COMMUNICATION WITH NORTH AMERICA.

(From the Manchester Guardian.)

The success of the steamers from Liverpool to Boston, by way of Halifax, has caused considerable attention to be directed to that route; and the Boston steamers seem likely enough, not merely to divide the trade in passengers with the New York vessels, but to obtain the greater portion of it. The advantage obtained by the Britannia over the British Queen, both in the outward and homeward voyage, is not owing entirely to her speed, but to the smaller distance which she had to cover, as will be seen from the following statement, which has been carefully taken from the best charts, and may probably interest some of our readers:—

New York to Liverpool.		
To Cape Clear - - -	2748	
Cape Clear to Tuscar - -	150	
Tuscar to Skerries - -	90	
Skerries to Liverpool - -	60	
	——	3048
New York to Bristol.		
To Cape Clear - -	2748	
Cape Clear to Bristol - -	275	
	——	3023
New York to Portsmouth.		
To the Lizard - -	2962	
Lizard to Portsmouth - -	200	
	——	3162
Halifax to Liverpool.		
To Cape Clear - -	2200	
Cape Clear to Tuscar - -	150	
Tuscar to Skerries - -	90	
Skerries to Liverpool, - -	60	
	——	2500
Boston to Halifax - -		350
		——
		2850

The advantages of the route by Halifax and Boston are not confined to the smaller total distance; for, in a steam voyage across the Atlantic, it is a matter of no small consequence to have an intermediate station, at which, if the progress of the vessel should be retarded by unfavourable weather, a fresh supply of coal can be obtained, and the chance of missing the voyage greatly diminished.

THE QUEEN OF PORTUGAL.

(From the New Monthly.)

It may be interesting to devote a few words to the description of the young Queen of this country as she now appears; and curiosity must be more active regarding her as she was for some time in England.

By her first husband, the Prince of Leuchtenburg, the Queen had no children; by the second, Prince Ferdinand of Coburg, she has two Princes born, and this gives the husband the right of being styled King of Portugal. He is extremely youthful, being not more than twenty-one, the Queen is twenty. This Coburg Prince is stated to be a well meaning young man, without vices, and disposed to meddle very little in public affairs of any kind. He is much influenced by a clever German, a M. Deily, who came to Portugal with him; and another important personage of his suite is a Monsieur St. Leger, a Frenchman, who married a Portuguese.

But to return to Donna Maria. The small, interesting little person, who was so much caressed by George IV. and William IV., is now grown into a very large woman. It is rare to see a person of her age of such an extraordinary size. Her features are of a heavy cast; her hair is light, and dressed in ringlets, but without ornament, and is tied in a knot behind. She is reported to be of a harmless, inoffensive character; and when hanging on the arm of the King, who is a slender youth, the contrast is singular.

The misery to which the Royal household is reduced can best be appreciated by stating the fact, that the Government find it more convenient to take charge of and keep the Royal establishment than pay a stated sum for the purpose to their Sovereign. The salaries of all are greatly in arrear; and the Royal personages are in such distress for money, that they are obliged to procure it on their own promissory notes, from Jews and private persons, at an immense discount.

The Palace expenses are arranged and regulated under a Board of Direction. The Queen and King dine almost always together, though the former takes her breakfast and *dejeuners a la fourchette* separate. There are no tables for others—no hangers on, no Court people kept. What remains from the Royal board is immediately given to the poor. The servants and all the attendants are on board wages. Few receptions are given at the Palace, and even when there is an audience of the Queen, she hardly opens her lips, or has communication with any one. The priests have considerable influence with her Majesty.

THE SEAT OF WAR IN SYRIA.—Beyrout, Beyrouth, Beyruth, Beirut, or Bairout, is a town of Syria, on the shores of the Mediterranean, situated on the south side of an open bay. It was a Phœnician city of great antiquity. The name is supposed by some to have been derived from the Phœnician deity Baal-Berith, who had a temple here; but Stephanus Byzanthius says it was so called from its abundant supply of water. Beer (he adds) signifies in the Phœnician language a "well." Diodotus Tryphon entirely destroyed it about 140 B. C., but after the conquest of Syria by the Romans, it was rebuilt near the site of the ancient city. Augustus, who made it a colony, called it after his daughter, with the epithet "happy," Colonia Felix Julia, and medals were afterwards struck in honour of the Roman Emperors, bearing the legend Colonia Felix Berytus. (Plin. v. 20.)—Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great, decorated the town with a theatre, amphitheatre, baths, &c., and instituted games. Herod the Great held here an assembly, in which he condemned his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, on the charge of conspiring against his life. After the capture of Jerusalem, Titus celebrated the birth-day of his father Vespasian at this city. Berytus was famous for the study of the law, for which there was a celebrated school in the city, the foundation of which is ascribed to Alexander Severus; it certainly flourished, at least, before Diocletian. Justinian called it the "nurse of the law," and would not allow any other city than Rome, Constantinople, and Berytus, to have professors who should expound the Roman law.

When the Saracens overran Syria, Berytus fell into their hands. It was taken from them in 1111, by Baldwin, king of Jerusalem, but retaken by Saladin in 1187. During the Holy Wars it often changed masters, and is the scene of the fabled victory of St. George over the dragon. Till the year 1791 the French had a factory at Beyrout, but they were expelled by Djezzar, Pacha of Acre, who seized the place from the Emir of the Druses, to whom it then belonged, and placed a Turkish garrison in it.

Since this time both the town and the adjacent country have been greatly neglected, though it still continues the entrepot of the commerce of the Druses and Maronites, whence they export their cottons and silks, and receive in return rice, tobacco, and money, which they exchange for the corn of the Bekaa and Hauran.

Beyrout now contains few traces of its former splendour. From the debris without the present walls, it appears that the ancient town occupied a larger space than the modern, which is but a small place. The walls are strengthened by several towers, and there are five gates to the city. It receives a copious supply of water from a small river called Nahr Beirut, which rises in Mount Libanus, and flows into the sea a short distance from the town. The streets are narrow and dirty, like those of all Turkish towns; the houses are mostly built of stone. The town is commanded by some low hills to the S. E. Its population is estimated at 6000 souls, of whom the Turks form one-third. There is a large and well-built mosque in the city, formerly a Christian church, dedicated to St. John, and there was a Capuchin convent. The suburbs of the town are as large as the city itself.

In point of locality, Beyrout is as pleasantly situated as any town in Syria; it stands at the verge of a beautiful plain, varied with small hills, and extending to the foot of Mount Libanus. The surrounding country is covered with kiosks, and enriched with groves of vines, olives, palms, and orange, lemon, and mulberry trees; behind which rises the lofty chain of Libanus. No corn is produced around the town; a small red wine is made on Mount Libanus, which is cheap and good; but raw silk is the staple, which, with cotton, olives, and figs, is exported to Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo.—Game is abundant, the beef from Libanus is excellent, and supplies of all sorts may be procured good and cheap.

The bay is large, and the anchorage good, though open to the northward; formerly there was a port, but now there is only a small mole sufficient to shelter boats. The entrance to the river is too shallow to admit a boat of any size. There is a rise and fall of about two feet, but no regular tide. Beyrout is in the pachalik of Acre; it lies in 33. 49½ N. lat. 35. 27 E. long., 40 miles S. S. W. of Tripoli, and 13 miles N. N. E. of Slade.

THE JEWS OF DAMASCUS.—The following brief recapitulation of the affair of the Damascus Jews may be acceptable to many of our readers:—A Catholic priest, named Father Thomas, suddenly disappeared from the quarter of Damascus in which he resided, on the 7th February last. Having been seen on that evening near to the shop of a Jewish Barber, the latter was apprehended and questioned, and finally subjected to torture, when he made what was termed a confession, and accused several of the principal Jews in Damascus of having put Father Thomas to death. This declaration was accompanied with various details, confirmatory, in the opinion of such judges as Damascus could furnish, of the guilt of the person accused. They were seized, committed to prison, and also tortured, to extort a confession of what they had done with the body. Even young children, for the same purpose, were subjected to similar atrocities. It need not be stated, that before such a tribunal what was deemed an entire and satisfactory proof of guilt was elicited. In this stage of the affair an appeal was made to the Pasha of Egypt by the Jews of Damascus, to put an end to the application of torture as a means of procuring evidence in criminal process, and to permit the further investigation of this affair to take place at Alexandria. To the first part of this application Mehemet Ali immediately assented, and, in a manner which does him honour, prohibited the use of torture against the accused persons; he refused, however, to have the process referred to himself, but directed that it should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Damascus authorities, and conducted before a tribunal composed of European consuls specially delegated for that purpose. Thus, as the affair now stands, the Christian monks are the accusers, and Christians also judges; but the population and authorities of Damascus are prejudiced against the accused persons and eager for conviction. For their defence European advocates of eminence are engaged and are now on their way to Damascus, accompanied by Sir Moses Montefiore, who is specially deputed by the Jews of London and Paris to encourage the persons under trial by his presence, and to afford them such assistance in money and advice as they may require.

MR. GREEN'S BALLOON—NARROW ESCAPE.

Mr. Richard Graves O'Donnell, who accompanied Mr. Green in an ascent from the grounds of Cremorne House, has given an interesting account of their narrow escape. He says that in descending—Mr. Green cautioned me particularly to take fast hold of a rope, which he had fastened across the wicker car, and luckily I obeyed his instructions to the letter, for presently we felt a slight check from one grappling-iron let down froom the hoop above to the distance of 140 feet towards the earth. A moment after there came a terrific shock; we were going at the rate of at least 60 miles an hour, and our anchor caught in the side of a dyke, and, owing to the extreme speed at which we were travelling, tore its way through the hoop, to which it was fastened, and, coming in contact with the car as it snapped, completely upset it, so that I and Mr. Green were turned topsy-turvy, with our heads towards the ground. The rope which was passed along the car alone prevented our falling out, though so complete was the upset, that most of the contents of the car, such as the ballast, &c., as well as my own hat, dropped to the earth. In another moment the car righted, and the balloon, thus freed from every check, descended, dashing us with terrific force against the ground. Immediately after, it ascended, and again brought us with a fearful collision to the earth. The wind was blowing with violence, and we were thus carried along for upwards of half a mile, till at last we reached a sort of creek or small river, through which we were hurried, half buried in its waters, to the opposite bank, over which we bounded like a tennis ball, and, after a few moments, found ourselves dragged through some acres of marsh and osiers, towards a high mound, which I confess I contemplated with fearful anticipations of the result. But onwards, still onwards, the terrible demon to which we had linked ourselves, held its way. Ere long we were dashed against it, and then carried over it, right upon a strong paling that lay at the other side; but nothing could withstand our impetuosity, and we burst through the oaken timbers as though they were cobwebs—not, however, I regret to state, without Mr. Green sustaining some very severe internal injuries. We had now a level plain before us. There were large herds of cattle grazing in the plain, who, when they perceived the balloon approaching, at first formed themselves into a body, as though to resist an invading enemy, but on our nearer approach fled panic-struck before us. Never was seen such an extraordinary chase--we were dragged along the ground, fastened to a monster that seemed to disdain all human guidance, and chasing a herd of cattle, who fled in terror, with their tails in the air and their heads to the ground. Ere long I found means to throw myself out of the car, without sustaining any material injury, and seizing hold of one of the ropes, which I twined round my left hand, as I was apprehensive that the balloon, when lightened of my weight, might bear my fellow adventurer on a second reluctant visit to Nassau, the rope cut through my flesh nearly to the bone: but I managed to hold on till a countryman came to my aid. Need I enter into any more details? Suffice it to say, that we found ourselves near Rainham, in Essex, having accomplished that distance from Cremorne House, Chelsea, in less than 20 minutes. The peasantry, who soon congregated about us, rendered us every assistance, and mine host of the Phœnix, in Rainham, contributed all he could to revive and recruit Mr. Green, who was rather seriously indisposed, and is, I am afraid, hurt internally. Thus, according to Mr. Green, I have the honour, let me add the pleasure, of having shared with him the greatest risk he ever encountered in 275 trips. The physician in attendance on Mr. Green states that "the whole amount of his injury is a dislocation of the first and second bone of the sternum, with a simple fracture of two ribs on his right side, which, after his perilous exploit, is as trifling an accident as could well have occurred."

THE SHIP BLENHEIM FOR NEW ZEALAND.—On Monday, August 24th, the Royal Tar steamer left the Broomielaw with the Rev. Dr. Macleod, Mr. J. Crawford, and others, on a visit to the ship Blenheim, then lying at the Tail of the Bank, previous to her departure for New Zealand. The ship is commanded by Captain Gray, and the emigrants amount to betwixt 150 and 200. They are chiefly from Lochaber, Morven, and Skye, with a few Lowlanders. The families consist of the parents, with from six to ten children each, and they are all under the kindly and fatherly care of Mr. M'Donald of Drimintoran, a genuine and highly respectable Highlander, who, to prove his confidence in the benefits to be derived from emigration, and the trust that might be put in his sincerity, goes out along with his family and friends to the land of hope, which, we understand, is Wellington, Port Nicholson. In addition to this gentleman, there is Captain Campbell from Lochaber, and his family, Dr. Sutherland, Mr. John Cameron, Mr. M'Farlane, and Dr. Campbell, the surgeon of the ship, from Mull. Some families were taken into the steamer at Glasgow and Renfrew, to be conveyed to the ship, and it was pleasing to observe the kindness and attention paid to these people by the active Secretary of the New Zealand Company at this place, Mr. Crawford.—When they had all got on board the Blenheim, they were assembled below to hear an exhortation in Gælic, from the Rev. Dr. M'Leod, who seemed to be almost adored by his countrymen. Although we knew nothing of the fine musical language which fell from the lips of the reverend gentleman with earnest volubility, we do not envy the feelings of the man who could have witnessed such a scene with dry eyes and a light heart. The parting of friends is always, in our opinion, one of the most melancholy events that can take place, and a parting such as this was, almost without hope of ever meeting again, doubly painful. The women sobbed aloud, and many a tear trickled down the cheeks of parents and children as they bethought themselves of ther native glens, and homes, and the friends they had left behind. It is no doubt all for the best that these poor Highlanders should leave a land that cannot even supply their very limited wants, but it is a woeful thing when it comes to the moment of departure. Never, we believe, did a more simple and unsophisticated people traverse the deep, than those who sail in the Blenheim. The Bible seemed to be the chief treasure of the adults; and what a striking thing it was to see some of the young women perusing, in sadness, the ministerial certificates of good character and conduct they had all been careful to procure, before leaving the land of their fathers! With our whole heart we bid them all "good speed."—Before leaving, Dr. M'Leod presented to the emigrants, from Mr. M'Lean, fifteen volumes of the most valuable books in the Gaelic language, with a few to found a Celtic Library in New Zealand, under the superintendence of the Rev. Mr. Macfarlan there.

SALE OF GROWING CROP—DUMFRIES-SHIRE.—A great deal of growing grain was sold by public roup in the course of last week. We attended the sales personally in some instances, and used a little exertion in ascertaining the exact state of matters in others. At Priestlands, the various lots of Oats averaged £10 7s. per acre; Mr. McGill, however, obtained a higher figure, having sold four lots near the Toll-bar, which averaged £11 4s. 6d. Another ten acre field he sold privately; and we believe Mr. Rae obtained the same sum for a crack field of oats on the farm of Park. At Kirkton, Kirkmahoe, a fine field of the same grain brought £13 2s.; and we understand Mr. Johnston, Duncrow, sold a good many acres of corn, which averaged nearly £14. But the sale of sales in this quarter occurred at Guillyhill on Thursday, where the whole growing produce on the farm was rouped, exclusive of green crop. One lot of oats actually realised the high price of £15 and upwards, and the whole extensive field in which it grew, averaged £13 10s. per acre. The practice of selling growing crop appears to be extending to this neighbourhood, and we have heard the most experienced persons say, that there is nothing which at roups pay so well as oats—not even wheat in proportion, where of the best quality.—*Dumfries Courier, Aug.* 23.

LOCKERBIE LAMB FAIR.—The number of lambs shown is variously computed at from 40,000 to 50,000. There is no doubt they exceeded those of any of the four last years. Fully the half of the whole were Cheviot, and the number of top, wether lots of this breed, was decidedly much greater than had ever been shown at Lockerbie. Of the other half, three-fourths were Cheviot and Leicester crosses, and the remainder were black-faced. There was a large attendance of the usual Scotch and English wool-dealers, and a great deal of business was done. The fine weather that had continued for a fortnight, had created more animation in the wool trade over all Britain; and the farmers showed a disposition to conclude sales at the present prices. Cheviot tarred wool, which was the principal sale, gave from 14s. to 14s. 6d. per 24lbs.; white Cheviot, 22s. to 23s.; black-faced, 7s. to 7s. 6d.

EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.—We understand that Sir Francis A. Mackenzie of Gairloch, Bart., being fully convinced of the importance of experimental and model farms, intends forming a Joint Stock Company of £100 shares each, for the purpose of renting one or more farms in Scotland, and cultivating them as model farms, on the most approved and profitable modes of management, suited to our northern soils and climate. The worthy Baronet has no doubt either as to the good effects of such an establishment, or to its being profitable to the company, under proper regulations, and a well-devised system.

EXTRAORDINARY SPEED ON A RAILWAY.—A few days ago a new locomotive engine, with passengers, on the North Midland Railway, travelled from Rotherham to Derby, taking a very heavy train of passengers—the latter part of the distance no less than 500—and the journey, which is upwards of 39 miles, was performed in an hour and 25 minutes. In returning, the engine, with only the tender attached, ran 10 miles in eight minutes, between Belper and Claycross tunnel.

CANAL BETWEEN THE RHINE AND THE DANUBE.—Napoleon's grand project for uniting the Rhine and the Danube, by means of a canal, is very nearly cosummated. The whole will be finished in 1842, and it is now completed from Bamberg to Nuremberg. A part of this grand undertaking will thus be open for navigation in the course of next year.

The manufacture of buttons has at length reached the *ne plus ultra* of perfection. An ingenious Frenchman has invented a button, in which the principle of nut and screw is applied, so that without a stitch, buttons may be far more securely, as well as more speedily, put upon clothes than in the ordinary way.—*Birmingham Advertiser.*

CURE FOR TOOTHACHE.—At a meeting of the London Medical Society, Dr. Blake stated, "that he was able to cure the most desperate cases of toothache, (unless the disease was connected with rheumatism,) by the application of the following remedy to the decayed tooth:—Alum, reduced to an impalpable powder, two drachms; nitrous spirit of æther, seven drachms. Mix and apply them to the tooth."—*Lancet.*

THE QUEEN AND THE POET.—In her late "progress" in the North of England, that Royal and Gracious Lady, the Queen-Dowager Adelaide, honoured Rydal Mount with her presence, and was there entertained by William Wordsworth, the Poet. The now venerable man, bare-headed, met her Majesty at the gate; and ushering her into his house, did the honours of the table at a collation. The Royal Lady conversed a great deal, and with evident satisfaction, with her celebrated host. As a matter of course with such a man, he bore his part on the occasion with the greatest dignity: for what less could be expected from one whose life has been one continued training to self-possession and heroic bearing.

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