

Abroad.

BY P. W. GEER.

Philadelphia contains some very interesting studies for lovers of history, but I did not find the fondness for ancient things that one is bound to notice in Boston. The principal and most noted relic of the early days of our government is Independence Hall, on Chestnut Street. It was after the hour for admitting visitors when I went to this old historical building, but since I had travelled so far, the janitor admitted me through the rear door, where the Old Liberty Bell met my gaze. I was shown into the room where the Declaration of Independence was adopted, July 4th, and signed August 2, 1776. The original furniture is still in the room, and consists of the chairs in which the members of the Continental Congress sat, and the table on which the Declaration of Independence was signed. Portraits of the signers of the Declaration adorn the walls, and a splendid statue of George Washington, carved in wood, stands in the centre of the room. Across the hall to the west is the state supreme court room, with the original court chairs.

Other points of historical interest in the vicinity of Independence Hall are Carpenter's Hall, between Third and Fourth Streets on Chestnut, where the first Continental Congress was held in 1774; Franklin's grave, S. E. corner Fifth and Arch Streets; and the Betsy Ross building on Arch Street, where the first American flag was made. So Philadelphia is not at all uninteresting to the history-loving traveler, while the people seem up-to-date in everything. But while the Philadelphians are up-to-date in their ideas, they are not up to breakfast until a late hour. Philadelphia is a sleepy city. Sometimes through the day the streets are well crowded, but the people are not in such a rush as they are in Chicago, nor even in New York City. I expected to find Broad Street narrow and crooked, but instead I found it to be rightly named, and it is a broad and beautiful street. The public buildings are fine.

I left Philadelphia on the early morning train for Washington, D. C., where I arrived at 11 o'clock a. m. Washington is the most beautifully laid out city I ever saw, and I was not there ten minutes until I knew how and where to find any street and number in the city. The depot where I landed is near the Capitol, and I walked up and took a look at the great government building. I had the address of Dr. Croffut, and I was not long finding his home, where, though a stranger, I was given a splendid welcome. Dr. Croffut was deeply interested in my story of the Liberal University, and before I had talked

with him many minutes he subscribed for a good amount of stock, and gave me a letter of introduction to the Secularists of Washington and vicinity. This letter had a splendid effect, for it made many friends for me among some of the finest people I ever met or ever hope to meet, and it also brought good support for the Liberal University.

After dining with Dr. and Mrs. Croffut, the doctor escorted me to the new Congressional Library building, the finest building in the world. I would like to spend a week in that magnificent building with all its wealth of knowledge, as it was I could only spend an hour or so. The central part of the building is in the shape of a dome, and contains the reading room and the gallery. The interior of this dome is the finest architecture I ever saw in my life. The railing of the balcony which overlooks the large circular reading room below, is lined at intervals with statues of the noted artists, musicians, writers, and thinkers of ages past. The whole structure is made of the finest imported marble. The "book stacks," containing thousands and thousands of books, extend from this central dome in three directions—north, south, and east—the entrance being on the west. The book stacks are connected with the reading room by means of pneumatic tubes, which convey the books almost instantly to the reader. The whole structure thus far described is entirely surrounded by a building extending on every side. This forms a large square building, covering acres of land. The arrangement of the main building in a square, with the large central dome connected with it by means of the book stacks and the entrance hall, leaves four beautiful courts within the structure, and a more beautiful building I never saw.

The Library is just opposite the Capitol building, facing it on the east. An immense fountain stands in front, with steps leading up to the building on either side. As one approaches the Library and climbs the steps, he is struck with awe with the grandeur and beauty of the architecture. Busts of artists, poets, and scientists adorn the cornice on the outer walls. As you pass in through the great massive bronze doors, a sight greets your eyes that you will see equalled nowhere. The architecture of the entrance hall is beyond description. It is impossible to describe it on paper. It has to be seen to be appreciated. No one can imagine anything so grand and beautiful. The mosaic is the finest I ever saw, and the decorations are rich though tastefully selected. Just off from the hall on either side are the reading rooms for the members of Congress. These rooms are so richly decorated and provided with such

fire easy chairs that I doubt one being able to read much. The Library building cost six million dollars.

The Capitol building of course must be inspected by all visitors and tourists. Several guides are on hand to show you the wonders of the building, and some will give their services for two dollars, but "so long as it is you, and you are from a distance," they will show you everything for twenty-five cents, providing you refuse to pay the larger amounts. The main lobby, with its paintings and decorations, is very beautiful, and there is something grand, wonderful, and enchanting about the old Capitol building, exceedingly so to politicians. I visited the representative hall, the senate chamber, the supreme court room, and the lobbies, corridors, and halls. All is quiet at this season of the year.

No one should go to Washington without visiting the pension building. There you will see the finest hall in the world, where the great inaugural balls are held. Of course you must visit the White House, and you will find it just as it has been described to you many times. Visitors are allowed to inspect the east room—the most wonderful thing about it being that it is a part of the White House. As I left the White House I met Secretary Alger going to see the President, and I wondered if he were going to hand in his resignation. I visited the war department, which is the largest building I ever saw. The treasury building is near by, and I went in to see the money but didn't see any. My visits to the Smithsonian Institute and the National Museum were very pleasant indeed. At the museum I had the pleasure of a visit with Prof. Lester F. Ward, a pronounced Secularist, and one of the most important and best informed scientific men in Washington. Prof. Ward will be in Oregon in September, and I hope to meet him there.

Nearly all the scientific men in the government employ are Secularists, and they are well educated in the cause of Secularism too. Washington seems to be a very Liberal place. It is strictly a cosmopolitan city socially, and right ideas seem to predominate. I don't know where one can meet with more wise people than are to be found in Washington. The social and intellectual atmosphere of Washington is refreshing, while the climatic atmosphere is depressing. I don't see how people can think rightly and well in such a climate, but it seems that many of them do. What a pity the Capitol of the United States is not located at Silverton. The climate and atmosphere there are both conducive to right thinking, and our government would be run on a more satisfactory plan.

By the kindness of Mrs. M. M.

Turner, I met Prof. Gill of the Smithsonian Institute, with whom I had a very enjoyable time. Prof. Gill is an excellent man, and has great faith in science. Major Pechin of the War Department is a delightful man, and I had the pleasure of an enjoyable visit at his house, where I spent my first evening in Washington. Mr. Pechin and the young folks aided in making the evening very pleasant indeed. I met Dr. Wm. Tyndall at his office in the District Government building, and had a few moments pleasant chat. Dr. Tyndall is deeply interested in the Liberal University. One of the pleasantest men I met in Washington was Gen. Wm. Birney, who had read the prospectus of the Liberal University, and was already deeply interested in our work. I discussed our plan with him, and find him to be very enthusiastic and anxious to help us to success.

My second evening in Washington was devoted to sight-seeing and exercise. Early in the evening I called on Mr. Blount, at his beautiful home in Georgetown. Mr. Blount is a Unitarian, and of course is interested in the progress of the Liberal University. From Georgetown I walked to the bank of the Potomac, and seeing a bridge, I crossed over it into Virginia, where the virgins live. It was two miles farther to the National Cemetery at Arlington (Gen. Lee's old house), and I walked on. The sun was just about to disappear behind the hills, and a soldier informed me that I could not enter the grounds after the sun went down, so I increased my speed and my long legs got me there just in the nick of time. I walked through the west gate into the city of the dead, and halted to read the epitaphs on the tombstones of some of the noted dead. Just at sundown I reached the old Lee mansion, nestled among the evergreen trees, on the crest of a hill overlooking the Potomac valley and the city of Washington in the distance. What a delightful place for a home! The house was open for inspection, and I had time to make a hasty survey and read some inscriptions on the tablets on the wall before the janitor came to close the place and take down the flag. I walked out on to the old colonial front porch, and leaned against one of the large pillars to enjoy the view to the east. Mrs. Turner had described the place to me while I was in Atlantic City, but it is more beautiful than I expected.

It was growing dark so I walked down the steps and along the path through the woods to the east entrance of the grounds, while the lightning-bugs lit up the way. I waited a while for an electric car which carried me to Arlington Junction, and then, rather than wait an hour for another car to Washington, two miles distant, I