

## Abroad.

BY P. W. GEER.

It is nothing unusual for one to know but little of the attractions and sights of his own city. There are many people in New York City who have never climbed the Statue of Liberty, many Bostonians have never been in the old State House, and there are some Chicagoans who didn't see the World's Fair. I find that I am no exception to the general rule. I have been among the Chinese a great deal; I lived in Portland for a year, and passed through Chinatown quite often, but I never entered a Chinese Joss House, nor ate with chop-sticks. Some of my Eastern friends thought it very peculiar that I should live where Chinese are so plentiful and not investigate their modes of living and worship, and my friend, W. E. Johnson, proposed that we take in the sights of Chinatown in New York City. Mr. Johnson knew how to proceed. He knew that if I would be expected to eat anything we would have to attend to that part of the program first, before I had seen enough to make me sick.

We wound around through narrow crooked streets, where the sidewalks were only two feet wide, with Chinamen so thick that we could hardly get along. Johnson kept looking up. I couldn't imagine what he did it for, unless he wanted an excuse to walk on the Chinamen who wouldn't get out of his way. I finally decided that he was going through some form of Chinese worship to keep on the good side of the Celestials; I noticed that he was on the top side of many of them. I began to look up too, for I thought it the proper thing to do, and I didn't want to be odd. Finally Johnson called a halt, and said we had arrived at a restaurant and would go up the stairway. I couldn't see any stairway, it was so narrow, but Johnson squeezed through a crack in the wall and I followed, and we proceeded to ascend an excuse for a stairway. I found that Johnson had been looking up for a restaurant sign, and had just found it.

We walked into a room at the head of the stairs, where we found some other white folks seated at round tables eating rats and rice and drinking tea. We found a vacant table near the window, where we could get a breath of street air, which was slightly less foul than the air of the room. I told Johnson that he would have to do the ordering as I was not familiar with the language of Chinadom. I had resolved to eat whatever was brought, and thought, of course, rats and mice would form the principal part of the menu. Perhaps they did. The stuff we had was a general conglomeration, and contained what I supposed was the

tails of young mice mixed with the hams of old rats. Besides these there were vegetables of all kinds, including onions, cabbage, celery and potatoes. This was all mixed up together, and I know what they call it but I can't spell it. It doesn't matter anyway. A skunk by any name will smell as loud, and Chinese victuals by any name all taste alike. Besides the mixture we were served with rice, fruit and tea. I don't drink tea, so Johnson had the benefit of that. Of course we ate with chop-sticks, and I made slow progress for awhile, but soon got on to the knack and found no trouble in getting all I wanted.

We next went to the street, where we saw a Chinese funeral procession going by. From the window of one of the carriages some strips of perforated paper were being thrown. These pieces of paper are for the purpose of fooling the devil, who has to go through the perforations. Johnson didn't know any better than to go out into the street and pick up some of the pieces of paper. You ought to have seen the people run; they thought Johnson was the devil. I thought I would play the devil, too, so I followed Johnson and picked up some of the papers, which I kept as curios. The poor Chinese thought there were two devils, and ran twice as fast. We had plenty of room after that, and could get along the narrow streets very well.

We next visited the Joss House, where we proceeded to worship at the altar. We saw all the gods, ghosts and angels, and many other things I didn't recognize, and I couldn't read the labels. A Chinaman came around with some sticks of punk, and Johnson bought enough to keep us out of hell a month for only fifty cents. Chinese religion is "heap cheap." We went up to the altar, stuck some punk in the pots of sand, and set fire to the upper end. As we left, the smoke was curling toward the nostrils of god (Joss), and he has smiled on me ever since, and blessed me with good health. Thus endeth my exploit in Chinatown. We passed through the Russian Jew district of the city on our way back to Mr. Johnson's office, and witnessed a nice little blaze in the tenement district. You can find all kinds of life in New York, from the high to the low. For my part I like neither of the extremes.

New York City has several policemen, and I had the opportunity of seeing several thousand of them on parade one day. They seemed to be showing off their strength so as to have a good influence on the morals of the citizens. There were policemen on foot, policemen on horseback, policemen on wagons, policemen on bicycles, and even policemen on beats. The procession extended along Broadway for

several miles, and the policemen marched while the sun scorched. The poor suckers looked like they wished they were somewhere else, and they acted like they were trying to get there. I don't know what effect this procession had on the morals of the New Yorkers, as I didn't stay to see.

I left New York one evening, and woke up next morning just as the train pulled into Buffalo. I had never seen Buffalo by day before, and was surprised to see so beautiful a city. I was not long in finding Dr. S. W. Wetmore, where I was made to feel at home. Freethinkers generally are acquainted with the writings of Dr. Wetmore, and I am sorry they haven't met him personally. Dr. S. W. is not the only Wetmore either. Mrs. Wetmore is indeed a lovely woman. She is a doctor, and together with her husband has built up a large practice in the city of Buffalo. Both of the Wetmores ride wheels, and were kind enough to obtain one for me, so that I could enjoy rides with them.

Mr. Wetmore rides a three-wheel concern, which he makes go at a pretty good speed, and he and I had a lovely ride out to the park and zoo a short time after my arrival. Buffalo has miles and miles of lovely drives and cycle paths, and acres of beautiful parks. We saw all of the animals and birds, and visited the site of the Pan-American Exposition to be held in 1901. This exposition promises to be a great event in the history of the United States, and Buffalo proposes to outdo Chicago with her great World's Fair. What the result will be remains to be seen. I have no doubt it will be a great event well worth attending. Dr. Wetmore is a kodak enthusiast, and took some pictures of the various sights we saw. We returned by the way of the cycle path, and had a lovely ride. In the evening I was invited to accompany Mrs. Wetmore and a small company on another ride, which was highly enjoyable to me. We visited the parks and fountains, and watched the horses test their speed on the new speedway.

My stay at the Wetmore's home was one round of pleasure, never to be forgotten. I am only sorry that I am not there yet. Both of the Wetmores are enthusiastic in the Freethought cause, and are anxious to see the Liberal University succeed. Mr. Wetmore expects to be in Oregon in a few months, and, of course, will make Silverton a visit. I am sure we will be glad to see him, and show him the beauties of our locality and the magnitude of our enterprise. Dr. Wetmore is a writer of ability, and is always heard from, through the press, on questions of the day. He never misses an opportunity to let people

know his views on the religious question.

During my stay in Buffalo I had the pleasure of meeting the adopted son of Dr. Wetmore, who, together with his wife, are splendid company. I also met Mr. Blair, who is a Freethinker, and who subscribed for the Torch of Reason. I also visited Niagara Falls, which I will attempt to describe in my next letter. Dr. Wetmore was to accompany me on this trip, but business was too rushing, so I had to go alone, much to my regret, though I enjoyed immensely the world's greatest waterfall.

For the Torch of Reason.

## Is Ingersoll in Hell?

BY F. S. MATTESON.

The greatest theological mind of the age is no more. Robt. G. Ingersoll—the man who has done more for the amelioration of undesirable conditions in regard to beliefs than any other man who has lived in this century; the man whose name and fame is known all over the civilized world, and whose name and fame will live, and be loved and honored when those of his detractors shall have followed the "ghosts," and faded forever from the memory of man—is dead. His demise is a national loss, exceedingly hard to replace.

Is the soul of Ingersoll now in hell? If the Christian's assertions regarding their religion are true, it certainly is. In a lake of fire and molten, burning brimstone, where "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," he is writhing and shrieking in agony unspeakable. He is "lifting up his eyes being in torment;" he is "calling for water to cool his parched tongue;" he is "weeping and wailing and gnashing his teeth;" he is roaring, and raving, and cursing the name of Almighty God; he is lolling liquid fire, lapping the flame, and chewing the bitter dust of hell; he is overwhelmed with anguish and unthinkable terror, while bands of fierce specters rush round him in frantic dance, shrieking with unearthly yells, "Welcome, thou first of Infidels! Welcome, thou lost forever!" And this unspeakable, unthinkable, unimaginable agony, fear, terror, and consternation, is to last "forever and forever, world without end."

The above is true, or Christianity is a fraud from beginning to end. "He that believeth not shall be damned." "The wicked shall be cast into hell;" and so forth, and so on. Ingersoll "believed not," therefore he is "damned." If unbelief is "wicked," he was wicked, therefore he is in hell.

Christians may not dodge this conclusion. After dinning it into our ears for 1800 years, will they run to cover now? Stand up, my