

Evening Telegraph

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1869.

THE RUSH BEQUEST TO THE PHILADELPHIA LIBRARY.

The report of the committee of the Philadelphia Library appointed at a meeting of the stockholders to consider the bequest of the late Dr. James Rush, is published in another portion of the present issue of THE TELEGRAPH. It will be seen that it recommends the acceptance of the legacy, and as we also give place to a communication warmly urging its rejection, both sides of the controversy are well presented in these publications. The proposition of the committee that "so much of the present collection of books and other property of the company as may by the directors be deemed expedient shall be retained in the present or some other central position for general use and circulation," effectually disposes, however, of the principal difficulty involved in the acceptance of the bequest.

Making all due allowance for the burthen-some conditions annexed to the will, they are still insufficient to justify the rejection of the grandest gift to literature ever made in this country, if the convenience of the stockholders in obtaining the books which enter into general circulation is not seriously interfered with, as it would not be under the proposed arrangement. The man who contributes a million of dollars to the purchase of a site, the erection of a magnificent library building, and the creation of a fund from which, a few years hence, three or four times as much annual income as the present annual revenues of the Philadelphia Library will be derived, may well be pardoned for requiring that his mortal remains shall repose beneath the monument he wishes to raise, for desiring the publication of his own works, and even for an attack upon the newspapers. Eccentric as he was, his eccentricities did not prevent him from performing a good and noble action, which is only too rarely imitated. His desire that a family name should be honored and perpetuated is common to nearly all the men who make large donations to charitable or literary purposes, and in respecting it the stockholders will do no more than the orphans of Girard College, the habitués of the Astor Library, the frequenters of the Smithsonian Institute, the scholars of the Cornell University, or the beneficiaries of a hundred kindred institutions. With all the faults of the proposed site, it is on the proper thoroughfare—Broad street; and a generation hence, when that magnificent avenue is adorned with splendid structures throughout its entire length, it will be a matter of little importance that the building is "too far down town." With facilities for the supply of the ordinary wants of the stockholders at the present or some other convenient and central location, and with a grand building on the leading avenue where choice treasures can be safely stored and displayed to the best advantage, provision will be made for the permanent establishment of one of the finest libraries in the world.

THE CASE OF SURGEON GREEN.

The court-martial of Passed Assistant Surgeon Charles L. Green, of the United States steamer Nipsic, for disobeying the orders of his superior officer, has attracted much attention, not only in naval circles but throughout the country. The principle involved in this case is one of great importance to the welfare of the naval service, and it ought to receive a full and candid consideration at the hands of those who are interested in promoting the efficiency and dignity of the naval service. The offense of Surgeon Green consisted in disobeying the orders of Lieutenant Commander Thomas O. Selfridge, the commanding officer of the Nipsic, who ordered him to take from the sick list an enlisted man, who in the opinion of the surgeon was not in a fit condition to go on duty. Surgeon Green consequently declined to obey the order, when he was placed under arrest by Lieut. Commander Selfridge, who ordered the man to go on duty in spite of the surgeon's protest. The court-martial which tried the case found Surgeon Green guilty on the first two counts of the charge preferred against him—namely, treating with contempt his superior officer while in the execution of his office, in dissenting from an order to take a seaman off the sick list, and disobeying a lawful order in thus refusing obedience, and sentenced him to be suspended from rank on furlough pay for the term of two years, and to be publicly reprimanded by the Secretary of the Navy, the order of reprimand to be read to the officers and men of each naval station and vessel in commission. On the third charge, of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman, in being intoxicated, Mr. Green was acquitted. The Secretary of the Navy practically acknowledged the injustice of this sentence by remitting the sentence of suspension from rank and pay, and in making his order stating the facts of the case a "sufficient reprimand."

We understand from a reliable source that it was given in evidence before the court-martial that the seaman in question was in reality not in a fit condition for duty, and that after the surgeon was placed under arrest, he was practically excused from duty by the executive officer, who merely required him to report at muster in order to make a show of obedience to the order of the commanding officer. There are few persons outside of the navy who would find any difficulty in deciding

upon the justice of this case, but there are some points with which the public are not familiar that have an important bearing. The surgeon of a naval vessel is required by law to keep an accurate daily record of each case under his care, and opposite to the name of each patient he gives a description of his symptoms, and whether in the surgeon's opinion he is entitled to a pension. This record is accepted at the Pension Bureau as sufficient evidence, in case of an application for a pension from the man himself, or, in the event of his death, of his widow. When a man is taken off the sick list, or in the event of the suspension from duty of the surgeon, of course this record ceases; and, in case of his death or permanent disability, there is nothing to show that he is entitled to receive a pension from the Government.

This case of Surgeon Green is in a great measure analogous to that of Engineer Tower, who, during the war, refused to close his furnace doors when commanded to do so by the captain of the vessel. Mr. Tower's excuse was that he had already more steam than he could safely carry, and that he could not close his furnace doors without imminent danger of exploding his boilers. In spite of this he was placed under arrest, court-martialed, found guilty, and sentenced to a severe punishment. The more onerous portions of the sentence were remitted by the Secretary, as in the case of Mr. Green, and the Engineer was simply reprimanded.

These conflicts of authority show conclusively that there is an urgent necessity for a reconstruction of the navy, and a more exact definition of the duties and responsibilities of the officers in charge of different departments. It cannot be disputed that in both of the instances cited the commanding officers were clearly in the wrong, and the surgeon and engineer in the right, and it is simply an outrage that the one should be upheld and the other punished. It may be necessary for the sake of discipline that the supreme power should be in the hands of the commanding officer, but there ought to be some way of holding him to strict account for the proper use of the power entrusted to him.

The result of these and similar annoying interferences on the part of the line officers is, that the staff of the navy is rapidly becoming demoralized. There are now a number of vacancies in the medical corps which it has been found impossible to fill with proper persons, because educated physicians will not submit to this kind of treatment, and they prefer to give the navy a wide berth. We sincerely hope that Congress will take the matter in hand at its next session, and make such a reorganization of the navy as will do away with the spirit of old fogyism that now rules it, and by a more accurate definition than exists at present of the responsibilities, duties, and privileges of each officer, promote harmony among the staff and line, raise the standard of efficiency in the service, and do away with the dissatisfaction that now exists. There is certainly no encouragement for educated surgeons and engineers to enter the navy as it is now managed, and these officers are of quite as much importance as those who have command on deck.

PRESIDENT JUAREZ, in his recent address to the Mexican Congress, on the occasion of its reassembling on the anniversary of independence, congratulated the members that they could then, for the first time in the history of the republic, celebrate the national anniversary in the midst of universal peace, a general obedience to the laws, and ability on the part of the Government to repress rebellion and disorder as fast as they arose. This is, indeed, an occasion for rejoicing, and it is to be hoped that Mexico has been at last emancipated from chronic anarchy.

GETTING OFF EASY.—The keeper of an insane asylum in Yorkshire, England, deputed two lunatics to administer to another a warm bath, and as the result the poor man was boiled to death. The keeper lost his situation, but did not lose his head.

ALL the Republican journals of Chicago except one repudiate the regular Republican candidates, and support the Citizens' Reform ticket. There is some prospect of purging and purifying the Republican party of that city, at least.

A HUMAN DEFICIT IN AUSTRIA.—The Vienna Wanderer, under the above startling title, presents some curious statistics in reference to the population of Austria. In every 10,000 inhabitants 253 deaths occur in Austria and Hungary, 258 in France, 290 in Prussia, 220 in Holland, 220 in Great Britain and Ireland, 222 in Belgium, and 361 in Spain. Thus Austria outranks immoral France, and almost equals demoralized Spain, in the rate of mortality. With respect to education, for every 10,000 inhabitants the number of scholars at the elementary schools is 18 in Austria and Hungary, 230 in France, 404 in Prussia, 501 in Holland, 1290 in Great Britain and Ireland, 1100 in Belgium, 1140, in Spain 700. It thus appears that the two countries having the highest rate of mortality have the lowest proportion of scholars. In regard to the number of births, Hubner shows that for every 10,000 inhabitants there are 403 births in Austria and Hungary, 309 in France, 404 in Prussia, 501 in Holland, 349 in Great Britain and Ireland, 309 in Belgium, and 400 in Spain. If we consider the increase of the population by the excess of births over deaths, we find that it averages for every 10,000 inhabitants, 50 in Austria and Hungary, 31 in France, 114 in Prussia, 92 in Holland, 129 in Great Britain and Ireland, 78 in Belgium, and 39 in Spain. A close comparison of these figures shows that for every 10,000 inhabitants Austria has an increase of 64 less than Prussia, 19 less than England, 42 less than Holland, and 28 less than Belgium. This is an important loss both in material and intellectual respects, a physical deficit which arises from an extravagant expenditure of life consequent mainly upon the drafts made by immense trading armies upon the vitality and stamina of the country.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

For additional Special Notices see the Inside Pages.

THE PHILADELPHIA AND ERIE RAILROAD COMPANY, Office, No. 230 WALNUT STREET, Philadelphia, Pa., October 1, 1869.
THE OIL CREEK AND ALLEGHENY RIVER RAILROAD COMPANY, has its Quarterly Dividend of TWO AND A HALF PER CENT. PAYABLE, at the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad Office, No. 230 WALNUT STREET. The Earnings of the Road, for the last quarter, \$445,000; for the last month, \$114,200; and for the last week, \$25,200.
PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY, NINTH Street, south of Locust, Medical Department, Session 1869-70 commences October 7th, 1869, with a General Introductory by JOHN O'BYRNE, Esq., Free to the public. Students desiring of attending College will call upon the Dean, W. PALME, M. D., at the University, from 12 to 4.

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BLACK SILKS, \$2'50.
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A New Article, Very Desirable.

ONE CASE VELOUR POPLINS,

In Entirely New Shades, \$2'00.

ONE CASE VELOUR POPLINS,

Entirely New Shades, \$1'50.

ONE CASE VERY RICH LYONS SILK POPLINS.

ALL-WOOL PLAID POPLINS,

All-Wool Plaids, 62.
All-Wool Plaids, 75.
All-Wool Plaids, 87.
Rich Diagonal Plaids, \$1'00.
Blue and Green Plaids.
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