

Louis E. Grant

(- 4 Jan 1859)

The Evening Star, January 5, 1859

Suicide By Prussic Acid

A clerk in the Navy Department named Louis E. Grant committed suicide yesterday morning at his boarding house (Mrs. Holmead's, Four-and-a-half street) by taking prussic acid. Some say that the act was committed from disappointed affection, others, from general despondency. He was about thirty years of age, and had at one time held the post of colonel in the Mexican service under Comonfort's administration. The law approved September 30, 1858, requires each apothecary to keep a register, in which the sale of poison is recorded, with the date of sale, the name, age, and profession of the purchaser, the kind of poison, and the use for which he desires it. The register of the druggist where deceased obtained the poison shows that the provisions of the law were complied with. The poison was bought "Saturday, Jan. 1, 1859" the name given was "Mr. Grant", age "thirty", occupation "clerk, Navy Department", article "prussic acid", use "for chemical purposes." It will be seen from the above that the poison was procured two days prior to its use. His friends on ascertaining that he had taken poison made every exertion to save his life, but were only able to protract his existence a couple of hours.

P.S.--On the night previous to his fatal act, he induced Mr. Albert Janvier, his friend, to sleep in his room. Throughout the night and yesterday morning he appeared collected and cheerful. As they were dressing, he went to the washstand and suddenly swallowed an ounce of prussic acid, that was not visible to Mr. Janvier ere he saw him apply it to his mouth. Instantly afterward, Grant asked Mr. J., in a joking manner, whether he had ever seen a man die of poison? And on being answered in the negative, he remarked quietly that he had just taken poison and was dying of it. He then fell back on the bed, and Mr. Janvier rushed over to the office of Dr. Boyle, who immediately hurrying over to where Grant was laying, found the room filled with the odor of prussic acid, and G. too far gone to save his life. The unfortunate deceased was a man of intelligence, and bore an excellent character.