THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, TUESDAY, JULY 12, 1870.

SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE CURTAIN DRAWN UP-SECRET POSITION OF THE CUBAN QUESTION. From the Spirit of the Times.

The reliance of the country upon the patriotism and discretion of the Senate, in regard to the foolish foreign policy of the administration, has proven to be well founded. The San Domingo treaty, which was pending when we last went to press, has been knocked on the head by a powerful vote; and a wholesome rebuke is thus administered to the President, by friend and foe, for attempting to manipulate and sell the action of a co-ordinate and superior branch of the Government, in order to carry out his policy. This attempt on the part of the President

to pledge the action of Congress to a foreign power was accidentally but happily revealed through the discovery of a secret protocol made between General Grant and President Baez, of St. Domingo, in which the former "privately pledged (so says the protocol) his influence" over Congress, in favor of the San Domingo purchase. So assured did the President seem to be of his "influence," and of the subserviency of Congress to his wishes in the premises, that he handed Baez \$100,000 in cash and \$500,000 worth of arms, as a complete proof thereof, and also as earnest money on the uncompleted bar-

Now, in the face of this extraordinary revelation, there can be no one, outside of the transaction, to regret that the Dominican treaty failed; for it is very important that the country should know how the President acquired the right to an "influence" over the Senate; and whether that right is of sufficient substance to be sold or pawned as one of the attributes of the Executive! If that be the case, the Presidential power is unlimited. The President may then not only make treaties, but may spend public money to confirm them; and, with a liberal secret-service fund at his command, may, in time, make himself master of the ratifying power. This would present as close a picture of monarchy as the world has ever seen, in which Congress, sinking to the subserviency of an imperial parliament, would be left with the sole function of endorsing Casarian decrees. therefore, that the defeat of Dominican treaty by the Senate great blessing to the country, and at the same time a warning to the President that the balances of the Constitution may not be encroached upon with impunity, by even a favorite with the people. Nay, this resolute and patriotic action of the Senate does yet more. It reveals to the people the fact that a man of naturally good intentions and homely common sense has fallen into the hands of a set of sharpers and adventurers who are misleading him for their own purposes; and who are pluming themselves upon the belief that they have found, in his inexperience, a placer by which they may all get

We do not doubt the personal integrity of the President in all and every of the jobs which these adventurers have decoyed him into; but we more than doubt the honesty of those who lead him into these speculations, and therefore ask the press (at any rate, those unite with us in defeating the adventurers, and in thus saving the honor of the nation. Let us promptly and earnestly turn to account the lessons which these sharpers have given us by their experiments to open and monopolize an Isthmian canal; and the still less justifiable project of seizing every eligible plantation or estate in San Domingo. Thus far the actual evils into which these people have led the President is but small. The three or four millions of dollars which have been wasted against the impenetrable mountains of Colombia, and the hundred and fifty thousand dollars of which Baez has outwitted him, are, together, a men bagatelle in comparison with the value of the warning they impart; for, through the exposure of the motives which governed these two little land transactions (both happily foiled), we are enabled to understand the secret interests which have till now embarrassed and confused the Cuban question.

We believe it to be not too much to say that nine-tenths of the American people are in cordial sympathy with the Cuban cause, and that unless an immediate change of front is made by the administration on that question, the Republican party may spare itself the running of a candidate at the next Presidential election. For a time, the administration had, in support of its Cuban policy, a general unwillingness on the part of the country to take any step which might impair our position with Great Britain in the Alabama claims; and also a natural popular desire to give Spain a liberal time to do justice to Cuba herseif, under her then apparently republican tendencies; but the American people, finding that Spain has relapsed to monarchy, and that the period in which she, as well as England, recognized our Rebels as belligerents has been more than quadrupled, have turned in one vast sudden tide (carrying such powers as Senator Sumner and The Spirit along with it), demanding an American expression of sympathy for Cuba, and also an application of the prin-ciple of an American primacy on the Ameri-can continent, to the extent, at least, of our right to regulate the peace and decorum of the neighborhood.

Finding, however, in the face of this un-mistakable sentiment of the people of the United States, that the President, under the control of his personal advisers, had actually attempted to stem this sympathy with a message which took sides with Spain, the people began to inquire as to what motives, beyond those of an obvious American policy, had instigated this inexplicable course. It was at this point that the motives which had governed the two land schemes flashed upon public mind as the motive which was now steering Cuba. It was plain that the secret advisers of the President had, as in the cases of tunnelling the Isthmus and in purchasing San Domingo, succeeded in per-suading him that the best way to obtain Cuba for the United States, was to buy it with money, and that it would be cheap even at the round sum of a hundred millions of dollars. This is the drag which has constantly retarded the Cuban question in the hands of our administration, and kept it immovable, even when pressed by the shoulders of nearly

the whole American people.

In that same moveless and pitiful condition does that mosning infant republic stand at Washington to-day, anchored to a bargain, and hopelessly imbedded in the slime of parasites, who, by some strange process, have made themselves the masters of this nation. The question of Cuban liberty has, therefore, become purely a question of money, by which all the natural ambitions of the continent are ntterly subverted, and in behalf of which sor- | fierce "loyalty" for a tolerant spirit towards did impulse every throb in favor of liberty is that section.

to be stamped out. The true picture of the Cuban question may, therefore, be described as follows:—First, draw a platform labelled a hundred millions of dollars. Stand upon it, as its chief figure, the President's favorite, General Sickles, our Minister at Madrid. See fainting Cuba in the grasp of his merciless right hand as it clenches her jugular vein, with the pale, long fingers of his left placed upon her pulse; while every throb of her extended agony drops guineas in his purse through the operations of his instruments on the Paris Bourse and London Stock Exchange. Spain in like manner sheds her treasures at every pore to subvert the Queen of the Antilles, while the whole object of the murderous minister is to prolong the conflict and to coin their joint pangs to gold. Thus he makes market of the woes of war, his single object being to prolong the strife, and to so exhaust the com-batants as to bring them to the standpoint of

This is the true philosophy of the Caban question, and by the light of it our readers may now, for the first time, understand the secret motives of the President's late extraor-

dinary Cuban message.

The acquisition of Cuba is therefore to be a bargain, paid for in money, and the present situation of affairs is to be maintained until that result can be accomplished. That is the reason why the President (to return to a figure which we have used before) lately heaved a rock on the Cuban deck while the poor victim seemed to be rising from the waters, by the mere lift of the rapidly increasing sympathy of the American people.

We learned the full details of this specula-

ion-or, if our readers please, this policylast summer, while we were in Paris, from no less an authority than Mr. Burlingame.
Prim first opened the matter to him, in the
shape of a proposal through the then new
Spanish Minister to China. Mr. Burlingame consulted Mr. Washburne; and Mr. Burlingame then gave a letter to Paul R. Forbes, an American gentleman of note, to go to Madrid and to talk to Prim upon the subject. The project was for Spain to sell Cuba to a third party, and from that third party to resell it to the United States. After returning to Paris from his visit to Madrid, Mr. Forbes was despatched to New York; and on reaching Washington a Cabinet council was called immediately by the President to hear his story. The plan of the purchase of Cuba was eagerly entertained by the President, who, unfortunately, did not seem to know that Cuba and all the islands in our neighborhood had practically become American property on the day he received Lee's surrender under the apple tree at Appomattox. Mr. Forbes was then sent back to Paris, and subsequently directed to confer in the premises with Sickles, and also with Messrs. Burlingame and Washburne. It was at this period that we were made acquainted with the state of affairs, and at the same time informed of the names of the banking-houses of London, Paris, and New York who were to be the brokers of the enterprise. We were asked our opinion of the project at the time, but spoke unfavorably of it; and subsequently declined to take any interest in the matter from one of the bankers of the ring—first, because we thought Cuba must come to the United States by natural means; and next, because we did not wish to profit by any operation which our judgment condemned as injurious to the country. The public have now the full secret of the Cuban position, and it rests with them to say whether they will permit it to be any longer handled by the administration for the mere purposes

EAST, WEST, AND SOUTH. From the N. Y. World.

. Within the decade which follows the census taken this year, we shall witness political changes and readjustments greater than have ever before taken place in this country in a period of peace. The census of 1870 will make a large addition to the political weight of the West, and add something to the political weight of the South. In all matters in which the West and South agree they will centrol the Government; and they are very likely to agree on the tariff, the currency, and questions of finance; that is, on the leading subjects of Federal legislation.

It may seem odd to expect the South to gain any advantage by the next census, as its population has undergone the wasting effects of war, and has not been recruited by immigration. But the abolition of slavery has added a much larger per cent. to its repre-sentative population than immigration has added to that of other parts of the country. In the new apportionment of Representatives after this census all the people of the South will be fully counted, instead of all the white persons and only three-fifths of the negroes. If there are four millions of Southern negroes, this change in the mode of counting will be equivalent to an addition of 1,000,000 to the appropriate of the dition of 1,600,000 to the population of the South, which is out of all proportion to the increase of any other part of the country by immigration. It will more than enable the South to recover its former relative strength in Congress. Although slavery was abolished several years ago, the consequent addition to the Southern representation cannot be made until after the census. There has been no past, and there will be no future, census attended with such great gains to the South.

Besides this increase in the number of its Representatives, the South will make rapid gains in political influence within the first few years of the opening decade, by a full resumption of its former business intercourse and connections with the North. Before the war the South was, and very soon it will again be, one of the most profitable markets for our merchants and manufacturers. Before the war these business relations with the North were a source of great political strength. At the outbreak of the war, and during the first year of its continuance, a large and influential portion of our Northern business men openly or secretly sympathized with the South. They would have been willing to make almost any concessions for the sake of keeping or recovering their Southern trade. About the second year of the war the tide turned, and thenceforward the prevailing tone among the business men of the North was one of zealous "loyalty." This was chiefly due to the new fields of enterprise opened by the war. The Government had become a better customer than the South had ever been. To supply its vast armies with food, clothing, arms, ammunition, tents, wagons, medicines, etc., taxed the energy and resources of the country. The great profits of army contracts, and the spirit of speculation which dominated in all the walks of business, consoled our merchants and manufacturers for the loss of the valuable Southern market, and caused a pretty complete transfer of their political sympathies. This great change will soon be reversed. The Government is no longer an extensive purchaser of commodities. With the reviving prosperity of the South, its trade will have more than its former value, and our active business classes will rapidly exchange their

There is already quite a change in this respect; but during the first three years after the close of the war, it was impeded by several causes. In the first place, the South had a succession of bad harvests, and the confiscation laws and the prevailing political uncertainty paralyzed enterprise, and prevented capital from flowing into the South. The consequence was that that section recovered slowly and heavily from the desclating effects slowly and heavily from the desolating effects of war. Another thing which has ope-rated against the South is the investments made by our business classes in the public securities. They have feared that Southern influence would favor the repudiation of the national debt, and that the Gov-ernment bonds would depreciate or become worthless. The fear of repudiation is allayed. The cotton crops of the last two years have put the South in a condition of comparative ease and prosperity, and rendered its trade richly worth cultivating, The full renewal of the old commercial relations between the two sections will do much to restore the former political cordiality. In a year or two more the prevailing tone among our influential business classes will be similar to what it was before the war, when the South, by the aid of its Northern connections, exerted an in-fluence in the Government quite out of proportion to its population.

The growing preponderance of the West will be illustrated by the census of this year.

Most of the European immigrants proceed immediately to the West, and the emigration from the Eastern States continues at such a rate that the rural population of the East remains nearly stationary. The census of this year is expected to show that the West has been outgrowing the East more rapidly for the last ten years than during any former period. All this Western growth will soon be represented in Congress. It will enable the West to dictate the policy of the Government upon all subjects on which the West is united, and can command a moderate reinforcement from some other section of the

We conclude, therefore, that the legislation of the present Congress is no index to the future policy of the Government. The present Congress is an effete body, the organ of expiring passions and the representative of constituencies which are about to be remodelled in harmony with the altered distribution of population. The reapportionment of Representatives on the basis of the new census will mark the dividing line between the effete political era that is going out, and the new era that is coming in.

CONSOLIDATION OF REVENUE DIS-TRICTS.

From the N. Y. Times. We hope that the Senate bill for the consolidation of the revenue districts, introduced some weeks ago, is not destined to be sacrificed at the close of the session to measures, it may be, of larger pretensions, but certainly of less relative utility to the country, or, worse still, in the interest of placemen who enjoy lucrative offices and have little or nothing to do.

That the administrative methods prescribed

in our present revenue system-however necessary and effective during the Rebellion, when almost every conceivable class of goods was liable to tax, and gave rise to complicated legal questions—are unwise, wasteful, and in-consistent, under diminished taxation, can easily be shown. For one thing, the perpetuation of the plan of territorial organization originally established has necessitated the retention of the full corps of collectors and assessors, without any reference to the reduction of receipts or of the labor incident to their collection. It is found, therefore, that, as receipts diminished, the comparative cost of collection has largely increased.

In 1866, when collections were greatest, the rate of cost was only 2.47 per cent. In 1867, under a changed law, receipts fell off almost sixty million dollars, yet the expense of collection in that year was nearly one per cent. greater, or 3'41. In 1868 there was a still further diminution of taxes to the extent of over seventy millions, but cost of collection had risen to 4.94 per cent., or one and a half per cent. more than the year before. In 1869, with a further reduction of over twenty-five millions, the cost was 4.75 per cent. The inconsistency of this state of things is rendered still more striking by the fact that, as the scale of expense ascended, the labor and care required for collecting the taxes still remaining steadily decreased. Only a few, relatively, of the articles liable to taxation in 1866 remained so in the following years. The ten thousand details of our earlier tax laws were also stricken out. In a word, the execution of existing statutes has been so generalized and simplified, that one-half, if not two-thirds, of the work formerly required in the districts has been abolished. Yet, under the system now in force, Government presents the anomaly of paying as high a price, out of diminished resources, for the performance of this fractional portion of the labor.

But there are other aspects of the case hardly less important, in which consolidation of revenue districts commends itself. It will be found that the reduction of several independent districts under one general head will simplify details of administration, and produce harmony and certainty of operation, where so far there have been conflicting practices and want of conformity. A vast amount of the more difficult and laborious business of the Revenue Bureau has arisen from the diverse views held and the varying methods of procedure followed by such a large force of iudependent officers. This, too, has confused tax-payers and inspired them with distrust of the Revenue law itselt. Of course it is obvious that the fewer the number of clerks employed at Washington, in this branch of the service, the greater the ease and satisfaction tax-payers will experience in their deal-

ings with the Government. The diminution in the number of the tax districts will tend, moreover, to remove what once was, and still is, a cover for frauds on the revenue. No plan could have been more favorable to the enormous whisky and tobacco frauds which have been perpetrated in this city than that creating so many separate revenue jurisdictions. The fraudulent dealer, if held to his obligations by the officers of one district, easily and quickly changed his sphere of operations to another, where the officials might be less vigilant. It may be imagined what boundless opportunities for illicit transactions the ten districts of this city and Brooklyn thus afforded, with their independent officers maintaining no concert of action among themselves, but oftener actuated by feelings of jealousy and official antagonism. Further, it was no unusual thing for property seized by the officers of one district to be rescued and run off into another, where they could exercise no official right of pursuit or recovery. No inconsiderable amount of forfeitable property was thus lost to the Government, and the authority of the law itself was brought into contempt.

For these and other reasons, which need not be stated, it must be apparent that there is an urgent want of effective legislation on this subject. The bill before the Sanata

this subject. The bill before the Senate,

while recognizing this necessity, is by no while recognizing this necessity, is by no means positive enough in its provisions. The reform to be accomplished cannot be thoroughly and satisfactorily carried out under a law which merely permits the districts to be diminished, but is silent should they not be, The law should define the action to be taken. It is hardly fair, too, for Congress to throw on any officer such an amount of responsibility, or expose him to the solicitation, intrigue, annoyance, and misconception sure to precede and follow the honest execution of such discretionary powers. There need be no uncertainty as to what districts may be safely consolidated. New York and Brooklyn can be placed safely under one revenue jurisdiction, Philadelphia under one, and Baltimore Bester and Cincipantia. and Baltimore, Boston, and Cincinnati under one each, thus getting rid of thirty-two assessors and collectors in these six cities. Let Congress draw the line here, at least, and make consolidation obligatory on them. If in doubt as to the expediency of applying the principle to districts spread over larger areas, that might be left to the discretion of the Executive. We are satisfied that it is necessary to reduce the number of districts in all the populous States to one-half their present number, and this reduction should at once be made imperative.

THE WAR CLOUD IN EUROPE—THE SITUATION PERILOUS.

From the N. Y. Herald. Our cable despatches are numerous regard ing the situation in Europe. They are all of a piece. They show very clearly and very conclusively that the game is now serious. If originally the offering of the crown of Spain to Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern was a dodge to shape events in the interest of the Prince of the Asturias, the dodge has been a little too fruitful. It has done more than was intended, and it has brought forth a great deal more fruit than was expected. Two weeks ago no man dreamed of the early possibility of war in Europe. Now the dogs of war are fronting each other and impatient to be let loose. If a grand fight does not take place within the next few days many and great expectations will be blasted.

Spain does not say she does not want the Prince Leopold. Prussia does not say she discourages his candidature. The various European powers do not say that they are prepared to interfere in what does not seem to be anybody's business. All over the feel-ing seems to be that France is too sensitive. If Spain wants the Prince Leopold to be King, and if Prince Leopold is willing to make his head uneasy under the most worthless crown in Europe, Spain and Prince Leopold ought to be allowed to do as they please. Such seems to be the European sentiment. But France is in an agony of excitement. Lower and lower the rentes descend. War prepara-tions go on on a gigantic scale. The French army is ready to obey the signal to cross the Pyrenees and to march across the Rhine. The Emperor remains at St. Cloud, but couriers arrive every moment bearing the latest news. Orders have been given to the commandant of the French fleet at Cherbourg to be ready to take on board some thirty thousand troops. The French press cries out more loudly than ever against Prussia, and demands not only that Prussia discountenance the candidature of the Prince Leopold, but that she fulfil the conditions of the treaty of Prague. Prince Napoleon, it is added, has set out for Copenhagen to effect a treaty with Sweden and Denmark. A livelier situation it is not possible to conceive. To-morrow this fresh bubble may burst; but tomorrow may witness the two most gigantic military powers of Europe in deadly conflict.

The situation is one which is more than ordinarily suggestive. It is safe, we think, to say that most men qualified to judge are of the opinion that France has revealed an unnecessary amount of sensitiveness. It is safe to say that Prussia has revealed a large amount of dignity and indifference. It is safe also to say that most men, and most nations too, would just as soon see these two national bullies try their strength and skill. It will to many be a source of regret if this fresh opportunity passes by leaving the two bullies shaking their fists at each other. All men everywhere are convinced that sooner or later France and Prussia must settle certain outstanding questions by an appeal to the sword. As well now as later. Better for mankind at large that this fight, which is inevitable, should come off at once. We know what the needle-gun can do. We are anxious to know what the Chassepot can do. Until this fight is over Europe must be oppressed by the weight of standing armies, and some of the most beautiful portions of the old Continent must remain barren and worthless. This impending fight over, Europe will enter upon a new lease of life. Should France come off victorious progress will be checked. Should Prussia win the gain will be again not only to Germany, but to humanity.

At the present moment it is extremely difficult to see the end from the beginning.

Austria would not be sorry to see Prussia humbled. Denmark shares the feeling of Austria. The King of Saxony and some of his royal friends would not be sorry to know that they were once again the equals of their royal brother at Berlin. The outside European powers would perhaps rather see Prussia triumphant. But France is armed to the teeth and full of fight. Should war break out it is not easy to say which would win. It is not difficult, however, to perceive that out of this conflict many strange things will grow. It will be necessary for the French troops to leave Rome. What then will become of the Pope? It will not be possible for France to dictate to Russia. What then will become of the Sultan? The American officers now in the service of the Khediye will not lose the opportunity of making Egypt independent, and thus laying the foundations of a new empire on the banks of the Nile. Russia might drag Great Britain into the fray, and so from the Rhine to the Industwo continents would blaze. French pride and German love of unity have created for us a fine prospect. We can look at it with some indifference. Another great war might do Europe good. It will not certainly do us any harm. At the same time we shall not be sorry if the explanations of Prussia put France into a better and wiser frame of mind. It is useless any longer to say that France is Europe and that Europe is the world. To many nations now it is a matter of comparative indifference whether France is contented or net. No one knows so well as Napoleon that war on the present issue would be foolish. His good sense may yet restrain France. A conference may yet settle peacefully all this trouble.

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