

The *Bank Committee* closed their sittings in the latter part of last week. Their report to Congress may be daily expected.

During the investigation various rumours were afloat in this city and elsewhere, touching certain transactions, which it was said had come to light, calculated to impair public confidence in the integrity of the Bank. These, of course, were instantly seized by the enemies of the Institution who chuckled mightily over the 'stupendous frauds' which they thought had been discovered. That these reports were entirely unfounded, no one whose views were not distorted by prejudice or interest, doubted for a moment and while we confess ourselves ignorant of the facts developed by the examination, or the results to which those facts tended, we do not hesitate to express a full conviction that no circumstance dishonest or dishonorable was found attached to the affairs of the Bank.

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One thing—no matter how ascertained by the public—seems to be generally believed; and that is that the Committee ordered a special inquiry into the accounts which existed between newspaper publishers and the Bank. If it be true that such an inquiry was ordered, and upon the presumed ground that any accommodation allowed by the Bank to such publishers implied a charge of bribery and corruption against the negotiating parties, we take leave to protest strongly against both the practice and the inference. A publisher, in his fiscal concerns, from peculiar causes, is often more embarrassed than his mercantile neighbour, and there is no reason why he should not be allowed to avail himself of the advantages which banking institutions offer without being suspected, and in effect accused of a gross and flagrant immorality. It might as well be argued that the merchant who obtains accommodation shares the profits of his business with the Bank, as that the conductor of a newspaper, who is thus favoured, necessarily sells himself, bound hand and foot, and compelled to advocate measures which otherwise he would have deprecated. There is neither reason nor justice

depreciated. There is neither reason nor justice in such suspicions, and if the Committee have thus acted we sincerely trust they will meet with the general rebuke which such conduct strongly merits.

It has of late years become a fashion in this country to divest editors of their privileges as citizens. If a man has only presided over the columns of a newspaper, no matter how pure and patriotic may have been his conduct, no matter how beneficial the measures he has advocated, no matter how efficient his services; no matter how rare and striking his abilities, he is placed under the ban of civil disqualification, and when proposed as a candidate for public station, the simple fact that he has been an editor is received as ample reason for justifying his damnation. This doctrine has been openly avowed, avowed, and adopted in the highest assemblies of the nation, and strange as it may appear there

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have not been wanting, even in the class thus
insulted and proscribed, men who have been
mean enough to lick the hand which was raised to
lash them, and fawn upon and flatter the authors
of their dishonour.

The attempt now made to govern the pecuni-
ary relations of newspapers is but another re-
move beyond the measure we have just refer-
red to. It forms another link in the chain of
subjugation, and if it is permitted to be rivetted
without indignant and effectual remonstrance, our
national press—our American press—will soon
become virtually enslaved, and its boasted freedom
be but a bye-word and a reproach. This must
not—this cannot be tolerated.

Why should the monied concerns of newspapers be made a subject of public investigation? If it be answered that in the present instance there was reason to believe that the Bank, through its discounts, had tampered with the press, we ask for the fact upon which that reason rested. Perhaps we shall be told that the ardent support given to the Bank by certain newspapers furnished sufficient cause for suspicion. Monstrous injustice! What—because an editor believes a tried and established system, upon which the currency and the commercial prosperity of the country greatly depends, should not be lightly bartered for one that has undergone no practical test, and still less be utterly annihilated; and because believing this he gives utterance to his opinions and enforces and strengthens them by reason and argument, shall he be held guilty of the venial crime of corruption, and his most innocent and necessary business arrangements tortured into proofs against him. Heaven forbid that this should ever happen, and yet if rumour be true has it not already happened? We wait the result with anxiety.