

## THE WEST PHILADELPHIA DISTURBANCE.

No one will doubt that the trouble at the Drexel Institute over the use of a nude boy model before a mixed class by Professor Eakins is due to a misunderstanding which is not Professor Eakins' fault. In the first place Professor Eakins' reputation as an anatomist is so well established that no authority in art matters would have supposed for a moment that he would ever consent to lecture on anatomy hampered by conditions which would prevent his teaching from being thorough. If Professor Eakins made any mistake it was in consenting to lecture to students who would be better satisfied to paint flowers and vases than to acquire a thorough knowledge of the anatomy of the human body. Such a recognition of actual conditions would have shown to Professor Eakins that there was little real use for his services at the Drexel Institute and that he had better take his skill and knowledge where there would be a real demand for them.

The rupture is one of many illustrations of the fact that there exist in this country a great number of institutions where art is supposed to be taught but where, because of the necessity of yielding to conventional beliefs, it is impossible, except in a way, to teach or to study art. As long as these beliefs are held it is impolitic to attempt to teach anatomy to mixed classes, and men and women who really desire to study anatomy must make some special arrangements to obtain the opportunity to do so. If the thousands of young women who are studying medicine or to be trained nurses balked at a knowledge of anatomy as the so-called art students do nobody would employ them because everybody would know that they did not know their business. It is equally plain that the study of anatomy is necessary to the equipment of the artist, but most of the young women who are alleged to be studying art have no serious intention of ever becoming artists, and their purposes can be entirely served by dispensing with the nude model. A few take their art acquirements more seriously than they ought to be taken, and thus the same kind of pleasing humbug is preserved which prevails successfully in so many walks of life.