

Abroad.

BY P. W. GEER.

Homer Davenport is quite a naturalist, and natural things always have a special attraction for him. He and I sympathize with each other in that regard, and I was delighted when he told me of a collection of curios and natural history specimens in Orange, New Jersey, and proposed that we take a drive down that way. Mr. Gilfort is the man who is the proud owner of this wonderful collection, which he acquired in twenty-six years' traveling over the world with his brother. Such a collection I never saw. There are over 400 rare old guns, pistols, swords and daggers, from the mediæval to the present time, besides aboriginal weapons from Africa, Australia and the South Sea Islands. He also has 8,000 specimens of American Indian relics, the completest collection I ever saw. There are skulls from the elephant to the smallest carnivorous animal and skulls from the gorilla to the smallest monkey. A gavia, or true crocodile, 17 feet long, from the Upper Ganges, is the only specimen in the United States and is especially prized by Mr. Gilfort. A baby hippopotamus is another splendid specimen. Besides these, there are horns from all the animals that ever grew horns. The steer horns from Africa measure 10 feet 11 inches. The most interesting specimen of horns are the two deer horns locked together. These horns are from Oregon and tell a sadder story than was ever written, and tell it so plainly that any one can read it. The deer were evidently angered and came together with tremendous force, locking their horns together so that they cannot be separated without breaking them. The prong of one deer's horn struck the other animal in the forehead, breaking the skull and killing him. The other was then left to starve, and as he dragged his dead adversary along, wearing the skin from his nose, the agony he must have suffered from hunger and exhaustion is plainly told by the expression on his face, which is still preserved, and tells of a deep tragedy committed in the "Wilds of Oregon." One cannot look at those horns and heads without a feeling of sadness.

Well, we thought Gilfort's the finest museum we had ever seen and were congratulating him on his wonderful collection, when he laughingly remarked that we had not seen half of it; and we hadn't. He took us into the cellar, where he showed us a still larger collection of shells, horns, skulls, bones and weapons. These are stored away on account of lack of room, and Mr. Gilfort expects to

find a partner who will go into business with him in New York city and open up a restaurant, which will be artistically decorated with all these rare and curious specimens, and, I dare say, will make the most interesting of all the wonderful things to be found in the great metropolis; and any one going to New York city will not begin to think his visit complete unless he has seen "Gilfort's." Of course, Mr. Gilfort is a Free-thinker. No one could study nature as he has studied it and be otherwise. When I told him of the work we are doing in Oregon, he expressed great delight in learning of it and will help us to succeed. He gave me a sawfish nose, 37 inches long, which is a splendid specimen, and I prize it very highly and hope to take it to Silverton without being broken.

My other experiences in and around New York city have been very pleasant, and I have spent most of my time with Mr. Wakeman and Dr. E. B. Foote, Jr., when not at the home of Homer Davenport in East Orange. Friday evening I decided to leave New York for New England and boarded the Fall River boat Puritan. This is an immense ship, which reminds one very much of a huge, five-story hotel floating on the water. It was nearly 6 o'clock in the evening when the huge ship pulled away from the wharf and steamed into the Hudson river. What a load of human freight! It seemed as though every one was trying to leave the city at once. We rounded the point at Castle Garden, passed under the great Brooklyn bridge and up East river into Long Island Sound. It was raining when we started, but inside of an hour it had cleared up and we had the opportunity of seeing a beautiful golden sunset. Our more sentimental writers would have had their poetic(?) fancies aroused by the beautiful golden tints on the water below and the ever-changing clouds above and would enter into more minute details of the splendor, glory, etc., but we have all seen the sun go down and that is all that was taking place then. I enjoyed the view and would have been glad to keep it with me longer, but it vanished and I remained (not "entranced") on the hurricane deck until dark, when I went to the cabin below and heard the orchestra play sweet and lively music until 11 o'clock, when I decided to retire. I could not get a stateroom, but had to sleep on a mattress on the floor. I had slept in worse places and felt quite refreshed when I awoke next morning at 4 o'clock, just as we were leaving Newport, R. I. I could not get much of an idea of the city, but I enjoyed the ride up the Nar-ragansett, viewing the quaint old

houses and settlements on either bank.

At 5 o'clock we arrived at Fall River, Mass., the end of our journey by water, and I left the boat and strolled up the streets of the city just as some of the early risers were going to their work. I arrived at the city square and looked around. The city hall is located on a spot where a battle of the revolution was fought so many years ago. What a wonderful change since then! Fall River is a city of factories. The place affords splendid water power, and this, with the good facilities for shipping in all directions, make it a good point for the location of factories, where much of our cotton and linen goods come from.

But the best attraction in Fall River for me, at least, is Miss Susan H. Wixon. All of our readers know of her. I cannot remember the time when I did not want to meet her, and now one of my greatest wishes has been gratified. I found Miss Wixon at her home on High street, and she and her delightful sister gave me a splendid greeting, and I have only to regret that my stay was so short. Miss Wixon is a model woman, and no one can make a mistake in imitating her noble life. The good she has done and will continue to do can never be estimated. To me, she is perfection. I cannot disagree with her on any point. As a woman, she is a true model; as a thinker, she is the clearest of the clear; and as a writer, she both entertains and instructs. As to her true character and the respect she commands among all, the fact that she has for fifteen years held her place on the school board in a bigoted city stands as an undisputed testimonial. At the last election her name was on both the Republican and Democratic tickets. All know her opinions on the questions of the day, and although they may disagree with her in some respects, they know her to be honest and true and just where to find her. She has a lovely home, where she holds meetings and gives lectures, which I dare say are instructive, of a high character and eagerly listened to by all. For the purpose of the lectures she has three rooms which she converts into one, and one would think that the house was constructed for this purpose. Across the hall in front of the building is the sitting room, and off from this is Miss Wixon's "den," where the wonderful productions of her prolific brain are placed on paper to be given to the world.

Will the world ever see a nobler character? I never wrote of any one of whom I could find so much to say. The question is, "What shall I leave out?" I wish I could have stayed longer, but I had to hasten on. Miss Wixon gave me some delicious cherries, saying that

I ought to be a good judge of fruit. I think I am, and I judge these cherries to be as near equal to the Oregon product as any I ever sampled. I am the proud possessor of Miss Wixon's latest photo, with her autograph, and also a neat little dish, with a picture of Fall River's much-prized high school building.

I reluctantly bade good bye to Miss Wixon and her sister and proceeded to the home of Mr. Stanton on School street, where I found Mrs. Lucy Coleman, with whom all Freethinkers feel acquainted. I was armed with a letter of introduction from Miss Wixon and this assured me a royal welcome, and I shall ever be proud to say that I am personally acquainted with Mrs. Coleman. She has passed the four-score mark in years, and if her mind was ever brighter or clearer, it must have been bright and clear. All these years she has labored for liberty, and what a wonderful life hers has been! Her life history would certainly make an interesting book. The only regret I have is that I only had a little over an hour to stay. Besides Mrs. Coleman and Mr. and Mrs. Stanton, I met Mr. Walter Stanton and the Mesdames Lincoln of Raynham, Mass. All are Freethinkers. I stayed for dinner and had the pleasure of sitting by Mrs. Coleman, who kindly saw that I was well fed and highly entertained. Mrs. Stanton is a splendid hostess, and I am inclined to think that the hospitality of the New Englanders equals that of the Oregonians. I am very glad to say that Mrs. Lucy Coleman is highly elated over the Liberal University and the work we are doing in Oregon, and will lend her aid.

At 1 o'clock I left the Stanton home and proceeded to the depot, where I boarded the train for Brockton, thirty miles away in the direction of Boston. Here I am at the Gruber home and having a splendid visit with our Secular poet, Miss Grace, her father, mother and Mr. A. W. Dellquest, of El Paso, Texas. Miss Grace E. Gruber is a remarkable young lady, and I will endeavor to describe her home life in my next.

I have just received a copy of the Torch of Reason, and it is like a letter from home. I read with pleasure Mr. Hosmer's letter describing the bicycle trip of the four pilgrims across the East Oregon "hills." I know how to sympathize with them (I mean the pilgrims, not the hills). "My bike and I" traveled over the same route last year. I see that the "Tygh Hill" baffled them and that they walked down its winding way. I can "go them one better" there. I rode down the "hill" and arrived at the bottom right end up. I am glad they did not try the difficult feat, for they might have arrived at the bottom sooner than they desired and be "all dead soldiers."

Brockton, Mass., June 13.