Evening Telegraph

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1870.

The earliest regular edition of THE EVENING TELEGRAPH goes to press at 11 e'clock, and the subsequent regular editions at 2½, 3½, and 4½. Whenever there is important news of the progress of the European war, extra editions will be issued after this hour, and before the regular time for the early edition.

THE CENSUS OF PHILADELPHIA. THE census of Philadelphia, as made up by Marshal Gregory, is one of the most remarkable documents of the age. It has taken a wonderfully long time to complete it. The returns of many other cities were published months ago, and as we heard from time to time of the complaints of their inhabitants that the enumeration was imperfect, we felt sure that Philadelphia was in no danger of such damaging neglect. We were confident that nobody in this municipality would escape the vigilant eyes of the consus-takers, and that, in view of the extraordinary length of time consumed in making p the returns, on the one hand, and the undoubted evidences of growth and increase of population, on the other, our population would amount to eight hundred thousand at the very lowest calculation. But alas for the vanity of human calculations. The Marshal and his deputies, despite their protracted exertions, have figured up only 657,159, and an increase of less than one hundred thousand during the last decade! There can be but one explanation of this astonishing result. The official census returns, tried by any and all reasonable tests, are grossly imperfect. If we contrast the vote of 1860 with that of 1868, allowing the same ratio of votes to the population to exist in each year, the number of inhabitants two years ago was 850,000. If we are guided by the number of dwellings erected since 1860, and average number of occupants, the increase in the last decade must have been at least 250,000. If we turn to Gregory's exhibit, and discover that the population of each of ten wards is reported to have diminished to the extent, in the aggregate, of more than thirty thousand, and that while no territory has been taken from any of these wards to make up the new wards of the city, other districts have lost a large portion of their territory without suffering a diminution of population, it grows plainer than ever that there has been fearful negligence displayed in some quarter in the compilation of these delusive and defective state-

It has long been contended by those who have carefully investigated the American system of taking the census that it was radically imperfect, but there has been nowhere in the whole Union, a more glaring and ab surd illustration of its deficiencies than in the city of Philadelphia. That gross injustice has been done to this municipality is beyond all doubt, and we trust that the Mayor and City Councils may at once devise measures for securing a correct enumeration, so that the city may be placed in its true and proper statistical position.

MINORITY REPRESENTATION AND CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

YESTERDAY a variety of interesting and important subjects were introduced to the notice of the Social Science Association, but among these there were two that particularly deserve the thoughtful consideration of all classes of citizens. Electoral Reform was treated by the Hon. Charles R. Buckalew in an elaborate address that explained the theory and practice of his plan for securing a proper representation of the minority in the representative, judicial, and executive branches of the Government by a system of a cumulative voting, and J. G. Rosengarten, Esq., set forth, in an able argument, the importance and necessity for a reform in the civil service. These two subjects, although distinct, have an intimate connection with each other, as they touch upon two of the principal evils that have grown up about our political system, that have been productive of demoralization, fraud, and corruption, and that threaten the worst consequences in the future. If some plan can be devised by which both the majority and minority can be fairly represented in the Government, one of the worst effects of the present plan of dividing the nation into two political parties, despite the variety of interests outside of those of a mere party character that ought to have a hearing, would be obviated, and independent voters, who now are able to do nothing when objectionable candidates are put up but to scratch their names, would be able to make their influence felt and respected. Any scheme for the accomplishment of such a result as this will of course be resisted by mere trading politicians, who are interested in keeping things as they are at present, and the party lines defined as sharply as possible, so that when election day comes round they can poll a large vote for the "straight-out" ticket: but, on the other hand, the noble army of "scratchers," the men who hold the balance of power, the independent voters, whose number is, we are happy to believe, increasing every year, have a right to demand that they shall have an opportunity afforded them to make their wishes known in the most effec-

tive manner possible. We are not prepared to say that the cumulative system preposed by Mr. Buckalew, by which a voter may distribute his votes among

a number of candidates or concentrate them upon one, as he thinks fit, is the best that can be devised, but it is at least the best that has yet been proposed, and is well worthy of a trial as a great improvement over the plan at present in vogue. Mr. Buckalew, whether he succeeds or not in having the cumulative system generally adopted, is entitled to great credit for the disinterested and unpartisan manner in which he has advocated it. A Democrat himself, he induced the people of Bloomsburg to try the cumulative plan at a time when the Democrats were largely in the majority, and when they were certain to suffer the defeat of several of their candidates by indulging in such an experiment. Such a piece of enlightenment on the part of a Democrat is as rare as it is praiseworthy, and all impartial men will be glad to give Mr. Buckalew the credit he deserves.

The demoralization of our civil service is one of the natural results of corruption in party politics, and all the indications are that it is almost hopeless to expect any adequate reform in the present disgraceful system of distributing the Government offices as political rewards until the independent voters are able to make themselves heard in a more potent manner than by mere protests. These are subjects that ought to be kept before the public constantly, and urged with pertinacity, and we hope that the deliberations of the Social Science Association will have the effect of exciting an attention to them that will lead to beneficial results.

Chief Justice Chase to Retire from the Bench. Correspondence of the N. Y. Journal of Commerce Washington, Oct. 24.—Some of Mr. Chase's friends have called at his house and failed to see him. This was never before so in their case. He has given up his residence in the city and removed to quarters in the distant suburbs. It is now distinctly and unreservedly announced by Ohloans that they believe Chief Justice Chase will retire from the bench this winter and live a pri-vate inactive life for the remainder of his days. His retired pay will be an ample competence for him-self and family.

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