

thing beyond the fact that a treaty had been formed at some time between the Danish Government and the United States, for the purchase from the former by the latter of the islands of St. Thomas, in the West Indies. This treaty has given rise to considerable comment and discussion in diplomatic and literary circles, some being in favor of its ratification, others strenuously opposing it.

A marked feature in the policy of the late Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, was the enlargement of the United States' territory. Under his administration Russian America was purchased by the United States; offers were made for Cuba, Greenland, and St. Thomas, and if he had continued in office, and had been able to carry out his peculiar views in this respect, the utmost limits of American ambition might, in time, have been gratified, and the territory of the United States have included "all creation."

Different views are, seemingly, entertained by the present Administration, and instead of helping to deplete the national treasury by the purchase of additional territory, the order of the day seems to be retrenchment and the establishment of a rigorous system of economy in the administration of the Government, so that the burdens of taxation may be lightened and the producing powers of the nation be assisted and accelerated.

The cause originally assigned for the purchase of the Danish West India Islands, was that they would be of such great importance as a coaling station for United States vessels in time of war; and it has been asserted, that during the progress of the rebellion, the Danish King, seeing of what vast utility they would be to the United States, generously offered to sell them. The disclosure of the real facts in the case, however, show that this ebullition of kingly sympathy with the Republic is entirely fictitious.

Mr. Parton, the talented and popular writer, in a work of his, recently issued, entitled, "The Danish Islands: are We Bound in Honor to Pay for Them?" gives a history of this transaction, and he seems to be of the opinion that this treaty should be ratified by the United States Senate. The main facts of the transaction, as developed by Mr. Parton, are, that the negotiations were commenced between Mr. Seward, and Raaslof, the Danish Minister, while attending a dinner party given at Washington in January '65, by the French Minister. Immediately after this interview between the two dignitaries the Danish Minister communicated the proposition to the King of Denmark who, in the beginning of the following April sent a positive refusal.

The assassination of President Lincoln and the attack on Seward were perpetrated immediately after this and the negotiations were discontinued until the following December, when they were renewed, this time, on the part of Denmark, and were continued for over a year and a half, during which period Mr. Seward, after his recovery, visited the West Indies. The price asked by Denmark for the three islands was twenty-five millions of dollars. This offer was not entertained at all by our government, and no specified sum was offered by Secretary Seward until sometime in '66, when he offered five millions. This, of course, was not entertained by Denmark, and the negotiations were suspended for several months.

In the Spring of '67 they were again renewed by Denmark, when the three islands were offered to the United States for fifteen millions, or two of them for ten millions. The United States refused this offer, and a few weeks later, Mr. Seward offered seven and a half millions, which was finally accepted; and towards the close of October, '67, the treaty was signed on the part of Denmark, with the understanding that it had to be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the United States' Senate, and that the purchase money could not be paid unless appropriated by Congress; and by Mr. Seward, with the understanding that it would not be binding unless ratified by the Danish parliament; and then sanctioned by a vote of the majority of the people of the islands purchased.

These are the main facts connected with this case, and upon these grounds it has been strongly urged by many that the United States is in honor bound to ratify the treaty and pay the money. When it is recollected, however, that the negotiations were conducted, and the treaty signed on Mr. Seward's own responsibility, or at least without being authorized by the Senate, without the sanction of which, no treaty is valid; and that the importance of these West

India islands have been greatly over-rated, it is rather difficult to see wherein the honor of the nation will be injured by a refusal on the part of the Senate to ratify this contract. This seems to be the view taken by that body as a decided disposition not to ratify has been evinced by them. At a time like the present, when reform and economy in the administration of the government are so necessary, and so imperatively demanded by the people at large, it is to be hoped that these principles will prevail, and that the efforts of any "ring," or others who may be pecuniarily or otherwise interested in having enormous sums of the people's means appropriated for the purchase of comparatively useless territory will be frustrated.

WAR PROSPECTS.

THE news, in to-day's dispatches, that all the war vessels in the Portsmouth and Charleston navy yards are to be prepared for immediate service, if true, looks somewhat ominous, and seems as if business, of an active and stirring nature, may be soon anticipated. The expressed policy of General Grant in regard to the Alabama claims, and the rumor that an extra session of Congress will shortly assemble for the purpose of the annexation of Cuba, either peaceably or by force, are indications that a foreign war is not at all improbable. The attempt to annex the island of Cuba, at the present time, would most certainly lead to a rupture with Spain, while the policy of the President in regard to the Alabama claims, if enforced, would be almost as certain to lead to a rupture with Great Britain; and in either case, success to our arms, and the enlargement of the domain of the United States might be confidently anticipated. But it is to be hoped that the President will not be hurried into a foreign war, however much some of his supporters may desire it, and however anxious some may be for the annexation of Cuba and the British provinces.

In regard to Cuba, if the people of the island desire annexation, they will, in all probability, soon have the privilege of declaring their wishes, and of becoming American citizens without the Americans striking a blow. The struggle for independence in that island, which has been raging for several months, is more than likely to terminate favorably for the Cubans, even if assisted by a foreign power. It is true that Spain is making strong efforts to subdue the brave islanders, but owing to the very unsettled state of their home affairs and the all but bankrupt condition of their national finances their chances of holding Cuba are slender. Party faction is so strong in that ill-fated country that to prevent the outbreak of civil war, it would seem that the united efforts of her best and wisest citizens will be required; and in a country like Spain, where party strife and division are chronic there is small grounds to hope for such a consummation, however devotedly it may be wished for. Hence it seems as if the ultimate and complete success of Cuba is but a question of time.

Should our government interfere in the affairs of Cuba, and render aid and assistance to those who are regarded as rebels by the Spanish government, they would be following the precedent set by England during the rebellion, of which such bitter complaint is now being made; and for which the government seems determined to have Britain make restitution.

In any case, war is not necessary to our national greatness. "Let us have peace,"—the expressed wish of the nation's Chief Magistrate, is endorsed by the thinking portion of the people at large, and it is far more desirable, and more necessary for the nation's welfare, prosperity and development, than war, even if the latter should lead to the unlimited extension of "Uncle Sam's" territorial domain.

ORACLES.

Truth in astrology? There may be; probably if there were not nobody would believe it. It is the surface of gold on the spurious coin which makes it possible to pass it; the die in which the coin is made is as good steel as that of the mint; the workmanship is as good, the metal used in making the coin is true metal of its kind, but the coin is bad. Even if the coin were made of the purest gold it is made without authority; the man who makes it is a traitor to the common wealth, and the man who utters it is a felon. The question is, is any proposed science beneficial to man which obliterates his free agency;

which robs our Father of the prerogative of governing this planet and its inhabitants; which claims to be superior to all human institutions, and converts man into a mere automaton? That the planets have influences peculiar to themselves is at least as reasonable to suppose as that we have an individual influence; that, in the midst of the great family of worlds, they act upon each other is reasonable; but that they control my actions is unreasonable. That the light of the planets impinging upon objects may produce effects upon them, or that the light of the moon may possess qualities which that of the sun does not, is very probable; but that that light should have power to cause men to do evil or good is, to say the least, very improbable.

That wonderful effects have been produced by very subtle elements, both upon mind and body, history and experience teach. The oracle of Delphi can be advanced as one among many evidences of the kind in ancient times. The inhalation of nitrous oxide may be advanced as a physical, and the magnetic passes of the "biologist" and mesmerizer, as among the more ethereal elements used in our own day. But in all these cases there is a constant influence exerted in a manner which, if the cause is beyond our reach, the effects never vary. The intoxicating or "inspiring" fumes which made the "oracle" give forth "unintelligible utterances," which were construed into sober sense, or nonsense, as the case might be, by the priests of the oracle, would inspire any one else who breathed them. Nitrous oxide, or "laughing gas," may cause one to dance, another to sing, and, perhaps, another to pray; but they produce effects which are analogous. As to the "passes" of the mesmerist, they do not produce like effects upon different individuals, but this is only a question of degree; some require a higher intensity of the "magnetic" influence to subdue them; or, the operator himself may be influenced "positively" by the "patient." In these cases there is a similarity of effect produced which is reducible to a law which all may understand—"all men are more or less subject to the same influences."

How is it with regard to planetary influence? Astrologers say one is susceptible of impressions from the light or influence of Jupiter, another from that of Mars, etc. If there is this influence in the beautiful light of the planet Jupiter, it is reasonable to suppose that all are alike benefitted by it. Not so, as the astrologer understands it: the individual who is born under the influence of that planet is the favorite of the "greater fortune," as that planet is called; while the poor creature who happens to be born, perhaps through a protracted labor, too late to get the blessing, may come into existence under the dominion of Saturn, (ominous name!) and, unless Jupiter is in "trine" or "sextile," to "the greater infortune," (Saturn), or Venus, (the next best of the good planets) the "native" (the person born,) will be a poor, miserable, sickly, cowardly drudge throughout all his existence, unless "Saturn is not in his dignities," that is, weak, by reason of his position in the zodiac!

This is all very pretty in theory, but is it true? Strange that mankind should have made observations and recorded their experience as the ancients did, for thousands of years, to try to establish the infallibility of the stars as oracles, and then have failed. No system, which has been the subject of human investigation, has been so thoroughly tested, and has failed so completely. Why was it so well examined? Men wanted it to be true; they wanted to raise the veil which hides the future from mortals to gratify their vanity and to give them power over their fellows.

Who does not know this who is free from the desire that this pseudo-science should be true? For, to him who desires it, it is true. The man who sincerely believes he is under the dominion of Saturn, or Jupiter, or any other being, is controlled; he is subject to an influence whose sway is despotic, just in proportion to the intensity of his convictions!

Now, what are the facts? A man believes in astrology, or planchette, or 'intuition,' or magic, or clairvoyance, or mesmerism, or any other "ism"—it is his oracle. He bows before it and it becomes his idol; the more fully he is convinced of the truthfulness or reliability of his idol, the more he will reverence it. Will he seek the true God? No. He will be weaned from any former attachment, when he ceases to drink of "the sincere milk of the word." To him there is no prophet but his prophet; no God but his. He may not have descended to this depth to-day,

but it is only a question of time. Who consults any of these oracles to do good? What are the motives which actuate men to seek for information? "I want to be great, to be rich, to know who loves me," or "who hates me," or "who wrongs me." Do any consult them with a view to be more useful members of society; to enable them to become better men and women socially, intellectually, morally? None.

Where, then, is the good of such "sciences falsely so-called?" If you are afraid to go to law unless the planets are propitious it is because your course is unjust; if you are afraid to marry for the reason that "Venus is not well aspected" in the heavens it is because you have doubts concerning the Venus you have chosen on earth; if you are afraid to plant to-day, because the configuration of the planets says no, it shows you lack confidence in the Being who causes the plants to grow.

But have the planets no influence on earth? Yes. The stream of light which flows upon this earth from countless myriads of suns, centres of other solar systems, helps to sustain life both in animals and vegetables. The sun is by no means the only luminary which is engaged in ministering to man, and, it is highly probable that the light derived from those planets circulating in this solar system, although only reflected light, may bring with it some of the qualities of the planet from which it is reflected. Perhaps those "hot and dry," and "watery and cold" qualities which the ancients noticed as qualities of certain planets, are really necessary to the perpetuation of this planet. At all events we may be assured of this: He who "made all things well," and pronounced everything "very good," did not create, and certainly would not perpetuate any withering, pernicious influences, such as are ascribed to the rays of light which innocently fall upon the earth from the planets of our solar system.

Particulars of the Death of Franklin B. Woolley.

The following account has been furnished by the St. George Office of the Desert Telegraph Line to Bishop E. D. Woolley, in relation to the death of his son Elder F. B. Woolley: "Frank left Point of Rock Station on the Mojave river on the evening of the 17th of March. He rode all night in a rain storm and stopped at Fear's in Cajon Canon, thirty-four miles distant from where he started. He left there and went to San Bernardino, stayed there during the 18th, and on the 20th returned to Fear's and stopped about three hours. He then went to what is known as Dunlap's ranche, about eight miles east of the main traveled road, to look for his horses, intending, if he did not find them there, to return to his train and make other arrangements. He stayed all night in a hay stack, and is supposed to have started early the next morning with the intention of returning to his camp. He had gone about half a mile, when from the tracks, it is supposed he met about sixteen Indians, when he dismounted from his mule to parley with them. Failing to compromise with them, and seeing they intended to kill him, he turned and ran about twenty-five paces, when he fell, shot by arrows. Such is the supposition. The Indians then stripped him of everything and dragged him into a ravine about twenty-five steps distant and there left him. They then led the mule a short distance up the hill to a bush and stabbed it, where it was afterwards found dead. Frank's failing to return to either Fear's or Burton's stations, which were on his way back to his train, awakened alarm, and Mr. William Gregory, of Fear's, and Charles Gerrard, of Burton's station started out in search of him. There being a trail going to San Bernardino, which did not pass either of these stations, Gregory and Gerrard went to it and there discovered nine head of horses, belonging to Gerrard, killed and mutilated. The men hearing noises in the brush, and both being unarmed, started back, and, when about half way across the valley, they found Franklin's black whip, covered with blood. Gregory then started for San Bernardino for a party of men to hunt the body. Arriving at Fear's, he found a freighter named Aiken, who, with his teamsters and some other men of the station, went in search of Frank. Gregory proceeded to San Bernardino, but could raise only one man, named R. Mathews. Arriving at Fear's, he found Aiken had returned with Frank's remains, much mutilated, most of the flesh being gone from the bones. Aiken had conveyed them on a mule from where they were first discovered, and was just burying them as Gregory returned. This was on the 25th of March.

The morning that Frank left, the train divided, it having been so arranged with Frank. The light wagons started on, leaving E. D. Woolley, jun., with the rest of the train. They waited three days, and then started on the 20th, Frank having arranged, before he left, that they should proceed down the Mojave and he would over-