

LEGALIZED LARCENY.

The Chicago Tribune of July 17, under the head of "Printing Office Corruption," faintly intimates that there has been a tremendous stealing under the immediate supervision of Public Printer Frank Palmer at the Government Printing Office in Washington. The Tribune shows that during the civil war compositors in that office were paid \$4 per day. These wages continued until 1873, when the daily stipend was changed to \$3.20 and continued at that rate up to the present year. But neither the bookbinders, pressmen nor compositors ever got the taste of the \$4 per day out of their mouths. Every year they have applied to Congress for legislation to reestablish the \$4 rate. Every year they have been defeated, down to two years ago, when the rate was restored as to pressmen. This, the Tribune says, encouraged all the employees in the Government Printing Office to renewed importunity for similar legislation. Therefore a lobbyist was secured. His influence with certain senators and congressmen who had expressed a desire, with truly generous altruism, to aid the printers in getting through Congress a bill to restore the \$4 a day salary was potent. It is intimated that this potency came from a "divide" which was demanded by the generous lawmakers who were about to make an appropriation of other people's money for the purpose of getting political influence among members of the Typographical Union throughout the United States.

The Columbia branch of the Typographical Union at Washington, D. C., unanimously passed a resolution, the CONSERVATIVE is led to believe, which pledged each printer to pay to a certain committee of influential members of the union the money value of their first two weeks' pay after July 1, 1899.

At the advanced rate of \$4 a day, this amounted to \$48 for each one during the

first two weeks of the present fiscal year. The business committee thus organized for the purpose of looting the public treasury consisted of (1) Oscar J. Ricketts, a smooth republican, who acts as private secretary to Public Printer Palmer and who is held to be on the "inside" of all Government Printing Office contracts, deals and possible profits. (2) President Jones of the Typographical Union is Ricketts' right-hand man and pliant tool. He heads the local printers' union in Washington, and is foreman of a piece division in the office. Jones has a deliciously loyal record when it comes to larceny within the limits of the law. (3) J. C. Clifford, paymaster of the Government Printing Office, is the third member of this hoodling combine. He is noted mainly for a penchant for pretty bindery and feeder girls, and also for a certain recklessness in overpaying discharged com-

positors. (4) "Colonel" Ramsey, foreman of the specification division of the Government Printing Office, who has a war record of some vagueness, coupled with a voracity for money, completes the committee; although the "Hon." Mr. Leach, he of the swelled head, foreman of the Third Division in the Government Printing Office, could, if he would, give some interesting testimony in this case.

These patriotic employees of our common country devised and engineered the bill that passed to restore on July 1, 1899, the \$4 a day wages in the Government Printing Office. But before that enactment, every compositor and every bookbinder in the Government Printing Office was compelled, whether he wished or not, to give his personal note for \$48. Mr. Ricketts attended to securing autographs to these promises-to-pay. Having been secured, these notes were held over the heads of the members of the Typographical Union with the intention that if any failed to pay \$48 on the maturity of the notes their situations in the government employment would be sacrificed. In other words, Ricketts (who is in deed and in fact the Public Printer) would have discharged any offender who failed to meet his paper.

The foregoing is a brief synopsis of what THE CONSERVATIVE believes to be an organized raid with the intent to commit larceny within the limits of the law. According to the Tribune, the robbery is in perpetuity, or until the law authorizing it shall have been repealed. It costs the taxpayers of the United States \$350,000 a year. It pays the printers and bookbinders each \$252 annually more than they received under the old scale of wages. The loyal lobbyists make at least \$50,000 as there are nearly fifteen hundred persons affected by the increased pay. Beside this increase of pay they are by the statute each given thirty days' vacation with pay. The Tribune hints, however, that some of the printers and bookbinders are refusing to pay their notes to the lobbyists. Through this disaffection, the whole scheme of plunder organized by Ricketts and carried through by men drawing salaries from the taxpayers of the republic, has been exposed.

It is possible that all Americans who denounce this great larceny may be called "disloyal" by those who support the McKinley administration in all its follies, extravagances and corruptions.

Beside the men who organized and successfully carried out this strong grand larceny Alger is a saint, a patriot, an angel with white wings and an immaculate biography.

WHAT MAKES INGERSOLLS?

Many good pietists wonder what makes Ingersolls. Ingersollism may be defined as emotional rebellion against theological ignorance and ecclesiastical

brutality. Not Ingersolls but ecclesiastics make theology disgusting. It is such disgusting sayings as the following that create "rebellion against God" and fill the ranks of infidelity. A man must be false to everything noble in him; "the spirit of God must have gone out of him," if he does not rebel and disown such religion as is being preached on the death of Ingersoll. At Douglas, Mass., a "follower of Jesus" illuminated the minds of 700 people with this beastly infidelity:

"Folks become rich by bargaining with the devil. They sell their souls to him; he gives them their wealth, and they go to hell forever to pay for it. The devil can set a trap right under your nose and you will nibble and bite and swallow the bait whole, and he'll damn you forever, in consideration of greenbacks.

"Thousands of young men are looking for their fathers to die, so they will get the cash."

"Christ said, 'It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter Heaven.' He got his illustration from a narrow gate through which a camel could go if his pack was unloaded. So a rich man can enter Heaven, but he will have to get down on his knees, unload his plunder, and wiggle through.

"Young men can't preach the gospel because the church won't give them a license. You don't need any license. Get a pine box and preach in the streets. I know a man who lived with his family on \$35 a year, but he saved hundreds of souls. Jesus Christ and two potatoes beat the devil and any feast ever heard of.

"When I was at school in Middletown the devil led me into a mountain in the same manner he did Christ. He offered me riches, but I said, 'You old black, dirty, greasy devil, I am going to preach Jesus Christ's gospel.' He tried to dissuade me and said, 'You'll have to live on donation grub and sleep in parsonages.' I have been preaching 23 years now and nothing can induce me to stop.

"When I was dying of yellow fever at Aspinwall, a few years ago, my soul went to Heaven. The Lord said, 'Won't you go back and preach the gospel?' I replied, 'This is a nice place and I want to stay.' I had my choice, but after I had looked the Lord in the face I decided to come back, and here I am.

"Ministers will have to preach hell or go to hell.

"Morality will keep you out of jail, but holiness will keep you out of hell.

"Rich men will be temperance advocates when they get to hell. They'll want the water to quench the fire.

"Most of preachers talk to please. I could be popular if I did not preach holiness."
A CONSERVATIVE.