A TRIP OVER THE PACIFIC RAILROAD.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD:—

I have just returned from San Francisco, and found the papers on my way through full of self-gratulation on the completion and junction of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads, and singing high sounding pæans in honor of an enterprise which, though deservedly exciting the wonder and admiration of the world, is yet, though I dare say few suppose so, in anything but a complete or satisfactory condition. So it occurs to me that it will be for the advantage of intending travellers over the road if I can let them know through your columns in what position I found affairs. In company of several friends I crossed overland to San Francisco in March last, but I will not trouble you with the state in which I found things then. My chief inducement in returning was in knowing that I should trouble Wells, Fargo & Co. very little with the transportation of myself and baggage this time.

A friend of mine left San Francisco on the 4th instant, and, returning from a visit in Nevada, I joined him on the afternoon of the 5th at Reno, whence we started together, about half-past four P. M., and proceeded to Elko by half-past twelve the next day, having, at the tail of our train, a sleeping and restaurant car attached, which were occupied by the directors and officials on their road to the end of the Central line. They brought with them the Californian laurel tie and gold-tipped spike, which have since effected the so-called junction of the lines at the opening celebration of the 10th inst. Leaving Elko at half-past one on the 6th, we arrived at the end of the road by half-past eight A. M. on the following morning. Ours was the first train which took passenger cars through from Elko. The only incident affecting our journey was a stoppage of the train during the afternoon for an hour, in order that General Stanford and family might take their ease at dining, the which gave rise to the utterance of several facetiæ at their expense. There was also a bad portion of the road, over which we rattled at such a rapid pace and with such an amount of jumping and bumping that even the equanimity of one of the "high-toned" officials I knew was disturbed, and he exclaimed at the imprudence; but the engineer had an object, and as that administered to the chief object we had at heart—namely, supper at Toano Pass, which we reached at half-past nine—we soon dismissed our fears, when it was over.

Arrived at Promontory Mountain (on the 7th), we were at once transferred to stages, and accomplished the remaining seven miles between the two termini by half past nine o'clock. It appeared to me as we passed along the road two or three days' good work required to be done before a train could run through; but what cannot a company which has had ten miles in one day accomplish even in an hour? On the way in the stage we passed an encampment which only a few days before had been the scene of a quadrangular fight, resulting in the death of five men, one shooting the other consecutively. The then terminus of the Union Pacific line was not united with water, much less with an eating house, so, as we had foolishly brought no provisions with us, we obtained nothing to eat till five in the afternoon, when we reached Taylor's Mills, two and a half miles beyond Ogden City. However, we were offered time to eat at Corinne (the new Gentile town which changes its mayor and corporation of seven aldermen every week), but the proprietress of the "New English House" had nothing prepared for us, and seemed to intend planning a meal on the table just as the train should start, and thus to save the victuals from consumption at our expense; so we withdrew in time not to be done, and packed up our appetites again till half-past five o'clock, when we came to a stop at Taylor's Mills for the night. We there, at a capital restaurant, made up for the loss of breakfast and dinner, and made supper do for three meals. At Corinne we overtook the people who had left San Francisco on Monday, the 3d, as they had staged it all the way from the Central line to Corinne, and they crowded into our already overfilled car. At Taylor's Mills we heard no end of bad news—of bridges broken down and of three interruptions to the traffic between Weber Cañon and Echo, and so had to lay over and pass the night crowded together in the solitary passenger car which the Union Pacific Company had generously provided for the transit of 100 first class passengers. On leaving the Union Pacific terminus about 100 railway hands, or "democrats" (being supposed to be all Irish), as they are generally called, having been dismissed with free passes to Omaha, had crowded on to the train, and stowed themselves wherever they could find room, there being very little accommodation for them; so that at each station or change of cars constant watch had to be kept that they did not invade the little room there was for a large number of ladies and children travelling in our company, no care being taken at all whether the gentlemen had seats or were saved from the forced company of these roughs.

Saturday morning and all the previous night it rained heavily, and no news of the state of things from the front arriving we were not allowed to proceed, so that at last we made up our minds to be detained two or three days in this pent-up state, while some eight or nine would-be wise people took the passing stage for Salt Lake City. They had been gone out half an hour when we were gladdened with the news that we were to proceed, and at forty-five minutes past eleven we were off, going at a snail's pace of course, for along the best part of the way between here and Weber Cañon, wherever the sides of the mountains had been cut away, a succession of landslips had occurred, while there seemed every chance of fresh slides also occurring.

Three miles up, at Devil's Gate, in Weber Cañon, we met our first check—a broken down bridge stretched some 100 feet across the Weber river, which was boiling below it fifty feet or so, and across this the passengers were desired to go, walking in a sort of acrobatic fashion, a board being provided in some places across the ties, through which the boiling torrent below was visible, and in others, where there were wider spaces, people had to spring from tie to tie, and then restead themselves before proceeding; while each person behind kept urging on the person in front to hurry over this unsafe construction. All were glad to be over it and I none the less when I heard men on the spot exclaiming that it might give way altogether at any time. The baggage and mails could not be pulled across, so they were taken round in carts, which was a means of conveyance never offered or suggested even for the ladies and children. Jumping on to the trucks, with an engine attached, which were waiting for us, on a spot where an extensive landslip occurred but a week or two ago, we were conveyed one and a half miles, and then met the second check, another unsound bridge over a less terrifying part of the river. We had to go through another acrobatic performance here; the bridge was wider, but not high above the water; it required, therefore, more care in springing from tie to tie, owing to the entire absence of crossboards to walk on. Arrived across in safety, men, women and children and roughs, we all sat down, feeling as if we had passed a Red Sea, and waited for the arrival of the baggage, and then of the train, which we expected would have waited for us. During this time the roughs amused themselves with discharging their Henry rifles and pistols at the rocks in front of them, till about 3:30 the train from Echo arrived, and its passengers had no sooner disembarked than down came a tremendous storm of rain and hail. Great was the scramble on the part of our passengers and roughs to get stowed away before being wet through, and in consequence a large number crowded into one or two cars, of which as soon as filled the occupants were informed they were to be left behind. Then ensued another scramble, and it was found that although there had arrived two passenger cars and enough cabooses for the roughs, but one car and two cabooses were to be employed for the conveyance, in infinite discomfort and unnecessary squeezing, of the whole crowd till we should arrive at Wahsatch. Being detained in this state an hour and a half for orders from Echo when to proceed, it was not till five that we started, and we reached Echo at eight, where we endeavored to restore our good humor and get what little comfort we could out of the meagre meal which was put before people who had had nothing to eat since seven in the morning. The third obstruction we had expected to meet in the shape of a washed away bridge had been replaced by a sound one in the morning. On leaving Echo such passengers as had no seats in the car were offered standing room as a change and a favor in a caboose kept for them, while the roughs had to crowd together and fare as they could. Somehow or other while we dozed away the night, some on the floor and some on boxes, we found ourselves at four A. M. on Sunday, the 9th, at Wahsatch, and there we expected to end our discomforts; but no, two passenger cars and two cabooses or box cars were all that was offered to our crowd, and, no precautions being taken, the roughs soon had possession of one car, while it was only by keeping the doors locked that the ladies and children had the other to themselves and their gentlemen. There was no excuse for overcrowding here as there were plenty of cars about the station, but the company, in a spirit of meanness, or their superintendent, declined to give the first class passengers any further accommodation than that they might crowd in with the roughs or stay behind.

Thus we started again at forty minutes past five o'clock in the morning, and my friend and myself were seated in the second car and found ourselves treated to the company of these roughs till we reached Cartee, sixty-three miles east. Chewing, spitting, swearing, drinking, bad odors and closed windows, added to our being in enforced close proximity to such a large body of the "great unwashed," we did not consider fair treatment to a passenger to undergo whose only other choice was to crowd in on the occupants of the ladies' car, already quite full, and to stand up all the journey till the company chose to put on another car. Well, further to add to our discomfort, at Piedmont where the disorder among the railroad hands, recently reported, took place (These hands had threatened to hang any contractor of the line they came across in consequence of their pay being withheld, and I was credibly informed by a machinist along the line further east, speaking for himself and the railway men generally, "the paymaster had not been near us for five months.") a fresh batch of fifty worse spirits joined the train, crowded mostly into our car, already full, filled up the gangways and made it soon intolerable by their lolling all over one's seat, kicking up no end of a shindy, hustling one another, snatching one another's bottles away to have a drink, playing with their pistols "for fun," as they said. Every man had one on, and later in the day, when more "on," they were actually firing them off inside and outside of the car.

Stopped at Cartee for breakfast; we made a bolt of it, and stowing our traps away in the ladies' car, determined to stand anywhere on their car rather than endure this enforced bad company; and this is what the public may expect from the meanness of the Union Pacific Railroad management between Rawlings and the end of their line. Why, even the railroad conductors are afraid of these roughs and their pistols, and dare not say a word to offend them or keep them in order, on this section of the line at least, for there the roughs hold their own and every one else's life equally cheap.

Later in the day (for we had to ride the whole 200 miles from Cartee to Rawlings without a seat, except by turning out others) the conductor, on being remonstrated with very mildly by one of our unseated fellow sufferers, replied, insolently, that "passengers who grumble ought to be hung." So the company and their servants evidently do not consider it their duty to study the comfort of their passengers. Such neglect, though, is quite inexcusable, as there were plenty of cars on the spot at Wahsatch, and whereas on the Central Pacific all cars as yet in use have been brought round by sea there is no unnecessary crowding, and constant civility and attention are paid to their passengers.

I have said nothing as yet in reference to the road between Elko and Promontory Mountain, on the Central Pacific; it is very unsound and incomplete, and travel there ought to be quite slow. From the end of the Union Pacific Railroad to Cartee it is as bad as it can well be, and is rightly described as "subsidy road." Even for the sixty-three miles beyond Wahsatch it is unsound, uneven, and certainly hardly safe for ordinary travel. It is not attempted at present to have sleeping cars beyond Rawlings, nor, in my opinion, would they keep on the line during the last 200 miles of the Union Pacific road. From Cartee, however, the road mends and the travelling is easy. Once in the sleeping car at Rawlings I know of no easier road in the States on which to travel; but we could not all obtain this accommodation until we reached Cheyenne on Monday morning, where the best cars for day travelling—ordinary and for sleeping accommodation—that I have seen anywhere are now running to Omaha and back. Let not passengers for the West be deluded by the grandeur of their conveyance at starting, for it will not last, and will not be continued entirely through till the road between the places I have mentioned is thoroughly reballasted and partly relaid and rendered safe for fast travel. The remainder of our journey was pleasant enough. The food is not first class at the stopping places, and we were rather crowded out by the roughs, who ate their meals and then would many of them claim exemption from payment of the $1 25 with mock passes. They seemed, however, to quiet down the nearer they got to Omaha and civilization, as if they began to feel themselves out of their element and amenable to order again. To show the nature of our company I may add that after we left Rawlings two members of a vigilance committee travelled with us prepared with a rope, and went through our cars at night searching for their victim, whom they intended to lynch at once, if they caught him, their cause of action being, I suppose, that a man had been shot and killed by a barkeeper at Wahsatch, in cold blood during the night we were coming through from Echo to Wahsatch, and the people were full of it there. At one of the stations, too, after dark, and leaving Rawlings, some of the roughs clambered on to the back of the sleeping car, where they hoped to effect an entrance into the car, but the brakeman found them out, and in the midst of their contention with him our conductor thought it advisable to rush out, poker in hand, and so helped him to dispose of his opponents.

NEW YORK, May 15, 1869.

THE BOSTON PEACE FESTIVAL.

BOSTON, May 19, 1869.

Boston, the "Hub of the Universe" and the "Modern Athens of America," as she is sometimes ironically termed, is really to be the scene of an event which promises to pass into history as one of the grandest and most significant of any during the past nineteen centuries of the world's career. It has been well said that all grand and novel enterprises have to pass successively through the various stages of ridicule, argument and adoption, and if they are to any considerable degree meritorious they will of themselves command popular approval and slip involuntarily through the additional stage of a glorious consummation. That monster musical demonstration, the great national peace festival and jubilee, of which so much has been said and written in the immediate past—that grand ovation in which the hearty admirers of a restored Union will unite in one common chorus and exultation of thanks and praise—will most certainly be a glorious reality, an unexampled success, a marvellous wonder. The inevitable ridicule which came from many quarters when the event was first conceived was rapidly followed by sober, serious argument. Then in quick succession the general ideas of the proposed demonstration were accepted and adopted by a public somewhat credulous at first; and now that it has appeared that there is everything appropriate in such a national jubilee commemorative of the restoration of peace, the whole American people seem disposed to unite in carrying the enterprise forward to a glorious and happy consummation. The representative people of the whole country—of the thrifty North, the sunny South and the plenty-laden West—will come together on the occasion of this auspicious jubilee to smoke the pipe of peace, to bury the political hatchet, and, as they separate for their respective and distant homes, exclaim almost involuntarily, and in one grand and hearty chorus, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men."

It was but a few days after the little interview between General Grant and General Lee, under the Appomattox apple tree, that Mr. Gilmore (of the renowned Boston band bearing his name) conceived the idea of a peace festival, similar to the one which he has arranged for on such a magnificent scale. For two years or more he has revolved it over in his mind, and during the intervening time reconstruction has gone forward, the Union has been freshly cemented, the proper time for the loyal and thankful to rejoice has come, and the opportunity for these pent-up rejoicings and thanks will be furnished the middle of the coming month. It would require physical and mental faculties of an omnipotent nature to comprehend and describe the colossal features connected now and to be associated in future with this truly appropriate and inspiring national celebration. Money, it would seem, has been the least of all considerations required to carry the grand occasion forward, and industrious labor, and, in fact, every other needed requisite, has been just as abundantly furnished.

The jubilee will occupy five days altogether, commencing on the morning of June 15 and ending on the evening of the 19th, and the Bostonians are arranging for the accommodation of 1,000,000 visitors during this brief interval. The President of the United States, together with his Cabinet, the foreign Ministers to this country and the Governors of the various States, are among those who have been invited. General Grant has insinuated privately that he will be here, and Cabinet officers, foreign Ministers and Governors to the number of over forty have formally accepted of their invitations, and the presence of some thirty members of Congress has also been assured. Large excursion parties are also arranging to come from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Richmond, Charleston, S. C., New Orleans, San Francisco, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Chicago and from all the various cities of the West and South. Numerous prominent officers in the Confederate army have been invited, and several have signified their intention of coming. A letter of invitation to General Lee was forwarded during the latter part of last week, and a favorable reply is daily expected.

While the hotels will be capable of furnishing accommodations to very many thousands of visitors, their capacity will, of course, not be equal to all the demands which will be made upon them. Boarding house keepers and private families have come to the rescue, however, and there is no doubt but all strangers will be well cared for, and at reasonable rates. To secure this a "bureau of accommodations" has been established, where all those having rooms and board for the extra visitors register their name, residence and price, and those desiring accommodations have only to apply to this bureau and they are immediately provided for, and without any expense to any one, the whole arrangement being furnished gratuitously by the jubilee management.

The Coliseum, the great structure in which the festivities of the jubilee are to take place, is rapidly approaching completion and everything about it will be finished in due season. It is located in the Back Bay section of Boston and on the tract of land known as St. James' Park and within less than half an hour's walk or ten or fifteen minutes' horse car ride from the principal hotels and central part of the city. It is unquestionably the largest public structure ever erected in the United States, and for strength, convenience of access and general adaptation for its purpose, is unrivalled. It will afford comfortable accommodations for about 50,000 people, and there will be some thirty or forty doors of ingress and egress. The musicians, vocal and instrumental, will occupy the central portion of the structure, and surrounding them on either side will be the audience. There is also a spacious gallery surrounding the interior, and directly beneath is a broad promenade. Retiring rooms are numerous, and among other conveniences will be a department for the representatives of the press, and also a general telegraph office, with wires stretching to all parts of the world.

The rehearsals of those who are to participate in furnishing the musical features of the occasion are continuing daily, and the very best musical talent in the country has presented itself. The instrumental portion of the orchestra will consist of about 1,200 pieces, and some 400 of these will come from New York city. The department of vocal singers will, of course, exceed this by several thousands, and upon one of the days of the jubilee the voices of some 20,000 school children will be heard, and the chorus on that day, as upon all others, will be rendered thunderingly effective by an artillery feature of the orchestra, the various pieces to be fired at the proper time by means of electricity. Madame Parepa-Rosa, as has been stated, will sing upon some one, and perhaps all of the days. The official programme for all five of the days will be issued this week, however, and then the public will know exactly what is coming and when to expect it. It is only necessary now to say, as was stated at the beginning, that the great and glorious jubilee will in every sense and feature be a happy success, a national honor and the means of inaugurating a kindly and fraternal feeling among all classes throughout the whole of this great American republic.

ART AND ARTISTS IN LONDON.

Hanging Committees—American Painters' Display—Description of Chefs d'Œuvres.

LONDON, April 30, 1869.

A few evenings since the reception of pictures at the new edifice of the Royal Academy, Burlington House, Piccadilly, was closed. Hundreds of pictures, large and small, were handed in, the number being very greatly in excess of any previous year. The new rooms of the Royal Academy are worthy of this increased activity of the artists. They are large, well lighted, elegantly decorated and so marked by a band below the ceiling and above the floor that no pictures exhibited there can ever be "skied" or "floored" in the old, bad mode. The walls are painted a dull maroon tint that will show up the pictures to the greatest possible advantage. In every respect, both for the exhibition of the pictures and the accommodation of the public, the rooms are decidedly an improvement upon the former location of the Academy. It is almost certain, also, that the display of pictures this year will surpass any previous exhibition. Burlington House, built out of the funds of the Academy, is architecturally a credit to London. It is nothing like so fanciful as the Venetian palace at the corner of Fourth avenue and Twenty-third street, New York; but it is exceedingly large, handsome, substantial and imposing.

The exhibition will be opened to the public in the third week of May, and will remain open for three months. Those of our American artists who can spare the time and the money for a summer trip will be more than repaid by the study of these best specimens of modern English art. The hanging committee is now engaged in weeding out the hundreds of pictures offered, and it is said that the committee has decided not to lower the standard of acceptance, in spite of the larger space at the new rooms and the larger number of pictures sent in. Better bare walls than bad pictures is an excellent rule, if hanging committees could only be persuaded to adopt it. There is an earnest wish that some of the leading American artists could be persuaded to send pictures over for exhibition at the Academy. This is often done by French and German painters, and the works of American painters would be even more heartily welcomed. Of contemporary American art very little is known in London, except through the works of Church and Bierstadt; and, although Church is greatly admired here, the London artists will not admit that Bierstadt is a great landscape painter. The gallery of American art in the British Museum is a disgrace to the United States, and it ought to be removed and replaced with better pictures at the national expense.

There are several American artists located here, however, whose works are always well received and who do more justice to their country. Major Dix's exquisite bits of coast scenery are always admired, as are Barton's more ambitious but equally pleasing pictures. An American artist named Whistler is the favorite of the advanced school of artists, and great things are expected of him in future. His is certainly a most original genius, as his "Symphonies in White" at the last Academy exhibition clearly proved. This year he has painted for the Academy a large sea piece, representing the waves dashing against the shores of the Mediterranean. The picture is full of life and vigor, and it is painted with a fidelity to nature which ought to put many more experienced artists to the blush. For instance, Mr. Whistler has painted the water blue—a genuine blue—and although few Englishmen have ever seen any water of that color, since the sea around these islands is a sickly green, yet those who have sailed upon the Mediterranean confess the truth of the color. Very much in the American school also is a picture by an English artist named Barnes. It is called "The Last Rose of Summer," and represents a dying girl and the setting sun. This simple and not unhackneyed subject is so forcibly and genuinely treated as to become an original gem of art. Such young men are doing the real artistic work of England now. Frith, Landseer and many other established painters with great names are devoting themselves to producing "pot boilers"—that is to say, pictures that will sell at once because they hit the public taste regardless of their artistic qualities. Frith, for example, has painted the billiard room of the Garrick Club, when he is really capable of doing high things in high art.

In this practical age, in fact, few disciples of high art remain. Artists have grown more worldly than of yore, and are not content to accept poor Haydon's fate in order to win his fame. They paint for fortune, not for art. They paint to please, not to benefit the public. Their highest standard of taste is the whim of a picture dealer; their highest ambition to get R. A.—the Royal Academy badge—tacked on to their names by some intrigue of personal influence or court favor. Among the few elder artists who still stand out for the old principles against the modern interest is one named Francis, who has done excellent work for years, but has never been appreciated except by artists. This year he has painted a picture called "A Welsh Maiden," which was exhibited at Sir Edwin Landseer's studio last Tuesday. It represents a simple peasant girl, carrying a rake, who stops at the top of a hill, just at sunrise, to listen to the song of the skylark. In this picture the problem of a bright figure against a bright sky is fully solved, and all the details of the work are marvellously executed. It is very doubtful whether this valuable picture will be exhibited to the Academy exhibition, and it is quite certain that Mr. Francis will never be made an R. A. If he would paint billiard tables he would be better appreciated.

You will gather from all this that I find the same differences and disputes between the "ins" and the "outs" of the Academy in London as there are in regard to the Academy in New York. It is quite true. Listen to one side, and you will be told that all that is good in art is inside the Academy. Listen to the other side, and you will learn that only the outsiders are really meritorious and that the Academicians are a set of muffs. The HERALD has always been impartial upon this subject and has distributed praise and blame where they were deserved, no matter whether the artist was in or out of the Academy clique. I am not at liberty, therefore, to take any side in this discussion, and so simply relate the facts as I observe them. In other points I find that the artists here are in the same condition as those of New York. A few famous men are getting large prices for their pictures, but the majority of artists are making very little money. Often it is difficult for them to keep the wolf from the door except by putting themselves in the power of that other wolf—the pawnbroker. Complaints are general; and what can be done? Business is very dull in London, and poor men cannot afford to buy pictures even though poor men can afford to paint them. The picture dealers have lost most of their best customers on account of the stagnation of trade, and accordingly they are putting the screw upon the artists. Such pictures as are sold go ridiculously cheap. Most do not sell at all. Many English artists would emigrate to America, but the reports which reach them from those of their comrades who have made the venture are very discouraging. If some New York dealer could establish an agency here to buy up English pictures for the American market he would make a fortune, if he would take good pictures without known names attached. But under no circumstances would I advise any American artist to come to England to make his fortune at present.

THE COTTON CROP.

Confirmatory Reports of Serious Damages to the Crop—Accounts from Alabama and Georgia—Plantations Submerged and Crops Destroyed—Planters Generally Replanting with Corn.

COLUMBIA, S. C., May 18, 1869.

Accounts received here of the condition of the cotton crop from the States further south continue to be the most unfavorable. In many places it has been found necessary to entirely replant the crop; but, as before mentioned in the HERALD, the scarcity of seed in most localities renders this impossible. Planters are in consequence compelled to put in crops of corn in such cases. While wheat and corn are generally looking well cotton is represented to be universally suffering, having been seriously damaged, withered and blown down by the cold winds, and reduced below what is known as a "poor stand." The extreme cold of the season is unprecedented, the mercury in latitudes as far south as Lower Florida standing indoors at fifty-four degrees within the past week—a circumstance hitherto unknown. All prospects for a crop that will at all compare with that of last year seem to be dispelled, and planters who have heretofore been enthusiastic are now gloomy and despondent. The last crop, generally so good, and bringing such high prices, was the first real help to place the South once more on her legs that has offered since the close of the war, and it was confidently hoped a good crop the present year would give a handsome start in the acquisition of their long lost wealth. The effect of the recent damage can then be better appreciated by those not so vitally interested in the success of the cotton crop.

As an indication of the present condition of the crop, and also as a good criterion to judge of its prospects, I submit a few accounts from different sections of Georgia and Alabama. A statement from Butler county, Ala., is as follows:—

The prospect for a good cotton crop in this county this year is worse than was ever known before. The seed in all the bottom and hillside lands has been washed up, and now a large part of the best lands in the county are covered with water, and the farmers, at least most of them, have exhausted all their seed. Yesterday a farmer in town said that he was offered one dollar per bushel for the common Petit Gulf seed, and he refused it, knowing that he would have to plant again.

About Greensboro', Ala., the lands had generally been submerged by recent freshets. A report from that section states:—

Planters on the river bottoms will, of course, have to replant much of their corn and cotton, after the waters have subsided. But cotton seed is represented as being very scarce—so much so that in some neighborhoods it will be found difficult to get all that will be needed, while high prices will, in all probability, have to be paid. The stands of corn and cotton in this section, except on the river and creek bottoms, are represented as generally good; but both are unusually backward for the season.

The Talladega (Ala.) *Reporter*, speaking of the cotton crop in that vicinity, says:—

Our planters tell us that we have never had a worse prospect for a crop at this season of the year. The heavy flood of rain and the continued cold, cloudy weather have run the earth together as solid as it was before it was broken. The stand of corn is bad, and the cutworms are daily making it worse. The cotton has been dying out in many places, and the grass and weeds are covering the fields.

From Camden (Ala.) comes the following discouraging report:—

The crops in the bottom lands have suffered more seriously than those of the uplands, and the cool nights recently upon us have been a great drawback to the cotton plant.

Since the above was written we have been informed by Mr. R. W. Brewer that about fifteen acres of his cotton is now at least twelve feet under water, and if the Alabama river should continue to rise about twenty-five acres would be completely submerged.

Numbers of others of our farmers, whose plantations are on the Alabama river, are seriously affected by the present rise, some having as many as 150 acres of land entirely under water. Many of those thus situated will be compelled to replant their corn and cotton, and we think the crop of the latter will be materially reduced in this country, from the fact that the seed cannot now be procured.

The Claiborne (Ala.) *Eagle* thus refers to the labor element in connection with the crops, and gives what might be regarded as general of the freedmen throughout the South in the rural districts:—

The river has got "high," and is now overflowing the crops of many of our people, without regard to age, sex or "previous condition." Some of our farmers have abandoned the lowlands and taken to the uplands. We fear the scarcity of cotton seed will prevent much land from being replanted in cotton. This, however, may prove a public benefit instead of a calamity, for corn will be planted instead. The freedmen are generally working well and behaving themselves with commendable demeanor. The only trouble is the men think their wives and children should not work in the crop, and the women entirely agree with them. Hence the scarcity of labor in our fields. They seem to prefer scarcity and almost starvation to agricultural labor with a competent support.

An Albany (Ga.) paper states that the weather is singularly unpropitious for crops, and the greatest uneasiness prevails about cotton, which now looks pale and sickly.

In Randolph county, Ga., the prospects were no better, as will be seen from the statement that the "late heavy rains, followed by chilling winds and an atmosphere almost frosty, have caused the cotton plants to die out extensively, especially upon gray and sandy soils."

The Eufaula (Ala.) *Times* speaks more encouragingly. It says:—

Much complaint is made on account of the injuries by the late heavy rains, in some places very materially injuring the stands and in some cases baking and hardening the ground. The cool weather, too, has had an injurious effect, making the cotton look sickly and bad, while in gray, sandy spots it is dying out. From a little observation in the country, however, the prospect is better than might be expected, and we hope good seasons in the future will greatly repair the damage already done. The freedmen, generally, are working very well.

In other sections that fatal enemy of the cotton plant, the caterpillar, has made its appearance thus early in the season, and is said to be playing sad havoc with the crop. Specimens of this destructive insect have been found in several places and its identity proved beyond a doubt. Altogether the accounts received thus far are painfully discouraging.

BROOKLYN INTELLIGENCE.

MARRIED IN COURT.—Justice Walsh united Patrick McNally and Mary McGinnis in the holy bonds of wedlock yesterday afternoon. The ceremony appeared to be anything but agreeable to McNally, it being a compulsory proceeding so far as he was concerned. Mary had made a serious charge against him, and the services of officer White had been called into requisition. The prison stared McNally in the face, and he consented to the union. The couple launched their barks upon the troubled sea of matrimony separately, McNally setting sail one way and Mary another.

DEDICATION OF ST. CHARLES BORROMEO'S CHURCH.—The new and handsome edifice of the congregation of the Church of St. Charles Borromeo, Sidney place, near Livingston street, will be publicly and solemnly dedicated to the service of Almighty God on Sunday morning next. The dedicatory ceremonials will be performed by Bishop Loughlin, of the diocese of Brooklyn, assisted by the pastor of the church, Rev. Dr. Friel, and a large number of clergymen from other parishes. The affair will, it is anticipated, be one of the finest of the kind ever held in Brooklyn and the attendance doubtless will be very large.

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BROOKLYN.

How School Books are Purchased—Testimony of a Publisher Before the Investigating Committee.

The examination by the investigating committee of the Board of Education of Brooklyn in regard to the manner in which books, supplies, &c., are purchased for the Board was resumed again last evening at the rooms of the Board, in Red Hook lane.

Mr. Kinsella, a member of the committee, stated that the committee had met mainly for the purpose of conferring with Mr. Seabury and Dr. Thorne. The papers had, in the publication of the proceedings, mixed the names of these gentlemen up in the matter, and the committee thought it but proper to invite them to be present, so that they might be heard.

Mr. Kinsella read the notice to the gentlemen, which was to the effect that they were to meet for the object above stated, and deemed it proper to notify them of the meeting in case they should desire to be present.

The gentlemen did not make their appearance.

Mr. W. J. Pooley, a New York publisher, was examined at some length by Mr. Kinsella. He testified that he had some years since furnished the Board with some books; believed they were called "Sargent's Readers;" had also furnished one or two lots of copybooks; the Board did not deal with him extensively; did not know positively from which firm the Board purchased the books, but should think from the price they were purchased from the Appletons; they published a complete series; witness also published a complete series and furnished the New York Board with a great many things; had furnished Sargent's and Greenleaf's Readers. The New York Board advertise for proposals, and I go there and get the supply list; there is a blank left for the price to be filled out; this system has been adopted for the past sixteen or seventeen years, and if I was the lowest bidder I would get the contract.

Mr. Kinsella—Are you acquainted with our system, Mr. Pooley? A. No, sir, I never could get acquainted with your system.

Q. Why? A. Because it is a close system.

Q. Did you try? A. Yes, sir. I have tried this last two years.

Q. How did you try? A. By asking questions.

Q. Who did you ask? A. I would not like to mention any names.

Q. Well, what replies did you get? A. They said my prices were not low enough.

Q. Were they not? A. I should think they were from the list of prices I saw in the papers; from what I saw in the papers my prices were not so high as the Board paid.

Mr. Kinsella explained that this investigation was for the purpose of ascertaining this very fact if one publisher could furnish books cheaper than another why the contract had not been given to him. They wanted to know what the difficulty was. Who was the member to whom you spoke?

Mr. Pooley—I would not like to say what member of the Board I conversed with.

Q. There can be no objection to telling it. A. I do not wish to mention names.

Q. I ask you the question and you do not care about answering it? A. No, sir.

Q. Did you ask one of the members of this committee? A. No, sir.

Witness was questioned by Mr. Rodes, another member of the committee, in regard to the publishing books; said he was an agent; books were printed in Boston, and he was interested.

Mr. Kinsella read the titles of several books, all of which witness said he could supply, but could not tell at what price; dealt considerably with boards of education, and when he desired to introduce his books he went to the school book committee. At the time witness tried to furnish books they were about to stock the schools, and he thought it would cost about $8,000 or $10,000, and he could not afford to furnish them for nothing. He thought he had spoken to Dr. Thorne since they had introduced the new series in the schools. He would not mention any names as he did not care about getting into any row about names.

Mr. Rodes thought Mr. Pooley ought to mention the names of the members with whom he conversed, so as to relieve those who were not interested.

Mr. Pooley refused, however, to give any names.

Mr. Stewart testified that Mr. Leonard was employed by the Schoolhouse Committee, not by the Board; the Schoolhouse Committee had been empowered by the Board to make the appointment, and the salary of $3,000 per year had been fixed by the Board by resolution. (Mr. Leonard is the Superintendent of Repairs.)

Mr. Daniel Croswell had been appointed as assistant clerk by the Board at a salary of $1,000 per year; was also messenger of the Board; his salary was $700 last year; his duties were the same now as they were then; he was responsible only to the Board.

Mr. Kinsella inquired if there was any list of the property owned by the Board.

Mr. Stewart said there was not; he only knew of the property from the deeds. He knew of eight vacant lots owned by the Board in Willow street; the Board had owned them for the past eight years, and they had been occupied by G. Ross & Co., lumber dealers; they had not paid anything for the use of them.

Mr. Carroll testified that he had been a member of the Board of Education for the past nine or ten years; was a member of the Committee on School Books, but they had only met two or three times; had never seen any bills from the publishers.

The committee then adjourned to the call of the chair.

WASHINGTON PARK IMPROVEMENT.

Fort Green, or Washington Park, which has been undergoing a very thorough overhauling for the past twelve months, the work having been commenced last spring, under the experienced supervision of the landscape architects who designed the plan of improvement, is at last assuming a definite form—in certain sections of the domain at least—which gives a pleasing impression to the glance of even a casual observer.

The entire extent of the ground within the enclosure to be improved embraces an area of thirty acres. The location of this park is admirable, being, as it is, in the very heart of the city and overlooking the surrounding land. From certain points a fine view can be had of the East river and the lower bay, with all their varied and interesting scenic incidents; a refreshing and invigorating sea breeze is wafted in from the waters, which is most captivating to all who seek the higher levels of the green on a warm summer's day, and those who have tested the truth of this statement may be termed as legion among the citizens of East Brooklyn and vicinity. Within the memory of the oldest inhabitant Fort Green, long years before the city government devised any plan for the conversion of the spot into a people's park or pleasure ground, was a most favorite resort for young and old. In 1857, when the subject of providing suitable public parks was first bruited, it was proposed to lay out eight pleasure grounds in the several sections of the city, three of which were to be on a larger scale than the others. In the following year, however, this idea was abandoned, and the project of one grand park, Prospect, was entertained, and two extensive sections of land adjoining Flatbush avenue were secured for that purpose. In the meantime the Park Commissioners indulged in the outlay of a few thousand dollars upon grading and fencing Washington Park. Walks were arranged, trees were planted, lamp posts were erected, and a very ordinary wooden paling enclosed the whole. This arrangement served the purpose for a few seasons, but the place finally became the haunt of a bad class of people, the fencing was broken, the lamps shared a similar fate and the place was finally in disrepute; hence the necessity for the present work of rejuvenation; for, after all, Fort Green will be but "an old friend with a new face" to the people of Brooklyn.

The regrading of this park is essentially complete, and about two-thirds of the new ground has been finished and planted. The place selected for public assemblages—the lowest ground, in the angle between Myrtle avenue and Canton street—which covers a space 370 feet in diameter, and affords easy standing room for a mass meeting of 30,000 persons, was some time since completely graded and is now all paved. It has been in use as a drill ground since last autumn, and is now nearly in readiness for all its designed purposes. This section of the plan is admirable, the site in question having the advantage of being readily accessible from the more densely populated part of the city, and requiring but little alteration, comparatively speaking, to place it in its present condition. The ground here has a regular slope towards the north, which furnishes a suitable location for the display of pyrotechnics, and is provided in the centre with a "rostrum" for public speakers. The space, though scarcely sufficient for large bodies of military, will answer well for the parade and drill of a regiment. As there is no fence between it and the streets on either side, when occupied by public meetings thousands of persons may pass in and out without disturbance to the main body.

The "saluting ground" is being laid out on the high palteau in the interior of the park, immediately opposite the "rostrum." This spot has been the scene of great historical events, and in consideration of this fact it is thus appropriately selected by the Park Commissioners. A road for artillery twenty feet in width, leading from the gateway nearest the Portland avenue Arsenal, is in the course of construction. A tomb for the reception of the remains of the "prison ship martyrs" is also included in the design, and the spot selected, on the hillside between the saluting ground and the meeting ground, is being prepared.

One mile of the walks in the interior pleasure ground has been graded, one-half of which has been completely laid with the Scrimshaw patent pavement, with gratings and other suitable arrangements for efficient drainage. Broad walks are being laid out and the whole place is to be turned to account. Lawns for boys and girls and a handsome vine covered walk are also part of the programme decided upon for the embellishment of Washington Park, which, when completed, will be one of the prettiest free pleasure grounds in the country.

AQUATIC.

Opening Day of the Dundee Boat Club, of Paterson, N. J.

The ceremony of formally ushering into existence the Dundee Boat Club, of Paterson, came off yesterday on the lake from which the society takes its name, situated about two miles from Paterson. The opening exercises were thoroughly aquatic. There was water on the earth, water above the earth and water under the earth, not taking any account whatever of boatmen and spectators drenched to the skin. The disagreeable weather well nigh made the affair a failure, but not wishing to disappoint the assembled three or four hundred—(had the day been clear there would have been as many thousands)—the clubs made two or three little brushes up and down, besides which, however, there was not much done.

The Dundee Boat Club is a decided institution. It is composed of gentlemen representing the boa ton of Paterson society, and has for its members such persons as bank presidents and cashiers, lawyers, silk manufacturers, professors and other moguls of the upper crust. At present it numbers twenty-eight members, and the following are the officers:—Coxswain, J. F. Boice; Lieutenant, J. A. Beckwith; Secretary, R. J. Hopper; Treasurer, George McCarter. Their barge is arranged for eight oars, and is quite a fine boat, although rather too heavy for racing. The club have erected a fine boat house on the banks of the lake, and bid fair for a very successful existence. The men, with one or two exceptions, are yet in need of long and skilful training and an indefinite amount of disciplining and drilling. As they are ambitious, however, they may amount to something in the end.

None of the expected guests arrived yesterday, with the exception of delegations from two clubs in Hackensack, who brought their boats with them overland—viz., the La Favorita Club, with a four-oared shell with outriggers, yclept "Ours," and the White Fawn Club, the owners of a beautiful little outrigged shell for two pairs of skulls. The White Fawn was the only really good racing boat present.

Besides the above, and the Dundee, were two little shells, owned by private parties, the first for one pair of sculls, owned by Rozworth Van Emburgh, and the second for two pair, and owned by George Lowe and J. A. Beckwith.

It had been expected that some of the Newark and Jersey City clubs would be present with their boats, in which case there would have been some amateur racing, and which sport was anticipated. The failure of these, however, to put in an appearance caused great disappointment, and as soon as it was found there would be no regular contest the visitors had to amuse themselves by crowding into the boathouse and listening to the dulcet strains of a brass band.

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