

## Abroad.

BY P. W. GEER.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

Tuesday morning I took the train for Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and from there I rode on a freight train down the Chippewa valley to Durand, the former home of Mr. and Mrs. Hosmer. I soon found Mr. George Dunlap in a store, and he was very anxious to hear the latest news from his friend, J. E. Hosmer. Mr. Dunlap is trying to shape his business so that he can locate in Oregon in the near future, for he likes our climate as it has been represented to him, and he is a pronounced Secularist. I enjoyed several visits with Mr. Dunlap during my stay in Durand and will be pleased to see him in Oregon. Mr. H. C. Page, Mrs. Hosmer's father, is visiting at his old home in Durand, and I found him with his sister, Mrs. Hattie Spooner. Mr. Page left Silverton a month before I did, and had no idea that I would follow him. I stepped on the porch, and through the glass in the door I saw "Father" Page enjoying a rest in a rocking chair. I will never forget his look when he saw me. He gazed at me with his eyes wide open, then looked at his sister and again turned his gaze at me. He looked out of the window to see if the scenery belonged to Silverton or Durand, and then pinched himself to see if he were alive. Satisfying himself that he was alive and in Durand, Wisconsin, he ventured to open the door to feel of me and see if I were a Geer or a ghost. Well, we had a jolly visit, and enjoyed myself visiting with the relatives and friends of Mr. and Mrs. Hosmer (or "John and Minnie," as they are called by every one). I saw the house that John built and recognized it, because it looks just like Hosmer. I visited the old home of Mr. Page and saw where John and Minnie did some of their "sparking." Among the delightful visits was three hours spent with Mr. I. D. Alkire in his museum. Such a collection I never saw before. I wish I could have spent a month with Mr. Alkire and his curios. There are specimens of the earth's crust from the different periods or eras; there are many kinds of shells and corals, besides a great variety of petrifications, ores and minerals. What a mixture of Indian relics, spears and old swords! He has samples and evidences of animal life from the lowest forms. Of course, Mr. Alkire is a Freethinker; no one could be such a student of nature and be orthodox. Orthodoxy is unnatural, and Alkire is close to nature. He is gathering his collection for the benefit of education in Durand, and the citizens of the little city ought to appreciate his labors. He is interested in

the Liberal University, and gave me two trilobites, some asbestos from the Black Hills and some crystalized carbon, harder and almost as brilliant as a diamond. I prize these additions to our museum more than anything we have received for some time. The trilobites are the first I ever saw.

Several people in Durand are going to move to Oregon to enjoy a free religious atmosphere, a milder climate and delicious fruit. We will gladly welcome them to our state. I enjoyed a pleasant evening with Mr. and Mrs. King and stayed one night with the Spooner family, where I visited with Mr. Page and his mother, who is well-preserved in her old age. My second night in Durand was spent at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Russell, and Miss Mabel entertained us with splendid music on the organ. Mr. Russell is a cousin of Mrs. Hosmer. That evening I bade good bye to Mr. Page, and expect to meet him in Silverton later in the season, for I don't think he will be long contented in the midst of narrowness and religious prejudice which prevails in Durand. The people of that place are not only afraid to speak, but they are afraid to even think. There, two things a person may do and be popular—pray and drink whisky. Durand is about the size of Silverton and has twelve saloons; Silverton has only one. I took the early morning train for Eau Claire, and Mr. and Mrs. Russell were kind enough to get me up and feed me before 5 o'clock. Their kindness and hospitality will never be forgotten.

I expect to remain in Wisconsin another week, and will visit different parts of the state. The general appearance of the country is similar to Western Oregon, but there is one exception I could never become accustomed to—there are no orchards. It seems that fruit ought to grow here since there are so many trees, but I suppose it is too cold. I hope to soon be in the land of Secularists and accomplish something for the Liberal University and the cause in general. I wish to make our people in different parts of the Union acquainted with our work, and Torch of Reason subscribers should not be surprised to see me, no matter where they live, for I am on the fly and am liable to light almost anywhere.

Eau Claire, Wis., May 4, 299.

Secularists would you not like to have some letterheads printed with Secular sentiment and Wettstein's Freethought badge, to use in correspondence with your friends? We will furnish them to you with your name and address printed on them for 75 cents per hundred, \$1.50 for 250, or \$2.50 for 500, post paid. Let the people know where you stand.

For the Torch of Reason.

## An Irascible Judge.

BY ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

A certain Judge Peabody, in the state of Missouri, when on the bench, always has the American flag spread out behind him as an evidence of his loyalty to the laws and constitution of his state. His decision in a recent case of a wife-beater has been extensively noticed by the press. The wife's complaint was summarily dismissed on the following grounds: The law gives the husband the right to slap his wife with his hand or fist, provided he does her no bodily harm; that is, he breaks no bones nor permanently disables her in any way.

The judge assumes there is no harm done when a mother is humiliated in the presence of her children and her own self-respect destroyed. This power, says the judge, is necessary to maintain a healthy family discipline. The plaintiff in this case argued with her husband in the presence of her children, and, probably getting the better of the argument, she provoked him, made him very angry, and he chastised her according to an old common law of England laid down by Littleton, Coke and Blackstone, and re-echoed by our own Story and Kent.

Sustained by such an array of judicial authorities, what folly for a wife to complain or for a husband to hesitate in using his high prerogatives. It was bad enough to argue with her husband at any time, but in the presence of their children, most demoralizing. The question might arise, whether a heated argument was worse for their children than seeing their mother chastised according to law.

The judge says that women know when they enter the marriage state that strict obedience is required, and they solemnly promise at the altar to obey, honor and love their master. On the contrary, women do not understand the significance of these pledges nor the laws on family discipline. They have not attended the law schools nor heard of the vagaries of Coke or Blackstone, and perhaps never seen their theories illustrated at the fireside, and possibly never heard of Judge Peabody!

American men, in general, as lovers, are so courteous and tender, so subservient and worshipful during courtship that women are wholly unprepared for this transformation of the lover to the husband. If Judge Peabody has revealed to woman her true status as a wife, every honest lover should give the key of this situation to his fiancée. Instead of reading beautiful poems on the divine passion, the uplifting spiritual essence of love, as set forth by poets and novelists, he should read to women

passages from our own Kent and Story on the beauty and blessedness of obedience and absolute submission to the commands of the husband. Judge Peabody has evidently been taking a Rip Van Winkle nap that he does not know the new woman, with our liberal divorce laws, can sunder all such unholy ties as readily as did Sampson the withes of the Philistines.

A law that would prevent two strong men from pounding each other when provoked in argument that cannot protect a wife in similar circumstances, is a travesty on all law. To extend the panoply of the law over a wife-beater in the nineteenth century, is a disgrace to the judiciary. Thomas H. Peabody should be impeached and sent to a lunatic asylum, or be compelled to join the Anti-Suffrage Association. We seem to be pariahs alike in the visible and invisible world, with no foothold anywhere, though by every principle of government and religion we should have an equal place on this planet.

We do not hold the ignorant classes of men responsible for their outrages on women, but the published opinions of men in high positions, judges in the courts, bishops in the churches, presidents of colleges, editors, novelists and poets, all taught by the canon and civil law. It is a sad reflection, that the chains for woman's bondage have been forged by her own sires and sons. Every man that is not for us in this prolonged struggle for liberty is responsible for the present degradation of the mothers of the race. It is pitiful to see how few men have ever made our cause their own. But, while leaving us to fight our own battles, they have been unsparing in their criticisms of every failure. Even those claiming to be our friends have published with alacrity our blunders to the world. Of all the battles for liberty in the long past, woman has been left to fight her own, with all the powers of earth and heaven, human and divine, arrayed against her.

To those who have a proper pride of sex, who have labored half a century for woman's emancipation, her present helpless position in so many situations is aggravating and depressing. In hours of solitude, alone with nature in all her grandeur, I have asked the everlasting hills that in their upward yearnings seem to reach the heavens; I have asked the majestic forests and mighty rivers hastening to the sea; I have asked the sun, the moon, the stars, that have for ages looked down on human weal and woe; I have asked my own soul, in moments of exaltation and humiliation, if woman was made to be forever the subject, the slave of another human will, and in solemn chorus one and all have answered, No! No!! No!!!