

Deseret Evening News.

GEORGE Q. CANNON, Editor.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, DEC. 11, 1867.

THE RECENT PURCHASE IN THE WEST INDIES.

Our recent telegrams have contained frequent allusions to the purchase by our Government of the Danish possessions in the West Indies. A meeting between the representatives of the United States and Denmark, to complete the arrangements for the transfer, was appointed for the 8th instant, and the probability is that, by this time, the Stars and Stripes float peacefully over the islands. The whole transaction has been kept very quiet by the Government, and very little has appeared respecting it in the public journals. From the best information we can gather on the subject, there are two islands included in this purchase, viz.: St. Thomas and St. John. For these the United States stands committed, through its authorized agents, to pay seven millions five hundred thousand dollars in gold.

The design in purchasing these islands is to establish a depot for supplies for the Atlantic squadron. It will also be of great utility and value to the government in any further naval movements. Such a depot would have been invaluable during the late rebellion. The fleet could have obtained the needed supplies there to have kept in good steaming condition while in chase or search of the rebel privateers. For the want of efficient protection during the war the mercantile marine suffered fearfully, from the depredations of privateers.

Before the transfer of the islands was decided upon, and while the negotiations were pending, the islands were canvassed, on behalf of the United States, to ascertain the sentiments of the inhabitants towards the government of the United States. The merchants, as we learn by telegram, do not like the American tariff; but annexation to the United States is popular with the majority of the people, and they are pleased at the prospect of the transfer.

The Danish West India islands have heretofore comprised St. Thomas, St. Croix (or Santa Cruz) and St. John (or St. Jan.) The island of St. Thomas is situated in latitude 18 degrees 20 minutes north, longitude 64 degrees, 15 minutes west. It contains an area of forty-five miles of rugged and well elevated surface, though there are no very high mountains. It is seventeen miles in length by about five miles in breadth. At one period it was well wooded. The cutting of the timber has had the effect to dry up many of the springs which once irrigated the land. The soil is sandy, and much of it is uncultivated. About twenty-five hundred acres is planted with sugar cane, which produces sugar of an excellent quality. The population is about thirteen thousand souls. There is an extensive trade at St. Thomas, much of the produce of the neighboring islands being sent there for shipment to Europe. It is also the principal station of the West India and European mail steamships, and the United States and South American packets stop there, and some three thousand merchant vessels annually visit the island. St. Thomas is said to be the best location, with the exception of Havana, for a naval station to be found in the whole West India group. Good dockage is afforded for merchant ships, and many have their repairs made there. The town of St. Thomas is picturesquely situated. Slavery is still in existence on the island, but the slaves are not numerous, being about one to every five whites.

The Island of St. John, (or St. Jan) is but a few miles east of St. Thomas, and contains an area almost equal to that of the latter island. The population numbers about ten thousand. Christiansburg is the principal town.

If a foothold is needed in the West Indies, we like Secretary Seward's plan of obtaining it much better than the filibustering schemes which were so much in vogue a few years since. If an honorable course be taken in securing such of the West India Islands as may be wanted, or the Sandwich Islands, the uneasiness of Spain and other governments will be quieted. The possession of these islands will be advantageous to our ships of war and merchant vessels. The port of St. Thomas already possesses two water batteries and the citadel of Christian Fort. These will doubtless be strengthened, and every precaution be taken to make the acquisition secure. It is probable that the islands will be placed under the charge of a Territorial Governor.

[Special to the Deseret Evening News.]

By Telegraph.

CONGRESSIONAL.

London, 10.

The action of Congress, relative to impeachment, excites considerable comment. The *Times* approves of the refusal to impeach, but fears the President will interpret it as a new endorsement of his policy, and hence concludes that sound reconstruction will be deferred.

Washington, 10.

House.—The Speaker announced the Committee on Reconstruction to be Stevens, Boutwell, Bingham, Farnsworth, Hurlburt, Beaman, Paine, Brooks and Beck.

Dodge offered a resolution which was adopted, inquiring into the expediency of establishing a United States arsenal at Ft. David Russell, and Cheyenne.

After some further business, the Speaker announced that the subject before the House for consideration, was the confiscation bill, postponed from 19th March last. Chandler and Eldridge spoke in opposition to the bill, and its further consideration was postponed to January 21st.

The House agreed to adjourn for the holidays from December 20th, to January 6th.

Senate.—The Chair presented a communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, in response to the resolution of inquiry, stating the consequence of resignation. Chandler said Edmund Cooper is authorized to assume the duties of Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, under the Act of 1795, till a successor is appointed.

A resolution was adopted, asking the Secretary of the Interior to furnish information relative to the bonds issued to the Pacific Railroad.

Sumner introduced a resolution, which was adopted, asking the President to furnish copies of correspondence touching on the recognition of belligerent rights by England during the rebellion, also regarding the depredations on commerce by privateers equipped in England.

Doolittle offered an amendment to Wilson's bill introduced last week, providing that a majority of persons voting in the Southern States be sufficient to ratify a Convention. The amendment provides that no person be a legal voter not possessing the qualifications required in those States before the rebellion, except those serving in the army, those able to read and write, and those possessed of property to the amount of \$250. The subject was discussed till the expiration of the morning hour.

Drake's resolution, condemning the language of the President's Message, was taken up. Drake denounced the President's statement declaring the laws unconstitutional. He spoke at considerable length very severely upon President Johnson; and desired to speak further on the subject, but desired it postponed till to-morrow, which was accordingly done. Senate went into executive session.

Philadelphia, 10.

The Union League has nominated Grant for President.

New York, 10.

The Associated Press have been considering the *Herald's* petition to retract its letter of withdrawal from the Asso-

ciation. Marble, of the *World* held that the interest of the *Herald* in the Association has already ceased to take effect from the first of January, and it required a unanimous consent for re-admission. The Association decided that a majority vote can grant the *Herald's* proposition.

ITALY.—The feeling against the French, on the part of the Italians, is said to be very strong in consequence of the late French intervention. The unpopularity of Victor Emanuel and of Menabrea is increasing. Ratazzi has joined the Radical party.

Experienced engineers are engaged fortifying Rome.

WEST INDIES.—The late hurricane at Porto Rico was much more destructive than was at first supposed. Fifty towns are known to have suffered more or less; Over 3,600 families were left destitute and homeless, their houses being torn down and their property destroyed. More than 200 persons lost their lives; the sugar and coffee factories are in ruins, and, in many instances, the machinery, steam engines &c., are lost. At St. Thomas the destruction was terrible. Over a thousand lives were lost, 763 having been washed ashore at last mail advices. Several other islands suffered severely, the hurricane having a most terrific effect, leveling everything before it.

The latest advices received from Hayti and St. Domingo confirm the reports hitherto received of rupture between the two countries. Gen. Montez is still held prisoner in Hayti. The revolution against the authority of Salnave in Hayti has come to an end. The foreign consuls in Hayti, against whom some animosity has lately arisen, have been guaranteed protection. An attempt was recently made to kill the United States Consul at Port au Prince. He was called out by a mob, and when he appeared on the balcony of his dwelling he was fired at from a rifle, the ball fortunately, however, doing no other injury than grazing his temple. The brother of Gen. Montez has made his escape, and was aided in doing so by the British Consul. The revolutionists on the frontier of St. Domingo number 4,000 men. They are in possession of the important Province of Cibao. Some pirates in an open boat off Cape Marie, lately attempted to take possession of the American schooner Lucy, from New York for Kingston, but were repulsed by the crew belonging to the vessel. The fight was quite a brisk one, and several of the pirates were killed and wounded.

A letter dated Sydney, October 1st, says:—News was received here on Thursday last from Fiji stating that a cannibal tribe residing in the interior of the principal island of the Fijian group had murdered and eaten the Rev. S. Baker, Wesleyan missionary, and six christian natives. The melancholy intelligence caused great indignation here, and within 24 hours of its receipt H. M. S. Brisk was equipped and at sea en route for Fiji, to enquire into the circumstances and punish the murderers.

Several new gold mines have been discovered in Auckland, New Zealand, one of which is of extraordinary richness, and yields 68 oz. of gold from six cwt. of quartz.

The Maories are threatening a descent upon the Europeans at the new diggings. The *Southern Cross* considers the reports to be much exaggerated.

Agricultural reports from all parts of the country are very favorable, and the sun of prosperity seems to be shining with unusual warmth upon the colony.

Correspondence.

20TH WARD, G. S. L. CITY, }
December 10, 1867.

Editor Evening News.—I am desirous of giving the public, through your columns, a description of the process of making matting in the East Indies.

Having fixed upon the dimensions, they drive wooden stakes into the ground at the two ends of the space, an inch apart, (but I would suggest a pole with nails driven in.) A small cord is then tightly stretched from one end to the other, forming parallel lines. Small rushes are woven in and pressed in with a small bat. When filled, the edges are bound according to fancy, with sheep skin or cloth; and the fagends trimmed with shears. Such mats as these will last for years, with care. They would be found good substitutes for carpet where economy is aimed at.

Yours truly,
WM. WILLES.

ARTESIAN WELLS.

The old and generally accepted theory of the Artesian Wells is that the water they supply descends from remote elevations, through sand and gravel beds, but that theory would seem to be refuted by the observations of those familiar with what is called the Artesian Well region in Central Illinois. A correspondent of the *Scientific American*, writing from Onarga, which is the centre of that region, and situated 85 miles south of Chicago, gives interesting particulars upon this subject, and assigns reasonable causes for objection to the old theory, causes founded upon scientific observation.

It appears that these wells may be produced within a radius of twenty miles at the depth of seventy feet. The water is procured by boring with a six inch augur through about five feet of soil, ten to twenty feet of sand, fifteen to twenty feet of blue clay, and twenty to thirty feet of "hard pan," this last deposit being a composition of blue clay and coarse sand or gravel as hard as baked pottery. The bed of white sand called "water vein" is then reached, and in this the water is found, in many places filling the discharge pipes several feet above the surface.

It is estimated that the wells in the district yield 53,400,000 gallons per day or 50 gallons per minute to each well. Some of the wells throw 20 gallons per minute while others give 120 or 2 gallons per second. Now, inasmuch as Onarga is situated 92 feet above the level of Lake Michigan, it is evident that the supply cannot proceed from the quarter. This writer also demonstrates that the supply cannot be derived from the surface in the vicinity, as no reservoirs exist. No vacuums, lakes or veins of water could collect and it is impossible for it to penetrate the bed known as "hard pan" that overlies the "water vein."

He then proceeds to inquire: "Now, if this water does not come from the lake or surface in this vicinity, but its source is a body of water some distance away, would it not be necessary for it to be at a great height to overcome the resistance it meets in traveling through this bed of sand? Say this old theory is correct, say that the source is 200 miles away and 200 feet higher than the discharge, would not the resistance it meets in traveling through this compact bed of sand so overcome the power it receives from the fountain head that it would fail to reach the surface? Or do you consider that this water is conducted through this sand on the capillary principle?—and, if this is true, why is it that beyond a certain radius they bore to the bed rock and fail to procure water?"

Thus, we think, a grave doubt is cast upon the correctness of the old theory, and whatever the true source may be of this natural outpouring, it still remains a matter of speculation, and it must be regarded as a subject deserving the closest and most earnest scientific investigation.

The fact of the supply of water being apparently inexhaustible and perennial should be no check to the industry of those qualified to trace so important an effect to its true cause.—*St. Louis Weekly Dispatch.*

LOCAL ITEMS.

THEATRICAL.—Last night there was a crowded audience to witness Mr. Couldock's impersonation of Falstaff, although the day had been so stormy, and the evening cloudy and lowering. His Falstaff was unmistakably a triumph. The fat, witty, sarcastic, humorous, cunning, cowardly knight was presented in the most mirth-provoking manner; while every point was made with a keen appreciation of its power. During the first act, where the character begins to develop, those unacquainted with the play, cannot fully enter into the spirit of the humor, which is one great characteristic of Falstaff; but his braggadocio displays itself, and his wit and wit raises the laugh and excites mirth where apparently nothing but contempt could be awakened, the audience must be dull indeed that is not stirred with laughter at each fresh manifestation of his peculiarities. Last night there was no stint of laughter, for the house shook again and again, at the dry humor, caustic wit, or flagrant cowardice of the fat knight. Mr. Couldock's Falstaff is one of the greatest impersonations which he has presented here. Miss Couldock had but little to do as Lady Percy, but did it well, as a matter of course. Mr. McKenzie in Hotspur had a fine character to play, which he is admirably adapted to do justice. His fiery impetuosity recalled, at times, his first success in Coltona. The language of the part is vivid with poetic gems, which seem almost too polished and lively to harmonize with so restless and daring a spirit nurtured in the lap of war and amid the din and clash of arms. Mr. Lindsey's Prince of Wales was very good, full of vivacity, dash and spirit. Mr. Margetts played Poinz well. Messrs. Graham, Merrill, Teasdale, Thompson, Malben, Neslen, Kelly, Matthews and the rest, acquitted themselves very creditably; nor must we omit Mrs. Clawson, who made a most excellent Dame Quickly. The play was well put upon the stage, and, if repeated, should draw another crowded house.

To-morrow evening, on the occasion of Mr.