

IN THE SUNNY SOUTH.

G. E. F.'S INTERESTING CHAT FROM FLORIDA.

The Natives Are Worse Than St. John People in Many Ways—Evidences of the Scott Act—Lectures That Are Not Attended and Empty Pews in the Churches.

[SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.]

TALLAHASSEE, Fla., Feb. 16.—Thermometer 75°, and rising—close and sultry—doors and windows wide open—fans going—heavy, looks like rain.

The governor of Florida appears to be a very quiet man. He lives in retirement, boards with a lady round the corner from our domicile, and walks about and looks like any other man, as Sam Slick would say. "Quite natural like." Not so when I was a boy at home, and such a dignitary thought of. A governor 50 years ago was supposed to contain the qualities of 50 men, the incarnation of all rolled into one, and, figuratively speaking, he really was such a personage—for the legislature could only act through him—his fiat was law; in other words, no law was possible without his permission. Then, in a social sense, a governor was regarded by us youngsters as one of the wonders of the world, and it was an honor to be carried through an ordinary life when his excellency condescended to speak to a commoner, or any one outside of his council or drawing-room. Those were royal days, however, ere responsible government had fairly got its head above water, the glory of which has all but departed. No wonder that those dignitaries swelled like mists across the Apian Way. The colonies served as asylums for the recuperation of the purses of old generals and half-fledged home politicians, out of business and seldom very brilliant.

The salary in New Brunswick then was \$15,000, and in Nova Scotia \$20,000. No more to do then than now at \$9,000, although the responsibilities may be less, for a colonial governor now-a-days divides these among his advisers. The salary of the governor of Florida is \$3,500. But salaries with such men here are of no consequence, it is the mark of distinction that takes them away from their usual occupations, while their accounts with their bankers are large, and their financial credit all but unlimited. Nor is his honor here supposed to go largely, if at all, into the entertaining business—give rich dinners and large balls, at lavish expense, for the delectation of the public at large—especially the capital public. No—his husbands his resources, as no doubt other governors have done, for the benefit of such charities as tax his attention.

The cocks crow here all night—they begin at dark and end at daylight, when they go to breakfast I suppose. Stygia seems to have more charms for these interesting animals than the coming of Aurora. With the colonial chancier it is otherwise; he has more consideration for the disciples of Morpheus.

I looked into the house of representatives yesterday for a few minutes—in time for the final passage of the board of health bill. It was voted on section by section, and numerous amendments were proposed, discussed and carried all in a business-like parliamentary way, the speaker being quite *au fait* in his ruling. There was one thing, however, that struck me as rather odd. The last section of the bill, as read by the clerk (who by the way reads all the bills and the amendments, instead of the chairman as with us), was as follows: "This act shall go into effect immediately on its becoming law"; that is, after receiving the governor's assent. Now it was my humble opinion at the time that the word *bill* should have been printed, for there can be no acts until a bill has passed through all its stages. Only then it can be called an act. Am I correct, Mr. Speaker Pugsley? But it was still equally odd to me when the honorable gentleman from Orange proposed a rider to the section, as follows: "To go into effect so soon as it has received the governor's assent," or words to that effect. Now, as no bill can become an act until after it has received his honor's confirmation, the addition was tautological or superfluous. The rider, however, was not accepted for the reason just given. So that after all mistakes are made in the best regulated houses here as elsewhere.

I am not aware whether there are any temperance societies in this quarter of the globe—nor have I seen any evidence of their necessity that causes me to make the remark—for I have not observed since my coming here that *rara avis*—an intoxicated man. The last drunken man I saw was in Fredericton. Tallahassee has no Scott—or more properly speaking, "Local Option Act," as such a measure is called here. But this I do know—there are more beer and wine bottles lying about Tallahassee than St. John ever knew in her palmist days—no reference to "York Point" this time. Almost every garden bears testimony to this fact. Instead of tiles which we use in Fredericton for hemming in the flowers, every bed is surrounded by wine and beer bottles with their necks planted downwards, making a very pretty arrangement, especially when artistically done; and were it not for the impression it might convey among my temperance friends at home, I would remove the brick tiling I now use in my garden, and substitute wine bottles—if I only knew where to get them. Perhaps pickle bottles will answer as well. Still

the wonder to me is, where do the good folks here find all the bottles with which to garnish their flower beds?

I attended a lecture, the other evening, when a gentleman delivered an address upon the proper observance of the Lord's day. The public had been invited by placard, posted several days beforehand, to give their attendance; and if ever I thought a subject demanded a full house, it was on an occasion like this. We went early so as to get good seats; but, had it not been for our party and half a dozen others, the speaker would have had no hearers, and yet he handled his subject as earnestly as though he was addressing a crowded house. I also attended a course of lectures delivered by another gentleman (Rev. Mr. Fox), on Swedenborgianism. I do not believe there were more than a dozen persons present at each lecture, all of which were most ably handled, and no charge for admission.

On Sunday evening last, I attended divine service in Rev. Dr. Carter's church, when there were not half a dozen present. The choir consisted of the organist, one lady and one gentleman—all the rest were *absentees*. The night was not stormy—merely somewhat dark and misty—had it been one of New Brunswick's winter nights, with great bodies of snow and ice on the ground, and the mercury some degrees below zero, and there was no larger congregation than this in any one of our churches, we should have understood matters. The conclusion, however, forced upon our mind, in accounting for such slim attendances on the several occasions referred to, was that the people never went out at night, or that one service a day was as much as they required. Our Fredericton and St. John churches are better attended at night than in the morning. Being nearer to the North Pole at home, I suppose, makes us feel our responsibilities the more. A warm country like this seems to take the religious fervor out of one—or, what is it? On the last occasion referred to, when there were so few present, I was reminded of a circumstance which happened to me a few years ago when in London. One Sunday afternoon on walking down to the Strand I heard a church bell ringing, but whence the sound it was difficult to tell. By dint of perseverance, and pushing through sinuosities, the streets all seeming to run in no particular direction, but gather in a snarl, I at length found the little church and entered. There were only three persons present, besides the minister—I made the fourth. What was in the choir I knew not—for it stood away in the back ground—in the gallery, but I think the organist had it pretty much all to himself. As soon as the sermon began one of the congregation took a fit and it required the whole of the rest of the congregation (three of us) to hold him and carry him out, which we succeeded in doing after considerable rattling, and laid him on the grass, where he soon afterwards recovered. On returning to our seats we found the minister still preaching,—as it there had been no interruption—to empty pews—unless it might have been to the organist, who had kept his seat in the gallery without any concern as to what was going on below. However, coming back to Tallahassee, Dr. Carter did not give us a sermon on this occasion, but dismissed us after the second hymn, so that through the remissness of the people not turning out, or rather not turning in, we did not have the pleasure of listening to a second able and eloquent discourse last Sunday, such as the first one was in the morning. I hope the Tallahasseans will hear of this.

It has just begun to thunder terrifically. The lightning is sharp, vivid, and seems a little trying to weak nerves. We have no conception at home of the concussion caused by heaven's artillery in this latitude. Our peals may be compared to the beating of a drum with those of a heavy Armstrong cannonade. However, I am all right. I just put my head out of the window and discovered that there is a lightning rod upon our house. So bang away. G. E. F.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE.

Rev. Mr. Bruce on Sabbath Observance.

TO THE EDITORS OF PROGRESS: In your last issue a correspondent refers to the meeting held in connection with Sabbath observance. He heads his article, "A Dangerous Element"; and he points out how certain statements made by some of the speakers have impressed him, and what results are likely to flow from the utterance of such views, and, indeed, as he finally expresses it, from the presence of "a band of clergymen and pious laymen who have never risen to a just conception of the Deity," and who are "a more dangerous element in our day than an infidel club with the same number of members."

Your correspondent seems to be in earnest in his anxiety lest men get wrong views about God, and he also speaks in a kindly way of the members of the society and their motives. He thinks they are so much behind the age that their well-meant efforts will bring ridicule upon religion, and he says that men will choose no God rather than accept "the orthodox God of petty capacities and vengeful passions."

I shall not enter upon this matter farther than to say, and in this I am sure your correspondent will agree with me, that it is well to state the views of an opponent

fairly. It may be your correspondent thought he was doing so when he referred to what was said about the character and actions of God. Perhaps he will kindly refer to his letter and explain how he arrived at his version of the quotations.

One or two points of only limited importance may be noted in passing.

The society is not the Evangelical Alliance under another name, although your correspondent may have thought so, from seeing some of the members of one society mentioned as being present at the meetings of the other. The only other point I notice is that the meeting was a public one, called by the society, and for the applause which greeted certain remarks the public, not the members of the society, alone are responsible. They may have been right or wrong in their opinions. Your correspondent will allow them liberty of judgment in this, I am sure.

But, as to the matter at issue, the utterances of two of the speakers: I take it for granted that the argument for the right of men to a Sabbath of exemption from needless toil is admitted by your correspondent. This was the substance of the addresses of the evening, and your correspondent, I suppose, agrees with this, and will help in obtaining it, as a right of which men and women ought not to be deprived.

Your correspondent has passed by all this, the aim and sentiment of the society and the meeting, however, although it was clearly expressed in the different addresses, and he has seized upon two almost incidental remarks, which he dwells upon as evidence of the narrowness and intolerance of the society. I have no desire to give peculiar prominence to the argument drawn from these remarks but I cannot think it right that your correspondent's statements should be allowed to pass unnoticed.

As to the special matter to which exception is taken, we may briefly put the objectionable doctrine in the form of two statements: (1) That loss and suffering result from the disregard of this day of rest, and (2), and especially, that God has anything to do with this loss and suffering. Your correspondent seems to deny these statements.

As to the first, I hope your correspondent is not so ill-informed as to deny that serious loss and injury come from the disregard of the day. If he is, it will not be difficult to convince him, I think, by references to existing circumstances, and the declarations of millions of men in all conditions of life. An induction can be made which, I venture to believe, will convince your correspondent.

As to the second, I shall only ask your correspondent if he will state precisely his view of the relation which God holds, not the "orthodox God," but his God, to the laws which govern life and all human concerns.

St. John, Feb. 21. G. BRUCE.

"Their Lordships' Predecessors." TO THE EDITORS OF PROGRESS: I am glad to find that PROGRESS is so outspoken. If the papers in the past, and your contemporaries, had been as attentive to the duties of their calling as PROGRESS is today, our citizens would now be the better for it.

I read with great interest your strictures of the 16th upon the disposition shown in a certain quarter, and by a few Jenkines, to introduce into this province the *lordly* idea in connection with the bench, where, for the last 100 years, we have been exempt from it, whatever way the sister province may have departed herself in reverence to it.

What are those busy-bodies, those toadies and tuft-hunters thinking about, at this time of day, when all political tendencies in the colonies are in the direction of a pure democracy, which ignores all titles, and puts its veto upon flunkeyism wherever it raises its head? It is enough to have the seed of knighthood engrafted upon our political stock; but when it comes to introduce a *baron* title, or adjective prefix, to our judiciary, it is more than we are prepared for, although intended as a mark of courtesy to the bench. The Parkers, the Carters, the Chipmans, the Botsfords, the Streets, all judges unsurpassed anywhere under the British flag for learning and high integrity, managed to conduct the business of their respective courts without any of the abject formula which snobdom is now striving to introduce for the first time. Nor would any of our former judges tolerate such a silly innovation, and our present judges should be equally opposed.

Probably some of your older readers will call to mind a circumstance, quite pertinent to the present occasion, which happened in our court room some 30 years ago. A gentleman from Nova Scotia was interested in a case before the court and was on the witness stand. The judge (Robert Parker) not catching a certain statement, asked the witness to repeat it, when he turned to the judge and addressed him as "my lord." His honor passed this over, but when the witness addressed him the second time in the same way, the judge looking quite gravely at the witness remarked: "You will please not address me thus. I am aware that in Nova Scotia, the term 'my lord' is a common address, but in this province we have never thought it requisite to use it."

Let the wisdom of Judge Parker be considered and sustained.

PROGRESS seems to be of the opinion that a certain judge from above on a recent visit to St. John put this stupid idea into the empty heads of the originators. By dint of good luck that young man (with scarcely a brief in New Brunswick) went to Ottawa and became stuffed with a sense of his own importance, and placed in a high position, for reasons not at all understood in St. John, and then comes down here as a new being to inform our judges, through said empty heads, that they ought to be called *lords*; and moreover, forsooth because Chief Justice Allen has just been knighted, he is the first judge to be *victim-ized*. No—no—I mistake the good sense of the judge to suppose for a moment that he will lend himself to any such nonsensical conspiracy.

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FREDERICTON'S BAD BOY.

He Don't Want to Have His Feelings Hurt Again—A Sermon from the Gallery.

Being's I got kept in 'after school last composition day cos I hadn't any wrote, and ma says to pa, when I cum home, "Hiran, what are we goin' to do with that boy? Good land, see how the boosem of them new pants is wore!" (O, if she had only knowned all). Now then, I guess I'd better hustle myself to keep from havin' my feelin' hurt that way agin.

Maybe I didn't mention it before, but pa is one of the trustees of our church, which is the most respectable in town, 'ceptin the 'Piscopals. There's nothin' he likes so well as sittin' in the amen corner and bein' looked up to by the common ones as a leadin' pillar of the tabernacle. He is regular pious, pa is, and ma sez he's got a second blessin' hid away somewhere in his Sunday clothes only she don't know 'zactly where he keeps it. He sez if they'd only allow him to take up the collekshun and lead the singin' offener he'd be ready to be waited up any minute.

Well, the other day, we had a man at our place sawin' wood for us, and pa, after beatin' him down ten cents a cord on the sawin'—for he allers said that piety and economy goes hand in hand—sez he o him, "Bob," sez he, "why don't you come to church this fine bracin' weather? Have you aired your sinful soul in the tabernacle lately at all?" sez he. "You ain't 'zactly the style for our tabernacle, praps," sez he, "not bein' used to wearin' broadcloth and minglin' with the leadin' families of the town, but never mind that," sez he, "cumrite along and we'll be glad to see you and give you a seat near the dore or in the gallery. Salvation's cheap, you know." (I guess it must be, or pa would never have laid in such a stock as he has).

"Why," sez Bob, leanin' on his saw kinder pensive like, I thought, "fact is Mr. Smith I have been 'tendin' your church for nigh onto fifteen years but it 'pears like to me as if I'm out of place there and aint wanted among such grand folks as your gettin' to be. I suppose you never bothered yourself to take a look up in the gallery, now did you, deacon? Well, I've been sittin' up there with wife and family for all these years, deacon, and there aint anybody belongin' to the church ever showed any concern for Bob and his'n. They have never sed they was glad to see me there, deacon. They have never come to my humble little home to see how wife and childer was, 'ceptin' the minister would sometimes hunt me up. They never even axed to know my name, nor said a word of kindness to Bob and his'n all these years. Every Sunday I see the rich fokes down stares with their fine bonnets and clothes on and I hears the preacher say as how our Saviour was meek and lowly with never any pride nor any style nor any frills and upishness about him, and how he loved to 'sociate with and help the poor and the afflicted ones of earth. But it don't seem to me, deacon, as if anybody wants to 'sociate with Bob and his'n, 'ceptin' the man what passes the collekshun box. I'm poor, deacon, I'm ignorant, sez Bob wipin' his forehead, but I'm onnest and I does what I can and gives what I can for the good of all. I don't want and I aint fit to go into your fine parlors or sit in your fine pews down stairs with the cushions and carpets in 'em, but you don't know, deacon, how I'd 'preciate a little sympathy for Bob and his'n. 'Ts awful cold and lonesome goin' in and out of that church Sunday after Sunday and year after year when nobody belongin' to it ever has a word of welcome or of kindness to Bob and his'n."

"It don't seem to me that that's the religion of the good book, deacon, is it? I goes in the back stairway and out the back stairway for them az goes in and out the front stairway looks at me, if they looks at all, stiff and haughty like as if such fokes as them wasn't made to mingle even at the seat of mercy with the likes of Bob and his'n. Is there any back stair and front stairway to Heaven, deacon? When the Chariot is sweepin' through the gates will the meek and lowly be hangin' on behind? Is there any Pullman cars for the proud and haughty, and flat-cars for the likes of Bob and his'n on that route? Will Peter at the gate be too busy a bowin' and scarpin' to the notables to notice the poor and nameless ones? O, no, deacon, the track that leads above is just a strate and narer road which rich and poor must grub along together. I like your church, deacon, and I like its doctrine. My father and mother lived and died in it, and I would like to live and die in it too, but it 'pears to me its got to be too stiff and grand and stately like, for us common ones and I guess I'll go to the Salvation Army after this, where there's some that's not too high and lifted up to speak to the likes of Bob and his'n."

And with that Bob took to sawin' away agin' and it seemed to me that the old hard look that cum into Pa's face once before when he was cussin' himself for bein' so respectable was roostin' on his majestic profile agin'. "That's a sermon never heard preached before in this town, Jimmy, sez he, but there's a heap of gospel in it twist you and me." JIMMY SMITH.

Fredericton Feb. 23.

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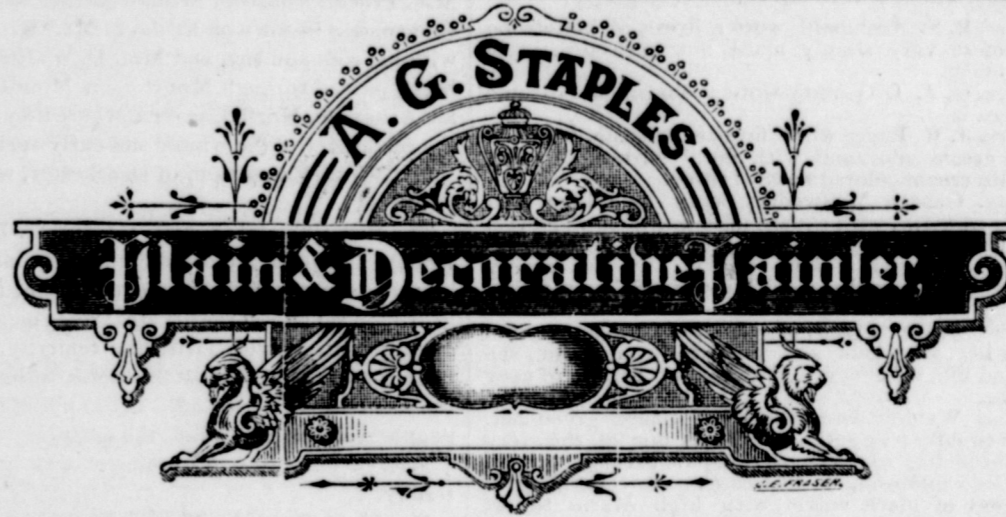
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