

Abroad.

Snake River, the largest and most important fork of the great Columbia, drains an immense country. Its head waters rise in five different states, reaching as far east as the Rocky Mountains in Wyoming. For some distance, the river flows through sage brush plains and where the water can be used for irrigating, the land is very productive and no more delicious fruit grows anywhere. The Snake River peaches, grapes and watermelons are known all over the United States. This river flows across the Southern end of Idaho and then forms the boundary between that state and Oregon. Towards the Northern boundary of Oregon, it flows through between towering mountains, loaded with rich deposits of gold, then the river makes a sweep through Washington and joins the old Columbia, on its way to the Pacific Ocean, before it forms the boundary between Oregon and Washington.

Payette, Idaho, is just across the river from Ontario, Oregon, and it was at this point that you last heard from me. I left Payette on Wednesday morning, August 24, and with the aid of the bike reached Weiser, seventeen miles down Snake river, at the mouth of Weiser river. I never saw so many watermelons. The farmers raise them for the market and at this time were busy hauling them to town for shipment. Of course there are other varieties of fruit, but this was the melon season, and one could see nothing but melons.

I stopped at Weiser for dinner, after which we (my dinner, the bike and I) started for the interior of the state of Idaho. An extra dry season makes an extra amount of dust, and the road in some places is very sandy, so the traveling was not easy. Night overtook us at Middle Valley, and we stopped at the home of a good Christian lady who, although she was not well, treated us well, and the next morning I gave her some Secular tracts and a copy of the Torch of Reason, which I hope will prove the proper dose to cure her of her illness, both of body and mind. Idaho has some very pretty valleys, and Middle valley is one of them. If there were not so many barren mountains the country would be more desirable to live in. Crossing a low range of hills, we reached Salubria valley, farther up the Weiser, and by far the prettiest valley I saw in Idaho. Salubria is a neat little town in a thriving country, and Secularists are not wanting there. The editor of the paper is a Secularist and he expressed willingness to arrange for a lecture Saturday night, on my return from Council Valley. We stopped only a few moments, and then journeyed on. The new tires for the bike were left

at Weiser, as I thought the old ones would carry me to Council and return, but at Indian Valley, ten miles from Council, they failed, so I took the "hurricane deck" of a horse and rode to my destination later in the evening. I had no saddle so had to ride bare-back and the stirrups got a little long before I reached my journey's end.

I proceeded directly to the home of Olof Sorenson, who lives on the hillside, one mile from Council, the thriving little city situated in the valley by the same name. I found Mr. and Mrs. Sorenson at home and made myself known to them. The Secular traveler is always made welcome at their place. I was pleased to meet Michael Johnson and family from Vale, Oregon, but was sorry to learn that they were to leave for home early next morning. Mr. Johnson is the grandfather of Lillian, our highly esteemed Liberal University student. I found Mr. Sorenson nursing a felon, which nearly made him sick. My letter had not reached there yet, so there were no arrangements made for a lecture and we spent the evening visiting. Dr. Lee, and Mr. Marsh, the photographer, called and we spent a very pleasant evening. Mr. Marsh resides in Weiser and devotes the summer months to traveling. He is an enthusiastic Secularist and says it has never injured his business to tell people his exact opinion on all questions. I visited him at his place of business next day and had a very pleasant time. He pointed his camera at me and drew the slide which made quite an impression on the dry plate. I don't know what the outcome will be. The last I saw of the plate he consigned it to the dark room, in a "negative" condition.

We advertised for a lecture that night and I was surprised to see so many out on short notice. I secured another member to the Oregon State Secular Union and met several enthusiastic Secularists, among whom are, Mr. Camp and family, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Hancock, Mr. Kehrl and others. Secularism was introduced here a year ago by Mrs. Hosmer and Miss DePeatt, who held some very successful meetings and secured several members to the O. S. S. U. There is a chance to build up a splendid organization at Council and I was invited to return this fall and assist in launching the organization on a firm footing.

Saturday morning I borrowed a saddle of Mr. Sorenson, to go with the horse, and started on my return to Salubria, where I was to lecture that evening. I reached the home of the horse at noon and stopped for dinner. Mr. Johnson of Vale had taken the bike to Salubria, where I had ordered the tires sent, so I rode the other ten miles in a freight wagon. The weather was hot, the farmers were busy, and my lecture was not well attended, but I gave

them the best I had and met several very nice people. Mr. Day, who runs the hotel, furnished me board and lodging and treated me very well. Mr. Hannan and Mr. Smith subscribed for the Torch, and during my short stay in Salubria, I met many who have thrown off the orthodox yoke.

Mr. Allison lives in the country and I called at his home for a few moments to acquaint him with our work and he expressed satisfaction at learning that we are doing so much for humanity in the name of Secularism. Returning to Salubria, we proceeded to Middle Valley, eleven miles away. The bike with the new tires went nicely and we were soon at the home of Mr. Kilborn, a good Secularist, and a good man. I was kindly treated and enjoyed my stay over night. Mr. K. subscribed for the Torch and expressed a desire to give the cause a further "boost" at another time. Next morning we took leave of the Kilborn family and worked our way over mountains and through valleys to Weiser, where we stopped for a short rest, and for dinner.

Mr. Triplo (I guess that is the way he spells it) owns an interest in a nursery at Weiser and promised to send us some trees for the University grounds.

From Weiser to Baker City, the country is mountainous and sandy and I decided to travel by rail for a change. The train was late and I passed the time in a discussion with a Christian Advent minister who expressed surprise to learn that the railroad company should grant me a half-fare permit. I suppose he was of the opinion that railroads are Christian institutions, run in the interest of Christianity and that the owners were all Christians.

Following down Snake River a few miles, the railroad crosses into Oregon. Here, the Oregon Short Line ends and the O. R. & N. begins, and at this junction, the town of Huntington is situated, dependent upon the railroad for its existence as a town. The train stopped for dinner and I put in the half hour visiting friends and eating peaches.

Upon boarding the train again, I encountered a Methodist minister with whom I held a discussion until we reached Baker City, fifty miles distant, where my journey by rail ended. I enjoyed my visit with this minister. He informed me that he is a believer in "theocratic" evolution. By this he means that evolution is ruled over by God. I told him that theocratic evolution is impossible, for God cannot rule over evolution. Evolution rules over God. The God of the present time has little resemblance to the god of the past. He is subject to the laws of evolution and evolution has changed him as well as Satan.

You may as well talk of devilistic evolution as theocratic evolution. Evolution needs no handle. It can handle itself, and handle both God and the devil.

PEARL W. GBER.

My Honest Opinions.

(Continued from 3d page.)

giving way, and the mind weakening with the body in disease, are very unreliable, to say the least. But such are almost invariably seized upon by Christians to distort the real views of a person after he is dead and cannot reply.

As to the Christian religion, I have studied it somewhat, and am convinced that it is not "Christian" at all, only by adoption. It is a warmed-over re-hash of ancient Paganism, adapted to the needs of the present-day priest. It is a fraud pure and simple. Not only a fraud, but it is the most cruel, inhuman, merciless and demoralizing fraud on earth. I know of no religion which is more so.

All systems of supernatural religions are frauds, and are founded on the ignorance and superstition of weak-minded people, children, emotional women and designing persons. And the "church" becomes a refuge for rascals and a feeder of scamps and hypocrites who "steal the livery of heaven to serve the devil in". Yet there are many good people "in the church". It is a monstrous poor religion that don't have some adherents better than it is. There are some otherwise good people who "profess religion" for policy's sake, and many unbelievers, both in "the church" and out of it, keep quiet from the same cause, not caring to combat or endure the vilifying, back-biting and other petty persecutions, in which "church people" so much indulge, towards those of courage and mental independence.

Persecution is about the only weapon the Christians have now. They dare not resort to argument in defence of their system, so they use such force as is yet left them to the extent of their ability.

Time was when Christians had power even over the lives of people. History shows that they have never hesitated to use that power freely and most brutally. Ignorant, brutal and savage, the wise and virtuous have ever been their especial prey, and the dungeon, the rack, the stake, fire and sword, have been their only "argument" to "convert" people to Christianity.

To "hold no faith with the unbeliever", to do evil that good might come", to them, has been sound orthodox doctrine. Under the savage sway of Christianity the Roman Empire was destroyed; the arts and sciences lost; and for twelve hundred years civilization was carried backward into degradation and barbarism.

After the Infidel invention of printing and gunpowder, learning began to revive, though the church fought with all its might against it. But under the spirit of inquiry, doubt, skepticism, freethought, infidelity, or by whatever name it may be called, civilization began