

left the Library Company free to keep up an establishment of their own in a better place. There was certainly great reason to apprehend that the remote situation of the new building would induce many members to forfeit their shares, and thus cause a serious loss to the income of the company. This danger, however, is now fortunately removed, and it may be that the future growth of the city will justify Dr. Rush's foresight.

Before the irrevocable step of accepting a conveyance of the new building had to be taken, however, a new and serious difficulty arose. For many years the Library Company had been exempted from taxation under a private act of Assembly; but by the new constitution of 1874 all such special legislation was abolished, and the legislature was restricted to the passage of general laws exempting property from taxation in certain defined classes of cases, under which it was feared that the company might not fall. A general law on the subject was in fact passed in 1874, within whose provisions the library would probably be included, but it could not, of course, overstep the constitutional limits.

A serious question thus arose, whether the directors could any longer act on the vote of the members to accept the bequest. As a matter of fact, it had become certain that the cost of the erection of the building at Broad and Christian streets would be so great that if it were assessed with the lot for taxation at that rate, the taxes with the annuities would greatly exceed the annual income. Nor would the revenues of the company, diminished as they would be by the charge of its own taxation, have sufficed to make up the deficiency. Such a result would plainly compel the abandonment of the trust as a mere matter of self-preservation.