## Evening Telegraph

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1870. THE SPECIAL LEVY FOR THE PUB-LIC BUILDINGS.

It is reported that the Law Committee of Select Council, at a meeting held yesterday, decided to report back with a negative recommendation the bill which had previously passed Common Council, authorizing a special tax of six cents per \$100 for the purpose of erecting new public buildings. The pretext for this action is that the Legislature has not authorized a special levy for the contemplated purpose; and as it is now too late to incorporate the proposed tax in the present levy, the opponents of the Penn Square site hope to thwart temporarily, if not permanently, the solemn decision rendered by the citizens of Philadelphia at the polls in October. To insure prompt action, Councils must either set at naught the new quibble, or contract a public building loan, or have a special act passed by the Legislature authorizing the proposed special tax. The most obvious course is to disregard the negative recommendation of the Committee of Select Council, and pass the law at once without being diverted from a plain duty by hair-splitting distinctions between tweedledum and tweedle-dee. - The people have decided the public building question, and it does not become their official servants to tamper or trifle with the clear expression of their will. No trait of the American character is so well defined as readiness to obey a great popular verdict, and Select Council cannot do a more unpopular and unjust thing than to hearken now to the insidious promptings of the leaders of the public building party which was defeated at the last election.

THE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

A DISGRACEFUL scene occurred yesterday at the meeting of the Board of Guardians of the Poor, which will confirm the impression now existing in the public mind that the management of the affairs of the Almshouse is not what it should be. Mr. Edward T. Parker, who has distinguished himself by vigorously protesting against certain abuses and by demanding necessary reforms, as usual found it almost impossible to obtain a hearing, and he was on this, as on former occasions, made the object of foul and abusive remarks instead of receiving the support of his colleagues in his efforts to correct the evils that exist in the management of the Almshouse. The charges which Mr. Parker brings against the officers of the Almshouse and against its general management are specific, and as no refutation of them has yet been offered, we have a right to believe that they are true. The city of Philadelphia cannot afford to be disgraced by the performances of another "Board of Buzzards," and it is evident that the affairs of the Almshouse need a thorough investigation, such as from general appearances they are not likely to receive from the present Board of Guardians. Leaving out of the question all considerations of decency and good morals, the fact that a very large sum of money is paid yearly by the citizens of Philadelphia for the support of the Almshouse is a sufficient reason for the public to demand that the administration of its affairs shall be above suspicion. This it is certain is not the case at present, and if Mr. Parker cannot obtain a hearing from the Board of Guardians, and if he finds himself opposed at every point, he should demand an investigation outside of the board by bringing the subject to the attention of the Grand Jury in such a manner that the latter body will have no excuse whatever for slighting it. At present, the visits of the Grand Juries to the Almshouse and other public institutions amount to little, and the presentments are frequently nothing more than eulogies when eulogies are apparently but little deserved. When there has been so much complaint as there has been lately in regard to the management of the Almshouse, it is clearly the duty of the Grand Jury to take cognizance of this matter and to institute a thorough investigation that will develop the real facts.

SOUTHERN WAR CLAIMS. A PLAUSIBLE Southern War-Claim bill was under consideration in the Senate yesterday, damages being demanded for the destruction of the property of a Union man in Kentucky by the cannon of the Union army during a fight with the Rebels. It seems to have been well understood on both sides that this was the strongest case that could be selected from a list amounting in the aggregate to thousands of millions of dollars, and that if this claim was endorsed by Congress many others of less merit would quickly follow in its train. It is thus put forth as a feeler, to see how much imposition patient Northern tax-payers will stand. If they acquiesce quietly in exactions which possess a semblance of justice, until the principle of paying Southern war claims is fairly established, they will be compelled to enrich tens of thousands of adventurous cormorants and their Congressional allies, The art of filehing money from the people under high-sounding pretexts has been brought to the highest state of perfection by the Washington lobbyists, and if they can get the Southern claims business fairly started, they will doom the industrious citizens of America to slavery but one degree less galling than that which was abolished by the

Jones, an unreconstructed Democratic Kentuckian, startled some of his Northern political associates in Congress yesterday by insisting that they should endorse the right of secession. He coupled with an amnesty resolution (which they were willing to favor) n declaration setting forth that the "Government of the United States was established as a confederacy of coequal States; that the question of the right of secession was from the beginning debatable;" and "that certain States had seceded and set up a government

of their own, in accordance with honest convictions as to their reserved rights;" and he thus laid down an out-and-out Rebellion platform. A few of the Northern Democrats, warned by past experience, refused to put their necks in the Rebel halter made by the consistent Jones, but thirteen of his faithful brethren were true to their creed, and with their assistance he put on record the fact that the principles for which Lee fought, Davis plotted, and Wirz starved Union prisoners are still cherished by ardent sons of the sunny

OUR CENSUS has undergone still another manipulation at Washington, and the aggregate population of Philadelphia is now reported officially at 674,022, or 296 in excess of Marshal Gregory's last figures, and 3022 greater than the last previous report from the Census Bureau. The latest figures show an increase since 1860 of 108,493, or 19:18

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