

## A GRAVE WRONG.

If the NEWS were opposed to the establishment of the copper works in this city—if it were even indifferent—it would see no occasion to lament the action of the City Council in deciding to give a bonus of \$25,000 for the purpose, and in defiantly over-riding the Mayor's veto of the measure; for we should feel that such action constituted as effective a blow against the enterprise as could be dealt. But for the reasons that we do most heartily desire the securing of the works, that we believe they will be secured, and that we hope every step toward obtaining them shall be above suspicion and grounded in the sense and good will of the people, we utter a note of warning against the course that appears to have been marked out for and is being heedlessly followed by the municipal fathers.

It is rarely that the illegal features of any enactment or proposed enactment are pointed out with greater perspicuity, terseness or force than was done by the Mayor last night in the matter of the bonus for these works. The authorities cited by his honor are exactly in point, the logic presented is vigorous and incisive, and the argument is unanswerable. The unlawful character of the proceeding is made so plain that anybody might understand it. What excuse, therefore, can there be for intelligent men like those composing the City Council refusing to see? Perhaps it would be wrong to say that they did not or do not see; no one would wish to offer such an insult to them. But what shall be said? To ignore the law as it is, to cast defiance into the teeth of the executive authority of the city, is surely neither careful legislation nor common courtesy. Would it not have been better, for a time at least, to let the matter rest with his refusal to concur? Manifestly this was the duty of the hour; yet not only was the former course taken, but it was taken at once and with such indecent haste and impetuosity as if it were feared the work engaged in might be stopped by some other agency if any time were permitted to elapse. This conclusion is supplemented by the further fact that the warrant for the amount—\$25,000—was hastily drawn and then checks for \$500 each as speedily as could be done were issued on five different banks, so that an injunction would not lie. What think ye of this, impartial reader, in this day of law and legal observance?

Look at it as we may, the whole proceeding wears a serious aspect. It is as dishonest to take money out of a treasury through the operation of legal machinery when the law itself is set aside, as it is to take it without authority under any other circumstances. The people were willing to give the smelter company all that was asked and had substantially signified their willingness to do so; a great many of them were willing that the city government should help out if such assistance were in consonance with law and propriety. The times are so dull and everything so listless in our midst that they or many of them were even willing to strain a point to secure the addition to our industrial pursuits, and if there

were an ambiguity in the law controlling, to give such proposed enterprise the benefit of the doubt. But it is questionable if a number outside the City Council corresponding with the membership of that body would uphold the giving or doing of anything by the municipality when shown that such action involved an open, flagrant and defiant disregard of principle, precedent and every safeguard by which we are surrounded.

The action of the Council, to sum it up in one word, is anarchical. To say that it is unprecedented might be right and it might not, since the record made by law-makers as law-breakers is a rather voluminous one. But to say that it is disappointing, that it is humiliating, that it is all but demoralizing, is not overstating the matter in the least. To force the issue and compass an illegal action by means of which those who were formerly with them are now as decidedly against them, is an action fraught with such grave concern to the perpetrators of it that those who chose them for guardians of the public weal are apprehensive of the consequences whether the objects of such apprehension realize the situation or not. Their action in any view of the case is lamentable and unjustifiable; and to attempt to excuse it with the argument that popular approval sustains it is an insult to the law and a menace to permanent welfare. Is it less a violation of law because a certain element clamors for it? Would it be more illegal if the popular will did not approve of it? Who knows, if the bars are thus to be let down, but that at some future time the present Council or one of its successors may decide to do, and really do, an act no more unlawful than this, and one that under those circumstances will fail to receive any favor at all! How will present defenders be able to act as critics then? Expediency is a poor substitute for law, and demagoguery is ever a public danger. It is out of sudden enthusiasm, either of favor or hate, that riots, revolutions, lynchings and many of the atrocities grow that in men's cooler moments they would prefer to leave to the law's operation. We repeat, a grievous mistake has been made, and either in its own consequences or those which will follow a similar error, there is certainty that all will see the day that they will rue it.

## THE CLEVELAND CABINET.

It is to be hoped that the announcement just given out by Mr. Cleveland that he will cheerfully inform the public as to who will compose his official household as soon as the gentlemen invited signify their acceptance and willingness that such information shall go out, will place the cabinet makers at considerable ease. In accordance with this determination, we are advised that one-half of the executive family is already made up and their names and stations are made known officially. They are:

Secretary of state—Walter Q. Gresham of Illinois.

Secretary of the treasury—John G. Carlisle of Kentucky.

Postmaster-General—Wilson S. Bissell of New York.

Secretary of the navy—Daniel S. Lamont of New York.

The names most prominently occurring in connection with the other positions are Gray of Indiana, Buchanan of Iowa, Herbert of Alabama, Glick of Kansas, Francis of Missouri and Irish of California. However, the affability and obliging disposition of the President-elect make it unnecessary to engage in speculation, as we shall know all about it shortly after he does, and undoubtedly there will not be much more delay.

## RUSSIA'S ENCROACHMENTS.

Karl Blind has an interesting article on the "Lands of the Czar" in the current *Lippincott's*. Looking at the immense territory Russia has overrun and conquered within the last twenty years, from the Caspian sea to the Afghan frontier and running even in to Afghanistan, the writer thinks that the most careless observer can see what the Muscovite is aiming at. It is mentioned that when Gladstone's immediate predecessor was asked to consider the situation and take decisive action, he laughingly asked the "would-be alarmists" to buy some maps of Europe and thus they might see how far the czar's dominions still were from the confines of India; but it is not believed he would make such answer today, nor would Lord Beaconsfield do so. Almost immediately after the last war against Turkey, says Mr. Blind, it came out that a secret envoy of the czar had plied the late ameer of Afghanistan with a proposal of an alliance in view of a war to be waged some day by Russia against English rule in India. The documentary evidence is printed in a blue book. Nevertheless, the English government has allowed itself, year by year, to be deceived, or appeased in outward semblance, by the diplomatic assurances of the czar's government. "Khiva was not to be annexed. Sarakhs was not to be touched. Merv was not to be incorporated. Afghanistan was completely outside the sphere in which Russia intended exercising any influence." All these promises are recorded in so many words. All were successively broken without compunction.

These matters have often been discussed, and the question of India's future brought up with intelligent and representative natives of that land and other eastern countries, and all of them acknowledged that English rule, whatever may have been the errors of statesmen in charge, has of late years done a great deal of good. It has legislated away some of the worst superstitions, given better instruction and made great concessions in the matter of having natives participate in administrative affairs. It is not likely, from all we read and can hear, that these people are desirous of change, least of all such change as Russian rule would bring them, neither is it among the events likely or even possible that England will permit the czar to advance much further toward the east without calling a most peremptory halt to the procession, and this, too, without regard to who may be premier.