

# EN ROUTE TO DEMERARA

Our correspondent has arrived at Georgetown, the chief town in Demerara and British Guiana. She has thus completed her trip from North America to South America on a Canadian Steamer, calling only at British Ports. It is the hope of many persons that all these Colonies shall, some day, form part of the Dominion of Canada.

GEORGETOWN, BRITISH GUIANA.

May 2nd, 1909.

Dear Mr. Editor,—

I scarcely remember where last I wrote from. We have got into such scenes of wonderland, of strange peoples, strange flowers, fruits, trees and birds, that really I am afraid my ideas are becoming decidedly mixed and that if I try to tell you of the last two or three days I shall be repeating myself. However, in any case, I am bound to do that, as on our return voyage we are to revisit all the Islands we have already stopped at, remain a longer time at each and call at one or two which I have not yet seen. After short runs ashore at Barbadoes and Trinidad, we arrived here yesterday afternoon. I am more than pleased with Demerara, and truly it is good, again to be, as Mrs. Malaprop would say, on "Terra Cotta." I only waited to deposit my "impedimenta" at the hotel, before taking the electric car down to the "Sea Wall," where, being Saturday, a Military Band was playing for the delectation of the Demerarians. The said sea wall forms a delightful promenade, flanked on one side by the Atlantic and on the other by a grassy Boulevard, beside which are pretty villa residences standing in ornamental grounds—and really the expression of ornamental applies to almost everything about the city. The numerous canals intersecting it are a very decided advantage in many respects, and some of these latter are entirely covered with huge water lilies, while over head is a pleasant shade by large spreading Acacia trees, covered with brilliant vermilion blossoms. Indeed, the plant life in this sunny part of the world is so very varied, that I feel inclined to suspect that if Solomon himself were here, he would quite possibly "funk" an exam. thereon! If the tropics are to be enjoyed with any degree of comfort, one must rise very early in the mornings. This one found me down at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, where I heard the children's mass and some very sweet singing. After breakfast I repaired to the Anglican Cathedral, where a very novel feature in the service, to me, was the presence of a large surpliced coloured choir. The possibility of there being black as well as white "Cherubs" had never occurred to me before. There is some good stained glass in the edifice and a very beautiful memorial font. After church we had a fairly heavy shower, which came as a blessing to lay the dust, and the rest of the afternoon I filled in by visits to the museum and reading rooms just opposite the hotel and the far-famed botanical gardens out in the suburb of Bourda. Night comes on very suddenly in the tropics and quite shortly after sunset it becomes dark; fortunately just now we have moonlight, and the croaking of the frogs, I feel inclined to say "Singing," for if they were in Canada, they would certainly be styled "Night-ingles." Well, for want of a better term, call it a "Vocal Noise"; this continues till morning, and for my own part I quite enjoy it.

Monday, May 3rd.

This morning I got down to the famous market about 7.15, and had such a picture of life as perhaps could only be seen here. East and West seem literally to meet, as far as nationalities are concerned. The East India Coolie is very strongly in evidence, the men, generally speaking, a handsome race, I can't say much about their costumes, but those of the women are decidedly picturesque; in some cases, gorgeous, as far as colourings go. Then, as to ornaments, they seem to have fairly exhausted all the available space on their bodies for the display of jewellery! Possibly, when one gets accustomed to it, it may be as natural to have a ring in one's nose as in one's ear. In this "Stab-rock" market the choice of merchandise appears unlimited, the most interesting portion of course being the edible, owing to the diversity of fruits and vegetables. There is occasionally more than a slight difference of opinion amongst the vendors which necessitates the arbitration of the local police; however, all things considered, life jogs along here in very good tempered fashion. After breakfast, I spent the best part of the morning in the Law Courts and the Police Courts. It sounds rather bad, perhaps I had better say I was shown around them. In the former, which is a handsome build-

ing, situated in pretty grounds and delightfully cool, I listened to a rather uninteresting case, in which neither plaintiff nor defendant was present. The counsel for the first was an English barrister and his opponent a black gentleman. The scenes in the Magistrate's Courts were livelier if somewhat pathetic. Seeing the City Hall, which has an organ, the Assembly Rooms, in which theatrical entertainments take place, visiting the Post Office, etc., filled in the rest of the morning, and the remainder of the day was devoted to a return visit to the Botanical Gardens and a quiet enjoyment of the Military Band playing in the beautiful promenade gardens nearer the city. Speaking of the former gardens, there is in them a fairly large sheet of water, containing an alligator and three or four manatees. These latter are perfectly harmless herbivorous mammals, and are, in fact, the legendary "Mermaids." They are about the size of a shark and most unlike our preconceived ideas of "Sirens." We left the docks at Georgetown late in

the afternoon of the 4th, quite a little crowd of Demerarians and visitors like ourselves coming to see us off. The next day was spent at sea and this morning before daylight we arrived once more at Trinidad. It is a long and tolerably rough row ashore, but our return visit amply repaid me, at any rate, for the tossing and splashing experienced on the passage. After visiting the Anglican Cathedral which has a particularly beautiful roof, some good stained glass and a very handsome pulpit, a charming drive in the open electric cars by and through the lovely Savannah brought us out to the wonderful Botanical Gardens. Readers of "At Last" will in that find descriptions of its many marvels, which I regret my pen fails to give. Leaving the experimental portion of the grounds, laden with orchids, lilies, bright-hued, but to me unknown flowers, and numerous specimens of leaves and berries of castor oil, eucalyptus, camphor, cinnamon. We walked through a portion of the grounds in which Government House and gardens are situated, but a little removed from the main road and the Savannah. Around this latter are situated the Queen's Park Hotel and all the most fashionable residential houses with a delightful background of hills which help to make Trinidad the very lovely Island it is. To-morrow we expect to leave for Barbados about noon, and are due, all being well, to arrive on Saturday morning, it being about a twenty hours run.

Yours truly,

SIDNEY A. GIBSON.

## THE SHIFTING OF THE DAYLIGHT

By W. P. ROBINSON

IT is apparent that the Daylight Bill introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Lewis will not become law until at least another session, and for the purposes of the measure this postponement will be a benefit, if the period of waiting is also a period of activity. Discussion of Mr. Lewis' proposal has revealed a friendly sentiment in Parliament, and he has been able to show that it is favourably regarded throughout the country. But there are difficulties to be encountered in giving effect to such a law, which, perhaps, have not been fully considered.

In the first place there is the question of jurisdiction. There is already a legal time for the various provinces of the Dominion, established by their several legislatures. The right of the provinces in thus legislating has never been questioned. The standard of the 60th meridian—four hours behind Greenwich—has been legal time in Nova Scotia since 1884, as the 75th and 90th meridians in similar manner have given the law in the matter of time to the Province of Ontario since 1895.

The Ontario statute reads as follows:—

"Where an expression of time occurs in any act of this legislature, whether heretofore or hereafter executed, or in any rule of court, by-law, deed or other legal instrument, the time referred to shall, unless it is otherwise specifically stated, be held to be standard time, and as regards that part of the province which lies east of the meridian of eighty-seven degrees west longitude, standard time shall be reckoned as five hours behind Greenwich time; and as regards that part of the province which lies west of the said meridian, standard time shall be reckoned as six hours behind Greenwich time."

In other words our clocks throughout all Ontario, except that relatively small portion lying west of Lake Superior, are set by the meridian which cuts the province a little east of Ottawa. By that time (five hours behind Greenwich time) our polls open and our saloons close, and the law of the province as respects those important functions will not likely be disregarded without trouble resulting.

The people of Port Arthur have gone in for a daylight bill of their own, and have put their clocks an hour ahead, but it is not improbable that the saloon keepers of that city can, if they wish, keep open until the clocks strike twelve, and still be within the law which calls for their closing at eleven.

No doubt this difficulty can be got over so that existing provincial statutes will not interfere with the operation of Mr. Lewis' bill, but this arrangement had better be effected beforehand, and a year is little enough time to do it in.

A greater obstacle to the adoption of a wholly arbitrary time standard lies in our foreign trade relations. As between the Canadian provinces, setting our clocks ahead eighty minutes during the period of longer days, will make relatively no difference. No inconvenience will result, and the people of every part of the Dominion will enjoy the

benefit of eighty minutes more daylight for recreation after working hours. But so long as the old order is adhered to in the United States, the commercial inter-dependence of the two countries will prevent any daylight bill from favourably affecting the greatest number of Canadians. American stock exchanges will continue to close at what is now three o'clock, and with our clocks set eighty minutes fast, it will be twenty minutes past four before we can leave the ticker. It will still be only three o'clock, or thereabouts, by the sun, but we want it to be only twenty minutes to two. The banks may manage to close at the new and nominal three o'clock, but it is certain that while the day's financial frenzy is at its height in New York, very few of their employees can leave their offices any earlier than formerly. Nor can newspapers go to press and release their employees any earlier if they are to publish the markets and the latest news. And so with establishments which now close for the day at five or six. They will not be able to call it a day, when the business day on the other side of the line is little more than half through.

Therefore let Mr. Lewis continue his educational campaign, not only in the interest of Canadians, but for the benefit of our southern neighbours. Farther south the sun sets a little earlier in summer and an artificial lengthening of the day is all the more needed. If he wants a powerful lever, let him begin by approaching the baseball players, and if his work proves successful we shall no longer have to read as the season draws toward the close, and the contests in the big leagues grow more exciting, "called on account of darkness."

The member for West Huron has the sympathy of every reflecting person in his efforts to bring about an increase in the out of door recreation time of the people of this country. His purpose can be effected by no other means but by the simple device of putting the clocks ahead. But conditions which might hamper the operation of such a law as he seeks to have enacted must be considered and removed.

### NOT EVEN FOR THE KIRK.

THERE joined the police force of London a young Scotchman but recently arrived from his native land. Being detailed one day to block the traffic on a certain thoroughfare where members of royalty were expected to pass, he was accosted by a lady hurrying to keep an appointment, who thrust her head from the carriage window to remonstrate with him over the delay.

"I canna' let you pass, ma'am," answered the man of the baton.

"But, sir, you do not know who I am. I am the wife of a Cabinet Minister."

"It dinna make na difference, ma'am," he answered. "I could na let you pass if you were the wife of a Presbyterian minister."