

Abroad.

BY P. W. GEER.

I arrived in the great city of Chicago Monday afternoon, after a two hours' ride from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I proceeded to the home of the Freethought Magazine, where I found H. L. Green and his son, H. G., with whom I spent an hour or so very pleasantly. Editor Green, I am sorry to say, is in very poor health, and it is not to be wondered at, for he has spent many years in active Freethought work, the greater part of the time working against great odds. He has succeeded in making the Freethought Magazine a very valuable periodical for the promotion of our grand cause.

My next visit in Chicago was with the Reichwald Brothers on South Water street. This is the busiest street in the world, and no one should visit Chicago without taking a journey along this thoroughfare. It may take you half an hour to walk a single block in the busy part of the day, and you are liable to be knocked down and walked on; but you ought to go there if you want to see humanity in a rush. There are crates of strawberries, barrels of apples, cases of eggs, loads of bananas and boxes of all kinds of fruits and green vegetables piled high on the walk, with a narrow passage through the center for people to travel—or attempt to travel. Men are running here and there with truck-loads of goods and buyers are busy inspecting the goods and getting prices. Messenger boys are running here and there delivering messages, and now and then a bootblack has the nerve to venture along the street and yell "Shine!" If one should stop to get a shine in that jam of humanity there would not be enough left of him to shine, or he would at least be black and blue all over. A man doesn't need a shine on South Water street, for he is in luck to get out of the place with even his boots on. The street is crowded with drays and express wagons, which deliver and haul away great loads and rattle over the stone pavement with a deafening noise, and one has to yell at the top of his voice to be heard.

In the midst of this busy mass, at the corner of Clark street, is the office of E. C. Reichwald & Brother, the chief of South Water street commission merchants. Their office is headquarters for the American Secular Union, where Freethought is dealt out in large doses as well as strawberries and asparagus. Mr. Reichwald was the first person to take a stock of green vegetables on the street. This was but a few years ago, and he was laughed at by all. He is noted for originality and his judgment is nearly always good. He was not

mistaken in this movement, which is proved by the fact that the street is now devoted to the commission business.

I found Secretary Reichwald working at his old trade, photography. He has the negatives of nearly all the prominent Freethinkers and is busy printing pictures from them, which he sends to Freethinkers in all parts of the country who send their pictures to him. These pictures make splendid presents and cause Freethinkers to feel better acquainted with each other. Sometimes Mr. Reichwald sits up until near midnight working with his pictures. People will understand by this his enthusiasm for the cause. He devotes the forenoons to his commission business and the afternoons to Freethought work. His daughter, Miss Josie, now assists in the office and is valuable help.

Mr. Reichwald invited me to spend my time at his home, which invitation I gladly accepted, and it is needless to say that I enjoyed myself. I spent one evening assisting Mrs. Reichwald in planting her orchard and garden, which work I enjoyed immensely. I also purchased the seeds and trees at the large department store in the city, Mrs. R. thinking my judgment in such matters ought to be good, since I had been raised on a farm in a fruit country. Time will tell.

During my few days' stay in Chicago most of my time was spent with Mr. A. E. Gammage, president of the Chicago Secular Union. Mr. Gammage is an attorney of splendid ability and a Secularist in every sense of the word, and I was glad of the opportunity to get his assistance in drawing up a charter for the Liberal University. He says there will be no trouble about making the institution solid and perpetual, and he is anxious to see it succeed. His help, with that of others, including Mr. Tenney, will be of great value in founding our school, free from all creeds and dogmas. Liberals are beginning to rally to our support now as they have never done before. They have become convinced that we mean business and are in this work to stay. There is no time to lose, for the summer is upon us and there is lots of work yet to be done before the building can be made ready for school.

Mr. Gammage has a large practice and is a very busy man. This necessitated much waiting on my part, but I did so cheerfully, feeling that it was for the best interest of the cause. Mr. Gammage is a splendid entertainer and one will never be lonesome in his company. I met Mr. Isaac A. Pool while in Chicago and had a very interesting talk with him. Torch of Reason readers are quite familiar with his practical productions which have

appeared in our columns from time to time. Mr. Pool is quite old, but well preserved. He is a florist of marked ability and lives at Melrose Park, in the suburbs of Chicago. I intend to visit him on my return from the East. I also had the pleasure of meeting Dr. J. H. Greer, another enthusiastic Secularist, who has been prominently connected with Chicago Secularism for some time, and he is interested in the work in Oregon. I made the acquaintance of Dr. Greer at the convention in 1896. Mr. Gammage and I called on Mr. Dahlstrom at his "Antiquarian Book Store" on Van Buren street, where a stock of Liberal books and literature can always be found. Mr. D. is a very pleasant man to converse with and is a pronounced Secularist.

Determined to hear Col. Ingersoll lecture on "Thomas Paine" in New York, Sunday, May 14th, I left Chicago Thursday night over the Grand Trunk railroad, after dining with the Reichwald family at their home on Warren avenue. I could not see any of the country through which I passed until morning, when I awoke at Battle Creek, Michigan. I had never visited that state before, and since I like to study the face of the earth as well as the faces of the people, I began to look around while the train halted for breakfast. The trees, with their green foliage, looked refreshing, and a luxuriant growth of grass covered the ground. Immense apple orchards were on every side, and the country has the general appearance, at this time of the year, of Western Oregon. It pleased me to see orchards again, and as we sped along toward the Canadian border among the rolling hills covered with fields, forests, orchards and trees, with here and there a comfortably situated home, the ever-changing panorama was enough to delight any traveler. At this time of the year Michigan is a lovely state, but in the winter time, I am informed there is a vast difference, when the trees are naked, the whole country covered with snow and the thermometer away below Kalamazoo.

Lansing, the capital of Michigan, is a lovely city, situated on the Grand river. The capital building is on a high elevation above the railroad track and is plainly visible from the depot. We arrived at the city of Port Huron at noon and waited until 2 o'clock before proceeding into Canada. Two customs officials boarded the train as we left the depot. The first one asked me if I was going to stop in Canada. I told him I would not if the Canadian government would allow this kind of "male" to pass. He grabbed my valise, pasted a label on it and went on. I didn't know whether that was a judgment against me as

being blasphemous or a clearance paper. Presently the other official came along and I waited breathlessly to see what was to be done with me, or more especially my valise, which was loaded with Freethought literature and dirty clothes. He made a grab for my valise and I thought it was a "goner," but as a last resort I showed him the label on the bottom, when he dropped the valise like he would a hot iron. He next visited an old lady whose valise was not labeled. He opened it, strewed the contents upon the seat and then marched on in his tour of inspection, leaving the old lady to repack her valise. It was then I saw what I had escaped by having my valise labeled, and I guarded that label with jealous care the rest of the journey.

We passed from American to Canadian soil through the great St. Clair tunnel under the river near the mouth of Lake Huron. This tunnel was cut through clay nearly the whole distance and is a splendid piece of engineering. It beats the tunnels under the Chicago river, inasmuch as it is much longer and the clay had to be frozen artificially before it could be cut through and walled up. It is worth any one's time to take this trip to see the wonderful works of Nature and Nature's god—man.

The afternoon's ride to Niagara Falls was delightful, indeed. The portion of Canada through which we passed is about the same as Michigan and is lovely at this season of the year. We arrived at London at 4:30 o'clock. London is a large, beautiful city and is a great railroad center for Western Canada. There I noticed more difference in the faces of the people than I did in the face of the earth. The people looked "Hinglish," you know. Most of them are dish-faced, with the dish turned bottom up. I suppose the people can't help it and it is useless to criticize them. I am inclined to think that the most of the people I saw are not two-faced—they would not wear the faces they had on if they possessed others. I don't mean by this to describe all the people of Canada. I saw many handsome ones, but most of them were women of course. Who ever saw a pretty man?

Just before we started across the suspension bridge at Niagara Falls another customs official boarded the train. He had on his cap a copy of the American eagle rendered in brass, and when the man spoke I thought the eagle had "squawked"; but I was not afraid this time, for I was leaving the foreign land and had seen Uncle Samuel's agents before (some of them brassy) and many an American eagle. I tried to appear bold and (this time proudly) referred him to the label. He made a dive at it with a blue pencil, and when