

THE DUBLIN EVENING MAIL

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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-

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vantage of us—for instance, beef is about 6s d; mutton, 8d per lb; other meat in proportion, and splendid geese and turkeys, the latter far superior in size and quality to anything we have, from 1s to 1s 2d per lb. A pair of ducks or chickens fetch little more, though they are scarcer. Butter varies from 2s to 1s 3d per lb. This, too, in the city where carpenters, bricklayers, and such, earn at present 10s a day, and grumble at that.

It was amusing to read in the *Boston Advertiser* of last week a Corporation notice giving the name and address of a milkman convicted of mixing water with his milk! What would our friends the milkmen at home say to such a proceeding? Probably our advertising columns would contain nothing else but such notices.

Après de drinking, they object to the lager beer made by the Germans, because it is too-tonic (Teu-tonic)! This joke, as might have been expected, came from a medical man.

In one point Boston is very deficient—namely, street lighting. [Probably no city in Europe of anything like the same size, except perhaps Rome, is so badly lighted. The gas-lamps are few and far between, ill placed, and, in true old-fashioned style, are not lighted at all on moonlight nights. This one was not prepared to find in such a go-ahead and old-established city. In pavement, too, there is room for improvement, though the side-walks are excellent, being of brick laid on sand, according to the most scientific principles of modern engineering.

Some years ago the trade of Boston exceeded that of New York, but, by the imposition of heavy custom dues, and other restrictions on commerce, the former has fallen behind in the race to such an extent that the Bostonians are at last bestirring themselves, and trying to draw some of the Western traffic and freight to their port. As the first step in this direction, a company, or, as they call it here, a "corporation," has been started with the view of running an Atlantic weekly line from this port. A few days ago I went to see the launch of the pioneer vessel for this line. They have decided on naming their ships after the great lakes, and this one was called the *Ontario*. She is a wooden screw steamer of 3,000 tons burthen, and 325 feet long, built at the flourishing town of Newburyport, on the Merrimac, some 30 miles north of Boston. We went down in a special train, passing through an uninteresting and rather barren country. Snow was on the ground in most parts. At one point, where we passed through a pine wood, the dark green trees were exquisitely dotted, with the snow sparkling in the bright sunlight. On reaching the shipbuilding-yard we found an immense crowd assembled to see the launch, the *Ontario* being the largest steamer ever built in New England.

On the stocks she looked ungainly enough, "wall-sided," and unwieldy. The preparations for launching were slow and silent, giving time to examine the crowd. The younger men looked like Ulster men, and the older ones so Germanic in features and dress that one wondered where their long pipes were; but the universal "quid" had replaced them, if, indeed, tobacco in any other form had ever been used by these men. Good humour and quietness seemed the chief characteristics of the crowd, and when a rope was simply laid on the ground to indicate a boundary, all fell back behind it, without needing any orders from officious policemen—indeed not one of the last-named gentry was visible amongst the crowd. At last the *Ontario* moved a little, then faster, and finally went into the water with a plunge. Then ensued a series of catastrophes. First one of the check ropes, which had been fastened to some trees on one side, pulled them up like so many bushes; a rope on the other side snapped, and in its recoil hit a paling on which some men and boys were perched, bringing it and them down by the run; another rope fouled one of the anchors let go from the bows at the moment when she floated, and

the result was, that the vessel shot across the river and stuck in a mud bank at the opposite side. The two tugs in attendance failed to draw her off then, but succeeded next tide; and now the *Ontario* lies in Boston Harbour receiving her engines and fittings previous to her first trip next spring.

The Bostonians may well feel that New York has got the start of them, for last Saturday no less than fifteen large ocean-going steamers left that port.

A few days ago I visited one of the many boot factories at Stoneham, a few miles off. This town, a place of some size, is devoted, in common with some three or four others in the State of Massachusetts, to the manufacture of boots by machinery. Almost the entire process is performed by machinery. First, the sole is cut out by a stamper, which between each stamp turns round, so that the end which was the heel at one time is the toe at the next, thus saving any waste of leather, as may be seen by looking at the soles of a pair of shoes placed heel and toe alternately. The D-shaped heel pieces are then stamped out and compressed together by a slow-motion presser, which comes down on them with a force of five tons. The uppers, after being similarly stamped out of pieces of leather, are closed and finished by sewing machines; the eyelet-holes being punched out by one machine, while the eyelets themselves are fastened by another. Then the last is fitted in, the boot turned upside down, and secured in an iron rest, formed of four jaws lined with indiarubber, and which expand, close, rise, or fall by screws worked by the operator.

The inner soles are then laid on the last, the part of the upper forming the "lap" pressed down over them, and pegged on by an ingenious hand-pegging machine, which by a single blow from a mallet punches a hole, withdraws the punch, cuts a peg off the end of a narrow ribbon of wood (which at each cut works forward) to be ready for the next one, and drives it in. All this is done literally as fast as the blows of the mallet can be repeated.

The outer sole is then lightly tacked on in its proper position, and the boot passed to the pegger, who places it on a swivelling rest under a powerful machine-pegger, which works on the principle of the hand-pegger already described, and seems to pour a stream of pegs into the sole. Next the boot passes to a man, who rapidly fastens on the heel with iron tacks, after which the boot is placed under a circular cutter, revolving at the rate of 2,300 revolutions per minute, which polishes off all the superfluous leather from the side of the heel, and leaves a clear rounded surface to receive the polish. There are many other intermediate and further steps, but those I have already detailed are the most important.

Every machine used is under some patent, and one is the subject of twelve separate patents, each for some further improvement.

It was one of the smaller factories I visited, and there are many larger ones in the place; but even in this one 200 hands were employed, many of them boys and girls, and they turn out every day from ten to fifteen cases of boots, each case containing sixty pair, or a daily average of nearly four pair of boots for each person employed!

At this rate this one establishment would turn out 4,500 pair a week. Some of the girls employed earn 12 dollars a week, which will account for the scarcity of domestic servants.

In illustration of the pitch to which servant-galism has attained, the following story is told:—A gentleman was engaging a nurse, and after she had asked a great many questions, finally asked how many children there were. "Six," said the gentleman; "but if it would be any object to you I could drown two or three of the younger ones!"

One sad evidence of the late war is to be seen in the number of maimed and limping men. About the streets, the number of shops where artificial limbs are made is also

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remarkable. They are to be seen in almost every street, and such a supply argues a great demand.

Agassiz has been delivering a course of lectures on the natural history of Brazil, he having just returned from a trip to that country. In his concluding lecture yesterday evening he denounced the progressive theory of Darwin as not being borne out by ascertained facts, declaring his belief that the Caucasian negro and other races were the result of separate creations, and not descended from one common parent. These remarks were listened to with profound interest, but without any signs of approbation or the reverse.

Agassiz, after many years' residence in this country, still speaks with a strong foreign accent and idiom, so much so, indeed, that with us he would probably have been laughed at had he lectured to such a mixed audience as listened to him here.

Though the Bostonians are so devoted to work, still they find plenty of time to amuse themselves, and, considering the population of the city, the number of theatres and places of amusement is very remarkable. One cause, no doubt, is that more people have spare cash to amuse themselves with than in England.

Fires appear to be of more than daily occurrence in Boston, and no matter in what part of the city a fire breaks out it is soon known in all quarters. All through the city are placed fire alarm boxes at short distances apart. When any one discovers a fire, he runs to the nearest box and gives a signal by electricity to the City Hall, where a man is always on the watch. The latter then telegraphs the locality of the fire to all the engine stations, and at the same time, by means of electricity, causes alarm bells to ring all over the city, these bells indicating, by the number of strokes, the ward where the fire is.

One day I was fortunate enough to see a fire during the daytime, and could observe the action of the steam fire-engines, and the course pursued by the firemen. The engines seemed smaller and less powerful than those used in London, but were got to work in a very short time.

The Irish here preserve many of their home customs, one of the most striking being the Sunday funerals. Here, however, instead of going three-on-a-side on cars, they hire the handsome two-horsed street carriages which are just as smart as any private conveyance with us. The first Sunday afternoon walk I took in the suburbs a string of six or eight smart pair-horsed closed carriages passed us at a rapid rate, and on asking my companion what all this was, heard, "Only Irish returning from a funeral." These carriages carry four or five, and as they charge a dollar a head, they make a good thing of a trip to an Irish funeral.

The fast-trotting horses are a great feature, and it is surprising to see the pace at which they pull along those light carriages known to us as "American waggon." To do a thing in "two-forty time" is a common expression puzzling to a newcomer. It refers to the fast match-trotting horses, who often trot a mile in two minutes and forty seconds. Some of the horses "pace;" in this the horse seems to first put forward the fore and hind foot of one side, and then the fore and hind foot of the other side. It is a shuffling, ugly-looking motion, but seems easy to the horse and rider. The large cart horses used here come from Philadelphia, but they are by no means equal to the draught horses to be seen in London. Oddly enough, the Americans have not got the English but the Continental rule of the road, and drive to the right.

Street begging seems entirely absent in Boston. Once I saw a blind man on one of the wharfs standing with his hand open before him, but saying nothing; very likely he had lately landed from the Old World.

I was surprised to see it stated that the number of Indians now remaining in the United States territory is but three hundred thousand. Even these few are now re-

ported to be "troublesome," and some of the papers advocate their immediate extinction by wholesale slaughter. A few years more and they will have vanished. They lately conceded a new route to California to the United States, or, in other words, undertook not to molest travellers proceeding on that particular line. Since the agreement the Americans have had some reason to alter this line, and go by a somewhat different one. This the Indians object to, saying it will disturb the buffaloes, and a border war seems likely to be the result.

Considering the vast extent of the United States, it is wonderful how much news regarding all parts appears in every newspaper, no matter where it may be published. Few Southern papers seem to find their way up here; perhaps they do not "grow" there so freely as in the North. It is a favourite saying that this country will "grow" anything but *monarchy*, and they point triumphantly to Maximilian as proving the truth of the saying.

Some years ago, in a coaching district in the West, several stages arrived at one small inn just at the same hour in the evening. One of the travellers, seeing that beds were likely to be scarce, addressed the landlord in the hearing of several of the guests, saying that he did not mind sharing his bed with any one else, but that he had got king's evil, which was contagious, whereupon the landlord gave him a separate bed.

Next morning, at breakfast, some one remarked that he had never heard of king's evil being contagious. "Oh!" said our traveller, "it is one of those diseases which appear in several forms, and I have got it in the shape of Republicanism!"

F. E. P.

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BOSTON.

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

One of the first acts of the Pilgrim Fathers, after their landing in this country, was the foundation of a public or common school, which was opened under the name of the "Latin School."

For nearly fifty years this remained the only institution of the kind, but in 1682 it became so crowded that two others were established "for the purpose of teaching children to write and cipher." From this latter period dates the real origin of the common schools, now one of the greatest and noblest institutions of this country. Unfortunately it is not universal, but to it the Northern States owe their overwhelming power and progress. This the South well knew, as the following extract from a leading Southern newspaper will show. The writer says:—"We have got to hating everything with the prefix *free*. The New England system of free schools has been the cause and prolific source of the infidelities and treasons that have turned her cities into Sodoms and Gomorrah, and her land into the common nesting-places of howling bedlamites. We abominate the system because the schools are *free*." Let us now see what are these free schools, so much reviled by the aristocratic South. By the laws of Massachusetts it is provided "that no person shall have the right to vote who shall not be able to read the Constitution in the English language, and write his name. That in every town and city an annual census of the persons between the ages of five and fifteen shall be taken. That in every town, however small, a school and teacher shall be maintained at the charge of the town for the term of six months, and that in larger towns the

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number of schools shall be in a certain proportion to the number of inhabitants; and that every person who shall have any child under his control, between the ages of eight and fourteen years, shall send such child to some public school within the town or city in which he resides, during at least twelve weeks, six of which shall be consecutive."

In Boston, however, as we shall see, they do more than simply obey these laws. The present population of the city is about two hundred thousand, and there are 281 public or common schools. Of these, 257 are primary, 21 are grammar, the remaining three are called respectively the Latin School, the English High School, and the Girls' High and Normal School. In all these schools the arrangement of the rooms are much the same. Each pupil has a separate desk and chair; the latter a comfortable seat with a back, but having only one leg, which is made of metal and fastened to the floor. At one end of the room is a low platform and desk for the teacher, and in every case an ante-room is provided for hanging up clothes. By this system of desks and seats no pupil can interfere with or converse with another without attracting the teacher's attention, and a free passage is open in every direction through the room. A primary school consists of six classes. The children usually enter at about five, remain six months in each class, and leave at about eight. The course of instruction is naturally simple, but is conducted as far as possible on the principle of not only teaching the child to learn by rote, but also to think how and why each step is taken. In the first, or senior class, the pupils are already tolerably familiar with reading, writing, spelling, and the first four rules of arithmetic. Simple oral lessons in arithmetic are given in each class; singing forms a part of the opening and closing of each session, and further instruction in the science and notation of music is also given. In summer the sessions are from eight till eleven in the morning and from two to four in the afternoon. A "recess" of twenty minutes is allowed during the morning school—in some cases, in the primary schools, two recesses of ten minutes each are substituted; and it is ordered that some kind of physical or gymnastic exercise shall be gone through in each forenoon and afternoon session. After leaving the primary school, the pupil next enters the grammar school, in which are taught all the branches of a sound English education. Here the pupil usually remains till about fifteen, at which age compulsory education ceases. If the pupil desires it, a further course is still freely open. If intending to pursue business or mechanical pursuits, he may enter the English High School, which was instituted to afford the means of completing a good English education. The course lasts three years, and may be extended to four. If, on the other hand, a young man desires to fit himself for a university, he can enter the Latin School, where the studies are conducted with special reference to university requirements. In the case of a girl, after leaving the Grammar School she may enter the "Girls' High and Normal School," which was instituted "to give a higher and more extended education, and to fit those who desire to become teachers." This course is also for three years.

In the primary schools it has been attempted, as far as possible, to have but one teacher and one class in each room, whereby the teacher's labour is ~~reduced~~ and the instruction and discipline rendered more perfect.

The following impressions were the result of two hours spent in a primary school in the poorest part of Boston:—

First, that the education, though elementary as it must be with children between five and eight, was *thorough* as far as it went; that the children seemed bright, happy, and anxious to progress, and that they were much better behaved than any English children of the same age would be; secondly, that the teachers were thoroughly equal to

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their work, and that the children seemed to regard them with affection; thirdly, that, though in a poor district, they were all decently and many smartly dressed.

In visiting a grammar school in another district one could not help being struck with the sharpness and intelligence of the children, who seemed thoroughly to understand the why and wherefore of everything that they did and said.

Of the teachers, five hundred and fifty are women and fifty-five men. In selecting these teachers the school committee endeavours to bear in mind, as far as possible, the axiom "as the teacher so the school." The school committee consists of the mayor, the president of the common council, and of six inhabitants of each ward, the latter being elected by the qualified voters of their ward, and holding office during three years.

Regarding religious instruction, it is provided by the "school regulations" that "the morning exercises of all schools shall commence with the reading a portion of the Scriptures by the teacher in each school—the reading to be followed by the Lord's Prayer, repeated by the teacher alone." As an instance of the freedom of these schools to all alike, whether rich or poor, may be mentioned the fact, even during the past year, that more than one child from the homeliest of homes has risen to the position of an accomplished and brilliant teacher in these same schools.

During the last twelve years the city of Boston has educated more than three hundred thousand children, at a cost of less than six million of dollars; thus each child's education has cost, on an average, twenty dollars, or about five pounds sterling of English money. More than half the sum is consumed in the teachers' salaries—the present pay of a primary school teacher being 600 dollars a year, that of the master of a grammar school 2,500 dollars. The average number of pupils to a teacher in the primary and grammar schools is forty-seven. In 1865 there were in Boston 34,902 persons between the ages of five and fifteen; of these, 27,095 were attending the public schools. The reader may infer for himself from these figures what progress Boston has made towards the true ideal of a system of public education—namely, that the schools shall be free to all, good enough for all, and attended by the children of all. In any country where the two classes of rich and poor are found, of course some of the rich will prefer sending their children to private schools; but in Boston, at all events, on the subject of taxation for public education, not a single murmur of objection has ever been heard. In the year 1864-5, the amount appropriated for the current expenses of the public schools was only about ten per cent. of the whole city tax; and such is the character of these schools, that the great bulk of the well-to-do taxpayers send their children to them. Thus, this liberal policy has provided itself at once the most economical and beneficial to all the inhabitants of the city.

F. E. P.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

New York, Jan. 1, 1867.

Though dated at New York, I have still a few more words to say about Boston. The third week in December ushered in the New England winter with a vengeance. First came snowstorms such as we rarely see, and the snow lay without melting; next came frost severe enough to bring down the mercury to zero, and allowing it to rise but a few degrees above that even at mid-day. The side-walks are cleared, but no attempt is made to free the streets from the snow, unless where the snow-plough, worked by four strong horses, dashes along, clearing the track of the tramway cars. Now out come the sleighs, with swift, easy motion, noiseless but for their jingling bells, and requiring