

Ernest L. Allen president of the German American died at his home in New York City, on June 1. He was forty-seven years of age.

The Commissioner of Insurance of the State of Illinois has annulled the charters of the Atlas Accident of Boston, the Globe Accident of Indianapolis, the Jewelers' and Tradesmen's of New York city, the American Temperance Life of New York and the Home Mutual Life of Detroit "for failure to comply with the existing laws of the State of Illinois."

Even if the United States desired to do so they could not scuttle out of Cuba and the Philippines after destroying Spanish authority there. Neither the Cuban halfbreeds nor the Malays of the Philippines are capable of self-government on a civilized basis. The latter, according to authentic reports, are a blood-thirsty crew, who torture their captives with Satanic ingenuity. The United States are under bonds to the world to preserve civilization in Cuba and the Philippines.

Lieut Hobson's exploit has set antiquarians upon a discussion of the origin of the phrase "Hobson's choice." A correspondent of a New York paper says that during Shakespeare's and Milton's time it was the custom for gentlemen to ride home from the theatre on horseback, hiring the horse, as we do a cab, at a stand. Naturally, each one wished to have the best horse, and much confusion ensued, while some poor animals were never taken. A university carrier and the first keeper of a hackney stable at Cambridge, England, named Thomas (or Tobias) Hobson (1544-1631), conceived the plan of placing his horses in line and forcing his customers to take the one nearest the door of the theatre. It then became no longer a matter of personal selection, but of "Hobson's choice"—that is, "this or none."

The officials of the Immigration Department will have to exercise the utmost vigilance in the distribution of incoming immigrants this year to prevent the hiving of foreigners in large settlements. It is absolutely essential to the future of the west that these new-comers shall be surrounded and mixed up with the Anglo-Saxon element, and Mr. Sifton and his assistants will find this a hard task if the flood of immigration continues to increase as it is doing. During the present week 1,318 Galicians have gone through Montreal en route to the west. They are coming into Halifax now in large numbers from Hamburg and other German ports, the steamers that carry them afterwards going on to New York to discharge cargo. The emigrants are a profitable side line for the Hamburg shipping companies, and they may be trusted to keep up the stream.

The rush to the Stewart River reported by our correspondent at Lake Tagish was anticipated by the authorities in the Yukon several months ago. Superintendent Constantine, writing to headquarters from Dawson at the end of January, said:—"Next season a police post will be required either at the junction of the Stewart River with the Yukon or at the mouth of the McQuesten, one hundred miles up the Stewart. At present there is a camp there of three or four

hundred men. The McQuesten is a good sized stream, is navigable for some distance by river boats and will in all probability be the site of a flourishing camp. This winter some 150 to 200 men are prospecting the small streams flowing into the McQuesten; one creek, the Twenty Mile, is already known to have good diggings, as a party of men were up there some eighteen months ago and did well, only leaving an account of not being able to get supplies." The Yukon promises to last longer as a sensation than the war.—*Toronto Globe*.

AN ACETYLENE DANGER.

The report of Inspector William McDevitt, of the Philadelphia Fire Underwriters, on an acetylene fire in Philadelphia, says:

"On Friday evening, May 20, 1898, during a heavy rain storm, a violent explosion followed by fire occurred among the ruins of the building No. 312 Willow street, which was destroyed by fire ten days before. Upon investigating the cause, it was found that on the fifth floor of the building adjoining that destroyed a quantity of calcium carbide (500 pounds in tin cases, each containing 100 pounds) was stored by persons interested in an acetylene gas machine on exhibition at another location. The owner of the building, desirous of getting rid of the carbide, threw the cases and contents down among the ruins of the burned building. Some of the cases in their descent broke, allowing the carbide to scatter and be exposed to the action of a heavy rain which fell during that evening, thus generating an immense volume of gas, which was ignited probably from a furnace fire under a steam boiler in use and located in a portion of the burned building, which escaped destruction, although it was at first supposed that lightning ignited the gas.

"Upon arrival of the Fire Department, the firemen, unaware of the nature of the burning material, directed a stream of water upon it, which produced at intervals immense volumes of flame and scorched several of the firemen, including Chief Baxter. Some of the cans being washed out, the gas accumulated in them, which when ignited produced explosions similar to bombs, the reports being heard throughout the city. Finally the exposed carbide was washed away by the streams of water. Beyond the breaking of glass in the adjoining buildings no further damage was done. Some of the cases and contents remained in the ruins, having escaped damage, and were afterwards removed.

"It may be well to state that during the first fire the building in which the carbide was stored was threatened, being on fire at the roof, and it is safe to say that had the roof or upper floors of this building (where the carbide was stored) been allowed to burn, and consequently melt the sealing of the cases, more serious consequences would have resulted in the attempt to extinguish the fire in that building."