

EDITORIALS.

THE following, being the substance of a letter from General Caleb Cushing concerning the present status of the "Alabama claims" and their connection with individual claims, will be interesting and instructive to all. We are indebted to the New York Journal of Commerce for the extracts:

1. To begin, it is misapprehension to suppose that there is any similitude between these cases and those of the so-called "French Spoliation claims."

In the latter case the government of the United States relinquished to France all claim against that government on account of alleged illegal captures of American merchantmen, theretofore made by France, in consideration of the relinquishment by France of certain national claims against the United States.

In view of these mutual relinquishments, the aggrieved owners of the merchantmen captured by France contend—and, as I think, with great reason and truth—that the government of the United States is bound in equity to indemnify them for their losses in consideration of the benefit thus accruing to the United States.

But the United States did not receive any money from France in the premises. It is a question of equitable indemnity, not a question of the payment of money in the hands of the government.

In the case of the "Alabama claims," however, the United States will have in their hands a definite sum of money, awarded against England by the Tribunal of Arbitration, and paid over by England to the United States for distribution among the parties interested, according to the award of the Tribunal.

2. In the matter of the "Alabama claims" the agent and counsel of the United States presented to the Tribunal detailed schedules and estimates of the claims of American citizens on account of captures by Confederate cruisers fitted out in or dispatched from ports of Great Britain in violation of public law; setting forth the names of vessels captured and the names of parties interested—whether owners of ship, freight or cargo, or officers and seamen, or insurers—and asserting the responsibility of Great Britain in the premises.

The Tribunal, in the first place, adjudged Great Britain to be guilty in respect of all captures made by the Alabama and the Florida and their tenders, and by the Shenandoah after her departure from Melbourne.

The Tribunal, in the second place, examined and scrutinized the schedules and estimates of individual losses presented by the United States, and on the basis of them made a grand sum in gross which they conceived to be sufficient, (and which I think is sufficient) to afford a just indemnity to the injured citizens of the United States.

This gross sum will within the year be paid by Great Britain to the United States, with interest on any delay; it will be received and held by the United States as a trust fund to be distributed among the parties interested, conformably to the tenor and spirit of the award of the Tribunal; and the government will be bound to make such distribution promptly and justly, by the moral force of its duty of good faith to England, and its obligation to fulfill the stipulations of the Treaty of Washington.

There is no contingency, uncertainty or doubt in all this; you and the other parties in interest may, I do not hesitate to say, rest assured of the honor and good faith of the government of the United States, in this respect, with just as much of certitude as in the payment of the gold bonds of the government.

3. It is for Congress to decide as to the manner of effecting the distribution of this money among the parties interested. We may reasonably conjecture, however, that a Board of Assessors will be appointed to receive and examine the individual claims upon evidence, and to estimate the amount of each, and the amount to be paid to the respective claimants. The most important duty of this Board will be the valuation of property and the determination of questions of ownership.

4. In view of the foregoing considerations, I earnestly advise you and other parties interested:

First, not to sacrifice any of your claims by sale, that is, not to sell under any circumstances, or at any other rate, than in the case of other assured rights of property.

All claimants in such cases stand better, appearing in their own right.

Secondly, not to sacrifice your claims by transactions in the nature of contingent agency compensation.

You will need attorneys or counsel before the Board of Assessors, who should be compensated with liberal and honorable fees as such; but your claims are not of that altortatory and precarious character which requires them to be placed in the category of some foreign claims, such as those before the Mexican Commission, or of some domestic claims demanding long continued and peculiar service before the Executive departments, or before Congress.

CASES of robbery, burglary, street and highway assault, and other offenses of a similar character have multiplied considerably hereabout of late, and the better classes of our citizens have been annoyed by and somewhat exercised concerning the existence of such a state of things. But this community is not alone in the affliction. Judging by the following from the San Francisco Bulletin, the people of the Golden City are still worse afflicted in that manner—

The city is swarming at present with thieves of all grades, who ply their avocation principally at night, and numerous young men who assume a guise of respectability in the daytime are included in the horde of ruffians. The most contemptible and less daring of these fellows keep a watch on the owl-roosts, or all-night drinking places, and stand in readiness to follow up any tardy inebriate sufficiently under the effects of liquor to disable him for vigorous resistance, and intercept him on his homeward way when some retired quarter is reached favorable for the pocket rifling process. Bibulous citizens so unfortunate as to experience the necessity of a rest by the way fall a certain prey to the thieves, and when the opportunity is auspicious are stripped of their clothing as well as valuables.

Now that everybody is going to have plenty of diamonds from Arizona, it may be as well to know how to test a diamond and tell it from other and inferior brilliants, so that nobody need carry about as diamonds pieces of shining stone that are not diamonds. And here, from an exchange, we have a condensed account of the most simple method of testing diamonds, taken from the report of the Smithsonian Institute—

Chemical tests, in general, being very difficult of application and involving a loss of substance, there is an optical test of a very delicate character which traces at once the line of demarcation between the diamond and all other colorless gems. This test is that of double refraction. In looking through a transparent stone at a detached object, such as the point of a needle, or a small hole pierced in a card, the object is seen double; as if there were two needle points or two holes. This phenomenon is called double refraction, and is exhibited by all white or colorless gems, except the diamond. As some dexterity is required to readily exhibit this curious property, the object to be looked at and the stone should be fixed at the proper distance apart by a little modeling wax, so as to be more conveniently seen by those interested in the experiment. This test, properly and thoroughly carried out, is infallible.

The double refraction whenever produced condemns the stone. The test is a convenient one and can be exercised without complicated apparatus or unsettling the stone.

THE Agassiz Institute, Sacramento, Cal., according to the circular of the corresponding secretary, is an institution which proposes to gather, preserve and disseminate the information concerning the Pacific States and Territories which is in the possession of individuals, and which now exists in a perishable and to many inaccessible form, and to do it as a labor of love, without any hope or desire of any remunerative result other than that which will accrue to the public. The circular submits the following as a general statement of the wants of the museum—

First—We desire specimens of every object that may assist the mind in forming an estimate of the nature of the Pacific Coast.

To understand the country we need specimens of soil, sand, gravel, boulders, rocks, minerals, and fossil remains, including that which is common and fairly representative of a particular locality, as well as that which is unusual and peculiar.

The sand, soil and gravel should be put in separate bottles.

Accompanying the specimens should be an account of the locality from whence taken, a description, of the locality and surroundings—whether valley, plain, gorge, mountain, hills, rivers, or lakes.

If the specimens are from stratified rocks, then the observer should state not only the locality, but the character and direction of the dip, the altitude or depth of the spot from whence taken.

We also desire specimens of plants, grasses, flowers, shrubs, wood and petrifications, with an account of the nature of the soil and surroundings in which they may be found.

Plants, flowers and grasses may be pressed and dried or placed in alcohol. The season in which they are grown and gathered should also be stated.

Also fish, serpents, insects, birds, animals, etc., with or without observations upon their habits. These should be put in alcohol. A statement of the precise locality from which the object has been obtained is a matter of great importance.

Also specimens of articles manufactured upon the Pacific Coast, with the name of maker and date of manufacture.

NOTE.—Each article must have, firmly attached, a label containing the name of the locality, the name and address of the finder or sender, and also a statement that the article is either common, or fairly representative, or peculiar and exceptional. All articles without labels will be rejected.

Second—We wish to place upon record all facts whatever relating to the history and general character of the Pacific Coast; everything that will give an idea of the country and people and their development.

We will be glad to receive accurate descriptions of soils, general and exceptional formations, mountains, valleys, rivers and lakes, springs, climate, temperature, storms, water-spouts, cloud-bursts, the fall of snow and rain, etc.

Competent persons, desiring to keep meteorological data, will be furnished with instructions, if desired. We desire exact accounts of fisheries, mines, vineyards, orchards, etc., including the results of various practical experiments; also accounts of the industries of each section.

Miners will do the cause of science a service by giving us accurate accounts of their mines, depths, dip and direction of strata, ventilation, etc.

We also ask for some account of the indications of glaciers, volcanoes, and earthquakes.

We will receive and place upon record any well authenticated statement bearing upon the history of California, the settlement and improvement of localities, the formation of institutes of learning, agricultural, medical, or educational societies.

Each paper must contain the name of the author, and cite clearly the authority upon which statements may be founded.

Having a limited income which must be expended upon the preservation of specimens and the dissemination of the knowledge obtained, we must be relieved of all expense incurred in the preparation and transfer of articles. Wells, Fargo & Co. will pass over R. R. lines all articles for the museum of the Institute free of cost, and over all stage lines at the actual cost of transportation.

All articles sent over stage lines, must, therefore, be prepaid.

As the railroads and express company have agreed to pass all articles free, the stage lines may be induced to imitate their example.

Send all articles, carefully packed and distinctly marked: THE AGASSIZ INSTITUTE, SACRAMENTO, CAL.

All communications must be addressed: REV. J. H. C. BONTE, Cor. Sec'y, Sacramento, Cal.

"Never mind," says the angry Frenchman, "the hour of vengeance will strike."

"Never," replies the calm and well-informed Prussian, "never, you have no more clocks in France."

"The Star of South Africa," the first and only fine stone of any size which has been sent to England from the South African mines, has been set as the central stone in a coronet for the Countess of Dudley. Its weight is 46½ carats, and it is of the purest water and brilliancy.

IN Dublin, Ireland, October 24, of pleura-fever, ELLEN, daughter of John and Ruth Hughes, aged 7 years 8 months and 11 days.—*Mul. Star.*

LOCAL AND OTHER MATTERS.

FROM TUESDAY'S DAILY, NOV. 26.

THE "Train Ligue" comes now from New York, and the number before us is mainly devoted to a defence of the Woodhulls and a furious scoring of their opponents in the matter of the recent startling little venture of the sisters.

SUDDEN DEATH.—We regret to learn of the death, at a late hour last night or early this morning, of Mrs. Julia, wife of Mr. Wm. Burton, of this city.

Deceased was an amiable lady and had only been married about one year. Her sudden and unexpected departure from this life will be deeply regretted by a numerous circle of relations and friends.

PROBATE COURT.—The case of the People vs. John F. Tasker, charged with stealing a pair of horses, the property of Burton Kimball, from Jordan range during the past summer, was brought up in the Probate Court yesterday, Judge Elias Smith presiding. Judge E. D. Hoge appeared on the part of the people, and the time was taken up in the examination of witnesses.

This morning Attorney Smith made a very elaborate argument on the part of the defense.

DESERET UNIVERSITY.—A new term of the Deseret University was commenced yesterday, with Dr. Park as principal. Between the Dr. and those of his old students who applied for re-admission to the University there was quite a warm and cordial reunion. The Doctor gave them a short but very graphic account of his recent trip on school matters to the East and Europe, and referred to some of the improvements he intended to introduce. Professor Park is well and most favorably known to the public of this and contiguous cities and counties, as an able preceptor of youth; and when it is once fairly understood that he has resumed his old position in the University of Deseret, and that that institution is in full operation, there is the best of reason to believe that it will soon be crowded to its full capacity with old and new pupils.

IN TOWN.—Major General Thomas L. Kane, of Pennsylvania, with his wife and two sons, arrived in this city this morning. The General is an invalid, still suffering severely from wounds received in the Union Army during the Rebellion. He has taken this trip on the recommendation of his physician, in hopes that change of air will improve his health. His stay here is likely to be brief, as it is thought the Pacific coast will be more beneficial than a stay of any length in Utah in the winter season, and it is very probable that he will leave soon for a milder climate. On the way here Mrs. Kane contracted a severe cold, and we regret to say that she is at present somewhat indisposed.

COMMENCED.—The city laborers have commenced the digging for the new water tank near the Theatre.

Mr. N. H. Felt is chairman of the City Council Committee on fire companies, &c., and has been, for some time past, excepting during the period of his being incapacitated from attending to the duties of his office by illness, an active and energetic advocate for the adoption by the city of the most effective measures for the prevention and subduing of fires, and we understand that the construction of the three additional tanks was decided upon at his suggestion.

STABBING AT PIOCHE.—The following are from the Pioche Record of last Thursday—

Between three and 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon the Headquarters Saloon, Panaca Flat, was the scene of a difficulty between James Woods and Wm. McCarty, which resulted in the death of the latter. From a gentleman who witnessed the fatal affray we learn that Woods, McCarty and another man were playing cards for the drinks, and at the close of the game Woods accused the other two of playing unfairly. This was denied, and McCarty called Woods as—n of a b—h. Woods then offered to fight McCarty if he would go out of the house, but McCarty was unwilling to that. Woods said he would not allow a man to call him such a name as that and left. Immediately after he returned with a large knife, but McCarty was not in the room. Our informant says he tried to get the knife away from Woods, and had almost obtained his consent to give it up, when McCarty came in through the back door and struck Woods a blow from the effects of which he jostled against our informant and knocked him over the stove. Before he could regain his feet Woods closed upon McCarty with his knife. He inflicted four or five severe wounds, one or two of which were mortal, from the effects of which he died in a short time. Woods immediately started to surrender himself to an officer, and meeting Constable Dolliff he submitted to arrest and was taken to jail. He previously gave up his knife to a citizen, and showed no disposition to escape. Woods is a native of Ireland, and probably not exceeding 30 years of age. He has the reputation of being a quiet, inoffensive man. McCarty was born in Boston, of Irish parents, and was about 30 years of age.