

let us calculate. If a society is based on money and self-interest, it takes its stand on figures, and society has been thus based since the Charter was drawn up; so I think, at least. And, then, there is nothing like a column of figures for carrying conviction to the 'intelligent masses.' Everything, in fact, so say our statesmen of the Left, can be resolved into figures. So to figures let us betake ourselves" (*the Minister takes one of the deputies aside and begins to talk in a low voice.*) "Here, in France, there are about forty thousand men in the employ of the Government; not counting road-menders, crossing-sweepers, and cigarette-makers. Fifteen hundred francs is the average amount of a salary. Multiply fifteen hundred francs by forty thousand, and you get sixty millions.—And before we go any farther, a publicist might call the attention of China, Austria, Russia (where civil servants rob the Government), and divers American republics to the fact that for this sum France obtains the fussiest, most fidgety, interfering, inquisitive, meddling, pains-taking, categorical set of scribblers and hoarders of wastepaper, the veriest old wife among all known administrations. Not one farthing can be paid or received in France but a written order must be made out, checked off by a counterfoil, produced again and again at every stage of the business, and duly receipted at the end. And afterwards the demand and the receipt must be filed, entered, posted, and checked by a set of men in spectacles. The official understrapper takes fright at the least sign of an informality, for he lives by such *minutiae*. Well, plenty of countries would be satisfied with that; but Napoleon went further. He, great organizer as he was, re-established supreme magistrates in one court, a unique court in the world. These functionaries spent their days in checking off all the bills, pay-sheets, muster-rolls, deposit certificates, receipts, and statements of expenditure, and all the files and bundles of wastepaper which the staff first covered with writing. These austere judges possessed a talent for *minutiae*, a genius for investigation, and a lynx-eyed perspicacity in book-keeping, which reached such an