms detailed in this chapter, fit to be recognized as public henefactors?

We select for our illustrations of the influence of personal bias, etc., on Agency Reports these sample facts of a gieat number germane to New-York City, because the prineipal oflice camnot elnde responsibility for them or pretend that it is not affected by the spleen, narrow-mindedness, and ignorant pretensions to which we have referrel. The effect of having the same fellows who play these antics on citizens of assured wealth and character in a position to gratify like feelings on gentlemen of less means and equal integrity can be readily conceived. Assuredly the knases who receive men's money and rate them well openly only to depreciate and degrade them pri-
under hen, in -e, one ?y cre lescent ord of in reYork: omely, wealth Newroom rising 'el the nut." after iim to ${ }^{11}$ per-foreality, c not ot in-lownnized
sonal great office 3 not eten; the med $s$ on idily and pri-
cutcly are not likely to bespect less wealth or greater sensibility to abose, if a purpose may be served or a feeling aratified, in disregarding both.

It oecurs to the witer that there onght to be a limit to public forbearance. Tho Courts, whose Lreath is publicity and whose prerogative is sovereign to correct and reprove things tending to thodestruction of suciety, seal up from prying eyes the inevitable records of human frailty. Leurislatures pass Siatutes of Limitation to restrain and prevent disenssions of personal chamater only calculated to foment strife and endanger social peace. Manieipal govermments set apart a time for removing the natural acemmalations which might affect the health of localities hy being brought in contact with the air at less propitions hours for human rest. The $\Lambda$ gencies alone, bound up in their own selfish ohjects, and incapable, from their very constitution as depots of ignoramee and mapacity, of respecting any tic however satered, any reserve however urgent, any misfortune however retrieved, set no bounds to the accomulation of matter obnosions in itself, and display their indifference to honor, and the comities of Society, ly giving it a permanent hospitality and a perpetnal cirenation.

## CHAPTER XI.

##  THEIR AGLE.

Besme: the yeary, halfearly, mad quaterly Reference Booke, the thee $A$ gencies indulge their subseribers with "Notitieation Sheets." These are suppead to be a true exhibit of the changes happening within the period mentioned to over sor,000 persons. The average number of manes on these Sheets is not over three handred. Whatever the Branch Oflices can pick up they report tu the Principal OMices, and the Principal Othees print and distribute weekly or monthly, as their enstom may be. The tirst objertion to these Sheets is apparent. Among son,000 persons the fluetnations of business, of it decisive kind, must munber thousands weekly. Let any single Merchant in iny town in this Comity or in Camala recall the changes in business men's affaits within his own knowledge during a single week, and he will immediately discover how incomplete and inale puate the few hmulred instances given in the Sheets must be to represent the dhanges by Death, Dissohutions of Firms, Insolveney, Julgments, Fire, and the thousund and one casmalties incident to the business life of $45,000,000$ of propuation. There is not a State in the Union, or a Province in the Dominion, which would not supply a larger roll; and single comnties in the mereantile portions of either comitry, would, if adequately reported, require a much greater exhibit.

The second defect of these Shect: is that they are wh when printed and wder when received, as well as incomplete. The Post-oflice is the means of first commmication with the Branch Offices; these oftices transmit news also, ly Post, onee a week: the Principal Othices make up the Sheets from this slowly gathered matter, print it during two days, and, instead of mailing directly
to subseribers, return the Sheets i: packages to the Branch Otliees for final ilistribution by mail.

In this manner the weckly lisi, when received, sememally eonregs information three weeks ohd.

Sow, it is the common e perience of busines men that tho period most dimgerons to honest thaders is always the period just previons to mexpected changes, or within a short time after they have happened, aml in adsance of their becoming, notorions. If the Agencies memit to serve their sulbereribers in my way, the wreatest expeclition would he shown in this critieal time. If they could not aid them ly approximating correct ratings, they might, at least, make an effort to promptly ammomee such opron sererets as Piilures, Suspensions, Receiverships and Fires. They know better than to attempt it. However the defeet 3 and incompleteness of their arrangements may to to sulseribers, they are fully appreciated by the Agencies. Pestime lente is a memingenal moto to them. It is safer and lefter for them that the bibseribers should wait and suffer, in their preckets and grools, than that the Agencies should be put to the additional cost and responsibility of telegraphing changes, ete, by mems of the Associated Press, or report a timancial death mutil it had stunk beyond providental resuscitation. This niggrardliness and self-convieting ceution distinguish all they do and determine all they decline and negleet to do. The use of the telegraph to and from their Branch Offices would cost from 820,000 to 830,000 yearly, perhaps more; but if it saved ten sulserribers ont of 30,000 , during the whole time, from loss arising from want of information, it would be a partial, however inaderuate, requital for the $\$ 8,000,000$ extracted yearly from the losiness cirital of the comntry. Even this slightechance of recompense is distegardel. The coercive features of the institution are relied on to make up for every shortcoming or omission.

The Agencies know they may shore if they choose, on the principle that $A$ pollo semper arenm tembit, and a man capable of communicating contagions lisense may thank no one for showing him a Hospital. A small-pox patient finds plenty of room and encounters little controversy in any commomity.

Let us, however, suppose the Change Sheet received in due course. Consigmments have had plenty of time to reach the buyer's hands, or his Receivers, or his Assignees. Pro rata distri-
bution, instead of recorery of the groods or payment in full, is the first consequence. The second is: entailed costs for Attorneye, and, in case of collection being made through the Agrencies, profit from the very! !os.s urlich their neyligener of subscribers' interests hat alreat!y intailed or "imisavated.

If the Change Sheets arrive pending a negotiation instead of after an executed contract, the absence of a credit applicant's name is a deceiving assmane ; while, on the other hand, if the mane appear in commection with an honorable change or a smspension, nothing is said to show whether the change is for the better or the suspension likely to be short, protracted, or distinguished by circmastances justifying forbearace rather than pressure. It is of common ocemrence to find Firms that had resmmed within a week after snepension dropped out of the Change Sheets entirely, and thas excluded from the commmity of active faders to which many Merchants and Manfacturers look for desinable customers. But if the resmuption be amomed, it comes montls after the time of happening ; and the resuscitated firm has had a chance to secure new assoriations before the old ones conld wisely take advantage of their longer acepaintance and former relations.

Of the Notification Sheets of MeKillop \& Npragno Co., J. M. Bradstreet © Son, and Dun, Barlow \& Co. the general charge holds grod:-that they are made up from the same sources as the Reference Books ; are slow to come, and useless or confusing when they do come. In a comntry of quick transportation, a device which gives contemplated or accomplished frand eren a week's start is necessarily valucless exeept as a test of patience; and after-the-fact knowledge becomes likewise a work of superurogation, in the instance of honorable business misfortme; for who crer heard of an honest man attempting to incur obligations when in a state of flagrant failure withont apprising the eredit-giver of his condition? They are, therefore, too tardy to prevent losses; too meagre not to deceive the trusting ; and, although the most pretentions sign of activity and alertness of the $\Lambda$ gencies, are of a piece with the decoy of the Prize Package and the trick of the S:awdust swindle.

As the yearly, half-yearly, and quarterl Reference Books are the standing capital and menace of the Agencies, they are made to do double duty-extort the yearly subseription

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It is ithin : ntively, which tomers. ter the mee to ke :al-
J. M. charge as the when device week's ; and Crograwho when -giver osses: I the ncies, l the

Books they ption
principally, and extract a hiemial tax of $\$ 10$ besides from subseribers. One would think the yearly charre monstrons enough for the mass of trash supplied; lont this supplementary piece of highwayism partakes more of the condign necessities of the footsore and birefaced "Secesh" who preded his vietim to the buff than the gentee Thepini-m which should characterize already well-mounted and well-apobinted foot-pads,-which the Agencies are wot. 'Tis the ohl story over agrain. The husiness public did not resist begimnings. Thes might have singly and cheaply orerome the first assault. They have paid fifty or sisty millions for their renaisoness, and mast now essay, with greater labor, to render mprolitable the very eapital supplied by themselves, and med to lamass the weak and levy tribute from the irresolnte.

The half-yearly and quarterly wolmes ane merely the yearly matter with the Notification Shect alterations. As subseribers receive the yearly volme for the subseription-price, and the little Sheets to modify a few of its many discovered inaceuracies, they have the very matter in their presession for which they are required to pay the additional 810 . This is a very considerable item for Dum, Banlow di Co., and in a lesser, lunt also propertionably profitalle, degree to MrRillop © Spragne Co. ani J. M. Bradstreet © Sou.

The cost of these absolntely-neelless looks is merely the paper and printing, about 8.50 or 53.00 per volume. The difference is elear protit. But the dodge produces a further adrantage. It makes the subseribers pay for the yemly Books: the profit of sales sapplies enongh to pay salaries, rents, and contingencies. The system of ealling in the old volmesserves a treble purpose. It contributes to prevent Merchants from diseovering tho extent of obsolete or identien matter, by comprison ; destross the primary evidence of information which may hate induced losees, on might furnish gromd for libels, and enthes the $A$ gencies to rewer all the paper and binding material of every edition to work ul again into a next issue or sell to the paper mamufacture: A calcalation will indicate the exquisite adaptation of mems to ends in all this armarement. It will show the ahmolity of the popular impression that Jack camot eat hit; colve and have it foo. The Agencies prove the contrary. They can eat their cake a dozen
times; be paid for the suceessive exertion; and only lose a few ermmbs in the whole series of operations in the interests of Trade! The yearly subseriptions are, therefore, either wholly or nearly Wholly, clear profit; so that, which ever way we thrn, we find every appliance disadsantageous to the subseriber and of profit to the publishers.

As to the yearly volmes themselves, they em only eontam, additional to the half-yemp or pharterly ones, as the case may he, the substance of the Change Sheets issued within the time of the fublication of the last quarterly, and previons to the opening of the yearly, term. If no changes be reported, none, of course, are entered; if they are reported, they make a very inconsiderable addition to the last volmues; and, in all events, apart from these alterations, the old ratings of eapital and eredit are sold over again, year after year, with commendable persistemed and constantly accmanating protits. The merelant who has not failed, and who has been quadruphing his mems within three or fom years, sees his old rating ocenpy the same place with the proverbial persistence of erro: The merelant who has failed will, in ninety eases ont of a homdred, either find himself paraded in all his pristine eredit or orerlooked, as is matmal where only abont fire per cent of the business population of the linited States and Camada is noticed in any mamer. Administrators and lixecotors who have pased their aceomes and been discharged, find their long-hmed testator in active life amd high eredit. The members of long-xince dissolsed partnerships discover themselves still allied in effort and responsibility. Once in every two or thee years a ernsale for new subseribers is entered on, from the district ollices, inte the towns whieh appear to justify the effort, and these itinememes have the effect of burving some of the notorionsly dead, and bringing into agency life and meshes some new, traders; but as the solicited merchant who refuces to subseribe is sure to be remembered as a pemalty to limsolf, an imbeement to reformation, or a temor to whers, the amomet of consequential misrepresentation ahled is gremerally in startling excess of the correction made.
between the necesity and policy of lying in ficcon of subseribers and the neeesity and policy of lying etginst non-subseribers, Truth, it might he thonght, is crucitied with all the concomi- we find profit
tants of gall and wormwood, while Bambats is let loose, witi lome acclain, to rob and phuder.

If the agencies were even conceded to preserve, in a tempting emploment, even the average morality of the day, why, it may he stated, should we expect them to properly perform a function more delicate than legislation; more remunerative ly its abme than lotery selemes; more involved and farextemding in parpose than any single enterprise of the time, excepting the linited States Revenue Service: when we have just seen a national Legisiature given over to the infernal gook he the rapacity of its most frustem members, and a carnisal of greed for dishomest gain sweep into its rortex Cabinet Officers, Ministers Plenipotentiary, and thonsands of the most revered characters in and out of phares of oftheial trust in the comutry? What right have we to inagine illiterate loys, working on a salary of $8(0)$ a wek, more mpight than Colfax, of managers, carming one thonsmat, and living at the rate of six, more self-denying than Tweed! We duot. But this is merely their : $\mathrm{p}^{\text {nologer for being as they are. It is no exense or }}$ justification for their existence, as such.

The agencies ase certainly not oflisered or controlled by men of exceptional mortification. Their staft is a promisenons gathering that cem have no other purpose in such a line of life than to make moner quickly and retire. As with all enterprises attracting public odimm, appeals to self-interest must preserve a constant exces of persinaling force over deterrent or disgnsting features. There must be compensation for shame suffered as well as labor done. The dememing performance over, the petty assistant may be cxpected to comut his petty knock-downs in rear of the establishment, while the higher priced and placed manager or confederate may lo presumei to openly pass throngh the front domer, to a luxnrious retirement, with just such a purtion of the roonk of the comcern as a feeling of perfect immunity from legen reprish on the part of associates, or his own opportmitics, may have delinced for: him. The reason is natural. Hangmen have always han, ats of right, something for the executions, over and above the fees. The rope, or at purt of it, is one. Other analugies will suggent themselves.

## CIAPTER NH.

## TAMPEALNG WITH THE LEGISLATURES OF CERTAIN STATES AND 'TILE PARLIAMENT' OF 'TIIE DOMINION OF CANADA-MORE secheit circulars-racts and metilods.

Cosscooss wrong-doers fear the law. Are the Agencies an exeeption? Ever since their introluction they have been hamed by the fear of Legislative interference. As they progressed in wealth and increased in age, fear gave way to attempts at precantion against it ; and a large part of their energy and no insignificant propertion of their profits are now devoted yearly to anticipating hostile movements set afoot hy their victims, or suppressing the honest efforts of enlightened and thonghtful law-makers to abolish or restrain their abnses. Dm, Barlow \& Co. make no mention in their Secret Cirenlar, which follows, of the first interesting episode had with the Camadian Parliament. They wholly overlook their experience at the Dominion Capital in 1873. A merchant of St. John, New-Brunswick, conceived himself grossly aggrieved, and induced the local member to propose a General Act of Parliment. $\Lambda$ committee was appointed to take testimony. Middlemiss, of McKillop if Spragne Co. (and then representing that firm in Montreal), was smmoned before it and examinel. An agent went in hot haste from New-York to appear for Dum, Barlow © Cor and give his notions. Feeling ran high-ligh enough to induce the rival $A$ gencies to confer together against the common enemy. They conferred to advantage. The Agencies were something poorer for a period; the Aet was not urged; sevemal anbitions members were flush for a month or two ; and the people of the Dominion found thenselves temporarily tumed over to the Agencies for further phebotomy. The conneetion of Mr-Killop) © Spragne Co.'s representative with the Canadian Credit Mobilier business, known as the "Canadian Land Swap," and the subsequent
 it umecessary to assure the realer that looth institutions nsedonly homoreble arguments, and persuated one or more Camadian Lesislative Committees solely by the innate foree of truth and the examplo of uprightness.

The second instance of Leristative interference with the nefarious husiness was that originated heme excellent gentlemon in the Lower Ilonse of the Pemsyhania Legishature. The statemen of that Comenomwealth, bronerlit up at the feet of Gimaliel, in all that pertains to popular rishtst, and fully apreciating the silcrevl rights of persons and charicter, carly noticed the invorls of the new clams on the old-time reserves of business and soricty. 'Ther felt, too, that if privileges so penemal were asserted in the mane of Right, they shouk be met at the threshold, and denied admittaner in the name of the Commonwealth, withont conditions ealdenlated to insure safety to Merchants and taders in purse and chameter. This comse was worthy of the Keystone State, and espectially honomable to the legal profession, which has so long mate its. Comeils a bulwark aganst individual wongs and lax constitutional interpretation. The home of a Shas:wool, a black, or a Garney wats matually the first in the Laion to challenge the bold pretensions of the Agrencies; and the ease with which the following Act passed an Assembly, largely composed of lawers reared in the stme schoul of jurisprudence, showed that there were not wanting many men who apreciated tho danger and songht to avert it.

## "AN ACT

"To punish commercial agents for false representations of the business condition "of cerlain persons
"WHEREAS There are persons travelling from time to time in dfferent parts of the
"Commonweath claming to be conducting or representur commeremal arenches to
"ascertain keep a reeord and publish the linmeial responsithity of busines; men in "different parts of the country
"Ann Wheneas Such pervons from malicious or eorrupt motives often wilfully and "kuowing exargerate and misrepresent the tinanclal condition of perons rararel in "diferent kinds of business to the great injury of such persons and the dencral publio
"Therefore

 "of the same
"That any person condueling the business of what is known as a commereinl ageney "established in this commonwealth or elsewhere for the purpose of asecrtaining pub.
"hishing and keeplng for publie or private information a record of the financial re"sponsibility and business condition of buniers merchments traders buikers mume. "facturers or other persons engaged in any commereial business and may person "chaming to be the representative of such commerelal agency who shall howongly " heedtessly or wilfully exaggerate or misrepresent by writing prining or otherwlse in "book form or otherwise the credit linanclal responsibility or bissiness condition of "any banker merchant manufueturer tradesman builder or other person or persons en"gaged in any enmmercial basiness shatl be suilty of a miselememor and upon con-
"riclion thereof shall he sentenced to pay a the of not less than two hundred und tifty
"dollars nor more than one thonsmand dolarsone half of the the imposed to be for the
"use of the haformer A convletion for the foregolng offence shail not bar an netion
"for thanares thy the person or persons lujured."
No sooner had this Bill passed the Lower Ilomse than the Agencies discovered it and took alam. They counselled together how to aroid the threatened restraints on mulicensed libel and irresponsible slander. One of their moles was the writing and prirate circulation, throughout the State, of the following contidential letter, copied from the original in the writer's possession, received from a merchant too honomble to act on it:
"Tha Mmecastha Aoexcy.
$\qquad$

[^3]" Respectfully yours,
$\qquad$
The fiest falsehood in this shameful document is self-evident. No bill could pass the Honse " with the very slightest consideration." It was referred to the Judiciary Committec. It had
received their full consiteration, and we know that no law of this import could pass from that committee back to the llouse without. having receieed the approval of the best leyal minds in the Stati. The second falsehood is meanly malignant. The wiseacres of the Ageney affect to think the act "loosely drawn." To further this impression they print it without punctuation amd with cerbal inacenacies, just as we have produced it. Every one knows, who can read it, that, even with these disadvantages, it is an exceedingly clenr and well-expressed statute. The tumb falsehood is worse than the other two in effrontery. The pullic are already better protected by the laws of slander and libel than the bill proposes! Why, as we have shown elsewhere in this work, the Agencies have ahways claimal immmity from the operation of these baws on the double gromd that their commmications were privileged between master and employec-principal (merchant) and agent (themselves) -and further, that their interest in the character of merehants and traders was a legal protection against either the claim for private damage or public prosecution! The rocrrn falsehood is "that merchants were petitioning against " the passage of the bill. There was not a word of truth in this statement. The circular was intended to induce them to do so, and in the hope that some might be got to sign against the bill, on the promises of special recognition from the Agency. $A$ few were caught by this bait, after a time ; but their number and character were so insignificant that the names were never presented in the Senate, and the bill was defeated ly very different methots and ones more distinctly within the Legencies' immediate control. 1 member of one of the Agencies went on from New-York to Harrisburg, with means furmished by the Agencies, to persuade certain majorities of certain committees of the Pemusylvania Senate that the bill ought not to pass. It cosit moncy to travel. It cost money to live in hotels. It was not without harge additional expenditure, and much intrigue, that this agent was enabled to telegraph that all was right at last ! The exact outlay will only be known in a court of justice; but it is safe to say the contingent or expense accounts of the Agencies show a marked rise in these spring months of 1574 to whoever may secure access to them.

The third interference with the Agencies occurred on the
banks of the Mississippi and Missomi. In Deemher, 18it, King, the St. Lonis oflice manager, learned that a bill was about to be introluced at Jefferson City creating greater reipmsibility, for false reports by Agencies, to the slandered and deceived, and defining their lialility to parties injured ly their espiomaty. These restrictions were barely just; but they would lave destroyed the institution in the State within an hour after their pasage. The fact wats communicated to heal-quarters in New-York, and the Agencies took alarm again. If this ceample were to spread, their career would bo brought to a clase. If it were generally known and cansassed even, there was danger that, althongh legislation might be prevented in Canada, Pemsylvania, and Missomi, some of the other States would legislate in the like wise spirit, and, by making the $A$ gences responsible for their malice and mistakes, practically prohibit them. In this emergeney a comoltation was had in New-Kork. As the result of the conference a telegram was agreed on and sent through the Western Union Telegraph Co. to King, instructing him to "spare neither money nor labor to kill the bill." King spared neither. The smm of thirty thomsemel dolLurs, at least, was expended among the Back Horse Cavalry of the St. Louis. Delegation, and a few effective society men in the cometry districts; lat we are bound to state, expended in a legal way: what we believe is another matter ; and the proposen bill dropped out of sight after serving a few evenings as a scarecrow at the Capitol.

There is still, however, in that and other States, the germ of an active opposition which may lead to eflicient legislation. Several energetic attorneys are badgering the Agencies in the conrts; and we should not be surprised if the spring and winter of 1576 witnessed a new campaign led by honest men amd supported ly the leading presses of that and other high-spirited commonwealths.

Wirned by this troublesome business in Canada, Pemsylvania, and Missomi, the Agencies conceived the idea of gnarding against future surprise and, if possible, cheapening their legislative processes, both. In execution of this purpose the following circular, dated Jamary 19th, 1875, was printed and sent to all branchoffices by the Mereantile $\Lambda$ geney. It indicites the anxiety of the Ageacies on this head:

1574 oont to ty, for md deThese cd the The Ill the pread, really legrisseouri, it, and, stakes, oll wis cgram ph Co. to kill d dolof the comway: opped at the everal ; and 6 wity the his. rania, milinst procular, anchf the

- I.E:CSL.ITHON.
"Tu Manigerna:
"We parle marly wisk to impress upon you the necessily of constantly pernsine "the oflelal reports of your state leghsatare, forder to diseover if my bills or re"solulions are lintroduced atfecting the Ageney business. We had a great dent of tromber " lat winter from Legrshation, cspechally in one or two cases, not has farg been advised " sultelontly early to combat it as suceessfully as we could otherwhe have done. The "moment yon discover anything nftectiug onr busluess do not fall to notify us at onee, "and to send the eoples of the documents. We presume the daily paper publish dat " the slate rapital will contain all that is neeessary, nod a hasty ghance at each day's "procecding will coable you to keep track of what we so much desire to know.
- Yours truty, (signed) "Dis, Baban de Co.


The indonsment he the Manager of a Southern Brameh on one of these circulars is eurt and to the point. "Jon't think the "Jegislature, composed as it is of two thirds negroes, will ever "think of a Mercantile Agency;' much less pass laws affecting it. "All they retere for is the momery!"

The tronble which Dun, Barlow \& Co. had in "two eases," during the winter of 15-t, "to combat Legishation" must refer to their interference with the members of the Missomri Legishature through the exertions of their St. Lonis mamager, King, and the equally important manipulations of the Pemsybania legrishature hy their Secret $A$ gents at Marrisburg and the vaions Senatorial Districts of that State. We must suppose all done within the Law. The confession of these two erimes against the public leaves many others of the same matare in the backeromed, but we have preferred to use their own proofs and limit ourselves, for the time being, to the offences which they hive admitted.

Can that be treated as a safe and legitimate business which adopts the methons indicated in the preceding cireulars to ehade legishative restrants? Ought the public comitenance or snstain men who, ly their own confession and these proofs, might be charged with following the practice of compting the fommans of Legislation?

Is there not a public dinger, apart altorgether from the question of private wrongs, in the growth of institutions which make a boast of anticipating reformatory measmes by capturing the representative bodies, or enourh of them to make the rest incfficient to carry out the popular will?

Our Representative $\Lambda$ ssemblies are bad enongh already; but it is full time to become alarmed for them when these Agency enterprises, "conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity", are emboldened, by public apathy, to approach the very sanctuary of the law-making power, and lay their unclean hands on the ministrants at the Altar !

## CHAPTER XIIL.

SPREADING THE PHAGLE-THE FURELGN OFFICES AND THEIR USES—JONATHAN THE ONLA KLSDEOI.

Ir is one of the womlers of the time how Mereantile or Commercial Agencies could establish themselves and prosper on this site of the Athantic, when public oppinion would not sulfer them to be phanted in may comutries, or attain separate vitality in any, on the other side of the Oeean.

In the British Islands they were not permitted to organize a List or report Credits or Standings ; and when, in 1872, they attempted, in view of the large California trade with $\Lambda$ ustralia, to phant themsel ves in Mellonrne, the people of that Colony drove then ont ignominionsly. Notwithstanding these effective exhibitions of feeling, a weak system of correspondence was inaugarated by Mckillop © Sprague Co., J. M. Bradstreet \& Som, and Dm, Barlow \& Co. in two or three Emropen Cities; aul those firms were put on their "good behavior" to let all British and Enropean Citizens severely alone, and confine their attention to Americans.

The Foreign Oflices of the American $A$ gencies are, therefore, used, like the ILome ones, to operate on American traders only. They are not suffered to speak-would not be permitted to speak -of the subjects and people in sight of their windows, in either Franee, Germany, or the British Ishads. Brother Jonathan is their exclusive resonree at home and abroad.

The fact is not flatering to mational pride. Is the American Citizen the sole Trader or Merelant who will permit himself to be tried at home by these self-constitnted tribunals of chamacter; followed beyond sea by their underlings; and harassed by their impertinences and exactions, everywhere? Either the human race recuires this protection from his dishonesty, and he concelles the
neecssity, or he is condowed with less self-assertion and independence, in affiais of Commerce, than Jolm, Pat, Sawney or P'ierre, and is content to have every one intermeddle with his affairs who maly desire to make a trade of doing so. Howerer we essay to exphinin his forthearane, foreigners will fall hack, at lats, on his conscionsiness of rpecial depravity, or his national bluntness of feeling.

Our National, State, Railroal, and Municipal lomas are never effected through information of the $\Lambda$ gency sort. Special Agents go out ; other Agents or Attorneys are sent here to inquire on the gromed into the seenrity of propesed investments; and the ofliee of the Agencies is therefore reduced to that of prepared detectives in the lighter transactions between tirms and individuals dis and trens Athantic. In these dealings, which onght to be on a plane of exuality between the respective mationalities, the home Anerican is always the inguired abont, never the inquirer; and the purpase of the forcign oftices can, therefore, only be to exerrise in London or Paris the same profitable surecellance over our cilizens which the Parent $\Lambda$ gencies render so remmerative in this comintry. As the American is the only man who submits to it in his native lind, it is fitting, perlhaps, when his business lies abroad, he should be mate to pay toll again, or take the consequences.

Rightly or wrongly, no business man or firm having foreign relations can wholly afford to disregart the significmee of the geographical position of these foreign branches. An unfarorable rumor, however started-even if started to be silenced on proper inducenent-obliges the inducement to be fortheoming. Among his acepuantances, a man with average grit and sufticient capital may do business in a storm of detraction. Abroad, a whisper is ruinons; and he is inconsiderate of his interests who does not purchase silence or buy encominus.

Our own impression is that these foreign branches are not growing in favor, and camot become permanent, self-sustaining estabisisments. Thair main revenue has aleays been collected on this side of the water, from the chuss of persons who desire decoys to credit on the other side; and they are so generally suspected now by British, French, and German Merchants, on aceount of reeent ocenrrenees, that their usefulness, even to the framdulently disposed, must, before long, come to ime end. Their only duty will be purely scenic and spectacular. In the show business every wagon
ndepen. Picre, irs who ssay to his confeeling. ns are Special inquire and the epared viduals , be on bome r: and exerer our in this to it in abroad, es. oreign of the orable proper tinong al may inons; rchase re not aining ced on decoys d now recent posed, ill be ragolt
and low adds to the clieet of the comaleade. In the Ageney business every oflice is an advertisenent. When, howerer, in the former calling, the mudienco discover that the beasts and performing amimals hear an ahsime proportion to the rages and conveganes, they incest in nor more tickets for thet circhs. By parity, when the foreign man of trade will no bonger bo deecived, mad the fradulent trader here can prowe no benetit, the foreign offices will be dippensed with ats mere advertisings lusuries, cheap indeed, but valueless for revenne in the New Word or the Old. Jonathan will then cease to supply Europe with a stamding proof of his wamt of confidence in limself. liesides, Busketshops ne profitless when exposed to the authorities.

## CILAPTER XIV.

DO 'IIE AGENCIES CONTRLBUTE TO, OR LESSEN, PANICS IN TRADE ?

Tue panic of 1837 is explaned in various ways. Some say the Stock speculations of men like Nicholas Biddle, Jacob Barke, J. W. Bleceker, and Samnel J. Beebe-the king operators of ten years preceding the catastrophe-were the efficient eause. In support of this theory they contrast the great fluctuations in the farorite Stocks of the day, and give the following examples:

Nor. 25, 183.4 Aug. 2in, 1835.
Morris Railroad. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . \% $^{0}$ 200
Marlem Railroad. .................. . . $6 t$ 105
Dry-Dock Bamk.................... . $118 \quad 145$
Delaware and Inudson Canal. . . . . 22 2 113
An adrance so purely speculative indicated "corners" worthy of comparison with the worst of our time; but mere Stock specnlation could not have produced the wide-spread destruction of 1837.

Our own explanation takes a more commercial turn. Forty millions had been invested in the purchase of wild land in the fiscal year '35-6! The process of locking up private capital in unproductive land had been going on for years. The Railroal system, then just beginning to draw to itsclf, in the hope of future profit, private means and publie credit both, had succeeded in absorbing forty millions more. Other sehemes of internat inprovement, Camals, Tumpikes, ete., had, to the extent of fifty millions for the former, and twenty-five millions for the latter, absorbed labor and resourees "in drafts upon posterity," leawing Bonds and Serips ia the place of the (for all immediate purposes) destroyed values. Comnting the Bank Bonds, there were at least $\$ 185,000,-$ 000 of artiticial representatives of removed or unproductive values
in the comntry, and, coincidently, a great shrinkage in proportion to population of productive agricultural labor. A lax eredit systeni extended from Emrope to Americel and permeated every condition of life to an enomons extent. Men worked less and "indulged" more than ever before. The erisis came with the defective harvests of '36. When Flon' was worth $\$ 22$ per harrel in Chieago, twenty days of excessive rain destroyed the crops; and the West-so called-which, it, was hoped, woul! come to the rescue, failed for a hundred millions, and brought the rest of the country tumbling down with her. In three years, according to Medbury, sixty Banks sank out of sight, dragging $\$ 132,000,000$ into the vortex, and out of an aggregrate indebtedness of $\$ 40,000,000$ the Creditor Class conld not realize over one cent on the dollar, the rest disappearing in collectors' fees, brokers' commissions, and the costs of Courts, Lawyers, and Juries. The sinking of active capital in wild lands ; the negleet to cultivate arable lands in proportion to growth of popnlation and trading needs; the withdrawal of the labor which should have gone to productive uses from them, and its diversion to heaping up dirt for futnre railroads, and sinking ditches for future camals, prepared the cominty for the catastrophe; and the elements, as if teaching the lesson that Nature should not always be relied on to compensate for any unwonted dependence on her, precipitated the disaster and made it miver:al.

Whatever explanation, howerer, be the true one, the $\Lambda$ gency system had its birth shortly af er the Panic of 97 ; and the periodical Trade panics since that time have oceurred in presence of its contimons development, and as if in derisive commentary on its pretensions. If its claims were well fomde l, trade panies wonld have been reduced or impossible ever since 1550 , when it clamed to embare the greater part of the commercial class. As matter of fact, they have been constantly shortening the period of their reenrence and extending the area of their destructiveness. Of two things, one : cither the $A$ gencies have not served the purpose of their origin in giving correct estimates of hasiness risks, or the trading body has disregarded their advice, and either credited when it shonld not, or injurionsly refused to do business when it might credit safely and profitably. We do not argue post hoo crgo propter hoc, but we say that if we find commercial panics
increase in manber, volmme, and intensity in the fresene of a Gy:tem which chams to afford protection against them by combling business to be comducted on a bationatly safe basis, we camot eseape denying the eflemey of the system or admitting that it is not followed. Bither is true ; and either leaves the system, we were about to saly, a frame on subsubers or a deception to the commmity.

Their diflicolty does not end with this dilemma. If they do not comvery a reliable basis for thathe, if they are not generally credited with doing so, why do they persist in urging umeliable ratinge on the publie and foreing a market which the enstomers own combluct shows to be irksome and valucless? Are they Phack-mailers-cocreers of others' money, giving no equivalent, of right belonging to them? Certainly the persistent tender of a valucless commorlity to our eitizens, acempranied with the opportmaty of rendering the commodity amoying and mischievons if not pmrchased, is a shopicions methor of livelihood, especially when it is remembered that the stamding, chatacter, and worldly eredit of others than themselves are the exchase subjects of sale. If it be not Plackmailing, it is assuredly not commerce. There is such a thing as a purely sentimental traflic in liedies amd Antigues. We shonld eall it highway robhery, however, if the eollector eflected an exchange for grold at the mazale of a pistol.

But the regular publication of Agency Reports is the introhuetion into Trade chamels of an afimatively distmping and injurions element. Disregarded, in the main, at and near the residence of the Merchant whose seredit is rated, well or ill, acemately by guess-work, or the reverse by design, the Irinted Reports must have the eflect, at a distance, of putting cantion aslerep amb antesthetizing suspicion. Suppose twenty-five thonsmad SubscribersMerchants, Mamfacturers, Traders, and Wankers-in the principal commercial centres are sated tosecure and preserve their subserip)-tions-that is, as they would wish to le-and an egnal or greater number are rated so as to make the:n andons to be rated better by subseribing: we have fifty or more thoneand men, in the ehief seats of commeree, margified or diminished in capital and credit for reasoms wholly apuert firom. Tirede reasoms and at variance with the natural ebs and flow of commereial affais. The actual condition of business is travestied, year in and yen ont, ly anti-
ficial one. $\quad$ eonstantly adive and acruresive interest is tampering with the weights and mensures of rerlit and capital. If the seller does not wholly believe in or act on them, le is not int to totally werlook them, and is more or lese, ahthomen monemsemely, likely to aceept and be influenced by them in some degree. This is the first disturbance of Trade. If we add to this that the capital ratings of the Reports represent, in the catie of son.(110) names, a variable excess over the minimmon calpital three and a half times greater than the minimmo of the Ratings, and vastly in cexeess of the cestimated census wealth of the whole comitry, we ser, at once, that the Agencies interject asecond element of miscalcolation, also necessarily jujurious and misteading. But when we know that the Irinted Latings of Cipital are constantly circmated by the three Agencies to 30,000 Subseribers, while the Seeret Leport:, designed to modify them, are never publicly sent out ; that the bane is sold and seattered broadeast, and the antidote, real or pretended, is lorked $n$, in the Ageney archives to be shown to wthers than the persons affected, mily when specially applied for, we need no furthor proof that in proportion to the growth of the Agencies must be the growth of dangerons trating, and consergently of Trade panies-the tirst-bom of inconsikerate Alventure.

The panic of 18.5t was pecipitated by the loss of a Californit stemmer, which threw the house of Paige, Bacon \& ('o. into smo pension, and so unsettled eonfidence in others that the single erent arsumed the dimensions of a mational calanity. If we eonsider the nsual risks taken by Traders, the narow margin of true profit, and the inevitable losses, we shall find no dillientty in believing that the additional errors and losises brought about by Agency misintormation, in even one year, greatly execed in volume the freight of any dozen ressels that ever sailed the sas, or the capital of any dozen traling firms in the Cnited States. The erowing dependence, too, of one Trade interest on every other enlarges the area of inluene and danger, while, within the special Trate most directly concemed, a surprising sutpension cartes within itself the ranses and oceasions of a series of others, each more alarming and colamitoms than the last. The suspension of one bamk or Trust Company creates a rm, more or less, on a dozen Banks. The unnecessury, mexpected, and extea business losses caused by Agencies are, of
all others, the most apt to astomish and dismay merchants, and to ercate a partial or general panic in the line.

The preceding pages have barely tomehed the massi of losses eansed, within the personal knowledge of the writer, in a few eities in a brief period by one $A$ gency, and the list might be almost in. finitely extended if space permitted. We can only instance an agfravated additional example of the same kind, which has just fomml its way into Conrt.

About $\$ 10,000$ or thereabonts, in prep, of a New-O Olems merchant was offered in Montreal in connection with an adrantageons hargain to a merchant of the latter city maned J. A. Converse. Ie applied to the Montreal oflice of Don, Wiman \& Co for special information, stating the facts. The Agency, after some delay, gave him special assumance that the dreavee was frool for abmost any amomit. The bargsin was effected mater this advice, and the Montreal merchant placed the Notes in the Collection Burean of the Agency for collection. The Collection Burcan, within a few days, and ignomat of the advice given by its Company, retumed the Notes as valucless, and reported to the merchant that the NewOrleans traker had failed monthis before!

Here was not alone the gross neglect to inguire, and resulting ignorance, such as we have s! - It to be nomal with the Agencies, but the exercise of a special effort to procure the truth resulting in a loss of $\$ 10,000$ to Mr. Converse, whose damages may be recoveral in the Courts, but whose serions loss must have prodneed in his line of trading many conserpential losses, and perhaps failure to others having relations with him.

This ocenrence-only one of many similar ones which onr space does not permit us to detail-was no doubt the predisposing canse of the mgent haste with which the "New $\Lambda$ grement," referred to in a former chapter, was presied on the attention of managers, and the old one surreptitionsly withdrawn and caneelled. The $\Lambda$ gency, aceustomed heretofore to mere suits for Libel with incidents of Damage, was maturally abarmed at an action secking to recover losses arising from false information; and it songht to interpose between itself and an incritable Bankruptey, for this canse, a donble-dealing contract which protected it from the eonserfuences of an almost miversal ignomace. Under the last, or "New" Agreement, the $\Lambda$ grency has secured a double purpose,
allul to
lusses w cities host in. : an agr as just

## ns mer-

 tageous werse. special $y$, silvo sit :lly and the reau of a few turned New-sulting encies, ting in ecoverin his lure to $\mathrm{h}_{1}$ onf posing t," reion of 1 c:arLibel seckongrlit or this a the ist, or rpose,
 line, if it shonld chooses, with framdulent thaders with impmity.

What is 10 prevent the hapening of smeln a frand as lasis $\mathbb{E}$ Co. perpetrated on Wall strect in fsifi, if :my momber of any uf the $A$ gences were indued, in view of the jresent want of re-ponsibility under the new arrecment, to enter into an armagement los its repetition! Ross \& (Co established themselves in the viennty of Wall strect at the time mentioned, and secured, le means which may be reatily comprehemer, Arency indorsement. With its ats-
 Having a moderate ambition, this sum satislied them, and they net about jossessing it in their own right. Konwing that we had an Extradition Treaty with Bural, they dhatered a selooner for omo of the ports of that conntry, set suil on a Saturday eveniner with the treasme, and paid sen, 15. Komewhere in the (inlf of Mexios the eaptan conceived at desire for a lo. or share of the pharder, and cexated one hamwed thomsmal dollars. Rosis of ('o, paid it. The vessel amd treasure landed; the indorish Bankers have not sine been heard of, and the deceived depsitons fasial duictly intu the procession of Arency dupes.
 cam, Sherman \& Co., Jay Corke \& Cu., Howes \& Macy, and ohthers, when they pretended to rate them at all, the last Panic, muder Which we are still laboring, would not have spread so far or struek so deep; but rating them as they rlul, in "Culimital Credit" and with " Unlimited Capital," they spead a net for their patrons, and rembered disaster more disastrons by lulling inguiry.

At the best, Thulde in the 「"nited States, ever since the close of the war, has been easily affected by momanatively smadl dietud). ancos. Sixty thomsum looks, jesuch hatf yearly and quarterly in
 of 8 on, 000 , would seem to supply a suftieient explanation and to affer at reasonable solntion for many motoward vicissiturdes in the business of the Cnited States and Camat Panics have errown out of lesser influences; and it is our belief that the $\lambda$ gencies not omly do not assist to give stability and security to Trade, but that they always and everywhere unsettle commercial relations just in proportion to the attention which they attract.

## CIIAPTER XV.

DO THE AGENCHFS MAKE THE CORRECTIONS WHOCH THEY CLAJM


Fivas since the writer annomed his intention to introdnce the public to the interior of the $\lambda$ gencies the latter have shown great alacrity in receiving corrections of their reports. Wanting other information, they are ghal to take the merchants estimate of himself, amb, cager to be ride of the responsibility for grossly false or malicious statements already gathered or published, they promise amends and place the indignant merelant, to oll apperances, just as much alowe his deserts as they had previonsly placed him below them.

They are ats considenate and accommodating in all this as one of their own canvassers who, exhansting his cloguence in vain to get astatement and a subseription, recently informed a city merchant (a Mr. Wronkow) that he would be obliged by the loan of five dullars. But these appearances are misleading and designed to mislead. For one injured and misepresented man who will call on them for a correction a dozen will neglect to do so, or remain ignorant of a reason for incuiring except as this book may suggest it. It is not yet moderstood ly business men that the best public ratings in the Reference Books are often only cloaks hehind which lurk the most damaging reports ; and that while ratings may remain constant, the private reports may be variable and contradictory, and rice erose. Persons satisfied with their matings, and not learning their stutns on the Plack Lists from us, will not think of calling ; whereas those who do call, with excerpts from the Black Lists, will he promised, and will apparently receive, an immediate correction on the Printed Reports, with many verbal phacating apologies for libel. But the old record will remain in the Books; will be circuluted from the Branch Offires ; and will be real with the complatinants' "say so " every time the latter is requestcal, for ycars to come-just as the sceret reports of some of our
must honorel merchants contain, within twenty lines of writing, details of pemely imaginary and scandalonsly maticious changes of fram and erime alleged to have been committed thirty years ago: The new report is added, indeed, as the man's opinion of himself ; the libels at was meant to correct remain too, to be read in every Branch Oflice in the United States, Camala, and Europe, and to go down and out with the modification, as the only "outside," and therefore rontrolling, estimate of the eapital, credit, and daracter of the affecter? mereliant. The $A$ gencies eseape punishment for wronge done ; the merchant groes about his business; lut the first inguirer at the agency will here all that ever was written of him read on request, just as if no complaint had been made or anemdment and reparation had been promised.

The erasme from the secret record of the offensive statements in the personal presence of the libelled, both in the principal and Branch offiese, would alone destroy the offensive matter and correct the agencies' habit of perpetuating the wholly false ame the half true indiscriminately. This has never been done-the agencies preferring to deceive the injured by an amiahle exterior, a penitent expression, and an abundance of lies.

They think the present agritation only a storm after all; and they hope to duell it and reach quieter times by being " all things " to all men," and protesting they meant no harm while fatally stabbing reputations or imperilling the suceess of a lifetime.

To show the dovetailing' of old slanders in new reports, and the system adopted of reading them out together, we select the instance of a well-known Builder in New-York City, condensed from the Black List of Dum, Barlow \& Co. from June 1861 to 1874. giving also the names of persons and firms to whom this epitome was read at the periods heremuder, and the Branch offices to which the same was transmitted.

Vol. XI., PAGE 243, NEW-YORK CITY RECORD.
from the c, mint erbal phat ain in the al will be etter is reme of our we shown Wanting sestimate or grossly lied, they th appearsy placed his as one in vain to city merce lom of I designed tho will so, or rebook may it the best ks behind le ratings c and contings, and not think

[^4]"October lith, 15:2.-Is silil Drector and Stockholder in the B-National Bank; ${ }^{6}$ mbo In the New.York - Insmrmece Company. Owns valuable fam at ——, Coma., " and several valuable pleces of real estate fin thls elty. Ite say;s he is worth nearly a - half million doblars, white more consermatue men place him at from $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 200$," (0)0. Is wharp and shrewil, but inclined to be a little overreaching ; consequently be " is not popminr. Parties deallug with him should have their contracts clearly defined."

Ciffif-Syracuse Branch Ofllece.
tion-Albany Branch ofllec.
To61-Burr d Chlehester.
infl-C. F. Danbmam dico.
4N:S-Kquitable IIfe Assurance Soclety. 653-Tappan © Carr.

Vot. VIH., 1. 5is.


#### Abstract

 " buidiner on contracts, and has sluce acemmatated real estate variously estimated " worth $\$ 100,000$ to $\$ 300,000$. Is at present dohyr no aetive business. Is a Director " and Stockholder in the B- National Bank. Is regarded sharp, shrewd, and, his " previons listory shows, somewhat unserupulous, although it is thou, het that for \&2000 " to sis000 he would be a falr risk, and would doubtless settle if matters were clemrly " defined."


:394-Peoples' Bamk. 3028-E. Cole \& Co. Best-Damatt \& Brother.

5hel-Ilartis, Richmond de Schaffer. n901-1. Krutiua \& Co.

By Dum, Barlow it Co.'s own printed Report this wellknown citizen," who is not reliable," who "settled" and " did not settle," who is a " fair business risk for only $\$ 2000$ or $\$ 3000$ when clearly defined," is rated "J) 2 "- $\$ 50,000$ to $\$ 100,0010$-and grood credit! By McKillop of Sprague Co., $\Lambda$ 1, 1, 1 a- $\$ 750$, (ho0 to $81,000,000$-highest, undoubted commercial credit! By J. M. Bradstreet \& Son, A A, B B--superior business character and ability, and in excellent credit!

Nut alone is the contradiction of the report glaring amd maccomitable, but the reader must not omit to notice that the subjectmatter has passed from Vol. XI. back to Vol. VIII. of the Reports; sin that, even if the ageney allowed the error to be amended and crased from the last volmme, the derogatory matter would still remain on the earlier books, to be seen and used of all subseribers, on request.

Perhaps no class of persons are more persistently and contimonsly libelled than those engaged in competing with the collection lureaux of the $\Lambda$ gencies, and we find hostile reports of

- Nutional bank; mat ——, Comn., is worth nearly 1 $\$ 100,000$ to 8200 ,consequently he clearly telinct."

Co.
rance Soclely.
pubt worth over ed gool where a
kion. Contlnued fiously estImated Is a Dircetor hrewd, and, his Wh that for $\$ 2000$ ters were clenrly

Schater.
this wellnd " did not or 83000 10,000-and 1 a- $\$ 750$,redit! By is character g and unache subjectof the Ree anended would still ubseribers, the the colreports of
these firms and associations ruming throurh the volumes in every direction. The Merchants Law and Collection Association, Ulmim de lemington, John J. Watson \& Co., Cohn © Co., and othors, are industriously assaled becanse they, cach in their own way, lessen the product of the Agencies' collections; and it is to be huped that men like Watson and assuciations like the Mer. chants' Law and Collection Association will not rest content with mere contradiction, but will show our merchants and traders the best method of haviag every thing offensive and false indubitably erasen, as well as denied and exensed. The advantage of such example would soon crowd the brimch oftiees of the Agencies with clamorons subseribers and non-subseribers who have suffered for years, and these too-patient people would exact the same precatution against future wrongs to reputation and inpediments to business.

Lat it be understood that erasure is the ouly means of getting rid, for the time being, of erroneons and scandalons matter ; that to be thorongle it must be procured in the branch oftices as well a sin the principal oftices; and that persons affected should not rest until they had assured themselves by personal inspection that the true Black List-the most destructive and injurious reports-had really been exhibited to them and destroyed. Many have complaned and been put off. It rests with the readers of this work to secure effectual protection from at least the repetition of baseless rimors and groundless accusations.

The past wrong righted, however, what security can be devised for the future consistently with the existence of these Igencies? This is the true question. In the presence of almost immmerable libels and slanders emanating from certan of the persons employed by the $\Lambda$ gencies during the past thirty-four years, they have not been brought face to face with more than fifty suits, owing to their methods of seerecy and prompt compromise of threatened difficulties. These same precantions and readiness to arrest legal exposme of their system will be taken hereafter. Suits brought will be compromised; suits threatened will be anticipated by friendly ratings; proposed legislation will be lobbied down with money; and, unless this exposure bear fruit in some concerted action against the institution, vast sums will be continued to be foreed out of cowardly merchants, and private character will continue to
be at the merey of every one who has a point to make against an adversary or a business grief to gratify. Without private reports the publie ratings would bo yuickly discovered valueless, or friendly and misleading; so that the preservation of these reports is essential to the existence of the Agencies; must be persisted in from neecesity; and even if old libels are expunged, new ones must be written and uttered. The only true cure is in the hands of mercharts themselves. Set them refuse to renew their subseriptions wader such new argreement as Dun, Barlow is Co. tender, and lot the State Legislatures, under their influence, pas; laws compelling the $A$ grencies, under the penalty of fine and imprisonment, requiring every reference to a man's eredit, business standing, or private character to be open to the inspection of any eitizen who may consider himself interested. There is no hardship in this proposition. Whatever the Agencies hold out as subject to general sale onght to be subject to general inspection. If this requirement would be onerous to the $A$ grencies it would only be just to the public, whose characters are the staple of the $A$ gencies' speenlations and protits. If the Agencies shonld wege the needless publicity of this plan, we answer, only those will examine who are interested, as now ; whereas, not as now, the party more interested than all others, the reported, will have an opportmity of knowing what is said about him, and to whom it is satid. If it bo true, the Agencies will have sawed their subscribers from lose, and shonld stick to it as a portion of the venture, for which they are paid so handsomely; if it is false, it may be corrected as soon as known, and so save imperilled credit and assailed chancter from a slow, secret, and assassin-like destruction.

But how can the Agencies pretend to lessen the publicity of mefarorable matter? Why, it oceupies a great prat of the time of the $\Lambda$ gencies to give the names of subseribers who luave sceretly inquired about their neighbors, and these names are seldom refiused! That is to say, the $\Lambda$ gencies betray all parties in turn: incuirers to each other, and subscribers, for small and large yearly sums, alike.

For instance, if Oplycke, Terry \& Steele, or Evans, Peake \& Co., dry-goods, of New-Fork, wish to know if E. S. Jatfray d Co., II. B. Claflin \& Co., A. T. Stewart \& Co., or any other honse in their own or oth r lines of trade, have inquired about Clement,
against an ate reports lueless, or ese reports ersisted in ones must e hands of is subscrip o. tender, liws comisomment, miling, or y citizen irdship in subject to $f$ this rely bo just Agencies' needless who are interested knowing trine, the 1 should paid so ; known, a slow, licity of time of rectly inrfused! induiry sums, cake © © Co., ouse in lement,

Morton of Co., of Chimago, Jones, Warner of Co., of Philadelphia, or J. \& L. Seasongrood, of Baltimore, they will liarm the fient at once; and the enstomers may readily be inducel to elange their phace of trading ly a representation of the lest inguirer that the others had secretly inumired about them at the Ageney, mud had lost continlence in their eredit! We know that subseribers receive this information not only from the clerks, but are formally betrayel, on system, and not as an isolated fact of the busness. By this mems many ohl and good customers are lost to merehants, the memest and most knavish generally being sutceessful in phaying on the feelings of the solicitor for credit, and inducing him to withdraw from relations so derogatory to self-respect and business pride. If the Agencies do not regard the interest of merchants who apply to them in confidence, they camot put on a show of consideration when the publicity of the trader's standing only is at stake. They give another illustration of "straning at a guat and swallowing a camel." We know of dozens of sulseribers to the Agencies who lave lost in one year one handred times the amomet. of their subscription ly laving their inguiries disclosed to competing merchants, who took advantage of the circumstance to acernire new customers. The best eustomers, in fact, were generally the efficient cause of capidity; for who wonld desire a bad one? And when a good one could be got ly so simple means, who would hesitate to adopt them?

## CIIAPTER XVI.

THE RELATIONS OF AGENCIES TO NON.SUBSCRIBERS AND "STREET" RUMORS-(OULD CREDITS BE GUARANTEED AND BUSINESS PROFits made to depred more bxclusively on till amouncl OF SALES?

We lave heretofore manly addressed onrselves to Ageney subscribers, accustomed to see the Books, to rem the Notification Sheets, and to be brought into eontact with the Solicitors, Offices, or Collectors. Such a relation implies a certain anoment of experience; and we have taken this experience for grmentel, and written as if it relieved us from much of mere explanation and also a great many illnstrations. Every reader of this Book will have seen, in his own limited circle, dozens of proofs of ignorance, mistake, or malice ; every one who has applied for a "private report" at the offices has had an oppormnity of securing a taste of the silly, rotten, or rancid stuff which they dole out as carefully and solemuly as if it were honey from IIybla or the chrism of some tremendous religions rite; and every one who has met the "Credit men," Canvassers, and Collectors need not be told, at any great length, of their amenability to impression, properly made, their assiduity in urging threats under the disgrise of applications, and their readiness to receive, as honest supplement to salary, any loose change which the merelnant may desire to spare. For subscribers the usefulness of this work is only in showing that their particular experience is the result of a system which inevitably renders the same experience common and consequential ; and it would add nothing to its force if we were to pile example upon example of the efficiency of a five-dollar bill, the saving efficacy of a chest of tea, or the mollifying effect of one or more baskets of French wines, on these Agency spies. If each reader were to add, to the sample proofs supplied by us, his individual experience, a mass of incidents, corroborative of our statements, would be gathered sufficient to fill twenty books as large as this; and it is manifestly useless for us to go on
futher, page after page, in proving agan and again what, with the evidence adready in, and that posecssed in every street, town, village, and hamlet in the land, camot be questioned. We turn, therefore, to that vast boely of Merchants ame Traders who pacetically take little, if any, interest in the existence of the Agencies, on do not know of their existence at all ; who buy mud sell, sive and get eredit, on the icputation made or leamed in the grool ald way of the grood old time before Agencies existed ; and who may see no danger in the System simply becemse they have nover realized that it operates on them without their linomedely, Of this number more than 800,000 exist in the United States aml Camada; for the 30,000 suliseribers to the Agencies are really the only ones who make it a habit to learn how themselves are rated, how others are rated, or use the Reports to indulye in offorts to comtrol their own amel others' ratings.

Now, it is just among this great body of non-subseribers that the Agencies exert the most malign, becanse maknown, influences. The Subseribers get the Reference Books and learn what is printal abont then-if not, what is on the secret records. The nonsubseribers do not get the printed Reports ; have no mems of even suspecting what is said of them in the private records; and do bnsiness in perfect ignomince of the many ways of affecting their eredit and dealinges indnlged in by the three $\Lambda$ gencies and their Credit Raters and Detective Correspondents. A non-subseriber is refused eredit, or is placed on a low matgin of eredit by a wholesaler. He sees only an exereise of individual cantion in the circmustance. Me is suddenly called on to pay up by areditor from whom no such messuge is expected or apparently matural. He wonders at the novel urgeney, and pays up indiguantly, often at a sacritice. Ife is in the habit of exchanging surphs lines of stock with amother trader, and even this convenience is abruptly withdrawn. Ifo wonders at the variableness of men, amd still sets the ocenrenee duwn to accident or to inn "minftumend determination of his cotrader. The trine explanation is to be fomme in the rnk lumen omd. rencalculated interference with his memer by the igencies; and he either struggles with less protit or groes out of business momer a elond, withont discovering the fact in time to avert the ronsequences.

There is a sort of wild justice in having subseribers hurt by
their own instrment ; but it is certainly inequitable for the men who are either too respectful to enter into the leagne, or who have learned to do bosiness withont reference to such an aid, to be, as they really are, more hopelessly and anconscionsly thwarted and maligned than any other class of merehants. Whether they seck credit or mot, the Agencies rate them to induce subseription or gratify a spite. Whether they eonduct a cash trate or not, the Agencies daim the right to speculate in public print and private record about their affairs and character, and to cirenlate these speculations on the gromms that some one else's curiosity may be gratilied or their Book list swelled.

The $\Lambda$ gencies have conceived the idea of making a separate and profitable business for themselves ont of other men's mames and reputations, and it is apparently immaterial to them whether or not a third perion shomlid ever have occasion to desire information on the sulject. The "world is their oyster," and non-sub)seribers must take their chance of being accurately or inaceomately rated and criticised by every mendacious scoundrel who will render, gratuitonsly, his unworthy serviecs. They have the capital of a printing establishment; and other men's names most supply an opportmity for its profitable use while ink and paper and printers can be had. If $A$ gencies had any justification in phaying with the names of persons asking for eredit, they have none for doing so with traclers who seck no eredit. If they had any pretence of justification in instituting inquiry on the basis of a real application for confidence and trust, they have none for engrging in and pub)lishing one where no present purpose of trade is to be subserved - Where none ever may rise to be subserved. If they were infullible it might be hambess to tonst them with we privilege in either event; but, being fallible, why shonld the non-subscribing soo, 0000 merchants of the United States and Camada be compelled to unromge the risks attending their errors, for a purely hypothetieal fure interest?
The wrong and impertinence do not end here. The nom-sub)scriber who is territied by their assmption may think if he pay one year's sulseription all will he well. Not so! "'Tis the first step that conats," but mainly becanse retreat ont of the meshes call ouly be aceomplisherl at a risk which had better have been taken at the start-namely, of incurring their displeasire. If a honse is
the men or who 11 aid, to thwarted her they scription - not, the 1 private cse specmay be separate 's names whether informa-10n-sub)curately fill renpital of ply an I printig with - doing ence of ication pubserved infaleither 00,000 to $\mathrm{ml}-$ cal fu-n-subpay first eshes taken use is
satisfied with its rating, why should it refuse, not morely to pay at the same rate as the first fears sulseription, bat double the amount? If it be not satisfiel with its rating, then the greater reason exists why it should pay freely and generonsly any additional tax imposed on the succeeding subscription-day. Where at man of assured standing refuses phamply, at the first approach, to have anything to do with the system, he cam only be rated low or ignored; and the system is generally ghad to let him in on the cheapest rates of subseription, if he deign to apply. Where a trader voluntarily applies, or is casily persmaded to apply, either from an honest of framdulent motive, he is made to pay a full price the first year, and a constetntly increasing one fformords. One hundred and fifty dollats cntrance-fee in the larger cities may-often does-rm ur to $\$ 300$ and $\$ 500$ yearly after 2 or 3 years' association. The $\Lambda$ gencies well know that every dollar givento them is an inducement to the trader to keep up the comection for this period at least; and that, between the conscionsness of having thrown away so much money, the fear of heing worse rated in the event of a discontimance, and the hope of making profit out of the agency misrepresentation, many of those who enter the lists will strugerle to meet the exaction for a few years. By and by, however, they see that roncessions bring no relief : they mast refnse to pay at all, or pay some time. $\Lambda$ fter the expiration of the period mentioned they dorefuse, and drop ont of one argeney only to find anohler at the door. The method taken to rom up sulseriptions is adroit and matmal. A canvasser says to the merchant, "We rated " your business at so amd so last year, and you paid only so much. "Your capital is larger this year, and your business inereased. "You should be willing to pay a propertionate increaze of subserip"tion." The merchant does not wish to adnit either that his eapital or business is less than during the past year ; he hopes to have it regarded more. Ile does mot contiouliet the eanvasser, therefore, but takes the hint and pays ont his money, year after year, mutil its exceeding anoment startles him and determines him to break with the monster, at whaterer cost.

Some business men and firms are often imbed to snbereibo to the three $A$ gencies in order to have their onen matingsand reports in each institution acree with the other ; and where the crednlons merchant, unfaniliar with Arency intrigue, find; mifomity in
their sepuate estimates of the same traler, he attributes it to
 ever, is so cosity an experiment that companatively fer influge in it.

Any subscriber, paying yeuly form Slat to \$5000, who shombld volunteer a biassed opinion eonespoing a trader of whom he prestmes to know, whether a rival in trade or otherwise, will find it readily acepped and permanenty recorded as the prevailing lelief, in freference to the opinion of a subseriber paying a less smin, or who does mot pay the Ageney at all. Herein is where $^{\text {and }}$ subscribers with doubtal motives suceced in impressing on the Agencies, atetively, their own impressions, real or pretended. A firm is fomm by its sival to be moderselling the market or itself, having bought to greater advantage, at mone propitions times, and in greater quantities. The rival need only say to the Agency that the shrewder lim is madording its stock mader market rates, and a suspicion of smargering, or an intent to abseomd or go out of business, is a natumal conclusion. So, liy these methonds, the sulbseriber has his satisfaction of an emmity or a rivalry, the Agencies are paid handsomely, and the better merehants go to the wall in the long rim.

But let us fake the case of a merchant heavily interested in a debtor on the bink of bankruptey. He wats to mave whatever he can and reduce his losses loy drawing offers into the catastrophe. Ile has only to report to the Agencies his failing customer favorably. The insolvent increases his stock and enlanges his liabilities. In due time le tumbles into limkrupery ; his assets show : diminution proportioned to the amome peeid mrantime to the friemelly erelitur repuring. There is mothing strange in this prococrling. Every wru eredit to an insolvent assists hin to leseen his liabilitics to his old cereliton ont of his now stock ; and an merchant, having a doubtal deltor on hand, would stand in his own light if he failed to speak well of him to all inguirers, mome perticularly the Agracis. The consequence is that insolvent men's names are made eflicient, by $\Lambda_{\text {gence }}$ interference, to pread and assure greater disaster to the many, for the benclit of the one, or the few, in the recret.

White on this sulyed of the gencral circulation given to false information, designed ly others for individual injury, wo shond
ntes it to 'his, howwinlulge
(000, who of whom wise, will prevailing ing a less is where is on the medel. A or itsolf, 11; times, c Agency Ret rates, 1r go ont , the sultAgencies e wall in
ited in : whatever astrophe. er favorial, ilities. show : o to thr this pro6 lessen 1 a meriis own pere por: men's :ad and one, or should
not werlook the fact that the late Aet of the New-York lergishature, enacted to punish the anthors or circulators of false rmmors intended to influence the "Street" or masettle confidenee, might be turned tro good ancount on the $\Lambda$ gencies, not as $\Lambda$ gemeies, but on the individual proprietors, on fit oceasion. If the law is worth anything it should be suflicient to support a prosecution in any one of the thonsand flagrant instances aforded by $\mathrm{A}_{\mathrm{g}} \mathrm{en}$ ey ervor ; and if it should not be sufficient as it stansls, the insufficiency onght to be demonstrated, so that the next Legislature may apply a more stringent and eflicient remedy by additional legindation. The prosecution of a single individual "rmon-stanter" would be at hanting of the wren when the atmosphere is alive with the ligger and baser liards of prey from Ageney cyries. We hear of two"stock" rumors, reecntly sent out with firm rejerts, which onght to be instantly ventilated in the Criminal Conts, and, we trust, will he.

The Agency syatem having leen shown incficient in its whole scope and purpose, ats well as in its practical working, the rucstion recors, is there no way of increasing the eertanties of merdants and traders in ordinary businces transations, of a sudden, and without putting these classes to the safest of all methonls of in-quiry-special individual examination?

It occurs to the writer that a seheme of Commercial $\hat{A}$ surance or Guarantee of Business laisks might be mafely tried in the great cities. It would require, when fitly developerl, large capital, but, we think, not more at the start than combld realily be got by calling out the latent resonrees of each city, and leavinus every Company which might be formed a local field to operate in, iodependently. By limiting end Company's operations to a eonvenient district of territory, it would be catabled to seeme for its own use exchasively, and fop the direction of its own investment outy, the lest attamable cotimates of cerelit and eapital of Business men, and would have the very highest inducement, selfinterest, to juilge aceurately and invest ramtionsly. A tanfif of charges for eontracts of (inamateo might be ardopted ; mombinable risks would be refased ; the statements of seckers for eredit comld be redneed to writing and sworn to; if false, the Company would have commative civil or criminal remedies at its disposal ; the wholesaler whose risks were aceepted would seenre a gramantee of
prompt payment ly the Company, for a reasonable sliding percentage, and, while the honest trader cond find an increased facility for legitimate purchases, sellers might rely on the gnarantec Company having the highest attainable certainty before it beeame surety. Given a certain eapital and good management, it seems highly probahle that an Institution of the kind mentioned in each city would, from comparatively small beginnings, soon supply a true gange to eredit, by becominy a part of the credit process, and profitable or ruinous to itself, according to its own accuraey of estimate.

Such a selheme possesses, in reality, several features which the Agencies claim, but do not possess. It assists in giving security to lonsiness dealings. It eliminates reeklessuess of statement; for a good risk brings profit, and a bad one loss, on the Guarantor,--the seller escaping in either event. The information on which riskis are taken is collected by the rish-taler, and preserved by him from outside partics as his permanent capital. Whether aceurate or inaceurate, it is harmless to the man who does not seek credit; and it is absolutely sacred in the instance of the man who is asking aredit. Every honest and honorable ond of business in commercial dealing is attained, and private character is even less disenssed than it is now by the Agencies every discoment day in our private Banks.

The common experience of business men leads them to expect in the safest eredit trade a yearly loss of from five to ten per cent on their active capital. If they could be assured against this loss, or the possibility of a greater, Trading would become a Science and Panies impossible!

The prollem to be sulved is, therefore: Conld capital see, in the experiment suggested, enough of profit to protect itself?

The same thing is done now, in a small way, by some of the better class of Commercial Travellers. Where a bad debt is made muder their recommendation, the loss is dedueted from their salaries and Commissions on grod ones. So long as we find individuals ready to assume this responsibility, and able to make money by doing so, why should we not believe the like might be done by Guaranted Companies, in the leading Cities of the States and Canada? There is eren a better illustration at hand. The Cotton and Tobaceo firm of Fatman of Co., Broad street, New-York, with
sliding perrased facility rantec Comit became it, it scems med in each n supply a process, and accuracy of
which the security to ent ; for a intor,-the hich riwls himfirom ceurate or redit ; and is asking commerdiscussed $1 \cdot$ private
to expect per cent this loss, Science
ce, in the
c of the is made : salarics lividuals y by doone by d Canaon and ह, with
hanches in varions cities of this comutry and Enrope, hamdle a businces of wer $\$ 20,000,000$ a year on Guarantees from their Agents and Correspondents. They make immense sums yearly, and do not lose a dollar. The English houses of John IIenry Schroder \& Co., worth $£ 12,000,000$, and Freeling it Goshen, worth $\$ 3,000,000$, and the Bremen ILouse of D. II. Watgen \& Co., worth $\$ 15,000,000$, guarantee orders. Fatman \& Co. buy for cash, and their Exchange is the first on the New-Fork market, being readily and cagerly taken by any of our Banks. If Schroder \& Co. can gramante orders enabling Fatman \& Co. to pursue an absolntely safe business on a time margin of thirty days, why conld not Ginarantee Companies, selecting men of the best knowle lige and talent for each trade to assist in their mamagement, do the sume? The salaries paid credit men in large Commercial Ifonses are enormons in the agrgegrate. These would be largely saved to the Mereantile communty. The Guarantee Companies would afford greater facilities to their employees for the exhibition of the best judgment, and promotion for the best fidelity. In addition, the want matnow yealy dran of the Agencies would be done away with, and merchants would find themselves gramanteed on every credit at an expense of only a small proportion of their present Profit and Loss Aecounts. The effect on trade could not be otherwise than favorable. The trader who conld not safely be gruaranteed would be obliged to either confine himself to small purchases for cath, if no seller could be found speculative enongh to take a credit risk, or ${ }^{\text {g }}$, ont of business. This wonld tend to weed trade of men who, from lack of fimancial responsibility, should not be in business, and would discourage intended frand from a useless exertion. It would, we think, restore commerce to a healthe condition. The credit-seeker, if solvent, conld have no motive in concealing lis true status from the Company, knowing from its claracter that an honest disclosure by him could only innre to lisi benefit, and woald not be perverted and cirenlated to his own detriment, as is now daue by the Agencies, to promote the interests of a rical trader.

At present every merehant practically insures himself. The Agencies induce more losses than profits and eschew responsibility. They keep the word of promise to the ear and break it to the hope. You pay for their pretended information. When it turus
ont erroneous, they show you that, by the very terms of your sub-seription-contract with them, the men whom they employ or inquire from dre your oren Agents, and that $\Lambda$ gencies are not responsible for their accuracy or inacouracy! Now, if the mercantile classes really insure themselves on all credits, so far as the $A$ gencies are concerned, and yot support the latter at great cost to themaches, it seems reasonable to expect that a seheme which would remove the modicum of risk, and reduce the useless expenditure at the same time, would he hailed as a public benefit. We make these suggestions to anticipate the objection that, having demonstrated the inntility of the Agencies, we lave no remedy to substitute which would partially or wholly relieve the trader from special inguiry in regard to customers at a distance. The idea is neither novel nor original with us. We find it entertained by f.ver ' $e^{\prime \prime}$ mercantile firms, and the same principle is practically ill. " $\mathrm{e}_{\mathrm{a}}$ ly a firm in Cleveland, in a limited trade sphere, and with perfect suceess. These gentlemen grarantee, for a small per cent, all? approved eredits in a particnlar line, and have made money by duite se. Why conld not a series of eompanies do likewise in reference to all Trades? Another example is before us. In New-York an association has just been formed, by some of the most experienced capitalists, to guarante contracts of Insurance, ete., and there is reason to hope that at an early day the prineiple will be extended to many other classes of contracts by the same company. The plan is sketehed to reflect the opinion of experienced business men rather than our own ; and while we express the possible arguments in favor of such a project, we do not commit ourselves to it, for our experience of the Commercial Agency System has taught us the innumerable opportmities of misapplication which even the best-devised arrangement might entail.

This disenssion has brouglit us face to face with a circumstance too often overlooked by merchants. How many business men lave fully considered the danger arising from the present method of detailing to strangers and underlings of the several agencies, in our large cities, the amount of negotiable securities on hand or the quantity and kind of merchandise, of great value and small bulk, in their stock? It is a well-anthenticated fact that many burglaries have oceurred immediately after the delivery of these detailed statements to agency reporters! A merchant wishing to confirm
of your sub)ploy or inare not remercantile re $\begin{aligned} & \text { gencies }\end{aligned}$ t to themhich would xpenditure
We make ng demondy to subader from he idea is tained by practicalhere, and small per ave mado es do likejefore us. me of the insurance, principle the same $f$ experipress the commit ney Sysplication

## unstance

 css men method ncies, in or the all bulk, hurglarletailer enfirnhis assertions of available assets, or requested to do so, gives the names of Stocks or the character of Bonds held by him, and, to remove all doubt, brings them ont of his safe and shows them to the inquirer. Or he takes the searcher for knowledge over his premises and points out to him the most valuable kinds of stock, in bulk, or broken for custom. The dullest rascal could not fail to learn aids to crime, for himself or confederates, in these thoughtless disclusures. And certainly, when we learn that the police authorities of severall large cities are diseevered to have long been in league with the choice spirits of the various departments of Statutory Crime, we shall not be astonished to learn that more than one Bank, Insurance, and private robbery has heen perpetrated to get hold of port:able assets, stocks, bonds, and moneys, which the owner had carefully kept within lis sole personal knowledge until the agency spy hadalso seenred the important detaits of time, amount, chaacter, and place. How few clerks are fully apprised, from day to day, of the state of their employer's capital, except in a small bnsiness too limited to afford chance of reserve! Large concerns may have one or more confidential men, outside of the partners, who are fully informed ; but the general run of employees is kept in the dark, as a rule of discipline if not wholly as a matter of preeantion. Aud yet the Business Classes have heretofure foolishly: opened their insiness secrets to every poorly-paid Tom, Dick, and Ifary who presented a Mercantile or Commercial Agency card and demanded to share in the confidenees withheld from well-known and, in other respects, fully trusted servants. A Guarantee Company or Companies conld entail no such danger as this on their patrons without suffering themselves. The agencies do not guard against it; and if they could, have no interest in lessening the risk by employing only the best-known eitizens, and at compensative salaries. Our advice to Merchants is: refuse details of stock or assets to incuirers until fully satisficd that the inquirer is not making an inventory which might reach and assist the principal eracksmen of the neighborhood.

## CIIAPTER XVII.

THE LEGAL DIFFICLLTLES OF THE AGENCIES-HOW THEY STRIEE THEIR COLORS OR ESCAPE FROM THE FIELD-STRAWS FROM tIIE bar.

Ax institution so offensive and aggressive as the agency system very naturally ran athwart the reputations of honest business men at a very early period in its career. Started in 1840, as we have stated, Church, its first traveller, contrived to libel (amongst others) Taylor, Male \& Mmrdock, of Colmbus, Miss., and when the libel was diseovered these gentlemen sued the libeller for damages in the New-York Common Pleas. Chureh defenderl on the gromed that he was employed by certain New-Fork merchamts to "report" traders for them as their agent; that he reported plaintifls to Wolfe and Gillespie, two of these merchants, in a private and confidential letter; that he had never seen the plaintiffs, bore them no malice, and merely repeated what he had heard in reply to incuiry ; and that the printing of his report was done withont his personal supervision, and solely by his employers. Ite further clamed the commmication was confidential. For the phantiff it was contended that Chureh published the libel maliciously; that it was written to be published, if not "printed," and that it was not, and was not contained in, a privileged commumication. The case finally went to the Court of $\Lambda_{\text {ppeals ( } 4}$ Selden’s Reports, p. 459), which decided by a manimous bench that the report was not privileged, but sent the case back for a new trial on an exception to a ruling on the admissibility of evidence in the Court below.

The decision in Taylor et al. $w s$. Chureh embodies all the law learning on the subject of privileged communications up to that time, and contains the test which renders all more recent agency publications, if untrue (and, as some contend, even if true), unprivileged and amenable to legal restraint and both compensa-
tory and exemplary danages. The printing for general cirenlation, and in a manner which might reach parties having, or intending to have, no business relations with the trader reported, was held to be against public policy, and to sulbjest the reporter to such legal penalties as any jury might reasonably see fit to intlict. Since this decision, several eases have come beiore the Courts it:other States; but in all of these the dedication, by printing and circulating the reports, to general use, of these estimates of traders' characters, qualifications, and standing, has been uniformly held to take them out of the class of privileged communications, and to leave the writers, compilers, and utterers subject to civil and quasi-criminal remedies on behalf of the persons affected by them.

The reason of this rule of law is very phain. While a merchant should be allowed to employ a clerk or agent to learu for his own use the standing of a dealer proposing to have relations with him, it would be unreasonable and impolitic to allow the same thing to be done on the mere hypothesis that other merchants at some future time might have like reason to desire information. Such a purely speculative interest in a future possibility could not be safely conceded to give a present immunity to such communications. The trader reported might never ask for credit. No one, in that event, could have any substantial reason for inquiry, still less could any one justify a purely anticipative and precautionary inquiry designed for general circulation. Where the necessity for privileged communication ceases, the permission ceases also. But even if one or a dozen merchants really desire information about a person proposing to enter into business relations with them, this fact gives no right to them, or any one in their behalf, to place the information in such a manner that it might reach a non-interested person. In other words, the interest must be a present and existing one to justify any communieation designed to limit or curtail the chances of credit; and when this interest is satisfied, the qualified privilege lapses again, only to be revived by the occurrence of a new justiacation for it.

Judged by this standard, the whole Agency System, as now conducted by anticipatory inquiry and general publication, is practically at the merey of the Courts and the public. It is protected in no manner by the subseription system-a deviec intended to create an agency character for it-for the subscriber las no
present interest in any name in the book ; his ever having a future one is purely problematical; und it is certan he can never have any in eight or nine hundred thonsand whose capital is guessed nt and credit standing rated.

When the Court of Appeals determined that thirty-six sub)seribers did not justify the printing of seventy-five reports in 1846, it is very plain that thirty thousand could not authorize the use of several hundred thousand merchants' and traders' mames, with "estimates" and "ratings" picked up and attached by the agencies, for sale and circulation to whoever might choose to purchase. It is quite probable, too, that the contract of subscription itself is a mere mudum puctum, and will be so held when the question shall have heen squarely brought up. Fortunately for the agencies, their powers of coercion have been so wreat in other respects that they have had no reason to sut for subseriptions. They make no bad debts. Bat they camot have this luck always. Some one will break with them ; and we shall then see whether or not they will have the comrage to go into Court for redress. Our own opinion is quite decided that contracts eontemplating a general system of commercial inquiry and the publication of its results, without the consent of the individuals reperted, and wanting the element of a subsisting interest in the reported parties, as traders applying for credit, are void on the ground of public poliey, and will be so declared. Whoever shall start the issue will prove a public benefactor. As we have shown in other places, "the System" has a holy liorror of Courts of Law and Equity.

Its policy has therefore been, from the beginning, to keep out of Courts; to retain ownership in the Reference Books sent out and recall them, so that they could not furnish proof to injured parties; and to supplement the dangeronsly-published books with a privately communicated plan of Secret Reports, where libellous matter may be gathered and doled ont with greater impunity. In pursuance of this policy their elerks are instructed to read injurious details to "Principals only," or their confidential managers, meaning heads of trading houses and subscribers. Their contracts are drawn so as to make their clerks and informants sorvants of these " Principals," and they expressly require that the said Principals should not laye any remedy against them for insufficient, de-

Ig a future never have guessed at ty-six subts in 1846, the use of mes, witl the agenso to purlbseription when the nately for t in other seriptions. this luck 1 then see Court for racts conthe pubiduals rein the reid on the ever shall we shown ts of Law to kecp ooks sent to injurooks with ere libesmpmity. ad injurinanagers, contracts vants of aid Princient, de-
fective, or mistaken information. The "New Agreement" of Dun, Barlow © Co. is a fruitful sample of this ever-active cantion and desire for irresponsibility; and the condnct of all the agencies in settling, where compromise is possible, rather than litigating suits for damages, is a further proof of their judicions susceptibility to legal terrors.

For the purpose of securing the fullest information in relation to the recent or existing suits against the agencies in the Courts of the United States and Canada, we lately sent letters to the known plaintiffs or their attomeys. We have several responses in our possession, but wo can only refer to a few of them. The suit of Joln A. Converse, of the Canada Cordage Factory and Plaster Mills, Montreal, recently instituted, lais not yet come to trial, and Mr. Converse does not know how soon it may, but he is confident faverdict. Itis claim is for danages arising from the purchase of mercantile paper of a New-Orleans merchant on the asmamee of the agency, after special inquiry, that it was "per"feetly gool." IIe bought the paper, and placed it in the Collection Department of the same agency within a few days. Shortly afterwards the Collection Department informed him that it was worthless, and had been so at a time antecedent to the incuiry about the maker and the assurance of the agency that he was solvent and in grood credit! So palpable an instance of agency effort is not likely to reach trial, and we should not be surprised to learn that, as it produced the immediate oceasion for the "New Agree" ment," it had been settled by the ageney paying a romud sum in damages and compromise to Mr. Converse.

In response to a letter of ours of the 2Stle of Jtine, 1875, ILon. Francis Kernam, of Utiea, writes that the action for libel commenced by his firm against Dun, Barlow \& Co. "had been satisfactorily "adjusted without trial," and that there was " hence nothing in the "case to interest the public." Mr. Kernan concedes that the agency had made a " mistake" and circulated "an erroneons re"port;" hence we are at a loss to imagine how he comes to the conclusion that a "satisfactory settlement" leaves nothing to interest the public. Is it of no interest to the public to know that the ageney had made a "mistake"? Is it of mone tlat the agency had circulated wrong information? Is it a matter of indifference that the agency had been compelled to e.t its words
and pay $\$ 16,000$ to his client? Why, what would the learned Senator have the public interested in, if not the standing danger to business character in ugency "mistakes," in their opportunities of circulating "erroncous reports," mud in their eagerness to settle privately sooner than go before a jury of their countrymen? For our own part, we know of few things of more netual interest to the business public than just such facts. They are certainly more impertant than the pre ent intimate relations of Mr. Kernan's law partners with certnin of the agencies in this city since the " satisfactory settlement" aforestid.

From Missomi, where a Mr. Kinealey acted as attorney in an agency case some time ago, wo havo no direct information of the present condition of the controversy, but the silence is indicative of a settlement after the Utiea fashion. From a State Senator and late member of the Constitutional Convention we learn that an active antagonism to the agency iustitution exists in that State, and we conclude from his letter that, however the agencies may "hush up" the injured by free piyments, legislative action will be soon taken to render then responsible in a wider sense or keep them out of that Commonwealth.

An instructive instance of Ageney methods, with Attomeys nearer home, oecurs to us, and may be mentioned. A gentlemin on Staten Island, some time ago, requested a well-known criminal lawyer and ex-Judge to sue an $\Lambda$ geney in New-Fork. The legal gentleman was eonsiderate enongh to inform the proppective defendant, who forthwith took measures to get rid of the evidence agail:st it to be found on its Records. No suit was eommenced, and the legal gentleman is now the retained counsel of the prespective defendant, we are apprised, in any litigation which may be evoked by this publication !

A chapter on the legal relations of the $\Lambda$ gencies would be incomplete withont a reference to the late quarrel, by Chancery Suit, for $\$ 50,000$ and Injunction, between themselves. Dun, Barlow \& Co. claimed that Bradstreet \& Son had "pirated" some of their matter in Canada. Bradstrect denied the charge, and countered by alleging the like of Dun in Pennsylvania and other States. On the trial it appeared that Dun, Barlow \& Co. had invented a lot of towns and villages unknown to any Geography or Census, rated their imaginary merchants, and quietly waited for their competitor
to approprinte the discovery. They even swore the hater did so; and the controversy is still smouldering in Court, neither being anxions to fan it into publicity.

The trick was ronceived in tho best mamer, and showed a mutual appreciation of mutual weakness.

When the dead may be kept alive to swell a Reference Book, and City Directorics laid mader contribution withont compensatim, why, indeed, should not a few villages nud towns be invented? The device was also the least harmful of any practised. Merdhants who never existed conld not well be misrepresented. Traders who had never been born or christened, conld not easily be injured in credit or standing. And the Agency system, for the first time in its career, wats sure to be safe and certain to be honest.

Of the recently commenced, or threatened, litigations against the institution it is not timely yet to write at any length. The terror awakened is indieative of the depths to which they must sink into Ageney methods on the trials. One is for damages for charging a man with homicide commited in self-defence by another! A second is for charging higamy! A third for acensations involving a female's chastity! $\Lambda$ fourth is ly a partnership for charging forgery on one of its members! A fifth-but these suffice to show that the $A$ gencies are abont to meet other questions than those simply relating to business solvency, and must defend their pretension to disenss and assail private character, moder the guise of giving opinions concerning financial responsibility.

Tho eagerness of the Agencies to prevent legal reprisals was well illustrated to the writer, in an attempt to dissuade him from this publication, by a proposition to purchase his silenee. The suggrestion was met with contempt. When the resonree failed, their next dodge was a published "Card," proposing to every one, with whom the writer had commmencuted, to correct mistakes on application. Redress for the past, however, was not promised. Nothing was said :about showing to applicants the pricate reports upon which the public ratings were based, nor was it suggested that the nanes of informants would be given as a badge of good faith. This deceitful "Carl" was merely a "stop-grap" to gain time, while an investigation was in progress, to learn the extent of the writer"s acquantance with " bottom facts." If a "Card" were to he issued now, the chanees are altogether in favor of a more lite-
ral array of terms for the dissatisfied, and a corresponding reduction in subscription-rates.

Perhaps the very meanest act on the part of the startled traffickers in the good name of so many of our first citizens, was the malignant manner in which they commenced dismissing or shifting cherks who might have secured special acquantance with the Black Lists. The suspicion of being suspected was enough. The known opportunity to learn undesirable knowledge was sufficient to place under ban. A clearer confession of conscions weakness was never illustrated by a pretentions system, in the instance of its oldest and most devoted servants.

Besides this Carding, dismissing, and shifting process, another precautionary one was added. A secret circular-the trustiest weapon in the rusty catalogne of the system-was diep:atched to Branch office managers, informing them that the writer had got great store of facts already, and might be in league with the clerks in the various Branches to get more. Extreme watelffulness was enjoined. Letters were withheld; post-marks scrutinized; any symptom of inereased assidnity in labor was held of bad omen; and such a fluttering gencrally was never seen before since Coriolanus "fluttered the Volsci in Coriole." The unfortunate clerks were undecided whether to look sad or cheerful; to be active or remiss in duty; to speak or not to speak of the thmader in the Agency sky and the threatened blinding blaze of exposme. All these precantions came too late. The persons selected by the writer to unearth the hidden secrets of the Charnel House had closed their labors long before the System took exceptional precantion; and the writer intentionally gave the first alarm limself by informing injured subseribers and others, by letter, that they could learn what was said of them in the Reports, free of charge, on application to him at the Agency's comnters! So the "Secret Circular" was just as valueless to avert exposure as the " Card" had been, and is now serving the only purpose it can ever subserve-namely, to show how eager tho $\Lambda$ gency Managers were to trample out the sparks which threatened their tinder-box institutions.

If this was the general conduct of one Agency, largely refered to in these pages, we can find no greater show of courage and selfconfidence in the other two, in the presence of the threatened danger to their system. Bradstrect \& Son were struck dumb, and
dared not commit themselves to any statement designeil to show either the comparative benefits or lesser defects of their establishment over others in the same line. They were willing to negotiate for the secret transfer of a competitor's good-will in the trade of a neighboring city, lut they shrmk from presenting to the publie any claim on its confidence or respect. They appear to have suffered judgment to pass against them liy defanlt sooner than go on the stand or introduce a witness. The older and larger firm of McKillop \& Sprague Co. met the emergency with a bolder front for a time, and, as we thonght and hoped, proposed to show that, whatever might be said against its rivals' manner of doing business, it had no occasion, itself, to avoid controversy, not arising from the Agency System, as such. In this spirit it favored the writer, of its own motion, with a pamphlet, published by it when the System was less understuod than now, and courteonsly solicited incuiries from him in reference to the firm's progress and painstaking. We acted on the suggestion in the same vein : and hoped, at last, to find some one who conld show effective administration on even a wrong principle, or introduce some defence for the principle which had not oceurred to us. Our disappointment was sincere when we found eren this firm declined to commit itself, on the pretence that facts conld have no foree coming from them. As if the mere making of such statement to us, in the expectation of a critical analysis, were not a straightforward and manly thing, certain to be favorably thought of by the public! This determination, however, coming after a proffer, indicates that the Commercial Agency preferred trusting to luck to showing its laand; and was just as unwilling to have the facts of its management submitted, over its own signature, to exammation and comment, as the younger and less generally recogrized firn of J. M. Bradstreet \& Son. It matters very little, however, to any one who shall read this work, and particularly the chapter containing the Comparative Tables of MeKillop \& Sprague Co. and Dum, Barlow © Co., whether the former firm employs more "help" than the latter, or spends more subseriptions, in arriving at the self-confuting statisties with which we have knocked both their heads tugether and demonstrated their worse than inutility. It is of no conseguence, whatever, whether the one or the other firm employs the greater number of hants and the more experienced managers; our issue is with the Srstem, out
of which both extract their wealth ; and so Jong as the System eannot be defended, it is not worth while to enter into a calculation for the jurpose of determining which of the two is the greater trifler with private rights or public patience.
between chaling the light of controversy and ereeping or drawling out of litigations on its belly, the Agency Busincss may be said to lead a reptile life of secret warfare for its own ends, but ef cowardly retreat and elusion when fairly challenged. It can bite and sting the unconscions and unsuspecting ; but it is wily enough to risk nothing when its opponents are prepared. If we may judge from the past history of $\Lambda$ gencies, they will pursue the same comrse which has stood them in good stead of courage or merit. They will seck to avoid responsibility for injuries done, by a swift show of deceitful meekness and simmated regret at their oceurrence; they will compronise, where they can, at the last moment, rather than try actions brought against them for libel ; they will lure to their side the Attorneys of the opponents, at every opportunity ; they will watch the Jommals of State Legislatures to anticipato legislation inimical to their pretensions; where it is attempted, they will eall in the "Lobly"; they will do anything and everything, except enter, voluntarily, on a public discussion or a legral investigation.

## CIIAPTER XVII.

the agencies estimates compared and apphibd to individotals in various cities-TIE ridiculous fidure cut by THE " WISDOM-SELLERS."
Ws: come now, by an easy and matural transition, from allegations relating to the eapacity and fitness of the $A$ gencies to advise in lusiness risks, to the proof of their unfitness, which is fomme in their own works and under their own signatnres. If we have, lieretofore, reasoned wrongly or assailed malicionsly, we are abont to be confuted; for who in the wrong can afford to be judged by the evidenee of his adversary? Bat if we have merely told the trith, and fairly weighed our sulbect pro and con., the Agencies themselves will supply us with incontrovertible testimony.

Of the three $\Lambda$ gencies Bradstreets', alone, gives mo capital ratings, so that it escapes, for the time being, from the common $p^{\text {il- }}$ lory of comparison into which we press the other two. But its competitors' "figures" must cast a deep shadow of suspicion over its own "words," and satisfy any reflecting person that greater wariness is no indication of equal or superior knowledge, but may be a sign and symbol of either more conscions ignorance or more alert self-conviction.

Take up, reader, the July (1875) Reports or Reference Rooks of the McKillop \& Spragne (o. and Dun, Barlow \& Co. They are the latest published by these firms at the hour of writing. They should be the most perfect. They are sohl for high prives. They onght to be worth something. They are ponderons and intposing in exterior looks and interior matter ; so that they oucht to serve, or be able to ferve, some nseful purpose in the Agency economy. They pretend to more prartical wistom than the Tables of Moses or the Then Commandments; for those merely grive moral axioms, and these clam to give lessons of suceessfal business life to a people ten times as numerons as the Jews at their
best, and engaged in trunsactions involving ten times more wealth than the treasures of Judea or Egypt. They are the ripe result and full fruition (it is said) of the efforts of a standing amy of correspondents numbered by the 50,000 ; an auxiliary cor ${ }^{2}$ s of municipal sappers and miners eomuting wel! up in the hundreds; headed and directed by the inherited and attained generalship and discretion of a staff of siuperb appointments and magnificent incomes, and they ought to be-well, worth more than waste paper. Alas! the anti-climax. These ponderous tomes, out of whose fecelent growth several fortunes have been made--out of whose hoped-for continuance several more fortmes are expected to be made-are self-convicting impostures. These manmoth accumulations of names and figures are discovered to be neither more nor less than utensils for withdrawing money from business men's pockets under the disguise of improving their understandings and facilitating their intereourse.

Open the two Books at the State of "Maryland," take the title "Baltimore," and for greater convenience, whi'e picking at hazard from the roll of names for our examples, select them alphabetically and set them down tabularly. Having chosen the names for contrast, note the ratings, and put down their equivalents, by the respective keys, in numerals. As both $\Lambda$ gencies give the extremes of capital ratings, let us take their lowest and their highest, each as to itself, and next as to each other, and contemplate the resnlt. It is certainly startling; and if the Agencies can profitably exist in an intelligent commuaity after the exposure, the fault will not lie at our door.
e wealth e result $y$ of corf muni; headed 1 discreincomes, Alas! feculent oped-for de-are tions of ss than pockets d facilithe title thazard phabetimes for , by the stremes st, each result. ly exist ilt will
baltinore, Maryland.

| NAME. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s estimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin . . combined ignoranue of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Abrahams, J. J., \& Son. | Ship-builders | \$100,000 | \$750,000 | 8650,000 020,000 |
| Armstrong, James, \& Co | Soap | 50,000 | 300,000 | 00 |
| Baltimore Bridge Co.... |  | 50,000 $1,000,000$ | 500,000 100,000 | $\stackrel{4500,000}{ }$ |
| Baltimore Steam-Packet Co.. |  | 1,000,000 | 100,000 | 250,000 |
| Barnum d Co. | City Hotel | 50,000 | 300,000 $-00,000$ | 175,000 |
| Bevan \& Sons | Marble | 25,000 | 200,000 20,000 | $\underline{\mathbf{1 7 5}, 000}$ |
| Cahn, Belt \& Co | Liquors | 250,000 | -200,000 | -250,000 |
| Eaton Bros. © Co | Dry Goods | 50,000 | 300,000 20,000 | $\bigcirc$ |
| Ellicott, William Mr., d Nons | General Commission | 250,000 $1,000,000$ | 20,000 200,000 | -200,000 |
| Fisher, James J . . . . . . . . . | Capitalist | $1,000,000$ 950,000 | 200,000 30,000 | 220,000 |
| Goldsborough \& Johnston. | Commission | 250,000 100,000 | 30,000 4,000 | -96,000 |
| Hicks, Georre C., \& Co. . | Fire-bricks | 100,000 $1,000,000$ | 4,000 200,000 | 800,000 |
| Howell, William, \& Son. | Shipping, etc. | 1,000,000 | 200,00 | $\frac{85,301,000}{}$ |

Is it necessary to waste words with a "system" which produces, for pay, and in the name of thrifty commerce and judicious trading, work like this? The mere figures must convince the general public ; how much more absurd and stnltifying they may appear to the gentlemen and firms above named ean only be truly known to themselres. But perhaps this example in Baltimore is anomalous. Not so! Turn to
bOSTON, MASSACHLSETTE.


| NAME. | Musiness. | Dun. lariow \& Co.'s ertinate of capital. | McKillop \& Spragne Co.s estimate of capiai. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Alberger, John L.. \& C | Pork-packers | $8.350,000$ | \$30.000 | \$220,000 |
| Beardsley d Belden. | Malsters | 25,000 | $: 300,000$ | 175.000 |
| Bissell, A. A., \& Co. | Commission and Fwig. | 25,000 | $\underline{200,000}$ | 175.900 |
| Buffalo Dental Manufa |  | 25,000 | 200,000 | 175.000 |
| Crocker, I. IL... | Malster and Cattledealer | 50,000 | 300,000 | 250,000 |
| Dawley, Job N. | Sewingr-machine's | 25,000 | $200,0 \mathrm{c} 10$ | 175,000 |
| Dodge II. \& C. | Planing-mill, etc. | 10,000 | 200,000 | 190,000 |
| Enos, (ieorge T., dico | Millers | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| Fellhousen \& Russell. | Stores, elc. | $\because 50.000$ | 30,000 | 220,000 |
| Fish, Armstrong S Co. | Insurance Agents | 10,000 | \% 5,000 | 6.5,000 |
| Fisher Bros. \& Co. . | Maisters | 250,000 | 30,000 | 220,000 |
| Haines \& Co. . . . . . . . . . | l $\quad$ imber | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
|  |  |  |  | 82, 465,000 |
| If these terible disparities are found in the caso of leading houses of leadingr trade interests in leading |  |  |  |  |
| cities, where the 1 gencies have their largest oflices, and canvassers and eredit-men at the lighest-paid eons- |  |  |  |  |
| prnsition, what mast he the greater wildness of ingency prophecy in referenee to less-known traders, in |  |  |  |  |
| are mere youths on begrarly weekly salaries, and volunteer correspondents, whose ouen antecedents and |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| lusiness standingr a | cr of surmise, or not | even surmised? |  |  |

CHARLESTON, SOUTH-CAROLINA.

| Nime. | Business. | Dun. Barlow \& Co.s cetimate of capital. | MeKillop \& Spraque Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ismorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Bardin, Parker \& Co. | Cotton, etc. | S2250,000 | T20,000 | \$230,000 |
| Boyd, Bernard. . . . . . | Liquors, etc. | 95,000 | 3,000 | $2 \cdot 2 \cdot 000$ |
| Brandt, II. F.. | Confectioner | 500 | 6,000 | 5,500 |
| Brown, Edmonds T................... | Hats | 100,000 | 10,000 | 90,000 |
| Charleston Mining and Manufacuring Co... . . ......... . . ....................... |  | 1,000,000 | 100,000 | 900.000 |
| Courtney, W. A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | Shipping Agent | 5,000 | 50,000 | 45,000 |
| Enterprise Railroad Co |  | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Gage, A., \& Co........ | Ice | 100,000 | 20,000 | 80.000 |
| Hastie, William S., \& Son. | Bankers, etc. | 100,000 | 10,000 | 90,000 |
| Holmes, Calder \& Co. . . . . | Paints | 100,000 | 20,000 | 80,000 |
| Lowndes, C. T., \& Co. | Bankers | 100,000 | $\stackrel{20,000}{2000}$ | 80,000 |
| Lowndes \& Grimball. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | Auctioncers | 1,000 | 20,000 | 19,000 |
| Marine and River Plosplate Mining and Manufac'g Co. of S. Charleston.. |  | 100,000 | 750,000 | 650,000 |
| Planters and Mechanics' Bank........ |  | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Ryan, W. K. | Cotton Factor | 250,000 | 30,000 | 220,000 |
| Sulphuric Acid and Super-Phosphate <br> Co........ . .......... . .... . . ... . . .... . . |  | 500,000 | 50,000 | 450,000 |
| Tecklenburgh, John. | Grocer | 5,000 | 200,000 | 195,000 |
|  |  |  |  | \$3, 5256,500 |

But the fluctuations of rating have a deeper meaning than we have yet assigned. Where the capital
figures are low, relatively, the credit rating, which involves the question of integrity, punctuality in fulfilling obligations, ete., is lost sight of or drops to zero, and the safest trader and most honorable finds his admitted capital, within which he operates well and wisely, a deprecatory circumstance never permitting a recognition of good standing. In other words, the demonstration proves that business character may rise with eapital but cannot be preserved in connection with small or snfficient capital, simply because it is small in amount, though it may be sufficient for the trader. nonstration proves that business character may rise with capital out cannot be preserved in connection with small or sufficient capital, simply because it is small in amount, though it may be sufficient for the trader.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.
cincinvati, ohio.

| NAME. | Business | Dmb, larlow \& Co.s cetimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Andrews, Bates \& Co. | Wholesale Grocers | 850,000 | \$300,000 | \$2.0,000 |
| Andrews \& Conklin. | Liquors | 50,000 | 300,000 | 250,000 |
| Britt, Patrick. | Boots and Shoes | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Bruce, B., \& Co | Carriages | 100,000 | 750,000 | 6.70,000 |
| Cincinnati Ice Co |  | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Cochnower, John. . | Coal | 250,000 | 1,000,000 and over | 750,000 and ove |
| Cunningham, Curtiss \& | Pork | 25,000 | 200,000 | 175,000 |
| Daniels, Nichols \& Co. | Tailors | 250,000 | 20,000 | 250,000 |
| Driver, H. L., \& Co. | Japanned Ware | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Eagle White-Lead C | ......... | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| Eckert, Michael ... | Tanner | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400, 000 |
| Evans, Lippincott \& Cunningham. | Pork | $1,000,000$ and over | 200,000 |  |
| Evans \& Kinney . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | Pork-Packers | 1,000,000 |  | $800,000$ |
|  |  |  |  | $85,605,000$ |
| In this city we sce the two Agencies differ one million and a half in reference to two houses engaged |  |  |  |  |
| in the pork and pork-packing business. The highest estimate of the eapital of both firms is $82,000,000$. We |  |  |  |  |
| have an incertitude, consequently, of monstrous dimensions in regard to two dealers in one of the most |  |  |  |  |
| clearly defined and staple inrestments. In these cases Mekillop \& Sprague Co. are the moderate |  |  |  |  |
| estimators. But we must not give them eredit, liastily, on this head. In the instance of the coaldealer, |  |  |  |  |
| Cochnower, they excel Dun, Barlow \& Co. at least $\$ 750,000$, and exceed them, in five other cases, as murh |  |  |  |  |


| NAME. | Busincss. | Dun. Barlor \& Co.s estimate of capital. | Mckillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Babcock, Hurd \& Co. | Grocers | \$ 100,000 |  |  |
| Baker, George A. | Lightning-Rods | 5 50,000 | 500,000 | $\$ 600,000$ 450,000 |
| Childs, O. A., \& Co. | Boots and Shoes | 100,000 | 500,000 | 450,000 400,000 |
| Cleveland Spring Co | Manufacturers (Springs) | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Clough Stone Co. |  | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Commercial Oil Co. | ........ | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Fulton Foundry Co. |  | 100,000 | 750,000 | 650,000 |
| Gaensslen Brothers. | Leather, etc. | 100,000 | 500,060 | 400,000 |
| Heisel, N., \& Son.... Hoffman, Isaac, \& Son | Wholsale Confecticners | 250,000 | 30,000 | 230,000 |
| Hoffman, Isaac, \& Son King, Z., \& Son. . . . | Hides, etc. | 10,000 | 100,000 | 90,000 |
| King, Z., \& Son. . | Manufacturers (Bridges) | 100,000 | 750,000 | 650,000 |
|  |  |  |  | \% $4,320,000$ |

Is there anything in the business atmosphere of the place to account for such results? Here are eleven names-the same number chosen as example in Chicago. The margin of donbt, over and above that shown in the latter city, is one million two hundred thonsand nearly. And yet, one would think, two Cleveland brinch offices ought to be able to approximate closer in the smaller city instead of becoming more variable and discrepant. The size of a place is thus seen to bear no relation to the accuracy or inaccurace of the reports of its trading clasecs. So the reduction of area or of names affords no material for imputing the increased probability of an approach to miformity of opinion.
DETROIT, MICHIGAN.

| NAME. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co's estimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co. 's estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Beecher, Luther. | " Biddle House" | \$ 100,000 | \$1,000,000 and orer | \$900,000 and orer |
| Darmstaetter, William. | Brewer | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Detroit Emery-Wheel Co. | ........ | 2,000 | 20,000 | 18,000 |
| Detroit, Lansing and L. Michigan R.R. | …… | 1,000,000 |  | 1,000,000 |
| Ducharne, Fletcher \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . | Hardware | 250,000 | 1,000,000 | 750,000 |
| Ford, I N., \& Co..... | Steam-Forge | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Grease., John, \& Sons | Drain-Pipes, etc. | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Gunn, C. K......... | Dry-Goods | 100,000 | 20.000 | 80,000 |
| Holmes \& Webster. | Plumbers | 100,000 | 20,000 | 80,000 |
| Hubbard \& King. | Lumber | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Kling P., \& Co... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | Brewers | 50,000 | 300,000 | 250,000 |
|  |  |  |  | \$3, $8: 8,000$ and over |

In this city we take merely one case for comment. Dun, Barlow \& Co. rate the D. L. \& L. Michigan
R.R. at $\$ 1,000,000$. McKillop \& Sprague Co. cannot say it is worth a dollar. They have heard of the company, or they would not put down its name. Of what use is the name without an estimate? Any Director ${ }_{z}$ of Detroit would supply that much without injury or responsibility. Were they in doubt after investig ? Then why do they not indicate their donbt instead of simply want of information? Again, if a ram lich D., B. \& Co. find to be worth $\$ 1,000,000$ cannot convince McK. \& S. Co. that it is worth anyt, e, how did the railroad satisfy D., B. \& Co.? Secondly, what ehance is there for clearnes about dealers with less anthentic evidences, officially or otherwise? abont dealers w. 11 less anthentic evidenees, officially or otherwise?

Nashyille, TENNEsSEE.


We have now before us a city of the smallest population yet reached in our examination of these absurd reports, and one largely affected by its relations to the Civil War. An approach to uniformity of estimate might reasonably be looked for in its case, if made even by two distinct inquirers who should open a Nashville Directory and send letters of inquiry to the first names which presented themselves. And yet to these professed specialists William G. Innt is worth either $\$ 2000$ or $\$ 200,000$, and Burns it Co. are good for either $\$ 25,000$ or $\$ 550,000$ ! Hunt and Burns may be worth, considered together, $\$ 25,000$ or $\$ 950,000$, and the person who wishes to trade with either is considerately left either figure to choose from at his leisure.
NEW-ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.

| NAME. | Business. | Dun. Barlow \& Co.'s estimate of capital. | Mckillop \& Spraque Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Abbott, Robert. | Cotton-Press | \$500,000 | \$100,000 | \$400,000 |
| Alcus, Scherck \& Autey. | Cotton Factors | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| Bayly, G. M., \& Pond. . | Wholesale Grocers | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Belden, F............ | Hats | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Block \& Brittin | Wholcsale Grocers, etc. | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Briggs, Payne \& Co. | Wholesale Grocers | 250,000 | 30,000 | 220,000 |
| Brousseau, A. | Carpets | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Brulatour, P. E. | Liquors | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Buddecke, C. T., \& Co. | Commission | 100,000 | 10,000 | 90,000 |
| Burbridge, J. W., \& Co | Commission | 1,000,000 | 200,000 | 800,000 |
| Camors, J. B., \& Co... | Flour | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Chaffe, John, Bro. \& Son | Commission | 1,000,000 | 200,000 | 800,000 |
| Chopin, Oscar. ......... | Commission | 100,000 | 10,000 | 90,000 |
| Clason \& Co... | Commission | 500,000 | 50,000 | 450,000 |
|  |  |  |  | \$4,850,000 |

It must not be forgotten that, in picking out these names, we neither exhaust the alphabet nor go over the leading enterprises of the merchants. We merely take a few names under the first few letters of the alphabet, and disregard the innumerable diserepancies of from 20 to $\$ 50,000$ even in connection with these. If we should depart from this course in our further comparisons, we shall do so solely to prove to the reader that there is no occult significance in any letter, as such, making in our favor and against the Agencies.

| NAME. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s estimate of capital. | Mckillep \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Abecasis, J. S. | India-Rubber Belts | \$25,000 | \$300,000 | \$275,000 |
| Allen, J. T., \& Co. | Furniture | 50,000 | 300,000 | 250,000 |
| American Clock Co.. |  | 10,000 | 500,000 | 490,000 |
| American Metalline Co |  | 50,000 | 1,000,000 and over | 950,000 and over |
| American Sardine Co. |  | 25,000 | 750,000 | 725,000 |
| Atwood, Thomas S | White-Lead | 25,000 | 500,000 | 475,000 |
| Babcock, Darid, \& Co | Naval Supplies | 50,000 | 750,000 | 700,000 |
| Bacon \& Hyde...... | Copper | 100,000 | 1,000,000 and orer | 900,000 and over |
| Barling \& Davis....... | Commission | 500,000 | $75,000$ | $425,000$ |
| New-Fork \& Ohio Coal Co |  | 25,000 | 750,000 | 725,000 |
| New-Fork Rectifying Co. |  | 50,000 | 500,000 | 450,000 |
| Nichols, William B... | Real Fstato | 50,000 | 1,000,000 and over | $\mathbf{9 5 0 , 0 0 0}$ and over |
| Nichol, Cowlishaw \& Co. | Upholstery Goorls | 100,000 | 1,750,000 | 650,000 |
| Noel, Saurel \& Marniffe.. | French Plate-Glass | 1,000,000 and over | 300,000 | 700,000 and orer |
|  |  |  |  | $\$ 8,665,000$ and over |

Out of (say) 40,000 New-York merchants we pick fourteen names, and find a disparity of nearly 89,000 ,-
000 ! In this city all the $A$ gencies have their principal offices, their largest number of canvassers and ereditmen, their imposing array of books, clerks, etc. From this city, pre-eminently, is drawn yearly a great part of their royal revenues. Facilities for acquiring accurate or proximately accurate estimates of capital are necessarily abundant in the Court Records, in the Register's Office, in the Banks, in the Real-estate publications. Surrounded by these opportunities, the Agencies must have shut their eyes and stuffed their ears, or allowed themselves to be deceived or persuaded, before achieving so eminent success in blundering.
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

| name. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s estimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined <br> ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Alexander Bros. | Leather-Belting | \$100,000 | \$10,000 | \$90,000 |
| Audrews, A. J., \& Son | Grain and Storage | 250,000 | $\stackrel{20,000}{ }$ | 230,000 |
| Ashmead, Henry B. | Printer | 250,000 | 30,000 | 220,000 |
| Atlantic Refining Co. |  | 500,000 | 50,000 | 450,000 |
| Audendriel, W. © ${ }^{\text {che }}$ \& Co. | Coal, Iron, etc. | 1,000,000 and over | 100,000 | 900,000 and over |
| Bailey \& Co.......... | Jewelers | 100,000 | 750,000 | 650,000 |
| Baker, Arnold \& Co | Gas Fixtures | 1,000,000 | 200,000 | 860,000 |
| baugh \& Sons. | Fertilizers | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| Beckhaus, Joseph. | Coaches | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200000 |
| Bement. William B., \& Son. | Tools | 1,000,000 | 200,000 | 800,000 |
| Berwind, White \& Co | Coal | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Billington, James H., \& Co | Factory Findings | 250,000 | 10,000 | 240,000 |
| Bhoomingdale, Phine \& Co. | Clothing | 50,000 | 300,000 | 250,000 |
| Borie, C. \& II.. | Bill Brokers | 1,000,000 and over | 500,000 | 500,000 and orer |
| Bower, John \& Co | Hams, Lard, etc. | 100,000 | 750,000 | 650,000 |
| loyer, L. S. \& Co. | Coal | 5,000 | 300.009 | 295,000 |
| lradlee \& © | Chain Manufacturers | 25,000 | 200,000 | 175.000 |
| Buist, Robert, Jr.. . . . . | $\ddot{\text { Seeds }}$. ${ }^{\text {a }}$ | 25,000 | 30,000300,000 | 970,000 $2 \% 5,000$ |
|  |  |  |  | 275,000 |
|  |  |  |  | \$8,495,500 and over |

(Continued.)
(ponu!puoด)-'VINV ATASNNGd 'VIHdTGQVTIIId

PITTSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA.

| Name. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s estimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co.'s cestimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencics. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Adams \& Co. | Glass | \$250,000 | \$20,000 | \$230,000 |
| Armstrong, C. H., \& Son | Coal | 50,000 | 500,000 | 450,000 |
| Bailey, Farrell \& Co... | Lead Pipes, etc. | 100,000 | T-0,000 | 650,000 |
| Bakewell. Pears \& Co | Glass | 1,000,000 | 200,000 | 800,000 |
| Bigley, N. J.. | Coal | 100,000 | 750,000 | 650,000 |
| Bovard, Rose \& Co | Carpets | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| Coffin, G. W. | Lumber | 100,000 | 20,000 | 80,000 |
| Crossan, J. McDonald | Hotel | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Davis, Chambers \& Co. | White-Lead | 1,000,000 | 300,000 | 700,000 |
| Dilworth, Porter \& Co. | Spikes | 250,000 | 1,000,000 and over | 750,000 and over |
| Fort Pitt Coal Co. |  | 250,000 | 30,000 | $220,000$ |
| French, Aaron \& Co. | Tailroad Springs | 250,000 | 30,000 | 220,000 |
| German Fire Insurance | Taiload Spring | 50,000 | 300,000 | $\$ 50,000$ |
|  |  | 500,000 | 100,000 | $400,000$ |
|  |  |  |  | $\$ 6,000,000$ and over |
| In this table the glass-dealcrs are favorites with Dum, Barlow \& Co., and the coal-dealers favorites |  |  |  |  |
| with Mchillop \& Sprague Co. ; but when the Agencies cannot guess closer than in the last two items about |  |  |  |  |
| a Bank and an Insurance company, whose standing and capital are matters of verified record in the State |  |  |  |  |
| Department at Inarisburg, it is quite impossible to ascribe to them any energy in looking for data. Even |  |  |  |  |
| mpardonable to discover from this table how negligent they must be in looking at the most patent eridence. |  |  |  |  |


| NAME. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co.'s cstimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Alden, W. L | Commissioner, etc. | \$25,000 | \$200,000 | \$175,000 |
| Bailey dt Noyes | Books | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Bond, J. II., d Co. | Plumbers | 10,000 | 500 | 9,500 |
| Cahoon Mannfacturing Co. | Lamps | 250,000 | 20,000 | 230,000 |
| International Steamslip Co |  | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
| Jose, Charles E., \& Co. | Crockery | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Locke, Twitehell \& Co. | Dry-Goods | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| MeGlinchy, James. | Brewer | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| McLaughlin, C., \& Co. | Grocers | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Portland Kerosene Oil Co. |  | 100,000 | 500,000 | 400,000 |
|  |  |  |  | \$ $2,614,500$ |

It wonld be entertaining, if our space were not so valuable, to insert here a few extracts from Agencies' circulars claining superiority over each other. Were we to believe each sapient self-lauder, it is the only correct, reliable, and thorough one, and its competitors are charlatans and impostors. Put face to face, as we place them, the reader can readily agree with what each one says, and come to a conchasion :mmon to all.
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND.


From this list, it is evident McKillop \& Sprague Co. are the favorites with Ageney subscribers in Providence. The Spragues, indeed, are all-powerful in Rhode Island, and blood-as the adage runs-is thicker than water. On the other hand, Dun, Barlow \& Co. are plainly in a huff with the Providence men, but not averse, we should think, to conciliation.
than water. On the other hand, Dun, Barlow \& Co. are plainly in a huff with the Providence men, but not averse, we should think, to conciliation.
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA.

| NAME. | Business. | Dun, Barlow \& Co.s estimate of capital. | Mckillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined ignorance of both Agencics. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Adams. McNeil \& Co | Wholesale Grocers | \$100,000 | \$500,000 | \$400,000 |
| Booth \& Co ... | Grocers | 500,000 | 100,000 | 400,000 |
| Capital Savings Bank | ….... | 250,000 | 1,000,000 | 750,000 |
| Cohen, Benjamin | Carpets, etc. | 10,000 | 300,000 | 290,000 |
| Cooper, John F. | Music, etc. | 1,000 | 20,000 | 19,00) |
| Deolin, Robert. | Grocer | 2,000 | 20,000 | 18,000 |
| Doherty, D.. | Grocer | 500 | 20,000 | 19,500 |
| Ginth, George.... | Grocer | 500 | 10,000 | -9,500 |
| Locke \& Lewenson | Carpets, etc. | 250,000 | 50,000 | 200,000 |
| Stone, R., \& Co | Harness | 25,000 | 3,000 | $22,000$ |
|  | Hamess | 250,000 | 1,000,000 and over | \%0,000 and orer |
|  |  |  |  | \$2,87\%,000 and over |

 mates. If $\$ 1000$, we shonld think they could readily lose their eapital in a day ; if $\$ 30,000$, a longer period might be required to absorb it. But the moral in the case is this: low ranges of eapital give us no greater tendency to approximation of estimate than high ones; and, one by one, the only conceivable excuses of the Atencies are shown to be merest moonshine.
ST, LOUIS, MISSOURI.

In this and the preceding city, we pick out the first chance names which open to us on the Reference Books, down to the letter M. Thirty names give us a variation of $\$ 17,000,000!$ Lp to this point $25 s$ names produce $\$ 101, \$ 52,000$ of demonstrated doubt in regard to capital possessed by them. If we had chosen to load our work with five hundred, we could have reached a mass of erroneously imputed capital equal to the whole available currency of the Enited States :

| Name. | Business. | Dun, Wiman \& Co.s estimate of capital. | McKillop \& Sprague Co.'s estimate of capital. | Margin of combined igrorance of both Agencies. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Davidson, William... | Mills |  |  |  |
| De Veber, L. II., © So | General Merchants | 500,000 | $\$ 000,000$ 75,000 | \$ 850,000 |
| Dunn, James L...... | Iron and Shipping | 500,000 250,000 | $\mathbf{7 5 , 0 0 0}$ $\mathbf{5 0 , 0 0 0}$ | 425,000 200,000 |
| Kennedy, E. T., \& Co | Steam Heating, etc. | -10,000 | 500,000 | $\begin{aligned} & 200,000 \\ & 490,000 \end{aligned}$ |
|  |  |  |  | \$1,565,000 |
| We must stop this tiring process somewhere, and this is as good and convenient a place as any. A few hundred names out of 500,000 prodnce over one hundred and thre millions of varicty of estimeite. What good can be subserved by going on and demonstrating an aggregate inaccuracy or doubt, superior in amount to all the active capital in the universe? And these be the oracles ye bow down to, business men of the United States and Canada! These be the guides to the unwary, lights to the blind, and roices for the deaf and unheeding traders and eapitalists of fifty millions of the hmman family : The serpent was worshipped on the Nile; but serpents are wise in their order. Who ever before heard of a community which erected large Incapables? edifices to commemorate Ignorance, or paid eight millions of money yearly to perpetuate the dynasty of the |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

## CIIAPTER XIX.

## important hegal decision-the melean case in toronto'THE AUENCY PRINCIPLE OF NON-ACCOUNTABHITTY DENLED by a canadian jury-a verdic'l for 'tie plaintife in a TEST CASE.

Tus Toronto Globe and Toronto Mail of December Sth and 9 th, 1875 , contain a full report of the trial of an action brought by one Andrew McLean against Dun, Wiman \& Co.'s Agency for damages sustained in consequence of relying on information given to him by their clerks and servants. The gist of the action goes, of course, to the very marrow of the controversy in which we are engaged ; and the throughness of the contention in the Canadian court, the strong array of comnsel employed, the directness of the testimony on the question of negligence, and the final result in fuvor of the plaintiff at the hands of the jury, render an ex!onded notice of the ease eminently proper in these pages. In fact, we have purposely delayed this publication so as to spread this corroborative proof of our arguments of principle and policy before our readers, believing that nothing could be more acceptable or convincing than a legal determination of a plainly test case coming after our own proofs, and showing their legal, as well as practical, bearings.

Mr: Bethune opened the case for phintiff. Me said the facts were as follow:

Mr. MeLean was a dealer in leather, and in June last E. M. Wilson, who at that time was doing business in the shoe trade on King street, called at plaintiff's to purchase goods. Mr. MeLean was not at home, but on his return he had sent to the ageney of Dun, Wiman \& Co. to get a report of Wilson's standing and character and business. The information was to the effect that Wilson claimed to be worth $\$ 7000$; that he had $\$ 5000$ or $\$ 6000$ in his business; that he was doing a fair business, and that his credit was fair. The inquirer as to this information resorted to it
abont $A$ pril, it seemed, or protaps an earlier date. The netion was fixed on the alleggel daty of the defendants to nse ordinary diligence in obtaning information acooding to their contract, and in remard to the standing of business men, and diligombly and fathfally to report to their subseribers the result of surli inquiries. Mr. Melocu had been in the habit for years before of paying his subseription, and the plaintifl clamed that he had a right to the danages he asked as a compensation for the loss he hat sustaned owing to the incorrect information they hat given to him. The defendants, Mr. Bethane said, came into court, and were prepared to deny everything-that they were not a mereantile agency, and that they had not signed the agreoment. The plaintift hand a right to compensation here just as much as if he had engaged a private detective, who hat neted in negligence of his orders; or agatinst a physician who had been negligent or ignorant of his engagement.

Mr: d. !. Cameron argued that the phantiff had no around for his action, fuoting anthorities, the principal of which were the Statnte of liamls, and the clanse relating to such actions in Lord Tenterden's Act, amd the Act :, (ieorge IV.; Swan w. Phillips, 8 ; Adolphus es. Ellis, 4,5 , 7. But in this action, Mr. Cameroa said, they wonld have to contine themselves to the grounds permitted in the thl Sec. of the Statute of liands, or Sece 6 in the Act relating to promises and agreements, and in which the mischiof intended to be guarded against was sufficiently pointed ont. The plaintifl's case, ats they hat heard it, conld not be sustained, as there had been no written contract, and he wonld ask for a nonsuit.

Mr. Bethme said the only case he would offer was a recent English decision, Llogd vs. Pernywas, an action against the Weekly Banmupt Gazette for not supplying information in agreement with a published prospectus. The jury had found that a contract had been made, and gave the plaintiff damages. Ile thonght the cases to which Mr. Cameron had referred were entirely outside the argmont here. He would ask his Lortshp to let the ease go to the jury, although he would have preferred the matter to come up by demmrer.

Mr. J. II. Cameron replied that the case cited by Mr. Bethune did not sustain the argument or form a sufficient ground for action.

His Jorelahip derged that The case did met erme withim the



 ron to move quereally.
 its receipt, its contest statime, that "Widon was wheth Sonem,

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 great many inquitis in that time.

 W. (. Mathews; there are twelwe 's thintern in the: whise; I wats








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what was the low state of eredit. I popose to show that from March lie hate sold probably up to 81000 worth of goonds at anction. We will want to go further, and show that it was well lanewn that Wilson was in embarrassed ciremmstances.

Jhilij, Jutobi.-Was a dealer in shoe-lindings and leather; linw Wilom, and had some talk last winter ahont his credit; it was said to be rery hatd ; the talk was ever since he (E.. M. Wilson) was in lnsiness ; I would not have trusted him; I did trust him for about s5s, and he gave a check, but before 1 could get it cashed be was gone; I am a smbseriber to the Inm-Wiman agency; I never made any inguiry there ; l knew enough myself; it was rumenty reported that he had been travelling in the States witl athone of negrominstrels. (On cross-examination the witness said it was not a groorl experience for binsings to have been going with a minstrel troupe.)

IU"illo, limardmorr, wholesale dealer on Firont street.-Wilson had asked for a credit at our house, and had ordered a quantity of growls which I refued to deliver; I had an idea that he would not succeed in lonsiness; his father had rpoken to ws ahout his son and regretted that he was so msteady, hut hoped now he was groing to turn over a new leaf; I had spoken to several parties during the spring, and there was an impression that Wilson was not in good eredit.
. Fowph Prosstman.-I an manager of Bradstreet's agency in this rity ; I ascertained E. M. Wilson's eredit through the ortinary chamels.

Mr. C'meron ohjected to this evidence of obtaming information. It might have been grotten hy some person who was evilly disposed towards Mr. Wilson.

IVthers, proceeding. It was we of our eity reporters who got the information.
Mi. ('amerom.-The sonrecs may be all wrong. Mr. Priestman tells us he has no personal knowledige of the matter.

Witness.-We Who inter hange with the other agencies in the city ; our clerks are fordidden to bave any communjeation with Dun,'Winatn o ('o.'s office.

C'ardes Blatr-I am (mploced by Mr. Blachford; I was also in the sewice of the edder Mr. Wilson for about twenty-five years, and in the employment of the young man after he got the busi-
ness; he had very inegular habits, not strictly sober nor partirnlar in his company ; I did heer lest winter some peoplo sety they would not trust liem; business men said so; ho was not an honorable man.

Williem Rodyers.-Was in the employ of Mr. Hay last smmmer ; Mr. Hay was Wilson's landlord ; I went into the store after he ran away and fomed a lot of empty boxes; there might have hech $\$ 15$ or $\$ 20$ worth of stock left.

Mr. Bethane said he now proposed to eall Mr. McFarlane to show that Wilson had been in the hahit of selling pareels of grools below eost. He had a donble proposition to demonstrate-the fact that Wilson was insolvent, and then that the defendants might have known this fact.

His Lordship said there conld be no difficulty abont proving the insolvener:

Mr. Cubley, recalle!.-There was nothing said of the date יP to which the information was given; if there had been I would have mate a note of it in my report.

Mr. Donald, recalled, said the agent told him they never mave dates; there was nothing sallas to th , rate up to which they gute the information.

Mr. Bethune.-Does the $\Lambda$ geney issue a change-list?
Witness.-They give us a change-list twice a week; they will not give a messenger a date, lat they put the date of the statement on the papers they supply; if they send a mpent "wele "fter it is asteed, for example, they will send the date up to which they know about the person, but if I was getting the information they would not tell me up to what time they had made it up. .

Mr. Bethune said this was the plantiff's case.
Mr. M. C. Cameron sarl the phantiff las failed to prove that the defendant had made beach of contame as they hat given the information $\quad$, to 29 th $\Lambda_{\text {pril }}$, and hat not given it as informat tion mp to Jome loth. Then the information was given up to the time when it was stated, and it did mot therefore appear that there had been any breach.

Mr. Bethme replied that the enntract ennld not mem to be merely the information they hatl, but they agred to give with reetsomuble rorrectness at a given lime orr " purtioular tiane, remel not any time, as it miyht be fier ar win yenses. The information must,
be of some nee, and to le of this character it mat he therefore of such dates that it could be relied on.

Mr. Bethune asked to be allowed to annend the declamation to sustain the averment that the report of the $29011 \lambda_{\text {pril }}$ was incorreet, and upon the merits. Mr. Bethunc said the repert following was misleading. This report was:
"E. M. Wilson, Toronto, June, 1575, has stock about $\$ 1000$, formerly of Wilson \& Co., dissolved. He is son of D. Wilson, who sold out to E. M. Wilson and E. A. Plilip. Wilson owns no real estate ; hats some $\$ 5000$ or $\$ 6000$ in the business ; he chams to be worth \$8000; character and halits are good; is doing a fair trulde ; buys mostly American goods; credit grood locally."

There was evidence to show that as far back as Jamary the young man's habits were not grod, and that his business was not at any time in a groed condition.

Mr. M. C. Cameron said no evidence had heen offered ot prove that E. M. Wilson was not all that wats stated in $A_{p}$ pil when the report wats made.

His Lordship decideal that there was sufficient to go to the jury on the question of Wilson's standing even on the $29 t \mathrm{t}$ of $\Lambda_{\text {pril. }}$

## THE DEFBNOA.

W. T. Pridham testified that he was in the employ of Jun, Wiman it Cob as city reporter ; remembered getting a report from Ernest Wilson; called at Mr. Wilson's store, and saw a person whom he believed to be Mr. Wilson ; inguired from others ass to the verification of Mr. Wilson ; speak in eonfidence to all parties doing business with us; believed that Mr. Wilson was speaking the truth, but did not until he verified it.

By Mr. Bethume.-Have heen for the past five years engaged in the Mercantile Arency Compray ; was in oecelsin, mal reporter with Muray, Middemiss of Co., Montreal ; had no previons acequaintance with Mr. Witson ; knew the firm wats abont dissolving, and went to get particulars; ; cane to the emelnsion that he was not worth nore than from $\$ 3000$ to $\$ 1000$; he damed to be worth $\$ 4000$ in property ; did not ushi him hiss indeldecturss; he may have had some ceth besides, for all I kiow; died uot uski theme to show theirbooks; consulted some of the boot and shoe manufac-
timers of the city ; dn not irmember mhom / remsultal ; Mr. Hewson was reporting for the rempany besides myself ; later wo limore-

 \& Co.'s; have been in their emphey for cight years; had been
 Wikson in that year ; ealled on Mr. Wilsom, who sad businces wats very good; hat no reston to dosht him; mate further inquirie; anongr, the wholesale shoe trade, "he pressumed"; wats making reports of other homes at the time; hearl nothing aginst his credit.

By Mr. Bethme. Was mot the regoline reponter at the time; performed the duties of eity reporter for three months; had at srool wencral knowledere of the trates of the rity; told me he had a stock of $\$ 10,000$ worth, but conld mot save remember hearing of Wilsen rmming away; artmot recall, the meme of the persme what gete me the information ; hat no reason to be sumpicious of Wilson.

Thomas Ilonston, examined, staterl that he was a dity reporter of the firm of Dma, Wiman de (o. ; mate the proper inguiries; the business was inceresiarg showly, but from other someces; the stock looked full in the shop; it was the leading trade in town.

Li!, MA. Tiethume.-David Wilson was not a partuer at the time of my visit ; the firm elamed to be worth over \$ 8000 ; think he clained himself to be worth So ono ; put him down at between
 ther I wade a report or met of the cirewnstance of Wilson runminiy urely.
 a similar compiny to that of the clefendints'; I mate a report of E. M. Wilson on the Th April, 1sin; the result: of my inguity wats favorathe ; saw E. M. Wilson personally ; I looked through the stock and sum the insurance paperthe held, and he gave me it statement of the thate he was drines, the insmanere, and the rental he wats phying I reported him wopla fom Stoco io Sobom, and his stock wort? Stoon ; I marle infuirics from other's; he appeared to he Bing it orood businces, and his stock was well assortes.

By Mr. Bethume.-I have not a copy of the repori I made; I spoke to Mr. Jacobi about Wilson in September, 1874 ; it was the firm then ; I reported the firm worth from sion to $\$ 10,000$; on the $A_{p r i l}$ report I thonght he (Wilson) had a stock of over \$(0000; he told me he had ; I could not surem that I ashed what his deble uere, hat I reported lime worth stoon to $\$ 5000$.

This was the case.
His Lordship remarked that he would hold the action to be one of breach of contract, and he said the contract wonld be that part of the general conditions that referred to the obligation of the defendants to supply information to the subseribers. Ilis Lordship asked them how they were to estimate the damages under this assumption.

Mr. Bethme said they wonld ask just as much as they had lust by the sale to Wilson. He thought they should recover the whole loss or merely nominal damages.

Mr. J. M. Cameron said he was prepared to show that the ntmost the plaintiff conld recover were nominal damages. In the atse of Kinghom $v$. Montreal Telegraph Co., 18 U. C. Q. I., he presented a case where his contention was snstanined, and that more than nominal damages could not be assessed ; Stephenson $v s$. Montreal Telegraph Co., 10 U. C. Q. B., was a similar ease, and in which the decision was that the plaintiff could not recover muless there was frand in the delay by the Company's official delivering' the message. Mr. Cameron said also there was no breach of the contract. IIe asked again if the plaintif: had any case to go to the jury.

ITis Lordship answered that he thought it would be most proper to allow the case to go to the jury. There would be the single issue of the breach of contract, but he was not at all sure whether Mr. McJean had acted with reasomable care. He said it would be better to phace the matter in a specifio mamer before the jury hy asking their answers to the two guestions:

1. Did the defendants, who are persons engaged in the Mercantile Agency business, furnish to the hest of their ability information to the plaintiff of the standing and credit of Ernest M. Wilson?
2. Did the plantiff act as an ordinarily prudent man in not making any futher inquiries in view of the fact that Wilson re-
sided and carried on business in his immediate neighborhood, and wat well known in the eity, and that the goods were not furnished for a fortnight after the application?

Mr. J. II. Cameron addressed the jury, remarking that they would lave nothing to do with figures, as that, by arrangement between comsel, had been withdrawn from the question. But they would have to decide upon a matter that was of as great conserpence to the mercantile agencies as to the public. Aud although these agencies had been in existence for about forty years, there was not a case reported in the courts that conld be called an example, exeept the one cited ly Mr. Bethune, which was the English ease he mentioned. Mr. Cameron said this calse was not a contract of guarantec. The question, Did the defendants give information to the best of their ability? was what they would have to consider. After a recapitnlation of the evidence and a statement of the case, Mr. Caneron laid down the proposition that if the Company gave all the information they possessed at the time, they had done their duty; and he said the Company had done this. Further, Mr. Cameron said it could not be expeeted that these agencies should be held to such a strict aecomint as was sought to be imposed on them in this case, and that all that could be expected of them was a fair report of the individual at the moment when they were asked.

Mr. Bethune, addressing the jury, observed that many people thought these agencies were not advantageons to trade, and it was a question on which the mercantile public were divided whether they should be tolerated at all.

The law would not look at the question of consideration, based upon the amount paid by the plaintiff; illustrated by the example of an accident insurance policy, where a mere trifle would yield a large sum back in case of accident. That they have not been sued before is no argment not to deal fairly with the question. That, if they escape scot-free now, will be an argment and an inducement for, perlaps, greater carclessness than heretofore, and greater risk to the subsecribers. All the phantift asked the defendints to perform was to give a fair report. It was,easy to see the power and facility the comprany poossessed. It was in the power of this company to puff any man, to rate him highly, amm phes him abure suspicion ; and it was in their power also to hast
any mans prospects and reputation. In this anse the firet report they marle of Wilano was mot rorvect, if almost he had been the most homent man in the commmity, affer all the opportmities they had of making inguirics. It was said that Mr. Mcesan might hase made inguines limadf, but it was mot io be sipposed that
 to know, in any way, as much about Wilson's lasinces ly any in-
 moting inquiries, combd do. Mr. Bethme proceeded to show the amomat of stock that Wilson lad reecised and owned at ayy time, and all the stock he harl been proseseat of, and to prove that he condd not have had the quantity of stock that was eredited to him by the $A$ gencey. The operations of the repurters of the $\Lambda$ gemey were eriticisel as motherines of the sont hate entitled hem to contidence. There were no paricular inguries, and no veritication of the answers exiven ly any one peran ly answers of another. Mr. bethme anded the jury to infer that the rejomers had forgoten all ahout the matter, and that really no inguives had been male at all. The: entries in the Agency book, for, were not assuriner as far as they rould be aseertained, cither for their onder ar for their corvecthess. It appeared, indeed, that the $A$ geney had mot matle their infuries at the very places where they might have leaned most, and where common-sense woml have pointed as the lest sourees of information. Wikon's stock and property in $\Lambda_{\text {pril }}$ could not exceed a value of $\$ 4000$. It was fhown that he hath a batance at the bank indeed, but the amomut at the bank wats made by the sahes made at anction. The company satid they did wot know that he was selling off the stock at a simerifiee in an anctionroom; but a namber of priate persons, merchats in the city, knew all about this. It was the blane of the servants of the compeny ; but it should not be asked that Mr. MeLean should suffer for these servants' mistakes. And when, two wecks after lee got a certification of the chanacter and stamding of this man Wibon, Mr. Mclean give him a credit, a few days only before he ran away, it was surely not too much to expere that the defendants should compensate him for the loss ho had sustained by their negligence. Then, if the defentants repuriated their contract in this case, a certain result would be that the pallie would lose confidence in then, and require to make a safer contract with them,
and reguire grater certanty in the infomation they pretem to give. Fion it was elear that the representations mande "pon Wilson's chanacter and business were mot true. De womblereeat that the value of these institutions was the degree of eare given to the information they frofesed to afforl to their subseribers. He closed by asking a verdict for the phantiff on both the guestions that were submitted to them. The whole system of mercantile argeney wats to dity on its trial, and their verdict wonld ire far to enforece at closer inspection loy the reporters and oflicials in these oflieces. If they allowed this to go it would be a step towards making these agenomes mere ollieces for hackmailing the eommercial commmonity.

Ilis Jordship said the case involved at momber of ghestions of dilliculty, but they had been instrusted in those flat were to be decided ley them. IIe perinted ont what the duties of the defendants were whicls they hal undortaken to execute: Sud it was only just to montion, too, that Wilion ham not been dealing much with any of the wholesale merehants here. He mate these remarks as to the standing of Wilson and the facility the defendants hat of making an acemate report of Wilson's lomincos. 'This report, Ilis Lomblip diol not hesitate to sity, as his opinion, wats not eonrect ; and he thonght there were still avemes of information by which a more corroct repert might hawe been obtainal by the defentants, amb, if a knowlelge of the sales at anction had been in pesisession of the compaty, they wonld certanlay have been at fanlt if they had not reported that knewledge to Mr. MeLean. His Lomblip, read passiges of the evidenee to stremgthen the idea that there hatd been at remissuess in the rompany in obtaning information of the commertial value of E . MI. Wilson, and in mot noticing that he pesessed non atiturle for business. The evidence of the cmplogees was not satisfactory ; they monla mot tell how they got their information exactly, with the exespling of one who said he had commmicated with Xh. Satobi. And if they took their information from Wilson's connmanication alone, they were not doing all their duty. MeKillopis reporter save cridence, it had to be remembered, smila to that of the defombate, but the jury womld consider whether he hand mate sufficient inguiries as well, lefore they would determine on its value. IIi; Iomelahij then glaneed at the question of whether the phantif had acted
with ordinary prodence in acepting the information and acting on it without making any inguiries on his own part.

The jury then retired.
The jury returned, after a short absence, with a verdict for the phantiff, being an answer to the first ynestion in the negative, and to the second question in the affimative. His Lordship decorded a verdict for the amomet clamed.

The local opinion on this verdict is also of great importance. We append two editorials from the Cilobe and Mail respectively under date December 9th, 1575.

## [Daily Globe-TODonto.]

MCLEAN VS. DCN, WMMAN \& co.
The verdict rendered in this case yesterday by a petty jury in the Toronto $\Lambda$ ssize Court appears to strilic a very scrious blow at the existence of the commercial associations honown as Mencantile Agencies. Mr. McLean, a highly respectable and extensive dealer in leather, in this city, was applied to in $\Lambda$ pril last by Mr. E. M. Wilson, then a shoe-dealer in King street, to supply him (Wilson) with a quantity of leather. Mr. MeLean was a subseriber to the Mercantile Agrency of Dun, Wiman \& Co., and entitled to obtain from $^{\text {E }}$ them from time to time reports as to the solvency of parties purchasing from them on credit, for the consideration of seventy-five dollars per ammem. Mr. MeLean accordingly applied to Dun, Wiman \& Co. for a report as to the standing of Mr. Wilson ; and, having received a favorable reply, sold $\$ 500$ worth of leather, or thereby, to that person. In July following Wilson absconded, and Mr. MeLean lost his money. Mr. MeLean therenpon commenced suit against Dun, Wiman \& Co. for the amomet of his loss, not alleging for a moment any want of good faith on the part of the agency, or that different information from that given was in possession of the Agency or its employees, but simply on the ground that its report was erroneons, and that the $A$ gency had not used due diligence in obtaining information. The jury sustained Mr. Mchean in this pretension, and gave a verdict against Dun, Wiman \& Co. for the full amount of his loss, $\$ .000$.

In the examination of witnesses it was brought ont that some parties were aware, previous to Wilson's absconding, that he was
not worthy of credit ; and that if Dun, Wiman if Co hat gone to certain partice for information, they womld have learned much more abont him than they tuld to Mr. MeLean.
[The Maii-Toromto.]

The case of MeLemus. Dum, Wintur is Co, which has ocenpied the attention of the Assize Comit for the last two days, was roncluded yesterlay: an verdiet being returned for the phantiff for the amome of damages claimed, subject to certain considerations reservel for the full Court. Two questions were left to the jury, as will loe seen in one report of the cese, and both wore answered in favor of the phintifl. The jury in point of fact have determined that Dun, Wiman of Cob did not use due diligence when they gave a favomble rejort of Wilson's standing, and that Mr. McLemm was perfectly justified in relying solely on the Company's statement. 'The mercantile community will be ghad to hear that even thas; far the ease is in favor of their rights. They are dragromed into sulscribing to these agencies, and the least they can expect is that the information receivel is so accurate that it may be siffely acted on. The Conrt above will have to decide whether the phintiff can really recover more than nominal damages, and eren if the so-cenled Mercantile Ageney should suceed in eseaping the heavier penalty, it and kindred institntions will have heen tanght a uscful lesson. The popularity of these agencies is on the wane, and merchants are heginning to quote the long list of failures which have oecurred in direct contradiction of agencies' reports and hieroglyphics. There is something m-Pritisln and repugnant to most right-thinking men in a system of espionage that has become a hage Mercantile Inquisition, hy no means infallible, and, it now appears, not always sery careful of the way in which it condncts its inguiries. his a matter of fact, the cases are fer in which private inquiry will not discover all a merchant wants to know of a purchaser seeking credit. New enstomers are bought at too high a price whose standing has to be certified by an Agency. The system of ereelit mey thereby be infinitely extended; lut old firms will tell you : much safer hasiness was done before this new-fangled system c:mme

IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)


Photographic Sciences Corporation

23 WEST MAIN STREET WETSTER, N.Y. 14580

into operation. Without impugning the bome fieles of this particular Agency, we are of opinion that collectively quite as much harm as good has resulted to those merchants who have been satisíied to take a customer's "rating" as conclusive evidence of his worth. Of some other associations formed for the purpose of enlightening the trading public it is not too much to say that they are merely suares and delusions got up for the profit of their promoters.

The great significance of this ease justifies us in calling special attention to two or three points not dwelt on at any length by comnsel. McLean was a subscriber for ten years, at the yearly cost of sto. IIc had, therefore, paid stoo to the Agencies when he lost his bill against Wilson, in addition. This is not a consolatory or exceptional experience.

The Mckillop \& Sprague Co. is caught in the legal trap as well as Dum, Wiman \& Co. Seithor knew the trne condition of Wilson when it reported him. their clerks did not even ask him how much he owed; they failed to examine his books or look into his empty boxes, and a jury, in finding Dun, Wiman \& Co. guilty of gross negligence, has really passed on evidence sufficient, if umexplaised, to mulet the rival Agency if the contract had been with it. The "institutions," as they like to term themselves, may not allow their clerks to associate with each other or exchange opinions: but it is quite apparent that the young gentlemen of both establishments ate very much alike in industry and business acminen.

Whaterer way we look at this Mchcan case, its effect camot be exaggerated. The System, instead of compromising it at the start according to enstom, relied on achieving a success on accome of the two special features-Mc.Lean's propinquity to the luyer and the buyer's fraudulent absconding. The forner fact, it was hoped, would raise the presumption of contributive negligence in MeLean; the latter, as the result of mule fides rather than financial insolvency alone, was relied on to relieve against mere contract damages. IIad the Agency any doubt whatever of victory it would willingly have paid up; so that the result may be taken as a success over them in their own selected field, ani against large and umusual legal odds.

Partimuch e been ence of mpose ay that ofit of agth by yearly gencies is not a ition of lisk him ook into o.grilty t, if unal been res, may xchange men of business
mot be the start ount of yer and s hoped, ence in m financontract ctory it aken as st large

## Cilapter Xx.

the best means of reducing the danger from the in. QUISITION-CORRESPONDEN'TS BELILSD A MASK-WHAT MERcIIANTS TIINK OF THF NEED OF CHANGE-FREE TALKERS ABOUT OTHERS SLRE TO BE BROUGILT TO TASK.

Whe come to the question, Ilow shall the opposition to the Agency systen: find full, effective, and fitting expression?

Half the foree of the agitation agrainst an evil-we had amost said all-is found in the fast that its movers have not alone arguments to convince, but also measmes of correction to advance. The practical value of any and every opposition to the $A$ gency system must submit to this test; and if, while the wrongs committed lyy the system are conceded, no method be proposed to remove them, or, wanting method, there be no independent means adopted for their repression, it will matter little, in the end, whether the whole scheme of traftic in men's reputations for personal bencfit shall have been approved or reprobated by the public. In this connection, as in most others, faith without works avails not; and he is the best reformer who, having demonstrated the necessity of reform, goes on and illnstrates the most direct means of its aceomplishment.

Our finst proposition is a phan one. No honest man ean support the system believing it to be noxions and langerons. Onr scoconb one is a matual corollary to the other. No sincere man ean, having the same belief, onit to become actively antagonistic to it. What, then, shonld a sincere and honest opponent of the system do to illustrate his faith and hring forth fruit ?

In the first place, such a man shond cease using the system at the earliest possible moment, or least (if we must adipt our sense of duty to the average of lmeness moralities) at the close of his present subscription. Even if he avoid selling on its cstimates, he owes it to himself, as a conseientions man, to withdraw his support from an institution on which his own opinion has already
passed judgment. If he continue paying for pretemted information on which he canmot or does not rely, he is merely lemding his nane and ment to the perpethation of an exacting amb mserupuloas eombination against the purses and reputation, of other men, and therely making himself a party to whatever of wrong or injustice may be done to them. He may be satistied, for peace's salie of a hoped for benefit, to stamd a yearly loss of sulseription; hat does he not owe somethinis to the clises to which he belongs, and shonk he not be ready to resent, reprove, and repress any and every flagrant assanlt on honerable trading so fart, at least, as his own contributive example mayg? We lay it down as a troue rule of commereial honor, that no one should coumtemence in another rets uheirll he would not perform himself.

Besides refusing to bear the gearly tax of subsription and Reference lbok bnying, our merrhants shonhl studionsly awoid ading the parasitie applamees of Collection Bureams added to the system, and acting as feeders to it. Even if the elasitication of a trader's donltful debts for purposes of collection and tmoning over to the $\Lambda$ gencies had no depreciatory effect on the trater"s own standing ats a carefnl eredit-giver, he must see, in a moment, that the Agencies' attomeys are not apt to be eflicient. in any litigatei cases, against the generally more competent lawers who will be fomed retaned by the defence. Is it to be helieved that the $A$ gencies ereature will exert all his energies agan-t an Agence supporter, or that the $A$ gencies would encomrage him to press collections for a small pereentage when the withorawal of subserip)tions may reasonably be expected to induce a much greater loss than any possible profit so obtaned? But even if his ntmost ability were serionsly exertel, what seemity can a creditor have for prompt returns from a persom capable of the personal meanness of giving up his time to donhle service as an umpuid spy and a poorl!-paid lawyer? If he exacted a salary from the Agencies, even that fact would indicate a cortain amount of moral stamina, and a certain respect for his professiomal calling; but, being either too weak to impose tems, or too elger, from want, to secure even a pittance of agreed compensation, he is certainly more amenable to temptation than his more independent and self-asserting brethren.
$\Lambda$ tumd means of decreasing the evil effects of the Agencies
form: his his erupu: ment, or in$\therefore$ salke 11 ; lint $s=: 411$ y and as lis, we rule mother tication tuming trateres coment, my litirs wo ful that lgency ess rol-Whererpter loss utmost ir have meanPy and rencies, tamina, gr either re even

## nenable

 ssertingis the very simple one of not applying to them for information. We have shown that, accorling to their own statements, they cannot really tell whether or not any single trader is good for any single transaction. Of whet service, then, con eny statrment of lis uffairs prove which does not go to the extent of justifying a simg'e bargmin? Indeed, must it not be more calenlated to lull useful inquiry than to suygest cantion? If a trader exereise ordinary prodence he can form a fresh opinion himself hased on the most recent available information; but if he trust ever so little to Agency reports, he is sure to judge from evidence incolerent in itself, in almost every instance, of dhbions age, and of dubions origin. Of what value, in the majority of eases, is an opinion six months old? Why should any man part with his moods on the strength of it, when the $A$ gencies eonfess their own want of contidence in it ly stipulating arainst any liability for imparting it? But over and above all these considerations, have we not shown that the system is the matural parent of constantly-agravating errors and misreports?

A fockin means of lessening the ill effects of the Agencies would be persistent refusal to supply them with mupaidfor information. Why shonld not a merchant inpart whatever he may timd neressary or useful divertly to the prasom or persomes from whom he seches creclit? Mrealy this is done in the vast majority of eases; and the credit-giser is acectstomed to write down the statement or to carry it in his mind. He can have it verified or confated by telegraph or letter within a short time-within as short or shorter time tham the Agencies. They must inquire fuecially, at his special expense, if he insist on the latest attanable rusors. They mast deal with a roluntrer mpeid corrosememdent who insists on lieepring behime o mecos: The merehant, on the other hamb, em inguire from other merehants of known standing, Whose answers would be intinitely preferabile, and whose statements, if knowingly erroneous and not compled with reservations, might even be followed by lemal recomes, on fitoerasion, Besides insuring known chamels of infomation, this practice, if genemally alopted, would also leave the whole mon-credit seeking mass of thaders free from even the possibility of being injured in chanater or standing within their self-limited lines amel methods of trade. The eredit-secker would not be, could not be, aware of the course
of inquiry beforeham, and therefore conld not maticipate it. The might rely on a goon report from his neighborhood if he had eamed a goom reputation. If he had not earned it, or the matter were in dombt, he conld personally convince the eredit-giver of any injustice done him, and indicate the direction from. which injurions remarks might have, or might be expected to have, come. In every event, he would have the donble satisfaction of knowing tha: his lusiness affairs were only laid bare to a person rightfully interested in them, and that he merely had one or meno known merchants to satisfy instead of the same momber supplemented hy the lowse gruesses of a secret series of anonymons correspondents, juwenile clerks, needy credit-raters, or vage-writing mangers.

A mFrn mens of comecting the growing wrong of the Ageney system wonld be the prompt request, monthly, of every person whene name appears in the lboks to see the sernet repert on which it is lused. If the Agencies refuse to show it, in the miginal recorm, berle, amel $f^{m \prime \prime} f^{\prime}$, to the applicant, he may rely that it is libelons, :and should seecure commed who conld either canse the mame to be suppresed or reguire the record to be prodnced, or both. If the Agencies allow the recorl to be examined on appli"ation, the person affected shond then choose whether they shall continue to trade in his reputation or desist. The result, in either hypothesis, must cripple the srstem. Of what service to any one except the jersom rated satisfictorily could the system be, in the one ease? In the other, merehants conld have no imfucement for phing for atsstem of inguisition which, in its net product, realized the sole perfection of a muthal-admiration coterie.

A sixm means, and, to our mind, the fittest of all mentioned, is resort to the law to repress their libels and recover damages, as well, for beaches of contract to supply information comeetly muder their old or existing subseription eontracts. By what right are ten men in the Vnited states amd Canada enabled to set themselves "p as irresponsible censors of their fellow-citizens' chameters and business stmdingr? Simple arreements at large with thirl partics on the subject are certanly no protection so long ats the really interested party's astes are not consulted. Fien it the principle of agenoy were allowed as a shich, in a single case, where actual trading had been contemplated in good faith, it wond be manifestly agranst public policy to permit miversal reporting and
t. He he had matter of ally li inju, come. nowing pht fully known uted ly indents, gers. of the f cevery port ont woriyihat it is inse the need, or un : ney shall in either any one , in the nent for product, toned, is hages, as orrectly rat right et thentwacters the third $r$ as the he prine, where ould be ting and
irrejonsible criticism simply becanse, at some time, one or more thonsands of one and a quarter millions of men might seek credit from one of thirty thonsand other men, subseribers to and employers, so called, of the Agencies. But this is not the whole of the objection. Of the million and over rated and eriticised by the Agencies not one half have ever had, or have ever songht to have, a single transaction with the thirty thousand subseribers! ILow can a theory of constructive agency be stretched so as to eover these inmmerable and wholly indefensible interferences with private character and commercial standing? Then, as to the fitness of exacting dmmages from professional news-rgivers, what can be fairer than to insist that men who live ly the business should lose by it, also, when fomd destroying their fellow-citizens, for private gain, in character and substance?

Lest the reader should consider these suggestions, however just in themselves, the result of bias in the writer, and any effort to carry them out singular and exceptional, and to be avoided for that reason, we proced to supplement them by the personal testimons, conveyed to the writer within a single fortnight, of a few of many leading citizens. It will be seen that om advice is already adopted by great mombers of merchants, and that whoever wonld imitate them need have no fear of being withont grood compayy. L. H. P., a leading liguor merchant, says his experience is "that, with the use ar an agener, and the expenditure of a bottle "of wine with its spy, he can break the eredit and repntation of " his neighbor. He knows of no other purpose it san serve, and " wishes it suppressed."

The President of the _- Savings Bank says: "I have borne "the donble relation of subseriber and correspondent. While "acting in the former eipacity, I always took care to compliment " my own friends and keep my own credit in the meridian. As "a partner in a firm withont more than 830,000 capital I found " no difficulty in getting the agencies to rate the house at 8400 ," 000 (!) up to the moment of its failure. I think thenn a colossal " hambing, and carefnlly aroid them in the sense of wiving a dol" lar to them."

The President of the __and _- Bank says: "I would not "throw away wine on any of them. A glass of lager is enough to "reach the credit men and raters."

An iron merelant on -_ street says: "I never subscribed "to any hat McKillop's, and I fomad they always onitted to rate "mo when my suhseription was discontinued. I finally got so "indignant I forcibly ejected one of the canvassers from my " oflice, and licked his hat after him."

A shipping-honse in South street regards them as " blackmail" ers, to whom he would neither give at statement nor subseription, "and forbade their canvassers to come on our premises. Onr "ratings have suffered, and are false, but we are too well known " to care."

A member of another shipping honse writes: " $A$ camvasser in" simuated that an attack on our credit would be made if we did " not subseribe. His threat is fulfilled. But I regret its vagne"ness prevents legal proceedings, although, to himself, the mean"ing and malice are (fuite clear."

Another gentleman, well known as a leading political economist, sends a long letter declaring in the most positive terms that " the " system is a curse, and ought to be abated by legishation."

A hair importer of another city says: "I discovered I was li"belled through the effort of a rival trater, who used the agency "agninst me. He pretended to be friendly, but was on the inside. "I now know how to get even, and will surely try."

The President of the N. T. Co. states: "If merehants are "attacked it serves them right for supporting such an institution. " Let them blame themselves, and turn a new leaf."

A gentleman, only second to Jenry C. Carey in deep stady of the ecomomies of trade, etc., says: "They are dollar and cent con"cerns, started and continned for a livelihood under a public pre"tence. I hope to see them placed on the defensive in the press, "in the courts, and in the State legishatures. For my part, I am " quite certain the District Attorneys in some States conll take "them in hand eriminally."

Mr. H., of II. © $\Lambda$., Wall street, says: "We subseribel at one "time, but, fimling the reports vague, incorrect, and meless, dis"contimed. Since then the agencies have thomerht less of us, "and in their reports say ' the father of one of onr firm,' who died "twenty years ago, 'is still interested,' and place us with our " 8400,000 capital below where they did when we had not a quar"ter of it."

A large Broad-street Lifuor Merchant regards it the "essence "of recklessness to pay any attention to the reports. It is a quick " way, a perfect short-ent, to Bankruptey."

A leading Clothier says: "Our traveller lately fomman agen"ey correspondent in leagne with a trader to purchase all he could "oin a favorable report and share the profits. I trust your agita" tion will give us an organization or common systen of action "against them."

These few samples, selected at rambiom from a mass of rity corresponlence, with two exceptions received within fourteen diys, barely give an idea of the extent and depth of feeling abremly eager to be directed against the obmoxions system. If we were to insert a tenth part of the genemal demuciation, ley letter or word of month, of which we have heen mate tho receiver or hearer within the same period, our book would not contain pages enongh to priat it in detail. But even these examples will suffice to show the hesitating traler that his views are also those of many, many other active and reputable merehants in every city and town in the comutry, and that he can rely on efficient countenance and support, from this time henceforward, in every' justifiable agrgessive movement which he may contemplate against the agrency system, its aiders and ahettors.

While this proof of an aromsed publie opinion must le assuriug to long-patient and long-suffering traders, it carrics a very different lesson to those who have heretofore freely expressed opininns of their neighlors to ageney detectives. Such persons must hear, in these rmmblings of an approaching eontrovers, the presuge of dischosures very painful and surprising. Victims will soon be demanding the nanes of their tradneers. Comets will compel discovery. The natumal anxiety of informants to avoid disclosure ought to be a warming to others that every statement made to the agencies may entail disugreeable consernences and should be sechulonsly avoided hereafter. A habit of strict refusal to say anything abont neighlors, under any ciremmstance, to the minions of the Inquisition, is our last recommendition in this comection. Its wisdom is apparent. The neglect of it, whether from thonght-, lessness or misinpprehension of the scope and purpose of the system, is certain to lring trouble and amoyance, in the near future, to loundreds who thought they could stab in the dark and never be
detected. What honorable merdant wonld like to find himself cheek ly jowl with the army of purposefnl or purposeless informers? Which one, with his own proper business to look after, is prepared to act as a slenth-hound, at the whip and heck of every ugency adventurer who may propose to retail, for hire and protit, neighbors' opinions of each other ? The oceupation is certninly not very dignified or grmeions, ut any time. After the publication of this book, we think we may say it will also be velly apt to become both troublesome and disreputable.

Fach of the means above sugrgested is good, in its way, in the effort to reduce the haminfuess of the agencies. $i$ few of them, faithfully persisted in, will give back to injured business men a large part of the fortmes made out of their chameters. The use, by any respectable number of men, of all the means indieated, will speedily put an end to the system, and release American combmerce from the filthy beak and strident talons of the agency volture.
himself informafter, is of every dd prolit, certainly bieatiom ot to bebusinces rs. The adicated, an comncy vul.

## CHAPTER XXI.

THE ENORMHTY OF THE BLACK IASTS-THE NDMBERR OF PEIRSONS



ILavist demomstrated in a preeding chapter, be indubitalide proofs extracted from Ageney Reference Dums, the absurnd position oecenpied by the System, julged with its own stambird, it only remains for us to direct attention to the private reperts, or Black: Lists, from which, white firwoble mangs appear in the Reference Books, opprobrions matters find comstant circulatiom.

We have seen that sumall capital ratings, are never assoriated with growl credit natinge, even for small amomis; that is, the Agencies do mot comsider hasiness chamater or private chamater, as such, sulficient to determine the right to aredit propertionate to recergnized capital, or worth recognition. But, on the other ham, large (apital, although rated in the Referenee Panks gencrally in conjunction with "groul" on "high" credit, preserves no fixed relation to losiness or private character even in the leference hooks, and, outside of them, in the private reports, is often associated with the most danaging statements. The ordinary reader, consequently, can discover mo metlend of detecting whether or mot the private reports of himself are carried into the Reference book ratings for either low or high capital, and is led, if rated satisfactorily, to helieve that his character las not heen attacked, or, if rated unsatisfactorily, that the worst appears instead of being reserved for priate sale and distribution.

On the other hamd, the expert in Agency literature written or printed, even if he never real a line of the private reperts, can lay his finger in the lieference liooks on every name smirched by masked correspondents or secret spies and recorded for permanent blackening. Wherever the least discrimination is shown in the
appleation of the movathe reritrain or sembens to the capital
 temed information of a danaging kind ; but, ast we have salid, the nhenere of and diserimination is no gramantee whaterer that mat-


 math as posifile ; for their mberibers are expected to come from
 subseribers*) names from the lists of the three Agencies, amb allow at many more to represent the very highest mane of expital from whide falum sulneribers are to conte, we shall still have about wrere han-
 and outside the purview of a sellish poliey of suppression on faroritism. When we are able to saty that a truth of the mading pephlation of New-York is on the Mack Lists of a single Sgence it will not appear exappemtion when we ald hat the total mumber of Merchants and Thaders in the Chited States ame Comada retuell!
 ninety thoisand, at least!

As we have seen, in a fomer dopter, how the capital ratings of Two mendeb axo sixtr-Two Merchants are made fo difler oxt:
 conceive at similar discordance, many times maltiplied, between the
 tar. Under the most favomble comlitions, one man's wat, ats distinguished from his supmenifions, merit is, necessanily, a pmaza seddom solved and never demonstralbe. When we add to the ondinary inherent tronble of determination the ace essomy drawbats of distanee, amonsmity, mutiltered prejudice, or modetected patisumship, the imperliments to acemare berome infinite, and even the minformed are prepared to believe that the contradietions of (eppital matings are sight in comparison with the raging ineoherencies of the crmparative Banck Lists on the sulyere of charrecter.

The reader must have noticed, and can recall, sevemal instances in former chapters where a single $\Lambda$ gency is fombl rating Merchants in good credit whose chanacter as business men is assaled with acrimony in the private reports. When persons ingood eredit by Agency admission are so attacked, it is nothing wonderfal to


 immanite from pmaishancht.

The Dh.nek lasts, therefore, we the dexignation we emploge to
 lyy entr. An iecherg is known to be two thimes muler water. The black lists are sumb ont of sight with their :acemmulated weight of multiplied impmitios.

The Aprendix which follows contains the initials of aluont rex THotsann Mcerchats' and 'Traders' mames, with dity, State, and business added. It represents selections from the liaponta of the

 we proprese for entarge the List matil we shall have given, for his
 business al arey :ssatiled Trader and Conpmation in the Cnited States and Camala.

Lu making up this temille arme of inculpatory mater anr pur-
 os doing su, whether or mat the $X$ gemeies hand taken liberties with therir names. We therefore antine ommelves the initials; ant where even this slight che might, in sumal plates or very peenliar Tanles, leal to identifiation, we hate mitted velertion. Jlae Lists, taken in commection with the Companative Tables in Chapter XVIIL., supply incontroverthle pronf of every allegation made in these pages, and leave onr realers in prosession of a fund of information bot merely movel and convineingr, but never hefore attainable, nor apt to be amplitied or extenled, except by the anthor. Its publication will induce and compel such chamges in the Igeney System that the future inguirer will be wholly at a has to sereme materials, and few, or none, will be fomm willing to devote the same amomet of labor on time to their compilation. Inckily
 the $A$ gencies can only cease with the Srstem: for while ther contime to publish be can continue to confute, amb will asomerlly do so. In some form, it may even become necessary and ilesitable to hnsiness ment that a weekly reoord of Ageney mistakes, muissions, calmmices, ete., shonld be made up and circulated, and the recep-
tion of this volmme will show whether there exists a desire for a rheaper, nore commenient, and periodical form of corrent corrections, aceessible to business men, side be side with the eostly and (rmbersme Agency System infimies.

Onf immediate duty, lowever, is with the Black lists and anch promions of them ats are appended. How ren any rational being womler at the condition of trale when told that this vast amy of maligned Merchants and Traders is simply the advancegramel of a host of other Merchants and 'raders who may finally mmber six mundmen thorsand! Bern in the rities selected for illustration we only cull a few manes ont of the greneral mass. The vast multitule is mot notably lessemed. In all its mighty proportions of mombers, wealth, acommulated hopes and aspirations, it awaits the next roll-call. Why, if a foremer were to hear from these Agencies that the propertion of reputable and tristworthy Merchants and Traders in the Vhited States was less than ten pere cont, cond we blame han for helieving that our social fabrie was incorvigilly rotten? And yet the passivists will say it makes mo matter how much the $\Lambda$ gencies belie or miseport so long as only. a few doren persoms, in the case of earh trader, are let into the secret! They forget that the falsehoods or libels themselves are not reduced in intensity by the method of repetition, and that the argregate resialt to the hasiness character of the comitry is precisely the same as if humdreds were made the contidants of the Agencies in each instance. Alt who have reason to ask are answered; and those ask whose opiniom, whem formol, assists to assure suresess or failure in treele to the porsom ingniral about. What else is wanted to leave the Trade of the comntry and commercial confidence both prostrate so far as Agencies cim prostrate them?

Even if we leave ont of account the wrong eommitted on private feelings, or the danger to individual prospects, here are thonsands of millions of bosiness capital confessedly in the hands of cheats or swindlers! Is it nothing to throw a cloud romed the utilization of this wealth? to place its owners in a sort of moral quarantine destructive to energy and only reached by the desperate? Our experience with $\Lambda$ gency capital estimates was certanly bad enongh, but in all that ministers to evil, and evil only, these character-killings of the Black lists are inconceivably the most infamons and most
deadly to legitimate commere. If the emable ond readers to exart relief and redress, our labor in compiling them will have been amply rewarded.
'Tor renew omr line of aremment:
I. We set out to prove that the $\operatorname{I}$ gency "System" was a sham and a swindle of the ti.st magnitme in its mavaramear. We

II. We proposed to show that it was really no Sysem, having neither ooherent principle now coherent illustation in its length
 trenting the diverovalamer of the $A$ gemmies as to third juntiess ame rech ofthor, are cometusime one these questions.
III. We eommenced writing with the design of faily disensiing the right of such an amomaloms " lastintion" to exist in an intedigent commmity at all, or withont special lemination directed

 tiuts?
IV. We designed to smogest to the husiness dasses remedial mensures :ganst the Nystem. What the sumerestion in rexarl to ( mamate Companies rloes mot prowide for is amply compensaterl



It omly remains for us to anticipate the methods in which the System will essay to meet onv argments:
 'To defeat this purpuse we rely on the justice of (onrts, the groxlwill of the independent press, and the assistance of the lomersulfering and errossly-betmed hosiness polblic.
 anything in his homble life to sperially rexret more seriomsly than his association with the System, he has pet to ham it.
III. The thiod cend last stfort will lne cithor to comblut his rectseming or jorim issue on lies fiects. This is the least likely of all, lout the one which the writer natmally desires. Shomld the Sys tem, however, find ome defender, we shall challenge him,

Fibstly, Topoint to a single line in the work which is mot an mtional deduction from facts stated in it.

Semelly, To contimmet, he mioor, a single mbdegation or fiser in the whote hook !

If we have written with wamth betimes, we have been uncom-! moions of the epirit of either malice or macharitablenes. If, on lowking over our pages, we see much that might be bettered, we

 justire to the subject; we have ume ahont either the amome of prepamation or the material at our disjosal.

Bat whether the $A$ gencies enter an a labered defence or not. they are sure to rely somewhat on the nee of their cheap talent fon priate cirenlars. 'Ihese will reach subseribers-will be practically exclusive and diflicult for the autside publie: or the authere to ob-tain-and may be made more efficiont in retaining patronage than all other instrumentalities combined. They posess all the advantages of partisan statements without entailing the penalty of open confutation like a new paper atiole or a panphlet isomed for gemeral realings. We must rely on some one of on realers for any specimen of this kind of missile which may le stealthily put into his hand. The open defence, if any, we en find for oumelves.

One additional deviee ocems to us. The Agencies are rertain to revamp and repmblish an old collation of Commendatory Satters written by a few subseribers, years aso, in return for orerating. These letters are simply poor imitations of the ones fomed in any Chery Pertoral ahmate or in ay Stomad Bitters pommeriamento. Whan not mamfactured ontright, they are simply enlogies compiled ly knaves for misleading fools.

Ferommendations dated sulasiquent to the rementing of this pultlication would not deserve the same chanacterization-for we are bound to believe the writers must proced on some knowledge of their topie ; bat we predict that they will be so few that the apocalyptic duty of eating then wond he within the capacity of an ordinary digestion.

## CIIAPTEI XXII.

## hasil Words.

So far of the past. What is the best methorl of erippling this dangerous and destrmetive system in the future

Most of the surgestions already made are limited in application to subserihers. Those about to be made may he acted on by the whole trading commonity, and, on on theory, shonld he carried ont promptly and persistently matil relief from the Agence inculns: shall have been attained.

One of the most effective of weapons will he the accommation at some eentre, for prompt distribution, of profs of $A$ gence erons, whether arising from ignomane or malice. It will realily oreme to a merchant who has, at any time, heen deceived by Agenco repmits, that the value of his information depends wholly on wiving it pulblicity, and, so far as may be, in comnection with like information from other merchants. Its point, too, will greatly depend on its circulation in the neighborhood where it originated, and might have frick contimation in the persomal experience of other tazders. ( iiven a common depositery, nothing will be more easy than to direct these proofs, in the most effeient way, at the system, and su preserve a comstant fire along the whole line of $\lambda$ grence oreupation. The writer will be ghad to constitnte himself this comurn repositors.

Even superion in importane to this athering of profs is the necessity that they shonld be irrefragale and incontertable. The "pponents of the System must mot imitate its lomermess of statement, or looseness of reasoming. What is mot ceipable of julicial demonstration to a common intent shombi mot he nseng. Whaterem contans an elenent of inference shonle be strictly somtinized if not wholly disuegarled. Where persomal feelings might essity to get a hearing, they shonld be watehed, weighed, and eliminated.

In illustration of the great care which should be exereised in aceepting statements, even at one remove, we camot do better than mention omr own cantionsness in the same connection. Since the appearance of our Prospectus we have heen pestered with innmmerable offers of testimony against the $\Lambda_{\text {gences }}$ from their Managers, Ex-Mangers, and Clerks, but we have not taken a single illustration from their experience, feming that, as on time did not permit us to go to the varions places refered to and verify the tendered evidence, we might fall into even mintentional error and give expression to individual griefs and selfish purposes. When, for instimee, one De Lestre, an Agency emplovee, wrote from Utiea that "he knew of several instances of undermining the merchants of that eite;" and would be glad to place the information at our service ; or when one Francey, in like employment, informed ns, among other things, that the Erie Disputch had shown certain favor to the institution, and several others tendered us lists of correspondents and damaging details for a consideration, we threw their propositions in the wastebasket. We could not wive any weight to statements incapable of ready proof, and disregarded them at once. Each merehant must exercise a similar watelffulness in taking nothing for sranted, and only vouch for alleged facts near at hand and capable of instant veritication if disputed.

If subscribers lave strong motives to assist in furnishing evidenecs of $\Lambda$ geney mistakes and mismanagement, non-sulseribers lave intinitely more reasons for doing so. Non-subscribers are the subjects of $\lambda$ genery dissection for the pretended benefit of subseribers. Their eharacter and standing are the System's stock-in-trade. Their financial assistance, through yearly suhseriptions, is one of the eonstantly-pmined ohjects of $A$ geney effort. If they would escape the altermative of propitiating Digon by gifts, or of being in hourly fear of his malignity, let them strike hands with erery man who has alrearly set his face against the monster, and who jroposes to destroy him. The rumed may retrieve themselves in time; lut it behowes selected vietims, as well, to do everything in their power to escape either the penalties of a worshipper or the pains of a sacrifice.

We have now finished onr initiatory work in these subterranem (rypts, and are abont to emerge again into the open air. 'Tis a pleasing riddance-the eseape, even for a short time, from the rank
in : $r$ than ce the munernagers, tration tus to dence, ession e, one knew cit,:" - when hings, m, and ing de-wasteible of ; must d, and nstant videnf have e sullribers. trade. me of would of lethe ev1 who res in ing in or the mean 'Tis a rank
rapors of these lower regions, reeking with fatid exhalations of assailed or decaying chanacters. But some one mast have gone down into their depths to explore and expose their seerets, and we are combident that, however pundy we have perfoned onr duty, the world of lowiness will be the better for it.

Much that we comid hase added must wait for another oceasion. We combld not wisely have given more sample fiacts, for we mather wish to gain the attention of the publie to a great ontrige, and enlist it in a canpuign for its extirpution, than to exhanst resources which, to be mont effective, must be held in a prodent reserve and only applied to revise a flagging interest or reinfore a waning controvers. Jike any other agitation, the one initiated ly the writer against the Commercial Agroner sistem in Ameriea shomld grow with disenssion, and should be supplied, in its prugress, with new weapens and missiles suited to the varuing phases of the contest. He is mot a carefal soldier who hinges all his troups into acetion at the opening of the engagement. The knowlenge of a powerful reserve fore is ako ats enemaring to friemels as dispiriting to the enemp. We have this reserve, and intemb to use it where and when it may reasomally he hoped to do most goon to pame lyzed trale and sally-ineset traders.

As for the Ageney system itself, this work places it on trial in the Cuited States and Camada. We call now it to plead, and gon to the comatry on the iswe framed. Here is our evidence in part. Where is theirs to contralist of refute it !

The question is not, "What is the writer's motive?" althongh we can argue m motives, if necessary; lmin, "Cam his facts be refuted!" Kint, " Does he luppe to be benclited by asailing the institution ؛" hat, "Is the institution, in its principle on as conductcol, fit to exist in a free community © We say it is mot, call on its defenders to cone forth, :umb, with an thesured faith in the outcome, leave the resint to the final opinion of an intelligent press and an colucated pulbic.

The Detective and Informer betong to the pathe of illicit trale on the skulking-phaes of acemplished arime. They shombld have mo combenance in the marts of legitimate commere on :mmong the men whose preeminent achievements have placel us in the position of one of the Cireat Powers of the Worll.

If we must have Inquiry, let it be open, straightforward, re-
spmsible, intelligent, interested inguiry, affording facilities to both Creditor and Debtor, Buyer and Seller, amemble to hoth, and regnlated by Law : an Jugiry befitting the manliness of the American clamater, and recognizing its fitucsis to be julged by the highest standards of business probity and commercial honor.

# THE SECRET BLACK LISTS or me "SYSTEM." <br> PART I. 

EMBRACING THE PRINCIPAL COMMERCIAL AND MANUFACTURING CENTRES IN THE

## United States and Clanala.

## NEIV-YORK CITY.






Mcrs. rwear. rumes. collnrs. 4. Felt. sults. sliirts. (Cups. mbers. ( ioorls. 'Suits. d llair (ioonls. . liruit. Jlotel. rtuker. linery. liguors. dware. jomery. intuors. 1 l'rod. lBroker. e I.cind. ibloons. 1 'rod. othingr. . (ito. Goods

## (o.

 Bukery. rupher. rsinith. shions. rinter. Shecs. Thilor. Ware. obnce. othing. indow (iluss. skirts. Cloth. Furs. Cloth. uruers 'ianos. r D. a . . Hats. rokers. Agent. Comin. weller. Intele. Fillre F Beds.rokers.



| H, | 13- J. Li. . . . . . . . . . Pattermmaker. |
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| , N......... . . . . . Ik. R. 'Ilow. |  |
| I. W. A Noms. . . . . . . . . . . I'rov. | 13-1: W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Pımır. |
| W. II. A ('o. . . Mnfira laces mal |  |
| bimbrolderias. | 11. |
|  | B- Bron. . . . . . . . . . . . . dewedi.rm. |
| beilers |  |
| c Med |  |
| S. B. . . . . . . . . . Colton Brokir | B- Fi, A. . . . . . . . . . . . deaf 'lohmmers. |
| 1:. S. . . . . . .shipplng und Con'u. | 13-1. . . . . . . . . . . . . Joburner Nhirts. |
| blbers linacy (ism |  |
| A. ................. . .saper Coblars and C'ulfs. | bittligs. |
| lal lilowers. |  |
| liguors. | 13-11. ... . . . . . . . . . Mise. Broker. |
| l'lımiter. | 13-1. . . . . . Identier und Findings. |
| Drugn. | $13-11$. |
| W゙. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {iro. }}$ | B-C C. 11. di Co. . . . . . . Brokers and |
| M. . . . . . . . . . . . . . .llardwar | yrups, cte. |
| Oy | 13-13. . . . . . . Bet. biote and shoes. |
| brants. | 13-13................. . . Ninilunker. |
| Pinnofortes. | 13-1. $1 . .$. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . iorks. |
| (.... | B- S. 'I' . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liphors. |
| (1. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 'Tohnurro. | 13-W W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Prinin. |
| A. A Sims. . . . . . . . S. E. Brokires. | 13- Z. 12. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {rrinter. }}$ |
| A. If. dico.....s. M. Nuelles. | 13- I. V.........Artista Materims. |
| * (i-m. . . . . . . Com'n Paper. | 13-M. J.. . . . . dadies' and C'hildren's |
| 1. d 'I'. 11. ..... . . R. E. Brokers. | Undrwernr. |
| (13m | 13-1). © . . . . . . . . . . Lenf 'lowncto. |
| W. N. . . . . . . . . . . . .llardwntr. | 13-13. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {chenir. }}$ |
| I'. l'. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .iquens. | B- J. Mc.J. d Co.'lolmerolnspectors. |
| J. W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {bnininter. }}$ |  |
| J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liyuns. | 13-J. J. $11 . .$. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Wens. |
| s. d Co. . . . . . . . . . Com'n Prom. | B- Bros. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Carriages. |
| A . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Whul. 1 | B—— (i-d Co. . . . . Shipuing mat |
| M. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 'Trus | C'un'ı. |
| dred llatr. | 13- J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Hariware. |
| Brushes. |  |
| I. . . . . . . . . . Ret. Fuacy (ionds. | 13-13. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Books. |
| W. H. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | 13-1 (i, N. . . . . . . . . Umbrellas, cte. |
| \& 1-....... . . Stamad diass. | $13-\mathrm{S}$. |
| Ii, H. . .....- Nickel Works. | 13-1. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {Pinnos. }}$ |
| . F. . . . . . . . . . . 3 3rasswork | 13- ${ }^{\text {d }} \mathrm{L}$ - . . . . . . Bunnot Fromes. |
| W. A. . . . . . Mnfr. llair fiood | 13-1 1.. . . . . . . . . . . . Mnfr. Cinars. |
|  | 13-1. M. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Contec. |
| J. W. . . . . . . . . . . . Thilor, etc. |  |
| I. Jr. \& co....Com'n Cotton, ete. | 13-11......... . . . . . . . . . Liguors. |
| J. A. d Co, . . . . . . . . Jlmmera. | 13-J. . . . . . . . Ret. Buots and shors. |
| J. © C'o. . . . . . . . . . . Conrpenters. | 13-4. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liguors. |
| \& 13-. . . . . . . . Ret. Clothing. | 13- J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Carpets. |
| \& 'o. . . . . . . . . . . dien't Com'n. | 13-A...... . . . . . int. Fatney (iomels. |
| ※K゙- . . . . . Mnfis. Plastipue | 13- A. © Co. . . . . . . Mnfrs; Jewolry. |
| cioods. | 13-13. J............... k id (ilowes. |
| V. II. . . . . . . . . . R. E. Broker. | 13-13. . . . Com'n Foreign 1). (ioods. |
| l. '1'...... . . . . . . . . . . . . Mair. | I3- H. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Butcher. |
| IV.....Ret. Hats, Chothing, ete. |  |
| W . . . . . . . . . . . . . Builder, et | 13- I. . . . . . . . . . Ret. Fancy (ioorls. |
| (1.11................ . . Stocks. | 13- A. © Co... . . . . . Men's Furn'g. |
| L. . . . . . . . Ret. Boots and Shoes. | 13- $\mathrm{S}_{\text {M }}$ |
| .lluman llnir. | 13-1- $12-\ldots .$. l'encils, rete. |
| . Men's Furn'g. | $13$ |



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$13-$ Mme. $\begin{aligned} & \text { B. R. . . . . . . . . . Millinery. }\end{aligned}$
13———F. M. A ('o. . . . . ('armago lphoinitery.
13- (i. W. © F. A. . . limminure and binprese.
13-A. A. . . . . . . . Ret. Men's Furn's.
13-12. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 0 ystions.
$13-13.1$. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . liguors.
13-- 1.1., ............. . Vier. (lothing.
13-11................. . . . . . C'arriagers.

 13-1 1..............................
$\qquad$
13- (i. A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . lanints.
13—— R. T. A ('o. . . . . Patmat Mrathic White Wire.
13- J. J...........................athere
13- Fi. \& (\%.................. . Timber.
13—— J. A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

13-1:.................. Imp. (rockery.

13—— IV. R., bistate of . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
13—— 11 -. . . . . . Biblibers hardwate.


313- (i. W........... . .ivery Ntiahles.
13-3. ('........................... . . . © .
13-1'.....................................

13- ('................. . Shoo Pindings.

 ete.

13- F. J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Aiquors.

13- J. I.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 'lathing. '
11——W. W.......... Nincral Waters.


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(1) (hathe rte.



$(-1)-1 \%$.


upplies. crweur. Broker. ol. i ro. Builder. (ioxds. rokers. |wares. 1)enters Teas. tractor. Hereors. Com'n. iquors. iquors. ng and d Prox. ing and in Prow Shits. whand " 1rod.

Slatrs. les, etc. ine Athaments. 'in Procl. in Prod. iquors. "pipics.
ractors. Frames. her, ite. nd Tin. rinters. Cloths. riniture. Brokir. tewelry. himpry. rinters. -lowers. .iquors.
cradles. romace. hiskey. Whol. (ionods. t. D. (i. lesale \& iil Thas. Builder. ate, cte. Stages. rdware. 1. Hats. 3 mikers.



('An
Ret. Fancy (ivods
C-B Bros............ Shipping and Com'n.
$\mathbb{C}$ - $\mathbb{E}$ Co.... Com'u Foreign Pickles and Sances. C—— $\mathbb{C}$ (i). . . . . . . . . . . . Stoek Brokers. C-_ E. M. . . . . Jobber Leaf Tobncco. C—C-CO.
C- (i. II. . . . . . . . . . . . Naval Stores.
C- J. S. . . . . . . . . . . . © 'on'n Lamber.
C-_ (i. M...............................
(B- A. M.................. . Anetionerer.
(1- I. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .Ret. D. (t.
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K－Bros．\＆Co．．．．．．．．．．Gen＇l Mdse．
$\qquad$ K－A．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Builder． $\mathrm{K}=11, \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots .$. ．Shirts． K——V．dCo．．．．．．．． H mps．and Com＇n Drugs． K－F．W．．．．．．．．．．．．Cotton Broker．
 ．iro． ． iro ． k＿s．h．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．ider． K—— H．\＆son．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Bricks． K——J．U．Mufg．Co．．．．Mnfrs．Steam Gnuges． K—— Co．．．．．．．．．．．．Prov．Brukers． K——＇T．B．\＆© Co．．．．．．．．．．．．．＇Crockery． Broker． K——（子．T．．．．．．Agent and Imp．D．G． K——TM．M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Liq．Broker． ．Ins．Broker． K—— W．II．．．．．．Shipping and Con＇n． K－J．J．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Iron Fondry． K—— M－．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．arriares． K—— E．M．．．．．．．．．．．．Stock Broker． K＿$\quad$ i．ditions．．Imps．Musical Insts． K——．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Liquors． K——strs \＆Co．．．．．．．．．．．Stationers． K——s．．．．．．．．．．．．．Mnfr．Flowers． K—— II．© Co．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．inano Legs． K—— $\because . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$. Cabinetmkr． K——J．F．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Pies． K——（．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Broker． K— $11 . . . . . . . . . . .$. Joblber Gloves． K－L．C．© Co．．．．．．．．Adver Agents and Printing．
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 L－S．．．．．．．．．．．Imp．Wntches and Jewelry． I＿K．．．．．Jobber Dress Trinumings． L L———C．．．．．．．．．．．．．Subtock Brokere． L－\＆B－．．．．．．．．．Stock Brokers． L＿J．．．．．．．．．．．．Liq，and Billiards． L—— \＆ lups．Sponges． L —— F．K．．．．．．．．Tras and coffees． L— J．\＆Co．．．．．．．Flour：（irnin，nnd （irn＇l Com＇n． 1－＿$\&$－


 ＿M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．IProd． L——Bros．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Prod．Denters． L—— J．W．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． I＿W． $\mathrm{W} . . . . . . . .$. ．Jobber Flour． L－A．（＇．\＆co．．．．．．．．．．．．．．idipuors． L——Bros．\＆C＇o．．．．．．．．．Bankers nad Brokers． I－C－Co．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Crment．
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 －S．M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Ret．I）．（i． L － E F－．．．．Tobaceo and Pipes． Bros．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Wholnace． $\mathrm{L}-\mathrm{B}-\& \mathrm{~L}=\mathrm{Co}$ ．
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L_ T. ©. \& Co.............. Brewers.
L_ I - J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Furniture.
L_ J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liqumbers.
L-T. P . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liquors.
1,——. \& (o............. Mdse. Brokers.
J- J. T. \& $\mathbb{S}$-.............Neckties.
L- R. V. \& Co. . . .Imps, Laces, etc.
I - $\mathbb{E}$ ( $-\ldots . .$.

- li. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Intent Jacks.

1, II.................. Com'n Liquors.
I_ I. . . . . . . . . . . . Sewing. Machines.
_-T. ...............................
L_—. J. M. . . . . . . . . . . . Com'n Paper.
L_ J. \& Co......... Mnfrs.' Arents.
$\mathrm{L}-\mathbb{\&} \mathrm{A}$-.... Mnfrs. Jewelry Set-
tings.

I-_ \& B-........ Ship Chandlers. Mel3-S. Y................. . Hats, ete. MeB——J. J. \& Co. ......Imps. haces. MeC- 13. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Tnilor. McC-\& $\mathbb{C}-\ldots .$. Jobbers Fancy Gionds.
McC—— J. . . . . . . Tobacco and Cigars. McC—— J........................... McC- N. . Bro. . . . Tobaceo liroker. McC- N. \& Bro. . . . . . . . Leather and
McC- P. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Ret. I). U.
McC- \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Drugs.
McC- Bros. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Int .
McC- I. A Co. .............. Lamber.
MeC-J. G. . . Mufr. Women's and Children's Lace Caps.
MeC- \& Co.... Galvanized and Refined Shect Iron.
McC-J. M. . . . . . . . . . 'ien'l Com'n.
McC—— J........................ . . Builder.
Mcc_ J. ........................... . Builder.
Mcc- J. E...........................Buidder.
McC——R., Agent.... Ship Chundler. MeC-II. . . Mufr. Nhirt Busoms and Women's Skirts.
MeC—— J. J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Lumber.
$\mathrm{MeC}-\mathrm{I}$ - Co .
 McD- J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Remn Praurant.
 McE——Tr....................... simp.eds. $\mathrm{McE}-\mathrm{T} . \mathrm{B} . . . . . .$. . . Biet. Clothing. MeE—— 11 —— $\&$ Co. . . . Musjuito Netting, etc.

 McG—— J. D. . . . . . . . . Iddse. Broker. MeG——T. \& Co.......... Oil Works. Ne Meq- J. . . . . . . . . . Lard nud firease. Neti- R........... Writing Flaids. McII- J. V. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Shoes. McII——P......................Ret. D. O . Mcl-\& 8 -.......Wines and idi. Mel-T. Mck - C . . . . . . . . . . . . Marble. Neli-\& F-............... Drugs. Mck——\& W. . . Shipping mul com'n. Mck- W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Machinist. McK—— H. .................... . Lipuors. Mck- J.......Ret. Boots and Shoes. McL-E....... . Shades und Paperlungings.


dware. shine. "uther. thing. asiery. d. (i. Shoes. ar, rte. dionds. russes. rokers. ioners. it, etc. d Liq. iquors. Heter Sump. . 'ionl. (iownls. Sufer. (inomls. shomes. iloves. rok.r. r . lisher. thenor. - Co. Broker. - Furs. Marble. I'rol. Gooth. Furn'r. ns, otc. Prod. w.ly incers. a leaf wacco. Brewer.

Hs, ite. atmos. Is, ete. ijpiners. in mers. dinells. finols. Truale. Hand Com'u. Norks. . (iro. Shres? Furn's. lis, ete.







 adies' s, ett, lishluer. Houls. ogaly. Hues. nd Eu(ilisis. . Ciml. Silftrs. Fish. roker r . ats mud Caps. C'om'in.
'owler. binulers. Printir. Contec. rulware rockry. ...iro. Brykurs. IIrellus. Maker. wellers. "1 Ruys. 1 cares. H1 Ciller. Banker. Hoterl. wis. wte. Printer. 1.1quers. welopes. ols, cte. Frobicen. cr dimuls. ewillur. illinury. tectwrie. chinury.
Print P . 1) enler. Stulles. Furn's. :lliurts. -ulpilies. inire, ete. irniture. truishles. nterinls. ...Fect.



rey (inoods. ..... Irman. Hin's, etce Clothing. hool. Airy . Lid ини C'aps. cy Gourls. Ret. Clo. Clothluge. cy (inoolls. uer ('lothes. 1) I'rinter. Plumber. Ig Com'n. ine Whe. 'Trobaces. curniture. ur ciouds. Supplies. r. Broker. cy (inexls. sobler anel Land. . Huts. jeweller. Furniture. 8. R. Iron. Nuls, rte. uctionect. 10 Oyturs. (iuns, ette. in Com'n. fand Instr. howentes. irbibider. Broker.
. Pianos. ats, Capis, ette. .T: ilor. cy (ionds. Pratk d Mineral Waters. aicy i) (i. cy dionds. (3) Broker. tationers. (mbrellhas. ring Misl. Butcher. ing.(ilass Plates. hol. (iro. urniture Covelties.
.Tailor. Tobaceo. Millinery.




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| :---: | :---: |
| F. M | . Ral E |
| N- 11 |  |
| !- 1 |  |
| $\stackrel{\sim}{1}$ |  |
|  | baceo. |
| ¢- A |  |
| S-_ Bros. \& ('o. . . . . Shipling ant |  |
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$\qquad$ $\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{N} \mathrm{N}$-. . . . Jobbers Millinery Goods.

 , J. ................... 1 Ilotel.

太_ S. S....Mnfr. lnk and Mucilage.
 $\underset{ }{N}$ N........ . .lít lit. Fancy lioods.
 (i) 1. - Co (\%. Piamos. .l'rod. M- Co..... Women': Vnder-
 K_ \& S—— A I-....dobbers linncy (ioods and losiery.
$\qquad$

 S——_ V - Co. . . Mnfrs. Viers. S——. \& Co. . . . . . Car linilders, ote -S- J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Poddler Cloth.
s-_ M, if S.......................... Bankers
min Com'n. Fistate, ete. Cloths. ber Clothis. 4'spplies. .Tobacto. . .limuors. ipping tand com'n. mmunition. os Aillinery (inools. con Brokır. Al Com'n. (n'l com'u. - Hotel. Hotel. mman liair. Mucilare: 1'mis. neil llates. mey (ioods. Co.

Piamos I'rol. weat: and Com'n. od. Broker.

Lígums Cum" and limikers: mand Itats. Hotrl. ${ }^{1}$ ' Chandler. $\cdots$ 1.umber er Jowelr: .Tobacer. welry, etc Susimiders. 1. Clothing. $11 \mathrm{~m} / \mathrm{s}$ "pping mad Com'n. 1. Clothing. ancy (iools wh Insier: and Shores . Jewelry. . Bencolust. ifr. Cipurs. nfrs. Vicers niders, et. and skins. in 13rokers. liller Cloth. awnbroker .Bnukers.



mmbr．学 Tailon．
 tily，＂川． Paintar． Fintis．
 ．Druge． Iew．lry． t．D．© sinterti． tillinery． mineyril． Broker res ite． －．Firel． Printer． Damar．ex．
 ．．．Pror． 11 sumes． $y$（iment inProul． 1 S Shaw． ．．．．．oil． licquers． tiltitur uns sic． Printers． powidr． Flowers． 4 Blinds． Thataro． ＇linware．
． 1 ， ＇t＇imis．
 1 Witars

## Itusirry．

 hishers． Broker． Broker． Tallors． （＇is．$\qquad$

 1月！
 （ionals．





 lhrokers. W—— J. F. \& Co..............Jewelry. W- J. H. \& Sons. . . . Catto Brokers. W—— J. I! © Co...... Stock 13rokers. W-1. H. \& W............ Fringes. W——S——dCo.Mnfrs.. and Joblers Limen and Lace Goods. W —— W — $\mathbb{E}$ - $\ldots$. . Itardwure. W——d G——. Shipping and Com'u. W—— (i-...........................ashes. W—— J......Agent Flour and (irnin. W- A. ....................Builder.
 W——耍..... Broker Flour and (irain. W—— W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Li, Ci, nors. W—— II. S. \& Bro. . . . . . . . . Bankers. W—— $\mathbb{E}$ (i-. 1 mpss . Slawls, Whit, Giools, etc.



3．nad N ． ersmiths． awellers． ．．T＇Tens． nd Bont 13roker． Brokers．
dletrees． ．Druys． ＇s＇Cloth－ ing． y Goods． ints，etc． ime，etc． 1 Broker． Bedding． Lumber． Solder Broker． llatters＇ Goods． Glasses． Lowing－ （ilusses． Furn＇g． Furn＇g． ．Cattle． llolders． toneyard． and liond Brokers． Jewelry． 13rokers． 13rokers． Fringes． doblers ce Goods． ［ard ware． d Com＇n． ．Sashes． Reffiners． nd（imin． ．Builder． is Fitter．
e 13roker． nd（irain． Liguors． Crockery． Bankers． ctioneers． ls，Whito oods，ete． Billiards． Clothing． ．．Hotel． nt Mcels．


## BROOKLYN N. Y.

|  | . T (ohacco nnd Cigars. |
| :---: | :---: |
| J. \& R | . . Spring Mattressces. |
| M. | . . . . . . Fancy (ioods. |
| J. W | Mnchinist. |
| (1) | quors. |
|  |  |
| 1. | Furn'r. |
| American | - i - C'O. |
| - 'I'. | ro. |
| $\mathrm{IR}$ | . Tailor and Cothing. |
|  | Batker. |
| J. II | . ©oppersmib. |
| W. | ioneer. |
| 1\%. | Carpets. |
| J. | mey (ioods. |
| 13 r | Carpets. |
|  | I). 1. |
| J. | binters. |
| 1 ' | Furn'tr. |
|  | hager beer. |
| W | 1)ruas. |
| $13-1$ | latinter. |
| 13-W. | Sewellar. |
| \& 1 | lliards and lim. |
| 13. | lothing. |
| S., | rockery |
| 13-Mrs. | Sloes. |
| 13-K... | Maker. |
| 1 B | (1., יtc. |
| N | (imo. |
| C. \& | lwnings. |
| S. | lats and Cups. |
|  | - $\mathrm{lour} \mathrm{Mills}$. |
| $13-11.4$. | (iro. |
| Mrs. | Finmey Goods. |
| Mrs. | Millinery, etc. |
| Irs. | Comlerwear. |
| rs. | Cups, and Furs. |
| 11 | Mafr. Straw Goods. |
| 3-- T. J.. | . Buots and shoos. |
| C. \& | Mufrs. Dress |
|  | I'rimmings. |
|  | , |
|  | ass Finishers. |







Gioods. Builder. Natting. Liquorr. ...I). (t. umbers. . Hotel. Brewer: ... (iro. . . . (iro.
'ainters. Snloon. lothing. lothing. Li, urors. ...D. l’ainter. lass, ete. staurant. liquors. d shoes. ilermkr. piskirts. 'lumber. Y Gools. handler. Jeweller. . Builder. lothing. .. 11 otel. Lic luors. Liquors. .Builder. urniture. ...J. ( D). ('. at shoes. Liguors. . Tailor. (iro. Plumber. rbuilder. . 1 Hoc Liquors. aruiture. Trusses. rockery. - Thackle . Clocks. y (ionds. . 'Tailor. 'lussels. wing M. and liq. . Paints. olsterer. y Cioods. y cioods. frs, Oils. Builder.




... irm. i shows. Confec. Comfere. l'ninters. y iond. Multster. Paluter. arrhges. d Blinds. s. (ilase thumker. tioncers. .... (iro. Ginsmith. cy (ioords. ail llonsic Furn'r. Lumber. . 'Thilor. Phumber. all shows. liquors. and Feed. Clothing. ....I). ${ }^{i}$ Tinware. cy (ioods. $\therefore$ Brewer. furniture. oopskirts. ....1). Crockery. cy Goods.

Tors, etr. achinists. s llinges. y (ioots. urringes . Cigars. hol. Gro. . Storage. . Baker. y Goods. . iro . urd Shoes. ctmaker. y Goods. fid lrov. Sances. Prov. Agent.

## ALBANY, N. $\mathbf{Y}$.



[to be continctio.]
$\Lambda \Gamma L \Lambda N T A, G \Lambda$.

[to me costinced.]

## AUlBURN, N. Y.

Music, ote. . (iron, ctc. Com'n, etc. milles., we. Com'n, ate. . . . A dinurs. . Clothimg. .....). 1 .Fominiry. .. Phanter. . . P'Imitur. ....... Mills. .../umbur. ... .irocer. . . . ${ }^{\text {inocer}}$ . . Planter. .. Planter. hesthurant. …D. .. .planter. . . .sululler. (iro. itton 1 k rs. ... Planter. .......(iro. .. Planter. ..... Druss. -...Miller. Furniture. .stk. Yard.

## BALTIMORE, MD.

| A- W. II. \& Co. . . . Oyster Packers. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| $A-T-\& C_{0}$ | . Auctioneers, ete |
| American $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{Co}$. |  |
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|  | ons. |
| 13-_ J |  |
| 13-C. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Shoes. |  |
| B-_ S................. Wines, etc. |  |
|  |  |
| B- (1................... Brewery. $^{\text {B }}$ |  |
| B-_J................... Brewery. |  |
| B-_ \& II - . . . . . . . . . Gen'l Com'n. |  |
| 13-- \& B-.............Furniture. |  |
| 13-J. |  |
| oes. |  |
| 13-1. | 'Tobacco. |
| 13-\& $\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{m}$. . . . . . . . . . . . . Tailors. |  |
| 13-11. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .iquors. |  |
| B-W............. . Foundry, etc. |  |
|  |  |
| B- R. \& Nons. . . . . . . Whol. Shoes. |  |
| 3-1 13. P'........... . . . . Books, etc. |  |
| 13-J. J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Coaches. |  |
| B-M. (i. II......... Paints, Oils, etc. |  |
|  |  |
| B——C. II. © J........... Silverplaters. | Grocer. |
| 13-\& Bro.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Shoes. |  |
|  |  |
| C- Bros. \& Co...................... . . Ornges |  |
| C- R.........................iro. |  |
| C-KW.... . . . . . . . . . . . Fcy (ids. |  |
| C- W..................cy (ids. |  |
| C-II- \& Co. . . . . . . . Founders. |  |
| C-_ I. II. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Broker. |  |
| C- T'. E. \& Co........... Gents' Gids. |  |
| ( 1 - R. B. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Iotel. |  |
|  |  |
| C-- G. W.......Mnfr. Cotton Bats |  |
| C-_ © (\%..... . . . . . . . . . . . Stoves. |  |
| (-I.T. R. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Laprs. |  |
| c- di. W. M................. . Shoes. |  |
| C-J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Periodicals. |  |
| C-_J........... Whol. Lqrs., etc. |  |
|  | Books, ctc. |




## BANGOR, MEL.

|  | J- 'I'. © Sou. . . . . . . . . . . . . Iddwarr. |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1-1. M. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Broker. | 1-- I. s. \& Cow. . . . . . . . . . . Medicines. |
| S-M- \& Co. . . . . . . . ('lothing. | K-_ N.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Lumber. |
| B-I. M. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Immber | 1._- (i. W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }_{\text {imo. }}$ |
|  | M—— \& V-.. . . . . . . . . . Shoes, etc. |
| $\mathrm{C}-\mathrm{T}$ | N-1. A........ (imm and L |
|  | P - \& J |
| 1)-C. C. $11 . .$. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Lumber. | P-... W. 'T'. d' ('t. . . . . . Lamber, ete. |
|  |  |
| F | 1- A. WF.............. Machinery. |
| (i-S. B. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . Lumber. |  |
| II. F'........... . . Mlillinery , ete. | 1-- E.................. . (iro., ete |
| (\%- E. A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Giro. | S-O. O. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . llot |
| G-- B. W. . . . . . . . . . . . . .l'rod., | 'I'-- \& (\%, . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Limm |
| \& (C- ......) , Lumber, | 'r-_ W. . . . . . . . . . Nivirration, etr. |
|  | Wー- D. . . . . . . . . . . . . F'ry dids., ete. |

[To me contisu:

## BINGHAMTON N. Y.

Itware. edicines. umber. . . Gro. oes, ete. umber. mimber. bere, cte. ruit, cte. chinery. umber. ro, cte. . Ilotel. cumber. ion, etr. ds., etc.

## BOSTON, MASE.



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| $\mathrm{B}-$ - 1 | ters. |
| B-J. \& |  |
| 13- (i-d Co.........l'aints, et |  |
| 13 | iquor |
| B- 'I. I3. |  |
| 13-0. | Tubles. |
| 13-J. J. 13. © Co. . . . . . . . . . . . Com'n. |  |
| B-1R. \& ( $6 . .$. |  |
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| $13-11.19$ |  |
| 13-T. |  |
| 13-13. |  |
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| B-\& B - |  |
| 13- 5 - S - C - |  |
| B- \& |  |
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| - J.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Bookseller |  |
| U. |  |
| 1 |  |
| N. J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Calf Bts. |  |
| (i_C © © (o. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Nitoves. |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| (:-_ I. M. . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {Plate Iron. }}$ |  |
| - J. S. 心 (\%, . . . . . . . . . . . . . Prod. |  |
| ( |  |
|  |  |
| - W. C. . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }_{\text {cather, etc. }}$ |  |
| (-- F- d Co. . Gans Fixtures, etc. |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| (:- S. W.............. Cordials. |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| (: |  |
| (1-JJ. ※ Co |  |
| (B-M. \& |  |
| - Bros. \& Co.... . . . . . . . . Chairs. |  |
|  |  |
| (- J, \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . . . iquuors. |  |
| (:- F. . . . . . . . . . . . Boots and shoes. |  |
| H. G. . . . . . . . . . . Tamner, etc. |  |
|  |  |
| U- E. W. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . Leather. |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  | losiery. |
| - | T'ailor. |
| (\%-II. Soms. | , |
| - \$ | Boots and |
|  | Sl |
| M. | seed Oil. |
| C.11. |  |
|  | Piano |





## BUFTALO，N．Y．



| I）－II．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Uro．etc． |  |
| :---: | :---: |
|  |  |
| I）－II．\＆C．．．．．．．．．．Planing Mill． |  |
| 1）－\＆（\％）． |  |
| 1）—— \＆ S －．．．．．．．．F＇oundry，ete． |  |
| j － |  |
| F － H W |  |
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| $1-\& W-\mathrm{T}-\mathrm{Co}$ |  |
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| 1－ |  |
| F － F 。 |  |
| F－C（11．\＆ |  |
| （i－$!$ ． |  |
| $(i=i$ |  |
| $\mathrm{i}-\mathrm{F} .$ |  |
| （i－1 ${ }^{\text {＇}}$ |  |
| （i－I I ． |  |
| 15－1）． |  |
| 11－J．${ }^{\text {I }}$ |  |
| H－C（．J．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Cnjuitalist． |  |
| IL—— F |  |
| 11 － 1 |  |
| II－ 4 ．${ }^{\text {d }}$ ． |  |
| $11-\mathrm{R}$ ．R． |  |
| I［－J．M．\＆Co． |  |
| II——\＆©o．．．．． |  |
| II－＿F．J．．．．．．．．．．．Flour and Feed． |  |
| II－li．\＆ |  |
| K－ 3 －Co． |  |
| 下゙ー S．\＆Co．．．．．．．．．．．．．Clothing． |  |
| K－Ii W | Inmmers． |
| K － F |  |
| I －J．（i．． |  |
| 1，${ }^{\text {a }}$ ． |  |
| 1 |  |
| I |  |
| 1，－ |  |
| I，C－ |  |
| MeC－ |  |
| Mch－J．13．．．．．．．．．．．Coffees，ete． |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |


[to be continued.]

BURLINGTON, IOW A.

|  | Grocers. |
| :---: | :---: |
| 'I'. W. d | Whol. Boots. |
|  | Brewer. |
| 13-1 |  |
|  |  |
| $13-\mathrm{W}$ | . Oil Broker. |
| 13-W. W | ( $\mathrm{irain}^{\text {a }}$ |
| 13-1). 13. | fatcl Mnfr. |
| J. 11 | Coal, rte. |
| C-W W. | Shingles. |
| 1)-J. J | eal Estate. |
| N-Mrs. | Millinery. |
| H -W | ilder, etc. |
| 11 | Cigars. |
| (1. |  |
|  | liety |



[zo me continced.]

## CAMDEN, N. J.



| II- J | tc. |
| :---: | :---: |
| - 1. | Window Sludes. |
| J- ' '1. | . Hoots and Shoes. |
| K- E. | Hotel. |
| K- P |  |
| 1, - E. 1 | . Drug |
| 1- E. ${ }^{\text {d }}$ | Notions and lbooks. |
| $\mathrm{P}-1 \mathrm{I}$. | (iro. |
| $\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{J}$. | lides. |
| S-J. | . .1ron. |

[TO me continuld.]

## CILARLESTON, S. C.




II. R. \& Co.

Com'n. C.
$\qquad$
$\qquad$ Whol. Liq. und Com'n.

II ......................
C-_ M. II. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . . Drugs.
C—E D - S . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Cont Com'n
$\mathrm{D}-\& \mathrm{~J}-\ldots . .$. . Livery and Sale
Stables.
arniture. Nursery. urniture. ters, ete. ...lqurs. Springs.
ines, etc. Shades. ad Shoes. - . Ilotel.
. . Drugs. ad Books. ..... (iro. ...Hides. .....Iron.
. Com'n. did Com'n. in Cotton. ..Drugs. . Factor. . . Drugs. . Com'n. ad Shoes. and Sale Stables.

 R——J. R. ('o..... latees, Embroiderics, ete. R——d._...Factors and Com'n. R—— IV. I'. © Co.Bniders' Materials. J. II. l................ . . . . . . . (iro. S- ('. W........................... Coal. W. W. . . . (om'n and shipping. s-T. G............. Cotton Broker. .J. II. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Lumber.

 T - \& 1 -...- . . ship Chandlers. T- W. J. .............. Upholsterar.
I
$W$ W— II- \& Co. . . . . . . . . . Com'n.
$W$-_ E H ——...... . Sonp and Candle
Factory.
Z__ Mrs. M. J. . . . . . . . . . . . Millinery.

## OIITC $\Lambda \mathrm{GO}, \mathrm{HL}$.



| A-_ \& ('o. . . . . . . . . . Whol. Paints. |
| :---: |
| 1-_J. (i...........Whol. Je |
|  |
| A |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{H}, \ldots . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$. (iasfitter. |
| B-_ J. C. Wr. . . . . . . Masonic (iood. |
| B-_ \& Bro. . . . . . . . . Wood and Conl. |
| 1)- J.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1 ). (i. |
| 13-M. M. © Co. . . . . Loan l3krs., etr. |
| 13-Bros...... . . . . . . . . . Stoves, et |
| 13-1). . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Showease |
| 13-_ ${ }^{\text {d-_ }}$. . . . . . . . . . Stoves |
|  |
| $13-$ Bros. \& S _ . . . . T'ype F'ndry. |
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| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| .... . . . Lumber |  |  |
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| F'. . . . . . . . .'Tohnceo and Cigars. |  |  |
| (i. T'. \& (\%). . . . . . . . . . . ('om'n. |  |  |
| d, © (i) |  |  |
| A. 11 |  |  |
| - 1. K. |  |  |
| 13 |  |  |
| 13- A. M. . . . . . (inslight and Cokre. |  |  |
| $13-18$. |  |  |
| $13-\mathrm{W}$ |  |  |
| $13-\mathrm{J}$. |  |  |
| 13-3. (1. W |  |  |
| 13- Mros. |  |  |
| $13-11$. |  |  |
| 13-- 12. 1 |  |  |
| 13-11. |  |  |
| - II. IV |  |  |
| \& 11 |  |  |
| 1--N- |  |  |
| 13-E. E. © (o. . . . . . Woollen Mnfis. Supplies and Dye-Stuffs. |  |  |
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| $3-\mathbb{1}$ - . . . . . . . . . . . . Lamber. |  |  |
| - 1 |  |  |
| J. \& |  |  |
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| (1- A. J. \& |  |  |
| - 1. R. |  |  |
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| - 1- 3 - (i) |  |  |
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| - $\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{d} \mathrm{O}$ |  |  |
| - S., Jr. . . . . . . . . . . . . Clothing. |  |  |
| - S. 1 , dr., dco. . . . . Engravers. |  |  |
| $\qquad$ A. 13. 太 ('o. . . . . . . . . . Curpiagen. |  |  |
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| - 1: A. \& ('o............ l'rinters. |  |  |
| - C', \& (i. \& Co.... Machinery, etc. |  |  |
| C-N. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Pig Lead. |  |  |
| C-1-11-1 © Co...Stationers. |  |  |
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| 1) J. II. \& (ib. . . ............... . . . (i. |  |  |
| W. M............ Real Estate. |  |  |
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| E-LE. F.......... . . . . . . (iuns, ete. |  |  |
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| $\mathrm{E}=\mathrm{E}$ Il- |  |  |
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1), (i. . . l،umbrer. . . . Banker: ruetors, otc. . ('lothing.

Sasles, rte. . . . . . . D. (i. . . Tobaceo. rewery, rete, Ilvertising. (ird Stan'l. A. Operator. . Furuiture. mel Notions. ol. Litןuors. ieddingr, ete. and Shoes. (iru. . .'Tunnery. l'aper-liangis, lerlding. rockery, etc. frw. Wushes, Doors, etc. uro Frimes. . . Clothing. ... . Lumber". 'onn'n (irtilu. laning Mill. 'lothingr, etc. k Machines. Whol. (iro. . (i)win, etc. .... . .lanal. l'dwuse, etc. wol. 'Tobaces. . . lom likr. Dig.lron, ete. sand Slioes. . . Filevator. Co
it abd llotel.
. . Makury. ....Banker. , Merchunts. , Filour, etc. oollen liags. .1). 4. . . . . . Bricks. Rope Nonld. ing. fis. Furn'er. I'at. Meds. a amel Sliocs lenil Estate. . . . Bankers. cy. Gro., etc.
. . Bankers.


[TO E: continueb.]

## CLNOLNNATI, ().





Witer.

$\mathrm{M}-\mathrm{A}$. B. $\&$ ( $0 . .$. . . Whol. and Ret.
1)rugs. M — $V$ —_ $\&$ ( o. . . . . . . Mnfrs. Lemil pipe. M——W. \& J. ('............. . Jowollers. M—\& 11 -........... Whol. Gro. M—— J. $13 . . . . . . . . .$. . Machinery. M—.J. M. \& (o. . . . . . Whol. laints.

 M-J. II. \& ('o. . . . . . . . 'rinters and Stat's.
 M-I'. J. . . . . . . . . . . . Fancy Goode.
M-_ S Son. . . . . . . . . Whol. and Ret. Clothing.

## .Broker.

## Brokers.

 Lhauors. Distillers. id Stut'y. ....110tiv. mil Agen. . . Com'l. ;eends and 1 lmplis. ..... iro. lders, ette, d Rooling Muterials. .....(i.s. silk Huts. . Distiller. \& Brokers. Lachiarry. . . . . 1 opis. en kstate. i'g cionols. and Flags. ther, 'tic' tions, ettr.
## . . . . Hotel.

 . .Jewdry. (inslitter. and shoes, $11-$ (d Carpets. "igars, ete. and Cups. thil Shoes. Clothing. (hol, 1). (i. . hamber. ; mad Sola Water. ook Pub'r. . Builder. and Ret. Jrugs. afrs. lead Pipe. Jewellers. Whol. Gro. Inchinery. ol. Paints. ..Com'n. 1. Liquors. . . Leather. Furniture inters and Stat'rs. s, Tin, etc. ....Pubr. ncy Goode. 1. and Ret. Clothing.

S- IV. II. . . . Carpenter mal Buildur. S-F. © Bro........ Whol. Liquars. s-1. P. \& Bro..... Whol. (1o, ite. S-T....... Pork and Beep Packer. 'I' II. J. .........Mafr. Lare Cinlhrs. I'-Bros. .............. Mafrs. Shoes. T-J. L. \& Sims. . . Wool and Com'n. T- A A-.............. Murrs. Plug mud Twhst Tolmere. T-W. W. \& Co...Whal, Millinery, T- I. ........Whwl. Hats and Capm. T-E. R. W...... Whes. Leaf Tob. IT- J. ............eather Belting, etc:
 IT- I. M. © Co. ....... . R. E. Brokers. $\mathrm{T}=\mathrm{S}=\mathrm{N}$ W——F........'utlery and Opticiuns' I). 1


## (HFVELAN1) O.



 Jeweller. irs. Stave Vachiner. Crow kery. . Broker. Hoge Mise. $\because$ Quarry. ? 1 Implis. m Whal
paper. lardware. Liquers.
d Pubis. - Salome. it lampis. 1. Comber. . 'bat. (l Since líyluas. dertakur. 3. (iromal whyirc. mugrints. achinists. wher and 4 Bakrers. . Reobler. Notions. cy fiomels. 'lianderes. Printore. Bmakres. (emarries. y fiorals. "игиi!ur"。 licpuors. agrombis.
'urniture. Brewer. Cluid mul lamps. . Ientist. ad P'ancy (ionotes. Extracts.



## OOLUMBUS, O.




## D $\triangle$ VENP()RT, IOWA.

d Saloum. . Nonions. Brинин. .J. 1 ooks, 1 . $\cdots w^{\prime}{ }^{\prime}$ - W

WVaristios. al Shases. ...Seales. . Drugn. $\therefore$ Collias. d ("igark. : it'lh, retr. . Римляк.
wry, rete. : Works.
 shanger. If Irons.

Brewort. 1 Puper. id Music: Id Share. and Sils. "tothing. . . . Prorl. ג. $\Lambda$ grent. Agrency. Finctory. . Inotel. Buildrer. 1 Siateon. Salomon. if Shomer. lase ctc. 'imlingr. .... (iro. Broker.

| A-J................ . Fruits, itc. | K- J. A . . . . . . . Sowing Marhince. |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1-0. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . ' 'robacere. | Mr: 1 - J. (\%... . . Boote nud Shoes. |
| 11-J. W. H. . . . . . . . . Jhysiriat. | Mr•W-TE. 1:. . . . . . . . . . . . . Buider. |
|  |  |
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| r - J. . . . . . . . . Bexts and Slmes. |  |
|  | M-- J. M. . . . . . . . Flour and lieed. |
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| \%- \& | 0 - bros. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Fiorinta. |
|  | P—— J. C............ . . . . . . . Salson. |
| 1)-Mrs. K. M............. . Mair (ionds. | P-_ İ, . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Ace. |
| (i). |  |
| (i <br> 11. Bonts :and Shors. |  |
|  | R-A.... . . . . . . . . . . Confectionery. |
| (i)- I- Co. | $R$ - 3 - \& Co........... . Thilors. |
| (1-3. M. . . . . . . . . Inate and rinis. | 1- B- \& Bros. . . . . . . . . . . . 'lothing. |
|  | S-J.......... . . . . Wersilans. |
|  | S- . II. N. (3......................... |
|  | $W_{-}$ $\qquad$ i \& (i. |
| II- II. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Inotal. |  |
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| $\qquad$ N $\qquad$ Tobaces. | Z-IV................. Boots and Shors. |

## T) $\triangle$ YTON, O.

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.Tailor. rugs, etc. . Milliner. Railinga.
. Aro. ling, ete. . Notions. Lamber. Limber. . . Drags. mlis, ete. m'n and
D. (i. D. 1. Hotel. thlur and Findings. Liquors. r. 'l'ailor. pemkrs. (I) Shoes. urniture. . IJotel. . . . Mil].
iro., etc. dles, etc. 'lothing. © Agent. and Tin. jils, etc. I Slioes. e Slides. . . . (iro. workers. l3uilders. s. (irnin Irills. Liquors. lisx, cte. 3rushus. Naloon. . . (itro. nd Liq.
13roker.
Lender. liulies. . Pıb'r. ro., cte. wrller. res and abnceo. miture. 11. \& Agrint. Fred. D). (i. d Furs. Cigars. ks, etc. terials.


| $\begin{aligned} & \mathrm{T}-\mathrm{B} . \mathrm{C} \\ & \mathrm{~T}=\mathrm{I} . \mathrm{N} . \end{aligned}$ |  |
| :---: | :---: |
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| W-13. F. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . J) (i |  |
| W- J. ${ }^{\text {W }}$ | Nursery |
| N-J. II | Marble. |
| W- | , |
| W-- S. |  |
| Z |  |

[TO be continued.]

## DENVER, COL.

| -s. S Son $^{\text {S }}$ | ng. |
| :---: | :---: |
| A-II. E... | . Com'n Diras, etc. |
| 13 | . . . . . . . . Butcher. |
| 13-\& 11 | (arriagr Painters. |
| C-M. A. | . . . . . Restaurant. |
| C-W. J. | Carpenter, etc. |
| C-W. W. \& | .Stock Dealers. |
| C-E. | Blksmith. |
| $\mathrm{C}-\mathrm{C}$ S | . . . . . iro. |
| ( | .Jeweller. |
| ( | Buider. |
| R-Mrs, 13 | Millinery. |
| $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{J}$ | Stock Deuler. |
| $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{J}$. | Clothing, etc. |
| F-J. 11 | ......Drugs. |
| $\mathbf{F}$ - \& Bro | Sporting (ids. |
| (i- Bros. | . . .iro. |
|  | Suw Mills. |
| (1)-J. | Jawnbroker. |
| 11-M | . (iro. |
| 11-13. | 'Tailor. |
| 11-\& | lothingr. |
| II-Bros | Soap, etc. |


| II. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . .Tailors |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| C. A. \& Co. |  |
| \& 1 |  |
|  |  |
| M- A. |  |
| M- J. M |  |
| M |  |
| $0-\mathrm{J} .1 \mathrm{~B}$. |  |
| P——Mrs. E |  |
| P—— W. II. |  |
| R-M. M. |  |
| S-J. W |  |
| $\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{l}$ |  |
| $\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{C}, \mathrm{M}$. |  |
| S--J. |  |
| S-T. II. \& Co. |  |
| S — E. K |  |
| -_- Mrs..... . . . . . . . . . . . Mair (inods |  |
| W-Bros................... Clothing, etc. |  |
| W—— \& W-......... . Dlaning Vill. |  |
| $\mathrm{W}=\mathrm{J} \mathrm{II}$ |  |
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[^5]
## DETROIT, MICH.



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| S-J. D., Sr | Lands. |
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| $\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{C}$ | Wood Yards. |
| $s$ - ( ${ }^{\text {d }}$ ) | l'dware. |
| s-W, W | . . . . . . . Prod. |
| S-J. W | Woodenwure. |
| 'I'-I. W. \& | . . . . . . . . (ro |
| 13 ros | P Platers, etc. |
| 'T- W. | hol. Books, etc. |
| 1 | Ret. Books, ete. |
| 11 | , (iro., et |

.Vessels. . . .l). ( . Bricks. Notions. C'lothing. . . 'T'uls. Lumber. sels, ete. . Builder. I'dware. H'dware. . (irain. 'lothing. Brewers. ...I). (i. wruiture. lothing. Com'n. illinery. arniture. ... . Gro. Auction. lothing. 3rewers. Lumber. . Shoes. . . Naws. . . Gro. ber, etc. Mchnry.
iro., cte. Brewer. ... (iro. Powder ars, etc. o. umber. rniture. lothing. els, etc. .1)rugs. litches. ry etc. (i., ite. 'T'ailor. 1F 13krs. uilders. 3 Wks. Cigars.
[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## DUBUQUE, IOWA.


[to be continued.]

## ELMIRA, N. Y.



[to hr. continexid.]

## ERIE, PA.

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[^6]EVANSVILJE, IND.
nd Contractor. Hotel. ry, ett. builder. Hotel. intater. Furn's, Hotel. dware. aurant. Drug. othing. ur, etr: - Agi. . (iro. milder. .Junk. uildur. Hiarde. . D. 1 ; rewer. . Giro. thing. otions. r, etc. welry. Coal. linery.

## F'ALI, RIVER, MASS.

| J. W. . . . . . . . Bometr mind Shoms. | H-K. \& Son. . . . . . . . . . . . . . H (tat. |
| :---: | :---: |
| 13-- I). W. . . . . . . . . . . . .urniture. | II- I', 1.................l). (3., ette. |
| B-J. J. \& Co. . . Whol. Fruits and | H-LE. M. . . . . . . . . . . . . Bricks, tic. |
| dim. | H - d W -.......... Furniture. |
| 3- II. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .'failor. | L.-W. . . . . . Mafr. Waterpreufs, ete. |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{C}-\mathrm{N}-\ldots . . . . . . . . . .1 P r i n t s$. | 1. |
| J——— J. \& Sonn. . . . . . . . . . . . Fish Oil. | J._N. I'. . . . . Mulr. Blankintr, etr. |
|  | N゙- J. F'............laill Cuversers. |
| ( $-\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{d} \mathrm{J}$ - |  |
| (\%-I' I)............... Sashice, cte. |  |
| J)-- M. . . . . . . Niller und Bleachar. |  |
|  | $\mathrm{S}-\mathrm{M}$-. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Clotha. |
| $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{M}-8$ Co. . . . . . . . . . Bulirrs. | 'J' |
| F- F. . . . . . . . . . . . . . .iron, etc. | $\mathrm{W}-\mathrm{M}-\mathrm{C} . . . . . . . . . . . .$. Cloths. |

[ro be continued.]

## GALVESTON, 'TEXAS.




## GRANJ RAPIDS，MICHE

gars．
lotel．
ajer．
liner．

## thon．

 later．m＇s．
sker．

## loни．

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［TO HR（ONTHNEEIS．〉

## ILAIIFAX N．S．

| A－A．B． | ．＇＇om＇m． |
| :---: | :---: |
| 13－J． 13. | Mnfr．Sorla Water． |
| 1－\＆R | ． $\mathrm{i}_{\text {\％}}$ and Com＇n． |
| $13-\mathrm{J}$ | （ ＇，m＇m $^{\text {a }}$ |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{W}$ ． |  |
| 11.11 .11 | Drugs． |
| C－Bros． | Fxpress，rite． |
| （ | chere the． |
| （ -F ．${ }^{\text {a }}$ | m＇n and Cond． |




| H- S. T..... |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| C. C. \& ${ }^{\text {co }}$ | . . . Merchants. |
| 11-D | .1). (i. |
| H-J. \& Son | Gro. |
| D. | very Stable. |
| H- 1. \& | D. ${ }^{\text {G }}$ |
| H-W |  |
|  | ins Fitter, ete. |
| K- K. \& | . . Stationers. |
| 1, 1). J | ro. and Com'n. |
| M | Furnlture. |
|  | Machinist, etc. |


| M- D | er. |
| :---: | :---: |
| M- (l. E. | Jrugs and llooks. |
| $\mathbf{N}-\mathrm{J} . \mathrm{K}$. | ..... . Clothier. |
| M- P. \& | . . . . 1 lrewers. |
| O-W. W | . Contractor. |
| O- E | Gro. |
| $0-\&($ | 'u Mers. |
| 1- M | Liquors. |
| 12-D | Gro. and Liq. |
| N-W | Butcher, etc. |
| W-L' | ots and Shoes. |

[^7]
## HAMILION, ONT.



[to be continued.]



HOUSTON, TEXAS.

| A-- N. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .Pro\%. | F-C. C. J. . . . . . . Carriage Trimmer. |
| :---: | :---: |
| A - J. J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Ilistel. | (i- F. . . . . . . . Boot and Shoo Mkr. |
| 13-_ M. A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Thailor. | II- A, \& F-- . . . . . Whol. D. G. |
|  | II_- 11. \& Co. . . Whol. and Ret. Gro. |
| C- J. W. \& (\%, . . . . . . . Cigars, eic. | \& (1-...Furniture and Uphol- |
|  | sterers. |
| C- F. 1I. . . . . . . . . . . . . 1300 ks , ete. | I_-_ \& Bro. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . D. G. $^{\text {d }}$ |
| C- J. A. . . . . . . . . . Machinery, etc. | M- W. II. . . . . . . . . . Carriagemkr. |
| D-_ T. W. . . . . . . . . . . . Banking. |  |
| D- J. W. . . . Carringe Trimmings. | M-S.S. . . . . . . . .Lumber Dealer. |
| D_W_-\& Co. . . . . . . . . . . Mill. | R-Mrs. M. J. . . . . . . . . Millinery. |
| D-J. J. R. . . . . . . . . . . . F'cy Goods. | S-J......................... ${ }^{\text {diro. }}$ |
| D-_ \& Co. ........ . . Winol. Liquors. | S-F. A. . . . . . . . . . . . Clocks, etc. |
| D- \$ . . . . . . Stoves and llardware. | S- \& II--. . . . . . . . . . . . . Pnb'rs. |
|  | S-C. ${ }^{\text {c }}$. . . . . . . . . . . Cabinetmkr. |
| E-_ \& V--.......... Gen'l Con'n. $_{\text {d }}$ | S-- \& S--. . . . . . . . . . . . . Clothing. |
| F-L. E. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Gunsmith. |  |
| F-I'.... Confec., Banker, and Exchange. | V-W. W. . . . . . Cotton and Com'n. <br> V_\& B |
| - W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | Z-L L. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Fancy Goods. |

[to me continued.]

## INDIANAPOLIS, IND.



| . | Patent Medicines. |
| :---: | :---: |
| 13-S B | Chairs. |
| C-W.S | Printer. |
| C-_ \& | es, etc. |
| J. II | eweller. |
| C-12. P. | otographic Mtr'ls. |
| 1. | Money Lender. |
| . |  |
|  | its, etc. |
| D-1R. | Millinery. |
| D-III. | ions, etc. |
| D-W. | I'dware. |
|  | . Druge |

rimmer. wo Mkr. 1. D. $\mathbf{~ G}$. Ret. Gro. Upholsterers. . . D. G. agemkr. .... Gro. - Dealer. (illinery. . Aro . cks, etc. . Pnb'rs. netinkr. lothing. .G. s. Com'n. . G. S. y Cioods.


[TO BE continte:s.]

## JERSEY CITY, N. T




| M- J. A. | r. |
| :---: | :---: |
| $\mathrm{M}-\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{Co}$ |  |
| M-J. M. \& C |  |
| M- B. H. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Druges. |  |
| N-M. S. \& Co. |  |
| $\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{C} . \mathrm{C}$ |  |
|  | rewe |


| S- J.. | . ...... Boots. |
| :---: | :---: |
| s-iV. 1 l . . . . . . . . . . . . Books, etc. | .. . Books, etc. |
| 'T- 11. A. . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {dents' Furnig. }}$ |  |
| W- \& C --. . . . . . . . . . . Coar, cte. |  |
| W- J. I'......... . . . . . . . . . . Coal. |  |
| W- S. 16 | Laprs. |

[to he continced.]

## Kansas City, mo.

| IIardware. | (1. |
| :---: | :---: |
| A- II. W. . . . . . . . . . . . Fibrniture. |  |
| 13-A. A. . . . . . . . . . . (denl. Com'n. | 11-W.......... Prod. and Feed. |
| 13-_ \& 13- . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Agis. | J__ \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Jewellers. |
| 13- \& 33-. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liprs. | K-1R. II. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . 'oal, etc. |
| 1- E. D. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Agent. | li- J. L. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . H'dware. |
| 13-_ \& 13ro. . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {b }}$ ) (i. and (iro, | K-_\& 'I-.............Furniture. |
| c- \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . irm. $^{\text {c }}$ | L_- A. S. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Hotel. |
| C- - Bros. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {lianos. }}$ | Ir_ \& W - . . . . . . . . . . P'ublishiers. |
| (C-- W. E. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Drnga. | M-I W . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Saddlery. |
| C-_ J. H. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . News. | M-J. E. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {I }}$ rugs. |
|  | M- \& S-... . . . . . . . . Muchinists. |
| 1)- J. N. . . . . . . . . . . . . . .Leather. | M-_ \& (b). . . . . . . . . . C'attle Dealers. |
| lim_ W. 13... ............ Builder. | R-_ \& Bro.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Vinegar. |
| $\mathrm{F}-8 \mathrm{l}$ | R-E. J'. . . . . . . . . Boots and Shoes. |
| F- N. R. \& Son. . . . . . . . . . . . . . iro. | R-- \& (\%.......... . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {D }}$ ) (1. |
| F- 11. ('. \& (\%, . . . . . . . . . . . Motel. | S-J. C. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Hotel. |
| (i-M. M. 13. \& 13ros. . . . .Cuttle Denlers. | T- d (\%o. . . . . . . . . . . . Whinl. Gro. |
| (t- W. C. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .lars. | T'- II. \& 13ro. . . . . . Whol. 'Jobacco. |
| J- J. \& Son. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | T- G. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Qro. |
| 11-I. P....................... dro. $^{\text {I }}$ | T-_ \& 13-_.......... AgI. Implts. |
| H-_ G. W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Il'dware. | W-_ J. Q. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . Bankers. |

[to he continuel.]
. Beots. ks, elt. Furng. oal, ete. . .Coal. ...Lqrs. wellers. onl, etc. I'dware. arniture. . . Hotel. blisherers. ;arddery. . Druga. clinists. Dealers. Vinegar. d shoes. I). (t. . .IItetel. iol. Gro. robacco. Implts. 3ankers.



## LAWRENOE, MASS.

[TO HE CONT:NUED.]

## LEAVENWOITTH, KAN.



## LOOKPORT, N. Y.

| M | Hotel. | II-- Mrs. A. C. . . . . . . . . . . Clothing. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 13-S. M | . Lime. | K_ 1. © Bro. . . . . . . . . . .licy Gds. |
| $13-$ d 6 | Gro. | K- J. P. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Sushes, ett. |
| 13-12. | Miller. | 1,-13-1--. |
| 3- A. A. | Fwdg., etc. | M- A. J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Glass, $^{\text {a }}$ |
| $13-11$ | 1)rugn, ete. | M- J. P. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Agt. |
| $13-\mathrm{J} .1$ | Carpets, ete. | P- J. H. . . . . . . . . . . . Fiwdg., ete. |
| 1 C - II. | Lentbuilder. | 1-_ \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Wool. |
| E-N. M. | Gro: | P-_ G................ . . . . . Dairy. |
| H-C I. B. | Miller. | R-- T. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {curtinges. }}$ |
| $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{A}$. | Agent. | U-- Mrs. E. S. . . . . . . . . . Clothing. |
| $11-\mathbb{L}$ | D. ${ }^{\text {d. }}$ | W-W, W...... . . . . . . . . . Dyer. |

[to ie continued.]

LOUISVILLE, KY.



Clothing. Fcy Gds. ushes, etc.

Books. ruits, etr. Publisher. Millinery.
D. G. ators, etc. Furniture.


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## [to be continued.]

## LOWELL, MASS.




[to de continued.]

## LYNN, MASS.

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| , | holateror. |
|  |  |
|  | Nhoes. |
| 13-W. | coal, etc. |
| S. I . | Boots, etc |
| B-P. W. |  |
|  |  |
| W. | Stitcher. |
| H. II. | . Drugs. |
| c-c. H . | . Builder |
| II. R. | Shoe Mnfr. |
| C-H. \& | Moroceo |
| 13. F | Carpenter |
| D-\& D | Shoers |
| B. \& | Slioers. |
| D-1I. 'T'. | Sline Mnfr |
| G-W. 11 | Inner Soles. |
|  | Shoes |
| S., J | Sloes, |
|  | Cement. |
| H-a. | nings. |
|  | Shoes. |
| - w. s. |  |


[to ie continued.]
de Rollers. ...... ${ }^{\text {Gro. }}$ Flour.

Vater, etc. . Boxes. il ''overer. Mnfr. ...aloves. .. Builder.

## MANCHESTER, N. H.



Shoes. . . Bullder. . Slippers. $s$ and Oils.
. Ilotel. ..... .... Nhoes. . Shoewnx. and Shoes. .... . . (iro. . ...Shoes. - Carpenter. . . . . Shoes. . Shoes. . . . Shoes. . . . Shoes. .... Shoes. Stoves, ete. .Shoes. . . . Shoes. . . . . Shoes. . . . . Shoes . Operator.

## MEMPHIIS, TENN

|  |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| I | '1. |
| A-- M. \& Son | Boots and Shous. |
| A-J. | Fancy Goods. |
| A-T. P. \& Co | Cotton and Com'n. |
| $13-11$. | 1). (i) |
|  | ro. |
| 13-\& S | re |
| B-L E. I, \& | Cotton Fuctors. |
| B-13- ${ }^{\text {S }}$ | Com'n. |
| 13 | (i., etc |
| $13-\mathrm{M} . \mathrm{M}$ | Sewing Machines. |
| 13-13. J | ( ${ }^{\text {con'n }}$ |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{N}$. A. | . ${ }^{\text {in }}$ |
| $13-11$. | Furniture |
| 13-J.'1. \& | C'om'n, ete. |
| 13- \& C | ks und Stat'y. |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{C}$ (1). | ord. and Com'n. |
| I | . ${ }^{\text {cot }}$ |
|  | rds. |
| B | , |
|  |  |




[ro be continted.]

## MILWAUKEE, WIS.

| G. | Foundry. | A-_ \% \& Co. . Bankers nnd Brokers. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| A-11 | Clothing | M - S (o.... ${ }^{\text {Pry }}$ Docks, otc. |
| A | ksmi | A- J. |
| A | Stage | . Saddle |

and Shoer. .Carringes. ....Com'n. aim A gent. and com n. speculator. orton shad. Mucliluery. i'l mad (iro. .......). (i. . ....(iro. ....contiee $\cdots$ lothlug, cte. thon Buyer. .... Conton. . Plumbrr. ugings, etc. .....com'n. Whol. (iro. and (com'n. ....... D). (i. Drugs. . Stornge. . Millinery. :Carringes. hol. Drugs. cumal Depot. ien'l Com'n. llotel. Publisher. ng Mill, etc. . Lamber. -. Ferelistore. and com'n. nfes. Bitters. D. ${ }^{\text {G. }}$ .....Drugs.


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| W- R. J. C. |
| :---: |
| $\mathrm{W}-\mathrm{A}$. |
|  |
|  |
| \& R-W...........Jeweller |

[to be continced.]

MOBILE, ALA.



## MONTREAL, QUE.

## on Factor.

 . .Com'n. Brokers. ry Stuble. urnituro.D. G. ad Shoes. Anction. ...Safes. iurniture. … ${ }^{\text {Gro. }}$ Pickery. ...Gro. in Prod. eeds, etc. lard ware. on Press. Ex. Bkr. d Com'n.
l. Com'n. lamber. 1 Factor. . .Hotel. urniture.

## N $\Lambda$ SIIVILLE, TENN.

| 12. F | are. |
| :---: | :---: |
| F. M | . 'arringes. |
| \& A- | . . . . . . . . Jewellars. |
| $\therefore 13$. | . Boots and Slopes. |
| 13- \& $\mathrm{C}_{6} 0$ | netion and Com'n. |
| 13 | Lumber. |
| 13-\& ${ }^{\text {1 }}$ | m'n. |
| 13-A. | . Patent. |
| A. 11 | .sicnles. |
|  | . . . . . Clothing. |
| 13 r | Lumber. |
| C-W | ro. |
| C-S.. | . .Dry (ioorls. |
| ( | (iro. |
| (-J. J. | (i.s. |
| (1- ico | Auction. |
| C-13. 12 | Shors. |
| 1)-11.1) | Mill. |
| $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{l}$ | Drugns. |
| F | Cotton Broker. |
| $\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{E}$ | . 1 lotel. |
| F-E S. | Boots and Shoes. |
| (i-11. 1 . | . Drugs. |
| (i- M. ${ }^{\text {c }}$. | Saw Mill. |
| (i-11. | Clothing. |
|  | . . Fancy Goods. |
| 11-C. 13 | oots and Shoes, etc. |
| 1 - \& Sol | Com'n. |
| 11- (t. W | Drugs. |
| 11-W. W | Cotton and Com'n. |
| 11-S So | Dental Depot, etc. |
| 11-_S | Clothing. |
| Miss | ...... . . Milliner. |


| K-\& W——........... Restanrant. |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| L_- J. E. \& Co. . . . . . Fimey (ioods. |  |  |  |  |
| M- J. A. \& Bro.. . . . . . . . . . . . 1 nsic. |  |  |  |  |
| M——M. . . . . . Dry Goods and boots and Shoes. |  |  |  |  |
| - II_ \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }_{\text {iro. }}$ |  |  |  |  |
| J. $\mathbb{S}$ Sons:. . . |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| N |  |  |  |  |
| N - $\mathbb{N} 11-\ldots . .$. . . Clolhing, ete. |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1-1 |  |  |  |  |
| I' |  |  |  |  |
| R-M Mrs. Fi. F. . . . . . Gents' Furn'g. |  |  |  |  |
| R-13. © Co.................. |  |  |  |  |
| H - C. |  |  |  |  |
| 13-I. A. |  |  |  |  |
| S-T' F . |  |  |  |  |
| S-11. ${ }^{\text {d }}$ |  |  |  |  |
| H |  |  |  |  |
|  Builders. |  |  |  |  |
| If. C.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .Oils. |  |  |  |  |
| s - $\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{H}$ |  |  |  |  |
| \& P - $\ldots$ |  |  |  |  |
| S-SNC |  |  |  |  |
| T-_ \& ( |  |  |  |  |
| 「-1. \& Cu. . . . . . . . . . . . Jewellers. |  |  |  |  |
| T- Mrs. |  |  |  |  |
| $\mathrm{V}-\mathrm{J}$ |  |  |  |  |
| ——W.E............N-S |  |  |  |  |

NEWARK, N.J.
estaurant. . Printer ather, ete. cy (ioods. $\therefore$ Music. and Boots and Shoes. ..... (iro. dlery, etc.
hing, ete. nd Shoes. peenlator. Clothing. s' Furn's. .... D. … (íro. Clothing. ographer. F. Agent.
nters and Builders. . Oils.
. 13rewery ither, ete. and Shoes. lewellers. Millinery. r. Tailor. S-

[TO be continced.]

NEW-TIAVEN, CT.





## Shoes.

## NEW-ORLEANS, LA.




[TU HE CuNTINLED.]

## NORFOLK, VA.

A- J. S. 13. . . . . . Fancy Goods, etc. 13-W. R. \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . 'on'n. 13-A. S. \& Co. . . . Whol. (iro., etc. $13-1 \ldots, \ldots$........................ 13-W. \& W-........ I). (i., etc. 13-S. . ................ . . iro, and Liq. 13-I). 1s.............. Carriage Mnfy. 13- I3. B............................. Com'n. $1-1-\$ 11$ D. (i., etc.
 H $\qquad$ Oyater Packar. F-\& $\mathbf{F}$ -
 (1-J. O. Jr. . . . . . Jimber and Coml. (i-J. R................. . Stoves, ctc. (i-— \& C - . . . . . . . Mufrs. Funnels. (i-M- \& Co........... Furniture. (i—— J. W. ......................... S.
H-W. T'\& Son. . . . . U Uholstcrers.


## OSWEGO, N. Y.

|  | J |
| :---: | :---: |
| A- II. ...... . . I). (i. und Notions. | $\boldsymbol{k}$ |
| A- ( ${ }^{\text {. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Cupsitulist. }}$ | 1.13. |
| A- A... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Hotel. | M-I. 1 ........... |
| 13. | M- A. M.......... |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{B}$. | M-J. J |
| 13-13.0............ . . dorlin | N- |
| B- C. W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Tonnaco\%. | 0 O-J. $\&$ |
| C-W. (1......... . . . . . . . . 1 i | 0 - M- $\%$ \% |
| Puinte | $\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{Co}$ |
| islues, | P-I. |
| D- A- \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . Millors. |  |
| F- J. \& (o. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . | r |
| Clothing. | 12-I. \& W-............. . ${ }^{\text {d }}$ |
|  | R-1. ${ }_{\text {R }}$ |
| ........lunk, ctc. |  |
| II- J. . . . . . . . . . . . Fis! and Jiruit. |  |
| . . . . Aumber. | $\mathrm{W}-\mathrm{C} . \mathrm{H} . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$. Builder |

> [TO HE Continced.]
ol. Gro. ec., ete. Liguors. . Druge. . Tailor. 1 Com'n. Lumber. ardware. . Com'n. ture, etc. liol. Aro. d Com'n. Liquors. Hdwar. Liquors
rod., etc. id shoes.


## PATERSON, N. J.

 did . Gro.
[to be continced.]

## PIIILADELPIIIA, PA.




## Carpets.

. Hatters. Lifjuors. Druggist. rd Ware. Chemists. Crockery. rs. l'aper. Lumber. oves, cte. . . . Conl. . Mnfrs. lachinery. . . . . Cars. Dyestuffs. Printers. . Lumber.
ron Pipes . . Liquors . . . . Con . Paintr - Works. Millinery. Plate, ete. fectionery. Sash Mill. . . . . . D. ${ }^{( }$ - . . Whol. Drugs. ping-Cars.
. Brokers. ud Stoves. Merchant . Liquors. Co.
.....D. G. . . . IIotel. . II'dware. and Grain. ...... Gro. Linen Gds. Soap. ad C'om'n. s. F'cy Cainet Ware. d Engines.

[TO ne contintred.]

## PITTSBURGH, PA.



sa lounder． （（ilansware． nfr．Irricks． and Drags． Caal． ro．und Liq． ol．Liquors and Shoes． Books． ol．＇lolnceo．

Ilotel． ．scules，etc．

Varicty． ，Neweller． Hotel． Distillery． Oil Dealers． （iro． 1）． 1. infrs Bricks． Trimuings． 1）． 1. teat Agents． ．Agent． Trunks． silks． ．Nursery Com＇n Coal．

Flour，etc． 13．IB．Iron．
Rays，ete． Drugs． ine builders． 18．E．Agent． Brewer． Lumber． （im． om＇n Whol． Tobucen． I Ins．Agent． Lumber，ete． ．Brokers． Conl． Coal．

$\mathbf{1 1}-1)$－（co．．．．Springstum M＿$\therefore \mathbb{S}$－．．．．．．．．Joh l＇rinters．



 V゙ッ： $11 . \ldots$ ．．．．．．．．．Coial $\therefore$－IV．．．．Itntic coloreql（ilass and Painter ！－－－If，I：．．．．．．．．．．Burniug Fluirl． ${ }^{\prime}$ ，（：II．．．．．．．．．．．． boilers． P－\＆$V$－．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Liquors． 1＇——＇I＇，J＇。 ．．．．．．． $\because$ 1 $1: \frac{1}{1}$ （o） littshurth $\mathbb{N}$ st． $1 .-1-1-10$ $1-\therefore 15$ whic nad lereser Artists．

|  |
| :---: |
| $1$ |




I：J．．i．．．．．．．．．．．．Com＇n Irum．

1i－A．．．．．．．21af：Corrugated Iron R－！．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Pianos
 Planing Mill．

| IR－Ii．J．．．．．．．Inalytical Chemist． |
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R——— L．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．IIotel．II
，

：J．J．$: ~$ bro．．．．．Printers，Books，


$S$
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S
cy（loods．
．Clothing．
Boots and Shoes．

 （is） W—W．W．．．．Marble and Machine Workn．
W——S．B．．．．．．．．．．．．．Builder，ete．

W゙ー 13ras．※ © © ．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．I Irower． Wー．J．W．．．．Mnfr．（insplpe＇longs，

W゙ーJ．W．※゙ Nons．．．．．．．F＇urniture． W゙——白．I＇．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Contrnctor． Y－＿M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．
［TO he continitid］

## POTTLAND，ME



$-\mathrm{P}-\mathrm{Co}$ and Machlue Works. Huilder etc. . . . . . . Iron. .... Hrewer. " ete: . .l'urniture. . Contructor. . . . . . . . Gi ro.

|TO H: continltib.|

## PORILAND, OR.




Slip Stores. ....Stabler. Whol Flour. ¡M...Lars. Periodicals. . . Druggist. ...Lamber. Buots. ...ildware. . .Machines.

Book binder.

## ...... Hotel.

 .... Books. Wood, etc. . . Lumber. y and D. G. pruce Gum. .Carriages. ictures. etc. Strap Mnfr. .Shoes, etc. $\cdots$ Spices. Flour, etc. Drugs. ... (handler. on Founder. D. G. D. G.. etc. . Findings.
## TOUGHKEEPSIE, ‥


, 8 Son M-. . . . . . . . . . . Drugrs, etc. J. . . . . . . . . Boots and Finces. is............................. . 1 . V, II. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 'lailor. . F......... . . Buots mud Shoos. i. l. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Stowes, etc. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Builder. \& I - . . . . . . . . .' Lobacer, ete. — \& Son. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Stoves.
II- E. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Crockery.

| T. | ('rockery. |
| :---: | :---: |
| $11-1$ M | . .....1)rugs. |
| 11-I. ${ }^{\text {P }}$ | D) (i. |
| M- W. | cr (ids. |
| M- F. . | es, etc. |
| M | Shoms. |
| M | Woodenware. |
| 1-J.J. | Colfiesa, ett. |
| $\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{A}$. | 13 smith |
| $\mathrm{N}-\mathrm{I}$. | 1], ete. |
|  | Brew |



## PROTIDENOE, I. I

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('rorkery.
Jructs.
I). (i. . FFer (ids. Stoves, etc. and Shors. ondenware. Collees, etc. . . 13 smith. . .Noalp, ete. . . Brewers.
. irn. , May, etc. ile I'river.

Boolis. . Fey (dis. omforters. d Fey (ids. pothecary: and I'roil. er TCalers. . $\mathrm{H}_{1} \mathrm{y}$, ate. Droges, etc. s. Kalejds
soppes. mi Stores. (ias Pipes.
. Painter'. Furnitura. Paints, etc. Jewe\}lers. $k$ Ribbons. pothecary. aw (ioods.




[TO LE CONTINUED.]

## raleigil, N. C.



[to he continted.]
D. $\mathbf{G}$.
D. G .

Books, ete. Com'n and Oil Mers. and shoes. and Shoes. .... Coal. in ineaters. stoves, etc. $t$ and Prod. ck Broker. ; and Caps. Woollens. und Com'n. ss Weaver.
nt Pumps. miths, etc. . liquors. 'om'n, cte. .'Tinner. nd Com'n. . and Liq. ographer. 'om'n and a Factors.

## RICILMOND, V「A.




W－＿Mrs．F．E．．
．Gro．，etc．
W——心W——．．．．．．．．．．．．．Clothing．
W－＿J．F．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．
［50 Le costinceds］

## ROCHESTKR，ズ．У．

| A－D．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． iro． | K－M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Confec． |
| :---: | :---: |
| A—— O．1：．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Ifotel． | M－＿（＇．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．iro． |
| A－L E．li．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Printer． | M－d．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．iro． |
|  | M—— J．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Gro． |
|  | M－d（\％．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Limmber． |
| ． 3 －l Bros．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． T ＇ailors． | 11－J．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． Conper． |
| B＿－A．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Mrat． | M－＿J．W．\＆Sio．．．．．．．．．．．l ${ }^{\text {Pianos．}}$ |
| 13－＿＇T＇．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．${ }^{\text {l }}$＇ictures． | M——s．（i．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Furniture． |
| 13－＿J．M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．iro． | M－＿S．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．${ }_{\text {cothing．}}$ |
|  | M－＿1．P．．．．．．．．．．．．Machinist． |
| r－m W．Son．．．．．．．．．．．．Leather． | M－1．W．．．．．．．．．．．．．Flour，ete． |
| C－W．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Mason，ete． | M－C．S |
| （1－M－S Co．．Covering Machince． |  |
| （－－13．H．．．．．．．．．．．．Staves， C ． | A－L＇．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Blacksmith． |
| C－L I1．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Cooper，cte． | M－S．．．．．．．．．．．．．＇liandler，etc． |
| （－M ．．．．．．．．．．．．Bookseller，ete． | IL＿M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Jeweller． |
|  | （）－＿1）．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．${ }^{\text {（lothing．}}$ |
| I）－I．M．．．．．．．．．．．．．Books，ete． | P——d．－．．．．．．．．．．．．．llay，rite． |
| K－W．\％co．．．．．．．Coton Batting． | 1 －＿C－．．．．．．．．．．．stores，ete． |
|  | P－11．S．．．．．．．．．．．．．． Capitalist．$^{\text {a }}$ |
| 1－W．S．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Printer． | R－I．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．igr＇l 1 mplts． |
| F－J．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．iro． | 1－ F |
| F－I T ．．．．．．．．．．．．．．＇Tamber，etc． |  |
| F －J．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．${ }^{\text {antter }}$ ． | $\mathrm{R}-\mathrm{l}-\mathrm{H}$－（ $\%$ ． |
| F | S－P＇．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Gro． |
| （i＿＿（i．W．．．．．．．．．．．．．．＇Turner． |  |
|  | S－B．B．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．${ }_{\text {iro．}}$ |
|  | S－\＆ N －．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． Stoves． |
| （i－＿\＆Son．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Shoes． | S＿－s．．．．．．．．．．．．．slowcases，ete． |
|  |  |
| G－＿M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． i dre Tools． | s＿－F．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． iro． |
| ．．．Shoes． | S－＿S．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．． Gro． |
| （i＿SS．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Mats． | s－－l3ros．．．．．．．．．．．．．Fihecutters． |
| II－＿ilrs．J．．．．．．Ladies＇Einderwear． | S－（i．l．．\＆（ $1 . . . . . .$. ．Stationery |
| 11－＿V．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Tailor． |  |
| $\mathrm{II}-\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{M}-\mathrm{Co}$ ． | S＿＿Mrs．l：M．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Gro． |
| II－If．J．\＆Co．．．．．．．．．Srales，ete． | T－\＆（－＿．．．．．．．．．．Machinists． |
| 11 －13ros．．．．．．．．．．．．Stairbuilders． | $\mathbb{V}$ |
| II－O．．．．．．．．．．． Boots and Shoes． | W－＿12．\＆＇T＇．．．．．．．．．．．．．＇Tobacco |
| K－＿\＆C－－．．．．．．．．．．．．．Bankers． | \％MI．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．．Blacksmith． |

［zo me continced．］
. .Gro., etc. . Clotling. ...liguors.

## SACRAMENTO, CAL.

. . Confec. . . . . . . (iro. ..... . . Lumber ... Cooper. Pianos. Furniture. . Clothing. Machinist. Flour, etc. . . . . . . Gro. . Vinegar. lacksmith. mader, etc. . .Jeweller. . . ('lothing. . IIay, ctc. stoves, ete. (apitalist. ، r'l limplts.
. Giro. Hardware. . ..... . (iro. . . . Stoves. weases, etc. ( 'lothing. . . . . . (iro. ...... Gro. ilecutters. Stationery. ..... D. $\mathbf{U}$. …... (iro. Machinists. . . Lamber. . .''obacco lacksmith.



## SAN゙ FRANCISCO, CAL.


 and 'lin. . Carpets. Drugs. arehouse. . .Printer.

Liyuors.

## Crockery.

peculator. Jesveller. Clothing. ewspaper. Brickmkr. ?rod., etc. Cligars. handlers. l. Cigars. Inter. Fruit. mur Mills. Harness. ry Goods. ....Conl. mikbooks.

Liquers. cy tioods. 1. Wines. Clothing. amps, etc. acco, ete. a' $^{\prime}$ Furn'g. Jewelry. nfr. Soap. and Rectifiers. and Oils. a Wines. e Works. nd Shoes. . . Bitters. acco, ete. handlers. n'n Prod. ers, Wool alers, etc.


## SAVANNAT, GA.




## SCRANTON, pA.

. D. $\mathrm{F}_{\mathrm{I}}$ (iro. Cotton, ete. . . Clothing. . Drugs, rte. . . . Narble. . . Lamber. . Gen. Store. . C'nrriager. Auctioncers. . Toys, ete. s and Shoers. Furniture. Com'n, etc. . Foundry:

Drugs. . . . . Drugs. . . . I'rinter. .....Hotel. D. (i., etc. . Fcy Gids. Photo. Gds. . Jeweller. ockery, etc. - Boots, etc. Coal. . Founder. . Clothing. ('ontractor. Com'n, cte. Com'n.


[To age conimued]

SPRLNGFIELD，MASE．

| 人－．F．．．．．．．．．．．Vimminh Mnfr． |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| A |  |
| B－\＆W－． |  |
| 13－M－ |  |
| 13－NSdio |  |
| 1－A． 1 |  |
| 13－N． |  |
| 13－6． |  |
| 13－W．W．S．．．．．．．．．．． ， arpenter． |  |
| （1－C． |  |
| （1－CA． 1 |  |
| （ ${ }^{-}$－ 11. |  |
| （1－＿II．M ．．．．．．．．．．．${ }^{\text {raper }}$ |  |
| （＇－A．W．\＆Co．．．．．．．．．．．Agts． |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| （＇－II．M．\＆Co．．．．．．．．Boxes，ete． |  |
| （－－Miss S．J．．．．．．．．．．Books，etc． |  |
| 13. |  |
| －\＆W |  |
| F －II． C |  |
| （i－I． N |  |
| （． |  |
| （i＿－${ }^{\text {d }} 11$－ |  |
| 1 L |  |
| 11 － |  |
| 11 － A － |  |
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［To ne continued．］

## ST．JOIIN，N．B．



. Carrlages - ©iro., etc. . Furniture Furniture. C'omfee, ete Furniture. lamis, ete: ts, Caps, cte. idge shells. ...Builder. .. .'iurpets. ......). (i. ......shoes Contractor. urriers, etc. -..... Soup. .Tinware . . Soap, etc.
. .Lamber. ...Lumber.

Boxes. cetrotypur. . Clothing. .Founders.
ripluilder. ofton Mill. - G'ds. etc. . . Liquors. .Gro. and Shors . . C'Com'u. ....Com'n.


| M-E.................... Millinery. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| Bowts nud shoes. |  |
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| P- R. |  |
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| W- L. II. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Snalt ete: |  |
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| W |  |
|  | . s tov |

[to ae comtinceb.]

## ST'. JOSEPIT, MO.

|  | Hotel. | itul |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Clothing. | , ....... Liquors |
|  |  | II- I. A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Motel. |
|  | Agent. |  |
|  |  | ,- C........ . . Suddler |
| $8-$ | oundry, | M__ Mirs......... .....black |
|  | Fued, ett. | 1 |
|  | Livery. | 8 |
| 1)-J | Books. | S-J. W. |
| $\mathrm{O}-\mathrm{W}$ |  | S-C. (................入ewspape |
| $\mathrm{D}-\mathrm{W}$ | Factorr | - |
|  |  | s- Wros--........dun |
|  | ws lepot. | s-\& 1 - 1 - |
| F | areksmith. | T-J. M |
|  |  |  |
|  |  | $\mathrm{F}=\mathrm{F}-\mathrm{Co}$ |

Lto me continced.

## ST. LOUIS, MO.


[to be continued.]

## S'T. PAUL, MINN.

. . Ansfitters. . Jewelry.
. Shirts, ete. . . . . lhnnkers. . . .'Transfer. . . D'ictures. . .Saw Mill. Saloon. Ag'I linpl'ts. . Ra'stumrant. 'luniug Mill. . . .'Tolmero. onfectioner. 12. J. Agent. . . Jobnceo. . . . . . 'I'ools. .rinits. . . Giro.

Co.
. Clothing.
..!. Agent. . . .'obaceo. . . 13roker. Pat. Meds. (i. N. Nills.
. Liquors. . Vinegar. . . . 3lmnkbooks.
owelry, ete. .Maltster. l'ublishers. Books. g lied loot. toms. . . Organs. ....Books. r. lirooms. .... Book Ink Minfr. Jry Gioods. I Railings. . Brewery. Booka. Plumbers. Vines, etc.

## NYRAOUSE, N. Y.



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li-R. \& Son. . . . . . . . . . . . . .'Trunks.

[to de conthicizd.]

## TOLEDO, O.



| If. . . . . . . . . $130 x$ Eactor |  |
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| , |  |
| Irros............. .R. E. Agents |  |
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| 1.. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Saloon |  |
|  | K- C. . . . . . . . . . . . Boots and Shoes. $^{\text {S }}$ |
| F |  |
|  |  |
| L-J. ................. . . . G., et |  |
|  |  |
| L- G...... .......... . Stonevurd. |  |
| lothing |  |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
| - $\mathbb{E}$ - $\ldots$, B, \& and 1I. $\mathbb{E} \mathrm{C}$ |  |
| - J. . . . . . . . . . . . Boots and Shices, |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| . . Lim |  |
| p-J. H..................inill supplies |  |
| (1. II, .......Sewing Machines. |  |
|  | (1. W. |
|  |  |
| R - \& I'.........N Works. |  |
| S- J. V. . . . . . . . Planing Mill, etc. |  |
|  |  |
| S-- |  |
| S-_ \& Co. . . . . . . . . . . . Brewers. |  |
| S—— T N. \& Co.. Mufrs. Tinware, etc. <br> S-_ J. L. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $\cdot$ Furniture. |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| A B........... |  |
| $\qquad$ A, B.... Ag'l lmpl'ts and Seeds.$\qquad$ J. L. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Jewelry. |  |
|  |  |

ming Mill . .II'd ware . ©lothing and Shoes. "....
$x$ Fectory . . Com'n. .... Óro. A. Agents. . . Com'n. . . Saloon. and Shoes. ad Shoes. . . D. ${ }^{\text {G }}$ D. (i., etc. . . staves. toneyurd. Clothingr.
. Boxes. … (iro. Giro, etc. Id II. \& C. nd shoes. arble, etc. Teas, ete.
ime, etc. Supplies. Machines. . Millers. Harness. - Worke. Mill, ete. ig House. d Com'n. Brewers. ware, etc. urniture. Hotel. r. Tailor. d Seeds. Jewelry.



## TORONTO, ONT.




## TRENTON, N. J.

| II | Flour Mills. |
| :---: | :---: |
| $13-1$ | Hotel. |
| 13-C. $\mathrm{C} . \mathrm{H}$. | inney (ioods. |
| 13-S.'T'. | 1 and Wood. |
| 13- A. J. \& | ....Candy. |
| C- \& N | . .Liquors. |
| $\mathrm{C}-\mathrm{C}$ | ... Mats. |
| 1- \& E | Undertakers. |
| $\mathrm{I}-\mathrm{D} .0$ | Liquors, cte. |
|  | Purniture. |
| F- I). ${ }^{\prime}$. $\mathrm{S}^{\text {d }}$ | l'ork, etc. |
| F-M Son | . Brkrs. |
| (i-1. C . | (iro. |
| (1-W. L. | Baiser. |
| 11-R- | Rubber. |
| $\mathrm{H}-\mathrm{P}$. | . . ${ }^{\text {rob }}$ |
| II | Blacksmith. |
| 11-LE. M | lote? |
| J. 'I' | Iobacconist. |


| $J$ | oces. |
| :---: | :---: |
| - A. 12. | Hotel. |
| M- I. 11. \& | Furniture. |
| M- \& E | D. ${ }^{\text {( }}$ |
| M-- \& $A$ | Pottery. |
| M-1. | Miller. |
| M-J. W. | Newspaper. |
| $\mathrm{N}-1)-8$ | Pubres. |
| 1-(i, 1 . | Capitalist. |
| P—— E. \& 6. | Crackers. |
| 12-J. W. | . . (iro. |
| R-J. $\Lambda$. Son | . Rope. |
| N- II, (i. | . (G.S. |
| S-- A. !). | llidware. |
| '1- | and Shoes. |
| '1 | Packer. |
| 'T- J. | 'hysician. |
| 11 |  |
| W-3 ${ }^{\text {S }}$. | pet Mnfr. |

[ro mi continued.

## TROY N. Y.

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| $\begin{aligned} & \mathrm{C}-\mathrm{I} . \mathrm{S} \mathrm{De} \mathrm{~W} . \\ & \mathrm{C} \\ & \text { J. W. . ..... } \end{aligned}$ | . Anfrs. Paper. |
| :---: | :---: |
|  | Collars, ete. |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| (1-- I. A. |  |
| C-_ © Co |  |
| C-W |  |
| C-1R. F. |  |
| 1)-F. \& Co. |  |
| 1)-M. |  |
| 1)-W. 1 | Stoms. |
| 1-J. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1 )rıgs. |  |
| E- W. . . . . . . . . . . Buots anil Shoes. |  |
| H-I I. D. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Engrineer. |  |
|  | ciga |

pet Mufr.


[to de continued.]

## UTIUA, N. Y.

| A-\& C | Bonts and Shons |
| :---: | :---: |
| 13-1F. W. | (iro, and Saloon. |
| 13-J. | . . Buidder |
| B-C | Brewer. |
| $\mathrm{B}-\mathrm{F}$ | Florist. |
|  | . . . . . . . Builder. |


| 13-11. C. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| C- |  |
| C-C Mrs. S. A ... . . . . . . . . . . . . II |  |
| $\mathrm{C}-\mathrm{N}-\mathbb{1} \mathrm{P}$ - . . . . Mnfrs. Caps. |  |
| C-L S. E. . . . . . . . . . .'Iransportation. |  |
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[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## WASIINGTON, D. C.

| A- J. II....... Stoves and Tinware. |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| $\wedge$ | Cigars. |
| es, etc. |  |
| A-_ J. . . . . . . . . . . . Paperhangings. |  |
| A- A. M. . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {Paperhangings. }}$ |  |
| 13-1... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Agent. |  |
| 13-P. I |  |
| [3-J. |  |
| B-I. O. W. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ${ }^{\text {Prod. }}$ |  |
| $13-\mathbb{E}$ S-........ Feed and Lqrs. |  |
| B- J. . . . . . . . . . . . Books and Stat'y. |  |
| \%-_ A. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Undertaker. |  |
| B-_ I. C. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Drugs. |  |
| 13-_ 13. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Millinery. |  |
| IP_ H. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Liquers. |  |
| C- J. T. . . . . . . . . . B'ldug Materials |  |
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|  | umbe |


ers and Fruit. ....... . 1 totel. . ....... Hotel. cture Frames. ro. and Prov. v Shades, etc. Tol, and Cig. . Paints, etc. ts and shoes. ts and Shoes. and Ret. Gro. tts and Shoes. .'Tobaceonist. . .......Gro. .... Builder. and Bookb'dr. iro. nud D. G. Hotel. Mnfrs. Saws. IItotel. Spring Beds. fr. B. and S . . . Jeweller. . ..... Fdwg. Paints.
und Stat'ry. Boots . . . .shoes. ...... Gro. ....... Cigars. -, . Tailor. m'n Paper. . Hats, etc. ..... Prod. ....Tailor. abinetmkr. . .Tin ware. Materials. Architect. Stoves, etc.

[to be contiveed.]

## WILMINGTON, DEL.



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## WORCESTER, MASS.



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[to be continued.]
. . Gro., etc. . . . . . Gro.
$\qquad$
. Dry Goods. . . . Satinets. .... Stoves.
$\qquad$
$\qquad$ ......Agts. . Cards, etc. pothecaries. Boots and S . . Boot Mnfr. . .F'cy Gds.

Boots and S. .'ontractor. . . Clothing.
...Brewery.
... Bakers. bber Goods. . . Dry Gids.


[^0]:    * By the bye, as these pages go through the press we find our idea carried out by at kast one ngency. Dun, barlow \& Co, are now agents for the chenp French brass and leather jewelry of the period ; and they are given as reference, in a late New-York Herald, on the efficiency of a moth exterminator.

[^1]:    
    
    
    
    
     "constituts and apmoint said lhun, Barlow de Co. wer wfonts to procure and furnish to
     "and with whidh we agree to comply fallhfully, to wit:
    
    
    

[^2]:    
    
    
    
    
    
     "objectionahle pratice, and althomet we have no great undashess about its that dexi-
     "tionable farm of expression had not been tiscal. W"e want lo dispontuge suits quble "as match as lo rlfferl Hem nuecersspully.
    
    
    
     "orlginal conlract was framed many years ago, hefore the busincss had tussumed my-
    " thing dike ils present mashilude: that it did not eover lhe leferene lbook and Noti-
    " Ileationshect; that it required all reports to be read at the allice; thet the primeiphe
    
     "ed that, under the adviee of eminent eomasel, we had decided to mako sume neces" fary altemtions, in order to latre the relations between our subserbers and ourselves " moro clady dethed, ete., ete.

[^3]:    "Dear Sir :
    "On the next pare you will please find an Aet that has been introduced into the Le"gisla'ure of Pennsylvanh, and which, with the eery slightest consiteration, has actually "passed the Ilonse of Representatives. There is a good prospeet, however, of stopping "its passage ha the Senate, and we beg, therefore, to usk your grod serviees to that end. "If you can aesist its opposition by letter, or otherwise, to the Representative of your "Distifet in the Senate, we beg that you will do so at onec. As you will see, the Aet is "very loosely drawn, and contuins a false declaration at the starl, that information is "'often' wiffully erroneons, and morcover oflers a bribe to unprincipled informers to "annoy respectable persons for the hope of reward. The laws of the land are abrendy "adequate to protect the publie, and the peralties now in cristence for stamer and libel "are hecuice than even this Bill proposes. It is therefore uncalled for. The merelamts in "the varions cities are petitioning against the measure, and yon will not be eingular ln "Your opposition to it if you will do us the favor to bring what inflnence you can to " hear in the Senate. Inasmuch as aetion is likely to be taken very shortly atter the Th "April, prompt measures are neeessary. We should like to have a line from you "whether you can help us in the matter or not.

[^4]:    " Junc 3d, 1861.-Falled many years ago, and setted at 25 cents on the dollar. Wus " हome time out of business, but subsequently got a large contract on the S- Insti" tution, Washington. Of late years has been speculating and building fo commection " with his brother-in-law, -_, who is well off and has snpplled the means mostly. An" teecdents are bad, and lie is not reliable; parties who sold hilm previous to his fallure "deellue dealing with him except for cash down."

[^5]:    [TO RE CONTINEED.]

[^6]:    [to he continted.]

[^7]:    [to ul continued.]

