

THE DUBLIN EVENING MAIL,

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

Boston, Nov. 14, 1866.

In the forenoon of a fine November day the Cunard mail steamer Java steamed up Boston Harbour, after a rapid passage across the Atlantic to Halifax, and having made one of the fastest passages on record—27 hours—thence to Boston. Her passengers were chiefly Americans, now rejoicing in being once more “at home,” and as we passed the outward-bound steamer China, just starting to retrace our track, a grizzled United States navy captain remarked that it would take a large sum of money to induce him again to leave his native shores for a sojourn in Europe.

A grand farewell lunch was spread at noon, and was hurried through by all, the strangers being anxious to be on deck to see a new land, the natives to recognise familiar spots. Soon we got a sight of Boston, part of the city on a hill crowned by the new State House, with its conspicuous dome, the rest clustering round the base of this hill, the whole seeming to rise out of the water, and to be fringed with shipping. No day could have been more favorable for a first impression of a new land; it was clear, fresh, and sunny, like a fine June day in Ireland. As we approached the Cunard wharf two schooners came in the way, and the Java not readily answering her helm at the low speed she was going at, we ran into one of them, the “James M'Closky,” fairly cutting her down to the water's edge. Before we had well got clear her flag was hoisted upside down, and the crew hard at work at the pumps; then we steamed on and lost sight of her. Next day the Boston papers informed us that she had been towed into shallow water and sunk, the schooner and her cargo of linseed being seriously damaged. No doubt there was a nice “little bill to pay” by somebody. Soon after we were alongside the wharf, and then came the usual scene of confusion that occurs at the claiming of baggage. Soon, however, all was got up to the Customs Examination Shed; then more confusion in getting, giving up, and reclaiming “baggage forms”; then followed the examination, by far the strictest I ever saw, though pretty well experienced in English and Continental customhouses. I escaped with but little trouble, however. One of my fellow-passengers, who had many packages and samples carefully done up, was not so lucky, and had everything, down to a pill-box or tiny brown paper parcel, opened, untied, and tossed about. Finally, he had to pay two or three dollars duty on a large engraving, and “growled” in true British style.

The first impression on leaving the Customhouse was that the air was something new, pure, clear, and dry: the next, that the people in the streets were most decidedly un-English like, and that there was no small children sky-larking about the footpaths. Where we landed in East Boston there were many wooden houses—a new feature to an English eye, and not a very pleasing one. Arrived at the hotel, the free-and-easy manner of the servants—I beg their pardon, the helps—was decidedly unpleasant; not that they were uncivil or lazy, but there was something unpleasant in feeling that “boots” addressed you as he would his fellow-helps. Next morning I heard a knock at my door,

and on giving some kind of a grunt as answer, was rather surprised to hear, “It is seven o'clock; breakfast is on the table, and I guess you had better get up,” this in a monotonous, nasal drawal. However, on getting down it proved that breakfast was on the table from 7 till 10, but half-past 7 appeared to be the favorite hour. At breakfast and every other meal the custom seemed to be to gather a variety of articles on and around one's plate, then begin to devour the whole at a rapid rate, and the moment it was finished to leave the table. The first day at dinner there was a great variety of dishes, and most people at table seemed to try to partake of as many as possible. Yet I may safely say that no one sat at table more than 15 minutes, the majority got through their “dinner” in much shorter time, and the moment each had finished he left the room. This is rather a change after Continental *table d'hotes*! In the matter of all kinds of poultry and fancy breads, the American far surpasses us; their turkeys and chickens would make an English housekeeper stare, such gigantic birds, so plump and fat. Prices here are much higher than in England; cloth clothing is double or treble what we pay, and for small articles ten cents currency, equal to about threepence half-penny, seems to correspond to our penny. Perhaps the reader may not know what currency means. Well, at the present moment there is no coin in the States for anything above five cents; all higher values are represented by notes varying in size, and generally known as “greenbacks.” Gold and silver have vanished, and should a stranger, on arriving, have a gold dollar he would get nearly a dollar and a-half “currency,” or paper money, for it. This paper is a legal tender for everything but the United States Customs, which must be paid in gold, or its equivalent in paper. Prices of living sound enormous in paper money; but they really are one-third less than they appear to be. The smallest value of note ever issued during the war was for three cents; but these have all vanished, and the difference between paper and gold is daily growing less. In a Boston paper of last week I saw it stated that the wages of journeymen bricklayers in this neighbourhood are now three and a half dollars a day. At the present rate of exchange this represents about 10s of our money; and, as a man in that class of life could live luxuriously on less than half of that sum, it would seem that bricklayers have fine times of it here. Here is an advertisement from the *Chicago Tribune* of Nov. 11th:—

“Wanted, 500 experienced railroad graders (i.e., navvies), Irishmen preferred, to work on the grading of the Cedar Rapids and Missouri River Railroad, in Western Iowa. Wages, a dollar and three-quarters a day. Board, three and a-half dollars a week.”

Seven dollars equal one pound at the present rates. The next advertisement was for “any number” of railway workmen, at two dollars a day.

Although to European ideas the labor market is far from being overstocked in these New England States, yet they, too, are sending out their swarms of laborers and speculators to the Far West, where, if report speaks truly, there is work and room for all who like to go in search of them. It seems to be a field suited alike to the laborer or the capitalist. One story I have

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heard regarding the West may interest your readers. A gentleman in Maine, who was sufficiently well off, got tired of the humdrum ways of these civilised Eastern States, realised what ready money he could, and went westward to look for a "location." He chose a spot in Kansas on the river of the same name; bought some land and settled there, in what at that time was a comparative wilderness. This was twelve years ago. Now, on this very spot stands Topeka, a city of several thousand inhabitants, and the capital of the prosperous State of Kansas. The land which that gentleman bought for a few dollars the acre is now valuable property, and he has become a wealthy man from the mere increase of the land.

This is but one instance out of many. The great distances in this country are apt to stagger a stranger; for instance, it is more than one thousand miles from this to Chicago, and yet that city is only on the threshold of the mighty West, the railroad system extending five hundred miles beyond it.

In street architecture the Bostonians show more regard for taste and proportion than the English, and decidedly less love of ornament. They have great advantages in an abundant supply of dark-grey granite, and use it often in rough blocks, which have scarcely been more than shaped, without any further dressing. For door-plates, handles, &c., a white metal resembling silver is much used, and it looks much cleaner and neater than our brass; it has the additional advantage of being more readily kept bright. In the business streets houses are sadly disfigured by name-boards under every window, generally gilt letters on a black ground. Happily the "ham sandwich" style of architecture is still unknown, or at least unused, in this city.

These clever Yankees have hit on a method of preventing the nuisance of the splash and dribble from street drinking fountains, which in some cases have actually caused their suppression with us. This they get rid of by simply placing the fountain on a grating which extends a few feet on each side of it. The remedy is complete, and I hope our architects are not too proud to learn from the Yankees.

Fenianism excites considerable interest here, not that they really care what becomes of Ireland or the Irish, but because they dislike the idea of being dragged into a war with England by any third party.

The tone assumed by the newspapers varies little. It is always something like this—"We mean to have the Alabama claims paid. If by friendly means, so much the better for both countries; but we mean to have them paid in any case."

They laugh at John Bull's fears of Fenians, and are sharp enough to turn it to serve their own purposes. All, as might be expected in a land of Dissenters, hail John Bright's attack on the Established Church of Ireland, and the *New York Herald's* special correspondent ventilates the subject very fully. This *Herald* has some points of resemblance to our *Times*. One is

that, it is devoid of principle; another, that though abused by many it is read by nearly all. The Irish element is decidedly unpopular here. The Americans say, "We give these people a home, and all the rights of citizenship which we ourselves enjoy: they live amongst us, and take part in our politics; then, the moment it suits their own convenience they become Fenians, and seek to draw us into a war with England. Even when they fought for us in the late war, they would only do so under their own national flag, and after two generations they are still Irishmen and not Americans."

Besides all this, say the Americans, "we consider that Irishmen do not make good citizens; the nature of the Irishman is rather to act from impulse than reason."

Be this as it may, there is, no doubt, an Irish element and influence in the United States which will show its power in the next war between America and

England, whenever that may come. Maximilian, who, according to American ideas, "had got to go," has probably by this time left for Europe, and the newspapers talk of the speedy entrance of Uncle Sam's troops into that unhappy country.

Some of the results of the late war are visible in the many armless, legless, or limping men to be seen about the streets. The number of artificial limb shops is remarkable. Here people seem to talk little about the war, the reason probably being that it is a painful subject, and that many families had members engaged on both sides. They have got a "Soldiers' Messenger Corps" here, their only uniform being a red cap with "S. M. C." on it. The Yankees do not use foreign words when they have equivalents in English, and their dislike of anything resembling uniform is curious. I have seen but one servant in livery, and he was a negro coachman.

At the post-office there is a separate counter for ladies—one of the many favours shown to the fair sex in this land of liberty where ladies tyrannise!

A few days ago I visited the courts, and was much struck with the absence of dress and formality. In the supreme Court there were four judges on the bench, and a white necktie was the only unusual piece of dress they wore, nor was there any nearer approach to our wig and gown worn by anyone else in court. A policeman, or "constable," as they call them here, has only a loose blue coat and a hat, with "B.P." and a number on it, to distinguish him from the citizens. Yesterday, I saw some marines: even their dress is but an apology for uniform. In their public buildings, hotels, &c., are many excellent contrivances for warming, but the utter absence of all regard to ventilation is striking. Like the Germans, they seem to think that if a room is "nice and warm" nothing more can be desired. However, as yet, there has been really no cold weather, but one or two slight frosts, and each day clear, bright, and fresh. One day this week (the second week in November) I saw a dragon-fly hovering about the wharfs; and indoors a few mosquitoes have had energy enough to bite.

Bunker Hill—a name dear to all Americans—is a small hill to the north of the city. Now it is covered with houses, excepting a square on the top, in the centre of which stands a plain, heavy granite obelisk, 221 feet high. Beyond the historical interest of the site, and the fine view of Boston and its suburbs, there is little attractive about the spot.

The much-vaunted system of street railways gives ready access to the suburbs, and is much better suited for that purpose than for service in crowded streets. These cars are long, low affairs, much like a railway carriage externally, and like a good roomy omnibus inside. They are very close to the ground, so that two steps are sufficient to bring the passenger on to the platform at either end, from which the inside is entered. The driver stands on the front platform, the conductor on the seat; and there is sufficient room inside for a row of people to stand up and down the centre. The platforms at the ends are often crowded, and it is a favorite saying—and, indeed, apparently a true one—that there is always "room for one more." Inside are seats for twenty people; about ten men can find standing room, and about five can stand on each end platform; thus the car can carry about forty passengers. I asked the driver of a Brooklyn car what was the greatest number of passengers he had ever carried at once. The answer was, ninety-four! This, however, was on some illumination night. These cars are four-wheeled, and their floors are very much closer to the ground than is the case with our omnibusses, and are much more easily entered and left. The trams the "street car" runs on are iron rails laid in the pavement, and projecting very little above the surface of the stones. Slight as is this projection, it is sufficient to give a considerable "wrench" to the wheels of any conveyance not crossing the track at right angles. The conductor and driver have each a powerful break, by

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which the car is stopped within two or three yards, without any assistance from the horses, who are thus saved the strain caused by pulling up.

The horses stand the work well; one pair I saw were 16 years old, and still very good. However, they do not begin to work the horses quite so young in this country as we do. The average earnings of one of these cars on a four-mile trip the driver stated to be about two dollars.

In crowded or narrow streets the trams are a nuisance to general traffic, but, at the same time, the convenience afforded by them is very great.

Boston has some pretty suburbs, and at first sight it is not easy to realise the fact that all handsome villas and country houses are built of wood; yet such is the case, very few, indeed, being built of brick or stone. Verandahs, porticoes, porches, are all constructed in wood, just as they would be, with us, in brick or stone; and some of the wooden houses built in the last century seem as good as new.

The great prevalence of the boarding-house system is attributed to the difficulty about domestic servants, who have it all their own way here. They are all foreigners—Irish or Nova Scotian for the most part—American “young ladies” despising housework as derogatory.

Boston boasts of a large crop of churches of various denominations and styles; the Episcopalians, are decidedly in the minority—these stiff-necked New Englanders will acknowledge “no lords spiritual or temporal,” as they express it. For all that, the Romish priests have continued to meddle in the common schools, first objecting to have the Protestant Bible read to Roman Catholic children, and, having carried that point, are next preparing to object to compulsory education of any kind, except such as they themselves approve of.

Here, in Massachusetts, attendance at the common schools is compulsory on all children between the ages of eight and fourteen; nor is any man who cannot read or write qualified to vote.

The two chief novelties in the Churches here—I am speaking now of various sects—are the performance of the singing by a small choir, the congregation remaining silent; and the introduction of politics into every discourse or sermon, and the application of religion to political action. This may be very right and proper, but it grates on an English ear.

In the suburbs the churches are far more pretentious in style than in the city, for out of town they are chiefly built of wood—often huge wooden piles in Grecian or Gothic style, but nevertheless towers, buttresses, spires, all alike of wood. A city building law forbids the erection of any fresh wooden houses, so as the old ones come down they are replaced in brick or stone.

Sunday is closely observed, as far as the shops are concerned; but the people walk about, take trips out of town in the horse cars, and otherwise amuse themselves in a way that would shock a Scotchman. By the way, the Presbyterians seem scarce here. Possibly there is something in their name as well as in their church system objectionable to New England independence.

To-day I heard something regarding Florida that augurs well for the South. In Florida societies for the purchase of land have been recently formed, and one was instanced which consisted of 100,000 shares of one dollar each. Of these 12,000 were held by whites, the remaining 88,000 by negroes. Thus it would seem that the late war has already produced good effects even in the “ruined” South. If the reports in the newspapers can be believed, a curious change in the population is now going on. The Southerns, more particularly the “poor whites,” or “white trash,” as the blacks call them, are moving West, and settling in the new Western States and territories. Pushing, educated men from the North are taking their place;

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and the idea here is, that in a very few years more cotton and other valuable products will be raised in the South than has been done since the country was settled. In any case this change of population must be attended with the happiest results.

The prosperity and future prospects of this Republic seem to know no bounds, and when the railroad is completed, and working, as it will be in a very few years, from the Mississippi to California, new regions will be opened up to the settler, and the miner, and the Atlantic and Pacific States virtually become one.

Twelve thousand Chinamen are now at work on the Pacific end of this railway, while at this end the works are being pushed forward by as many Irish navvies, as can be obtained.—*Dublin Evening Mail* of Dec. 5, 1866.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

BOSTON, Nov. 28, 1866.

To-day there is a good budget of news. Uncle Sam's troops in Mexican territory; great excitement reported in New York and London on account of supposed Fenian rising in Ireland; a “difficulty” about the Alabama claims; an annexation meeting in Canada; and gold gone up five per cent. Such is the exciting bill of fare of the evening papers; how far it is true is quite another affair. Strangest of all is reading in the morning papers the London intelligence of the preceding day at noon. It seems to bring England closer, the more so as the telegrams we get from Europe are much more detailed than those you receive from us. In fact, very little other European news beyond telegrams appears in the American papers. Great indignation is expressed against France for not withdrawing their troops from Mexico, and against England for not settling the Alabama claims. Little sympathy with the Fenians, however, is expressed by any newspapers of standing.

These Americans would like to give John Bull a lesson, but the moment any one else stirs against him, they begin to talk of the “old country” in affectionate terms.

They tell a story here of two young Englishmen who were fishing in a Yankee smack off Cape Cod a few years ago, and while watching their lines conversed with the skipper, a weather-beaten old man, who spoke in no respectful terms of England. One of the Englishmen remarked to his friend that if these Yankees got so impudent the English would have to come over and give them a licking. “What!” said the old skipper, “again?” Our English friends “concluded” to drop the subject.

This evening Boston presents the appearance of Dublin on Christmas eve. The streets are crowded with people shopping, and in the markets fat turkeys and delicacies of all sorts are being rapidly disposed of; for to-morrow is “Thanksgiving,” an institution puzzling to a newcomer. It seems that when the Pilgrim Fathers settled here they determined to have no “Church holidays” and to make up for Christmas, which could not be done without in some shape or other, they invented “Thanksgiving, Day” a moveable feast generally held on the last Thursday in November, but settled at the discretion of each individual State.

Formerly it was confined to New England, but is now general everywhere. As with us at Christmas, little work is done during this week, and to-morrow morning is set apart for church-going, the evening for gaiety. Though dress, and indeed almost everything, is higher priced out here than with us, still in some points they have the ad-