

Abroad.

BY P. W. GEER.

There is one thing I forgot to say about Boston. There are several things I didn't say, but only one thing I forgot. I have reference to beans. An account of Boston would be incomplete without a mention of "Boston Baked Beans." New Englanders do not consider their meals complete Saturday evening and Sunday morning without beans. Often they do not eat them, but beans must form a part of the menu just the same. Bostonians are great people to do things through force of habit; they even have a habit of thinking that Boston is the "Hub" of the universe, while, in fact, it is only one of the spokes, and the wheel could run without it if necessary. Of course I like Boston and the Bostonians, but I am sorry the people have such mistaken ideas. I wish they could see Silverton and the Waldo Hills once.

A trip to Boston would be incomplete without a plate of beans, so before leaving I went to a restaurant and ordered some. They were simply super-natural. Having eaten my fill of beans I left Boston for Brockton, where I arrived in less than an hour, and found the Gruber family at home. It was supper time and I was invited to join the family and have some more beans. It was Saturday night you know, and I was glad of it. The next morning was Sunday, and I was glad of that too, for we had more beans. Mrs. Gruber is a Secularist, and lives for this world. No one will ever go hungry at her home, nor will visitors fail to enjoy her kind hospitality. It is possible, and even probable that the Gruber family may move to Oregon some of these days. They all express a desire to do so, and why not? New England is a nice place part of the time, but Oregon is a nice place all of the time.

After having a good visit, and exposing myself to a kodak in the hands of Miss Grace, who fired three volleys at me, I boarded an electric car for Providence, R.I., while Miss Grace and Mr. Dellquest went in the opposite direction to Nantasket Beach. I hope their ride was as enjoyable as mine. The day was delightful, and the ride over the low grass-covered hills, along the old stone walls, amongst the trees, was indeed pleasant. I arrived in Providence a little after noon, and as I could not get a train for Putnam, Conn., until evening, I spent my time viewing the city. Providence is now the capital of the little state of Rhode Island, and a beautiful capitol building is in process of construction. Sunday is a poor day to visit an eastern city, for business is suspended almost entirely, and the residents who do not go to church (by far the greater majority),

are out in the country or at the seashore, especially in the summer time. Providence is quite a large city, is nicely situated, and has the appearance of cleanliness.

At seven o'clock in the evening the train started for Blackstone, and I decided to get as near as possible to Brooklyn, Conn., that evening. We passed through Woonsocket just at dark, so that I did not get to see much of that city. At Blackstone I waited a few moments for a train to Putnam. I staid over night there, and took the early morning train for Danielson. On my arrival there, I made inquiry for the Bliven home, for I was in search of Eliza Mowry Bliven. I finally found Mr. Spalding, the driver of the Brooklyn stage, and he informed me that Mr. and Mrs. Bliven were living on a farm a few miles beyond Brooklyn, and he would drive me there for a dollar. The dollar and I soon parted company, and Mr. Spalding and I were on our way over the hills, and soon interested in a discussion of religion, when I found my friend to agree with me on nearly every point. At the village of Brooklyn I "changed cars," and Mrs. Spalding, who was also splendid company, took me and her pet dog in a buggy, behind a lively horse, and drove me over to the Bliven home.

I found Mrs. Eliza Mowry Bliven in her garden. She decided that the long lank, being climbing out of the buggy was her friend from Oregon, and she gave me a friendly greeting, which caused me to feel at home. I was escorted into the house, where I deposited my valise and had a few moments chat with my friend in the library. Torch readers are acquainted with the writings and work of Mrs. Bliven, and I wish all of them could see her in her home. She is a tall, spare-built, middle-aged woman, exceedingly active in body and mind. She works hard at her household duties, cultivates her flower garden, and assists her husband at picking berries and gathering vegetables. I found her in the midst of a week's washing, which I did not wish to interrupt, and my offer to assist in the job was declined with thanks (much to my delight). Mr. Bliven was in the field, back of the barn, wielding the scythe, and dodging the rocks in his efforts to save a scant crop of hay. It was there that Mrs. Bliven escorted me, saying that she would see if I was cordially received, and if so she would leave me in her husband's company, while she returned to her washing. I don't know what she calls cordial, but I know that I was never treated better in my life; and I guess Mrs. Bliven was satisfied, for she returned to the house, where we found her a few moments afterwards, busily engaged in the labor-

ious duty of extracting Connecticut dirt from New England garments.

Mr. Bliven is an elderly man, quite active, and a champion at swinging the scythe, caring for chickens, cows and horses, tending the garden, in fact, he can do most anything that a man is supposed to do. His mind is as active as his body, and I have read some interesting articles from his pen. He has traveled considerable, and the account of his trips to Oregon and California some years ago is very interesting. I watched with interest the patience of my friend in searching for blades of grass among the New England rocks. After the job was completed we went to the house, where we examined the style of architecture of the building. Mr. Bliven climbed the cherry tree at the corner of the house and brought down some of the fruit for me to sample, and then we visited the strawberry patch, where I ate the finest strawberries, and the most of them, I ever ate in my life. It reminded me of eating peaches at Uncle Heman's last year, in Oregon. We next gathered some peas for dinner, and after taking them to the house and shelling them, we went out to visit the pond below the barn. Mr. Bliven waded out into the water to gather some beautiful white water-lilies, while I sat on a large rock and scratched a frog's back. I had heard of the "frogs of Windham," and this one had evidently heard of me, for he was not one bit afraid, and sat contentedly while I scratched his back. Everything on Mr. Bliven's place is gentle—the cows, calves, horses, chickens, and even the frogs are pets.

I spent most of the afternoon in the company of Mrs. Bliven. We talked about the past, present and future of Freethought work—an inexhaustible subject. Mrs. Bliven's work of writing, publishing, and distributing the tracts of Scientific Wisdom, has proved of great value to our cause, and had her health not failed her, she would have accomplished much more. She is now in better health, and I hope my visit has helped to "rouse her spirits;" and if she will not attempt to do it all at once, she can still accomplish a great deal. The suspension of the Little Candle almost killed her, and when I assured her that we would start it again at the first opportunity, she was greatly pleased, and will look forward to the coming resurrection with great hopes. Her home is beautifully situated among the hills and trees (and rocks) of Connecticut, and her library is well filled with valuable books, while her head is filled with excellent ideas. The collection of minerals and shells in the library is indeed interesting.

Mr. and Mrs. Bliven are strong temperance workers, and both are practical vegetarians. No meat of

any kind enters into their diet, and they use but little sugar and salt. The table is well filled with delicious food, tastefully prepared, and no one needs to go away from the table without a perfectly satisfied appetite. At this season I can live on a vegetarian diet and enjoy life, but I don't know how it would be in the winter. I have no doubt that with Mrs. Bliven as cook, and Mr. Bliven as provider, one would fare well.

Early next morning, Mr. Bliven took me in his nice new buggy, behind a lively horse, and we sped away over the hills to Chaplin Station. Mrs. Bliven gave me a beautiful bunch of flowers, and after we had both expressed satisfaction and delight at having met, I bade her good-bye. I hope to be able to see her again, and I also hope to furnish her a means of giving her ideas to the world. The Little Candle ought to be resurrected next fall.

The road to Chaplin leads through the heart of Windham County, and Mr. Bliven took me over some of the highest hills in order to let me get a view of the country. The lay of the country is like that of Iowa and parts of the Willamette valley. Different varieties of trees and underbrush grow luxuriantly. I don't see how anything can grow where there is so much rock. They use stone to build fences, and it is a rare thing to see a field of more than ten acres. Even building so many fences does not utilize all the rocks, and occasionally you see a pile of them as big as a good-sized house.

New England is no agricultural country. The farmers make a living selling milk, fruit, and vegetables to the people who work in factories. If New England should lose her factories, what would people do? Why is New England such a place for factories? What is the use of shipping the raw material so far to be made up, and at the same time ship flour and other provisions even a longer distance to feed the people engaged in manufacturing? Living is cheaper on the Pacific Coast, while at the same time it is nearer to most of the raw material, and there is water power unlimited. The markets of the world are gradually growing nearer the Pacific Coast, which will some day be the great commercial and manufacturing centre of the world. I do not want to work against the interest of the people of New England, but I am prophesying what will surely follow in the wake of civilization, and shrewdest ones will go West in advance of the rush.

We arrived at Chaplin a few moments before train time, and I had a nice visit with the Jewitt family, who are Secularists, and are now members of the Torch of Reason family. Mr. Jewitt has a fine collection of ancient fire-arms, swords,