Mayors Hall has made a third defence of himself against the charge of being privy and consenting to the thefts from the City Treasury; but it is like his two previous defences—corroborates the charge and deceives no one. For a sample of it this will serve: He says that the Times makes a great parade of disclosing secret accounts, whereas in point of fact, the very accounts which are now brought forward in that paper were long ago freely and fearlessly printed and published in the Reports of the Board of Supervisors. So they were, after a fashion; but when the taxpayer reads the words, “May 31, 1869, A. J. Garvey, Repairs, etc., $38,792,” or, “July 5, 1869, G. S. Miller, $49,763 80,” it conveys much less information to him than when he reads in the Times—as he would be able to read also in Comptroller Connolly’s quarterly exhibits, if that official had not for two years declined to make any—that Garvey, in 1869 and 1870, for plastering and painting county buildings, got $3,870,406 06 of the public money; that J. H. Ingersoll & Co., during the same time, got for furniture and repairs, $96,666 68; and that, in brief, the repairing, furnishing, plumbing, etc., of the County Court-house—as yet unfinished, and, according to Mr. Nordhoff, shabbily furnished—cost us, for the one building, all but seven millions of dollars—$6,907,392 24. The printed accounts, huddled into thick volumes, of which perhaps half-a-dozen are in existence, and which are in no sense accessible to the public, are not calculated or intended to convey any information whatever to anybody, and do not. It is the intention of the law that the Comptroller’s exhibits shall do that; and, naturally enough, it is the intention of the Comptroller—whose books are of course kept with a technical accuracy equaling that of any set of books anywhere—to pursue the tenor of his peculiar way as noiselessly as possible, and not every three months attract attention to himself and his accounts. The Mayor, then, makes no defence at all, but gets into the box as witness against himself. More than that, he is defiant. Being interviewed, he took the line that “even if there was anything in it, it would blow over before the next election.” “We have got the State,” he says, “and we mean to keep it.”

Perhaps he is right, and it may be that out of these disclosures no harm will come to himself or Connolly, or any other of the set, unless, indeed, the exposure should interfere with the success of the Viaduct Railway. We do not observe that crowds are flocking after the shares of that stock, though, with a moderately honest city government, the books would hardly have stood open three days. Considering the length of our unfinished Court-house, and that the Viaduct road, in its two branches, would include something like fifteen miles of brick and mortar work for Mr. Garvey and the other gentlemen to construct and equip, the proverbially timid capitalist may be held excused, under the circumstances, for hanging back a little at first. A public meeting is to be held, it is said; but there is no saying that anything practical will come of it. It may be doubted if there will be any of the talked-of combinations to resist taxes, or any impeachment of the Mayor, or any criminal prosecution of Tweed. People buy the Times, and read the figures, but each passes on to business, and declines to pull down on his head heavier assessments, or lose time and money attacking swindlers in courts which they own. But it is certain that the publication of the accounts, whether or not it shakes the Ring in this city, has made many Democrats angry with it, and it is unreasonably to expect, Hall’s impudence to the contrary notwithstanding, that we may have are forming legislature next year and a new charter; which it is not so certain, we trust, as the World thinks, that Governor Hoffman will veto. Yet, when we think of Mr. “Hank” Smith, and of Mr. Charles Spencer, with his large family Bible, and the very wicked but still not unique Mr. Winans, it is but a chastened hope we indulge after all that the legislature can help us.

Still, that there are many thieves is small reason for not pushing to the wall when you can all you can catch. We suggest the work as a good one for the Bar Association of this city when it gets Mr. David Dudley Field’s case finally disposed of.

Mr. Marshall O. Roberts, a prominent Republican, to whom we referred last week as a gentleman who had vouched for the correctness of Mr. Connolly’s accounts, has published a card, in which he begs to call the attention of the public to the fact that he did not examine into the condition of all the departments of Mr. Connolly’s office, and that the certificate which he and his committee gave Mr. Connolly “referred only to the securities comprising the Sinking Fund, and the manner in which the accounts relative thereto, and to the debts of the city and county, were kept.” The fact is, that in the stress of an election, when the Comptroller was accused of withholding his accounts, and of withholding them because he did not dare to publish them, so full were they of evidences of his own and his friends’ dishonesty, he invited Mr. Roberts, Mr. J. J. Astor, and four other gentlemen of weight in the community, large taxpayers, to come in and examine his books. They complied with the invitation, and every body said that we should now know whether or not Connolly was slandered. “We certify,” said this committee, “that we have made an examination of the affairs of the Finance Department and Sinking Fund of said city—Finance Department of said city,” not of “said office”—“that the entire office was thrown open to us”—the “entire office,” not “a single department of said office”—and “all the account-books, securities, and records of the said Department and Sinking Fund were submitted to our inspection and examination.” “And we further certify,” they say, at the end of the report, “that the account-books of the Department are faithfully kept.” This is language which Mr. Roberts and Mr. Astor must have suspected would, by most people, be taken—as, in fact, it was taken—to mean that “Connolly was all right,” and that, from partisan feeling, the Republicans had been cianoring false charges against him. But, however that may be, Mr. Roberts could have had no doubt as to what would be the interpretation of the last sentence of this report: “We have come to the conclusion, and certify, that the financial affairs of the city under the charge of the Comptroller are administered in a correct and faithful manner.” Now they came to this conclusion either with such an examination as alone could justify their putting their names to such an assertion concerning such a man, or else they came to it without such an examination; and, in either case, the public may rightly be curious as to what could have induced them to sign the report. Tammany does nothing for nothing; why should prominent Republicans have done anything for Tammany? Mr. Roberts’s card is not quite an explanation of his course on the occasion in question.

It is understood that the sub-committee appointed by the Congressional committee which was ordered to investigate the affairs of the Ku-klux Klan in the South are going to report, and are going to report that there is such a thing as the Klan in existence; that it does attack people for their politics; is composed of “Conservatives,” and contains no Republicans; has committed many most bloody and shameful outrages, and that the Ku-klux law was necessary and is benefical. We ourselves have no doubt that the passage of the Ku-klux law was inexpedient and wrong; and we shall wait for some time before believing that the law has practically been of any benefit, all the time believing that any benefit it has brought us has been very dearly bought. As for the rest of the report as above summarized, we are ready to accept it as the truth, and nothing but the truth; but it is not at all the whole truth. Here are some figures from Louisiana which we consider strictly germane to the matter which the Committee has in hand, and which will, at any rate, get some of the country’s attention: Between 1850 and 1860, the State tax in Louisiana ranged from twenty.
one hundred dollars to twenty-nine cents. In 1865 and 1866, it was thirty-seven and a half cents; in 1867 and 1868, it was fifty-two and a half cents; in 1869, it was seventy-five cents; in 1870, it was $1.45; and for this year it will be considerably more than $2. Next, it is to be considered that while the taxes have thus increased, the State's expenditures have been constantly in excess of the receipts. Mr. James Graham, the State auditor, certifies that the excess in the fiscal year ending in 1871 is $8,778,618 15—making the total debt of the State nearly $49,000,000. At the breaking out of the war, Louisiana had a debt of $10,000,000; in 1868, this was $14,500,000; in 1869, $32,500,000; in 1870, $41,000,000; and, as we have said, in June, 1871, nearly $49,000,000. But formerly, before 1860, a sixty days' session of the legislature cost from $100,000 to $200,000; the regular session and extra session of 1870 cost more than $750,000; and the regular session of 1871 cost more than $9,000,000. The State Treasury supported at a cost, in 1870, of $432,000, and in 1871, of nearly $400,000, about thirty sheets of newspapers (in name), printed in the country districts, and, in great part, conducted by members of the legislature. The State is, in short, as North Carolina has been, as South Carolina also has been, and as nearly every Southern State has been, the prey, since 1865, of grossly and shamelessly corrupt governments, whose officers have made fortunes, and of rings of railroad and other speculators.

Surely it is not wonderful that the respectable portion of Southern society, seeing what rogues and thieves their rulers and lawmakerns are, should not be very earnest in putting down the bands of lawless young men who, if they do disgrace themselves, their State, and often humanity itself, do also sometimes whip a greedy tax-collector, shoot a bribed law-maker, and compel a disreputable office-seeker or office-holder to run the country. It was only this last week that the leading Republican paper of Charleston, while supporting no less Radical a candidate than Mr. Gilbert Pillsbury, an old-time Abolitionist, who is now the mayor of the city, and is up for re-election, pronounced a good part of the rest of the ticket an insult to the honesty, intelligence, and decency of the party. It was of necessity that, in a country like the South, violence should be the response to the frauds and rascallities carried on by such peculiarly sneaking and base rogues as were too many of the Southern "carpet-baggers." In view of the cost of reconstruction in money, in the reputation of the North, in the embittering of the South, in the wrenching which such legislation as the Ku-klux law has given our system of government, it is far from clear that it would not have been cheaper if we had abandoned Mr. Lincoln's system of galvanized States, and garrisoned the Southern country for five years, keeping it in order with soldiers till the Southerners themselves were ready to behave sensibly. It would have cost us fully as little in money, Constitution, and credit as we have had to pay out on the other system; and we are not done yet. However that may be, Louisiana's case will bear thinking of when the Ku-klux Committee comes to report. And how anxious as national Republicans we ought to be that the Republican party of Louisiana should get Dunn for manager—or chief warden—instead of Warmouth, or Warmouth instead of Dunn!

The shocking accident, on Sunday, at the Staten Island Ferry had some peculiarly pathetic features. Many of the killed and wounded were women and children; they were poor hard-working people who were about to make a cheap holiday by taking a twenty-cent sail, away from the stifling air of the city into the coolness of the bay; of those who were not killed instantly by crushing or more slowly by drowning, many were agonizingly sealed. It is a long time since a more miserable accident has occurred. How it happened will only be known after the investigation, and may likely enough never be known, it not having been the way of such investigations to be very strict or very satisfactory. But who was the immediate cause of the accident, and what shall be done with him, are not questions that it is very profitable to consider on such occasions. As to punishment, juries will never do anything in such cases, because the intention to kill and maim is always utterly wanting; and even when there has been an error of judgment, or a neglectfulness, or even a carelessness, that we are almost justified in calling criminal, still the juries are apt to think, or, indeed, to see, that the offender's sense of guilt and remorse, and the usual loss of his place, and injury to his prospects, is punishment sufficient for his offence. The profitable thing to do in presence of such a calamity as this ghastly destroying of more than seventy men, women, and children, and the wounding and disfigurement of some hundred-and-odd more, is to consider whether or not some new safeguard, applicable generally, cannot be thrown round all our steamboat travel. To this end the knowledge and the usual methods of this particular inspector should be most rigidly examined in the light of testimony from experts, and as heavily visited as possible, if he has been inspecting with insufficient knowledge or insufficient care, and taking fees for sending people to their death. And the general subject of the management of our ferries—a very profitable franchise—may properly be examined thoroughly. On one or two of the lines of travel between the city and suburbs, the treatment of passengers—shut into a floating sty with cattle, and abused by ruffianly deck-hands; kept waiting hours in the ice because the employment of ice-boats costs money; made to wait sometimes a whole night away from home because a boat is taken off without warning—has been a disgrace to the city. Of some of the companies no harm is to be spoken; of others, nothing else; and the general reputation of this Staten Island Company is not in all respects caviar.