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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

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a sharp lookout from the foot passengers on the crossings. Very soon the street is deep in a powdered mass of snow, ice, and dirt, but all frozen and perfectly dry. Through this wheeled machines labour heavily along, while the sleighs glide easily over it. As Christmas is at hand, the streets are crowded with ladies' shopping, and the cold has brightened their eyes, brought roses into their cheeks, and generally brightened and enlivened everyone.

How different from our gloomy winter, when sloppy streets, wet feet, and colds in the head are the order of the day! Yet this New England winter is not without its drawbacks. The side-walks are so slippery that falls and broken bones are far from uncommon; the wind, when it blows at all, is piercing, and the sun is apt to loosen the snow on the housetops, which, avalanche-like, then falls into the streets, often causing serious hurts to the footpassengers.

On the "common" the boys and young men amuse themselves "coasting." A small sled, just large enough for a boy to sit or lie on, is taken to the top of a snow-clad hill, the boy flings himself on the sled, glides down at an amazing rate, and is carried far on the level beyond the foot of the hill by the force got up in the descent. This sport seems to have some fascination like skating or sleighing, and is carried on unceasingly.

Shortly before leaving Boston, I visited the large iron-works of M'Kay and Aldus, at East Boston, in whose shops many steamers and locomotives have lately been built. At present they have on hands two huge ten or twelve wheeled locomotives for the California end of the Pacific Railroad. To English ideas, the intended speed of these huge machines seem small—but twelve miles an hour; but then they are built with a view to carrying heavy goods trains over the steep inclines of the Sierra Nevada. These works are large and in full work, yet but a few years ago this M'Kay kept a small huxter's shop, and failed. This was within the last ten years; now he has these large works, and is rapidly making a fortune, but such sudden rises are too common here to attract any attention in Yankeeland. The average pay of the workers in this establishment is over three dollars a day, and as a large number of boys are employed, of course the average pay of the able-bodied men would be considerably more.

The distance from Boston to New York by rail is about 230 miles, and is a tedious nine hours' journey. Though the long American railway cars, with passages down the centre, and allowing a passenger to walk freely from one end of the train to the other, are not without their advantages, still they are not without serious faults. In the first place, the backs of the seats are so low as to afford no rest for weary heads, and from the imperfectly closing doors at each end, which somebody is for ever opening and shutting, and the absence of partitions, a draught is apt to sweep through the carriage, particularly about the feet, and the stove, which is supposed to warm the interior, creates a stifling heat about the head but leaves the feet cold. However, the motion is pretty easy, and there is some relief in being able to walk about. The line passes through Connecticut, but except for the many trim, white, wooden New England towns, and some fine river views, the trip is uninteresting.

My first impressions of New York were of a great, active city; long, straight streets, and avenues seemingly of interminable length; palatial houses and shops, oddly mixed with poor brick dwellings and small wooden affairs, some scarce worthy of the name of a house. Except in the very best and oldest streets this odd mixture prevails, but everything is in the transition stage, and every change is in the shape of some new improvement.

New York is built on an island many miles long and but two broad, and in all but the oldest part of the city the streets run at right angles across and along the island;

those running across are called streets, the others avenues, both being indicated by numbers instead of names.

Though little can be said for the beauty of this system, it is very convenient, and makes losing one's way almost impossible, even to a stranger. However, the width and great length of the streets gives full play to the wind, as those find who have occasion to go out during a snow-storm.

It is a curiously mixed city, the population more foreign than American, and chiefly composed of Irish and Germans. Hundreds of notices and signs are in the German language and character; in some streets, and even districts, you may walk without seeing or hearing anything but German. The Irish element, though quite as strong, is more dispersed, and consequently more remarkable, but no one can go very far without hearing specimens of every possible Irish brogue. Perhaps the reader may not be aware that the city government is entirely in the hands of the Irish; and for the credit of my countrymen, I am sorry to say that New York has the reputation of being the worst-governed city in the world, the men who rule it devoting all their energies to the fiercest political agitation and wholesale jobbing of contracts.

Probably, however, from the varied and ever-changing character of a large part of its population (which, with the city of Brooklyn, now amounts to a million and a quarter), no city in the world is so difficult to manage.

Last year (1866) a quarter of a million of immigrants landed in this city—a disturbing though enriching element, which no other city in the world can show the like of.

I have not yet ascertained the shipping statistics of the port, but judging from the forest of masts fringing New York and its suburbs of Brooklyn and Jersey City, the number of sailors and "loose fish" constantly here must be very large.

Broadway is a noble street: its length I shall not state for fear of being disbelieved; but for two miles it is perfectly straight, one end of this length opening to the sea, the other being apparently closed by a handsome church.

Magnificent shops abound along it, some of brown sand-stone, others of snowy marble or grey granite, a few of brick, just to remind one that there is such a material. The American architects seem to me far superior to ours. Instead of inventing some monstrosity, plastering it with ornament, and then calling it artistic, our friends over here are content to copy from the classic models of Greece and Rome, just modifying to suit the needful difference, and with the most happy results. There is but one instance of the ham-sandwich style of architecture, and no one seems inclined to repeat it. We must remember, however, what advantages they have in materials here, and that their work is ever fresh and clean—no murky atmosphere nor soot to defile. Perhaps you may not know that in these American cities there is no smoke, and that the air is as clear and the sky as blue as it ever is in Italy. The smokeless anthracite and dry air are to be thanked for this, and it is pleasant to see the house chimneys and tall factory shafts as smokeless as if they burned charcoal; in fact, they do, for anthracite is mineral charcoal.

The New York newspapers are all full of articles on, and letters from, Ireland. Few of them express any sympathy with the Fenians, unless, like a certain Irish Roman Catholic prelate, who, in answer to some one who was fiercely abusing Fenianism, without entering into an argument, replied, "Whisht, sir, whisht: they are driven to it!"

An American Government official at Boston told me how, when on a recent coast voyage, he had met some Irishmen on board, and had tried to discover what would satisfy them in the way of concessions from England—if such and such reforms, or failing those, the establishment of a new and free Ireland in this hemisphere would not do, and only

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got for answer, "No, sir; bedad, we must have the oulu country!"

As yet I have seen no external signs of Fenianism, but there can be no reasonable doubt of its existence in the shape of a large armed and drilled organisation, which is certainly not likely to die out as long as it has anything to contend with.

Mexico is the most absorbing topic to the native American, and all here speak of Juarez as the recognised head of that country, regarding Maximilian as a mere usurper sustained by French bayonets. A curious story is told and believed here regarding Napoleon's intervention in Mexico. From the earliest times till now all explorers, whether mere adventurers or scientific men, have brought back accounts of the extraordinary mineral wealth of the Mexican province of Sonora, which adjoins the Gulf of California. The great range of the Rocky Mountains are known to contain the precious metals in abundance, which have already been successfully mined in Montana, Idaho, and Colorado, territories of which the reader has very likely never even heard of, but which are already peopled and represented in Congress. In Sonora this mineral wealth is believed to culminate, and well-informed people think that it was with a view to ultimately obtaining this valuable province our acute ally lent his troops in support of the Mexican "Empire."

To use an American phrase, "Max has got to go," and then Mexico will "gravitate" into the Union. An American gravely told me the other day that Mexico would soon be in the Union now, but that he should much have preferred getting Cuba!

The completion of the Pacific Railroad cannot but affect the relations of this country with the Old World. It is asserted that the line will be opened throughout in three or at most four years from the present time, and then the shortest road from England to China will be to New York, across the continent to San Francisco, and thence by steamer to Hong Kong. That the Americans believe that this is to be the case is evident from the fact that the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, corresponding to our P. and O. Company, and whose steamers run from New York to Panama, and thence to California, are already making preparations to "swing" their Atlantic line to Europe, and their Pacific line from San Francisco to China. American influence will soon begin to tell in the East when this takes place.

Those familiar with American statistics tell us that in the ordinary course of events their population in 1900—but thirty-three years hence, remember—will be one hundred millions; and if then still united, who may say what their place and power among the nations shall be? Can we wonder that Americans are intoxicated with such a career before them? They fear but one rock ahead, disunion, and with their late experience of that, they will try hard to steer clear of it. Yet this country welcomes all who wish to cast in their lot with it, and share its prosperity and freedom.

At present I am stopping in a large boardinghouse, and a sketch of this peculiarly American institution may interest the reader.

This one consists of two houses thrown into one, and accommodates about forty guests. Breakfast is on the table from half-past seven till nine, and consists of various kinds of hot meat and hot bread and potatoes, tea, coffee, and hominy, and sundry dishes unknown with us. Lunch is on the table at one, when hot tea, cold meat, and bread and butter are consumed by those who may be at home. Dinner may be had from six till seven, a plain substantial meal, begun with soup and ending with coffee. Nothing more before bedtime. There are many dishes which it would be useless to name, as they are utterly unknown in England; but every newcomer must be struck with the quantity of iced water and butter consumed at each meal. I always thought the Irish did pretty well in the butter-eating

line, but the Americans far outdo them. Beer or wine one seldom sees, except in a barroom. Iced water is the universal drink even in this Siberian weather, and a very refreshing liquid it is. There is a handsome public drawing-room free to all, but in this house many of the families have private sitting-rooms, so it is little used. All the food is excellent and nicely cooked, but Americans have little of the gourmand about them, generally bolting their meals and rushing back to work. To English ideas the thought of a family living in a house like this will seem strange, but it is only too common here, and is partly caused by the difficulty about domestic servants and the scarcity of small houses. Cleanliness is a great charm here, ever fresh snowy napkins and towels, and perpetual cleaning, scrubbing, and polishing. With the exception of three or four Brazilians or Spaniards, and a man from Limerick and myself, the company are all "native" Americans, all classes, from the professional man to the shop-boy, being represented, and all mixing together.

New Year's Day is kept in peculiar style in New York. On this day all the ladies remain at home "to receive," while the gentlemen go the round, making short calls at every house where they have any acquaintance. This year it was a cold wintry day, snow some inches deep on the ground, and more rapidly coming down. Under these circumstances, it was amusing to watch the dandies going about in sleighs and carriages in evening costume, and making frantic rushes in and out between their conveyances and the houses. I should imagine that a large supply of severe colds had been laid in on that day. The following day the ladies go about calling on each other.

In olden times, cakes called gookies were on every table, and the unhappy gentlemen were supposed to partake of these at every house, and when they could eat no more, had to fill their pockets with them!

The day is kept as a strict holiday, all the shops and even the district post-offices being closed.

A new General Post Office is about to be built, and in describing its site our friend the *New York Herald* mentioned that among its advantages it was just opposite the new office of the *Herald*! This, by the way, is a handsome white marble structure in Broadway, and is probably the finest newspaper office in the world—pity that it should belong to such a paper.

We get much fuller cable dispatches from Europe than you do from us; in fact, the few questions or meagre line or two of American news *via* the cable in the *Times* seems quite absurd after the full details we receive from Europe. Cannot our papers get up some news company such as there is here? Is Reuter to remain king of the telegraphs?

The *New York Tribune* is, perhaps, one of the most amusingly absurd papers here, retailing daily all the old fallacies of the protectionists, and demanding "a tariff" "high enough and light enough to keep all manufactured goods from our shores," otherwise the country will be "ruined." This doctrine is happily nearly exploded now, and the Americans begin to see that the pockets of a few rich manufacturers ought not to be protected at the expense of the general public.

The New Englanders, being manufacturers, are almost to a man in favour of protection, and denounce in the bitterest terms the modern free-trade policy of England and France.

The New York streets are almost entirely given up to the horse railroads, or tramways, for which they are well fitted, being straight and level. Americans are always surprised to hear that we have not got these "street," or "horse cars," as they call them, and wonder how we manage to exist without them. They certainly are most convenient, and when the trams are well laid, interfere very little with the general wheeled traffic. I suppose we shall have them some day.

If the number of churches has anything to say to the goodness of a city, New York ought to be a very excellent place, indeed; for it abounds in handsome churches. How-

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ever, during a short walk on the afternoon of New Year's Day, I saw two serious street rows, and any number of drunken men. There were plenty of policemen, of course, when they were not wanted.

These policemen, by the way, are mostly tall, strapping young Irishmen, as you soon find out by asking a question of any of them. They are dressed in long blue coats, and wear a cap not unlike that formerly worn by the Irish constabulary. In Broadway their chief occupation seems to be escorting ladies over dangerous crossings, and seeing them in and out of omnibuses—I suppose Irish gallantry must find a vent somehow, even in a policeman on duty.

They have here an excellent little contrivance which I do not remember having seen elsewhere. The slides for letting down boxes, bales, &c., into the cellars beneath the stores, instead of being, as usual, a straight inclined plane, are curved, consequently the box, when laid on the top, which is the steepest part, glides down rapidly, and gently stops on reaching the flatter part below.

In the common slide the speed increases as the box slides down, till it reaches the floor with a whack and a hop calculated to damage both the box and its contents, which is entirely avoided by this simple contrivance. F. E. P.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

New York, Jan. 21, 1867.

Few cities possess such natural advantages for shipping as New York, there being deep water at each side of the island, enabling vessels of almost any size to come alongside. The wharves and piers are mostly wretched-looking structures of timber, irregular and unsightly. That belonging to the Inman line is a brilliant exception, and is well fitted up with a system of shafting running the whole length of the pier, and worked by one large engine, by which the discharging and embarking of cargo can be rapidly and easily effected. The amount of shipping in the port is, of course, immense, both sides of the island and the opposite shores of New Jersey and Long Island being lined for miles with vessels of all descriptions and sizes.

With scarcely a single exception, the various lines of European steamers converge at New York, and as here all shipping lies alongside, instead of being in different docks as at London and Liverpool, the effect is striking. During the past year the value of the imports and exports of New York exceeded 550,000,000 dollars in gold, nearly equally divided between imports and exports. Of all the imports, but 13,000,000 entered free of duty, which may give the reader some idea of the heavy taxation on all imported goods. In fact, it is scarcely possible to mention any article, whether imported or produced on this side, that is not taxed; even each carte-de-visite photograph pays a tax of two cents.

The large steam ferry-boats plying across to New Jersey and Brooklyn are novel to one lately arrived from the Old World. They differ entirely from our floating bridges, such as may be seen at Portsmouth and elsewhere, those here being regular steamboats, worked by paddles, but having broad, covered decks, with a long cabin at each side, and accommodating two long rows of vehicles in the centre. One day, when I crossed to Jersey city, the boat could scarcely make her way through the huge cakes and fields of floating ice, grinding and crushing slowly through them, her way being sometimes almost entirely stopped. How the paddles stand such work is a mystery.

On the last Sunday in 1866, I visited Beecher's church in Brooklyn, and though there a quarter of an hour before time, nearly failed to get in. When the service began, and the congregation rose, the building appeared literally as if not another person could find even standing room, and the effect of such a multitude joining in the singing was

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startling, after the usual lifeless American service, where the congregation listen in silence to the singing of a small-trained choir. Mr. Beecher's discourse was most original, both in substance and style, many parts of it causing the hearers to laugh, a result apparently not displeasing to the preacher. The pews in this church are only held by the year, and are annually put up to auction, a course which must be very beneficial to somebody's pockets. Mr. Beecher announced that he would hold a "reception" on New Year's Day, from 10 a.m. till 7 p.m., when he should be glad to see any of his congregation, or indeed any one who liked to call, adding that those who wished to see him in a smiling mood had better come early, as he found by experience that after he had shaken hands with about fifteen hundred people his pleasureable emotions were by no means so lively towards later comers—an announcement which seemed highly to amuse his hearers.

Among the many educational institutes of this country, the School of Mines, attached to Columbia College, deserves to be mentioned. Three years ago the institution was opened, with a view to afford means of acquiring a sound knowledge of mining and the allied sciences. It began but with a few students, though even more than its originators had anticipated; now it numbers nearly one hundred, and even more are anxious to enter, but the standard of the entrance examination has been raised, with a view to excluding all but the promising students.

The chemical department and laboratories are the most perfect and extensive that I have yet seen, and the number seeking entrance shows the want of such an institution, and how well it is appreciated.

The course extends over three years, the students being required to spend the four summer months of each year on some actual mining works, and to bring back a certificate of having done so. No text-books are used in the course, and the system of examination by paper has been entirely abandoned, with a view to check the system popularly known to us as "cramming." The average age of the students is about twenty-two, and they look like earnest, hard-working men.

The plans for the extension of the school buildings, and all the fittings, furniture, &c., have been made in the building, under the superintendence of the professors and students.

The standard of answering required at the examinations is very high, being sixty per cent. of the maximum obtainable.

In this institution the Americans seem fast approaching that period to which they profess to look forward, when they shall not only no longer have to visit Europe in search of learning, but when Europe shall come to them. At present they seem to have fallen into the mistake of rather establishing new institutions than seeking to improve and extend those which they already possess.

You have probably heard of the vast mineral wealth of this country in California and the Rocky Mountains, but you may not know that a small company of a few shrewd Bostonians are now working a gold mine in Nova Scotia, near Halifax, and earning a dividend of fifty per cent. They work on the principle of cheap management, and no expensive salaries to officials. These sharp Yankees seem to have got ahead of the "blus noses" even in their native Nova Scotia.

The educational statistics of this State sound highly satisfactory. Its total population is just four millions, of whom 823,873 are voters; the children (so called) between six and seventeen number 931,404, of whom 919,033 attend school, ninety per cent. attending the common or free public schools. There are 11,552 schools supported at a cost of 8,628,143 dollars per annum, about one-half of which went for teachers' salaries.

During the past year there has been a decided falling off in the number of Irish immigrants, and a corresponding increase of Germans. Of the quarter of a million who landed in New York from the Old World in 1866, 106,000