

## From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XXXVIII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THERE still linger round the THE REIGN Houses of Parliament traces of OF TERROR. the terror that reigned twelve years ago after the explosion in the Crypt, following at no long distance of time from the more serious outrage that shook the offices of the Local Government Board at Whitehall. Something like a state of siege was declared within the precincts of the Houses of Parliament. The police garrison was more than doubled. The railings of Palace Yard formed the limit of approach. Respectable persons halting for a moment in passing to look within became objects of dire suspicion to the watchful police. The very messengers running between the newspaper offices and the Press Gallery were numbered and labelled, and required to display their authority before passing the cordon of police.

WEST-  
MINSTER  
HALL IN  
THE OLDEN  
TIME.

Up to this period of panic Westminster Hall remained, though in somewhat restricted conditions, what it had ever been, a possession and a thoroughfare for the people. In "Barnaby Rudge"

there is a graphic picture of the scene at the era of the Lord George Gordon Riots, drawn by Charles Dickens from contemporary records. "There were many knots and groups of persons in Westminster Hall," Dickens writes, "some few looking upward at its noble ceiling, and at the rays of evening light, tinted by the setting sun, which streamed in aslant through its small windows, and, growing dimmer by degrees, were quenched in the gathering gloom below. Some noisy passengers, mechanics going home from work, and otherwise, who hurried quickly through, waking the echoes with their voices, and soon darkening the small door in the distance, as they passed into the street beyond. Some in busy conference together on political or private matters, pacing slowly up and down with eyes that sought the ground, and seeming, by their attitudes, to listen earnestly from head to foot. Here a dozen squabbling urchins made a very Babel in the air. There a solitary man, half-clerk, half-mendicant, paced up and down, with hungry dejection in his look and gait. At his elbow passed an

errand lad, swinging his basket round and round, and with his shrill whistle riving the very timbers of the roof; while a more observant schoolboy, half-way through, pocketed his ball, and eyed the distant beadle as he came looming on. The smooth, worn pavement, dusty with footsteps, still called upon the lofty walls to reiterate the shuffle and the tread of feet unceasingly, save when the closing of some heavy door resounded through the building like a clap of thunder, and drowned all other noises in its rolling sound."



OLD WESTMINSTER HALL.

From an Illustration in "Barnaby Rudge," by Cattermole.

IN THE CLAIMANT'S DAY. As long as the Courts of Justice flanked Westminster Hall, the splendid vestibule was, by necessity, left free to access by the people. Whilst the Courts were sitting, it was scarcely a less picturesque scene than that depicted by Dickens. Shortly before the demolition of the old courts, the drama reached its climax in the coming and going of the Claimant. Morning and evening, through weeks and months, the broad width of Westminster Hall was narrowed by a wedge of humanity that opened to make room for this portly person waddling to and from his carriage.

When the seat of justice was shifted to the Strand the House of Commons clutched at Westminster Hall, and with its traditional exclusive selfishness, proclaimed its sacred ground. The public were not absolutely excluded, but they were not, as heretofore, indiscriminately admitted, necessity being created for showing that they had some business or errand in direct communication with the courts. If, for example, they had orders for the gallery, they might pass through Westminster Hall on their way thither. They might even, on field nights, stand in groups to the right of the big doorway, watching the members pass through, and loudly whisper their names. After the explosion panic, the public were so rigidly excluded from Westminster Hall, that a member might not personally conduct a stranger along the echoing pavement of the lonely hall.

As far as the safety of members in Session in the House of Commons is concerned, these restrictions are as ineffective as they are arbitrary. A nineteenth-century Guy Fawkes provided with a modern explosive would not haunt subterranean passages or waste his time in Westminster Hall. As that blatant personage O'Donovan Rossa showed a couple of Sessions ago, there is no difficulty in obtaining a seat on the front bench of the Strangers' Gallery. Being there, O'Donovan Rossa was content to obtain cheap advertisement by flinging out a noisy protest upon the astonished heads of members. If he had meant business, he might, at his leisure, and with certain aim, have flung on the floor a bomb that would promptly and indefinitely have adjourned the sitting.

This contingency was ever present with the authorities during the scare. They attempted to guard against it by careful examination of anything that looked bulky about the person of a stranger. Even members carrying small black bags were

objects of police suspicion. It was felt then, and the assurance remains, that the unassailable basis of safety of the House of Commons from murderous assault from the Strangers' Galleries is the invincible objection *Messieurs les assassins* have to linger within reach of the explosive at its supreme moment. They hanker after the slow match and the opportunity it provides of getting away to a safe distance before innocent and unsuspecting sojourners or passers-by are blown into eternity.

One of the quaintest relics of the FORGOTTEN SCARE exists out of public view in SENTRIES. the back courtyard of the Houses of Parliament. The long length of this is bridged at various points by portions of the building. The habitual tendency of the dynamitards to place one of their infernal machines in a snug corner, under an arched building, pointed the police mind to these passages as being the very places where attempt to blow up the Houses of Parliament would be made. Accordingly, in the height of the panic, order was given that a policeman should be placed on duty at every archway, relief being so arranged that by night as well as by day the spot should be guarded. The edict has never been withdrawn, and into this peaceful Jubilee year, day and night, summer and winter, through the recess as through the Session, every archway of the Court Yard echoes to the tread of a puzzled policeman.

DRESS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. Study of a collection of pictures and prints depicting the House of Commons in Session at various epochs of its history is, apart from the personalities, interesting as illustrating the changes in sartorial fashion. The House in Session in early spring was, to tell the truth, a very ordinary-looking assembly. Summer setting in with the severity of the last two years, the dull-toned benches blossom in summer array. Now is the coy cummerbund seen, and the white ducks of Cap'en Tommy Bowles flutter to and fro, imbuing the scene with a grateful touch of purity and innocence.

At its best and brightest, the House of Commons is, from the spectacular point of view, a poor thing compared with what it was in the time of Walpole, or even of Pitt. In the National Portrait Gallery there is a precious picture of the House, showing it at work in the Session of 1742. It is an engraving by Piné from a drawing from life by Gravelot. The scene is, of course, the old House of

Commons, with its chapel-like galleries, its candelabra pendant from the ceiling. Speaker Onslow is in the Chair, and the crowded audience is addressed by Sir Robert Walpole, who wears the blue ribbon of the Garter. All the members wear wigs, and are dressed in handsome frock-coats with high stocks. According to the custom common to gentlemen of England of the day, every man sports his sword. To-day the only armed man in the House of Commons is the Serjeant-at-Arms.

The inflexibility of the rule against either members or strangers bringing weapons into the House incidentally adds to the long list of injustices to Ireland. It is an ancient privilege of the City of Dublin, that when in its corporate capacity it presents a petition to the House of Commons, the document is presented in person by the Lord Mayor, gowned and chained, accompanied by his sheriffs, his mace-bearer, and his sword-bearer. But before entering the House to stand at the bar with the Lord Mayor, the sword-bearer is obliged to deposit his lethal weapon with the door-keeper.

MR. MARJORIBANKS'S DISAPPOINTMENT. Another instance where this rule, prohibiting the carrying of arms in the House, arbitrarily interfered with a peaceable procedure, is connected with one of the few speeches the present Lord Tweedmouth addressed to the House of Commons whilst he still sat in it as Mr. Marjoribanks. He had strong views in respect to a new magazine rifle. I forget precisely what direction they took. In order to do justice to their exposition, it was found necessary to turn the Whips' room into a sort of armoury. For several nights anyone entering, on whatever business, was pretty certain to find himself covered by a deadly barrel, along whose glistening level Mr. Marjoribanks's eye gleamed. He was merely explaining to someone else the bearings of the new rifle. It was startling at first. But when the caller, by the frequency of his visits, grew accustomed to it, it came to be regarded as quite a friendly reception.

Mr. Marjoribanks had looked forward to the advantage of a collection of the magazine

rifles within reach of him as he stood at the table of the House delivering his lecture. The Speaker thought it would be interesting, but ruled it was irregular. So the rifles were left in the Whips' room.



LORD TWEEDMOUTH AND THE NEW RIFLE.

IN PITT'S PARLIAMENT. In Pitt's time swords were no longer worn in the

House of Commons, though in other respects the dress of members is scarcely less picturesque. In the National Portrait Gallery there is a painting with a curious history, showing the House of Commons in Session in 1793. It is the work of a German artist, Karl Anton Hickel, who was fortunate in obtaining special sittings from prominent members. That

such a picture was in existence long remained a tradition round Westminster. Diligent inquiry failed to get upon its track. It was ascertained that the artist on returning to his own country had taken his work with him.



MR. PITT.

From Hickel's Picture of the House of Commons.

It was the late Mr. Edward Stanhope who did the nation the service of capturing the prize. By diligent research he discovered that in the year after the Battle of Waterloo, the Emperor of Austria bought the picture from the heirs of the painter. It was carried to Vienna and subsided into a store-room. Earl Granville, at the time Foreign Secretary, took a warm interest in the matter, with the result that the Emperor of Austria graciously presented the picture to the National Portrait Gallery, where it now hangs—in somewhat of a vault it is true, but worth studying when the sun shines.

The scene is full of life and colour. William Pitt, in velvet coat and knee-breeches, with white silk stockings, is addressing the House, looking much less like Mr. Chamberlain than he does in his statue at Knowle, and in the less meritorious work of art in the corridor leading to the Lobby of the House of Commons. All the members are clean-shaven, powdered, and wigged. One on the Treasury Bench, immediately behind Mr. Pitt, is a colleague startlingly like Sir Frank Lockwood. With the exception of one or two members, who wear low, broad-brimmed felt hats, all are uncovered. *Per contra*, the Speaker wears the three-cornered hat, taken in hand in these days only for the purpose of counting the House.

At the corner seat below the gangway, inconveniently squeezed, is a figure which one would at first sight take to be the Chaplain, though what he is doing there, seated among members, is inexplicable. It is not the Chaplain, but the Master of the Rolls, arrayed in black gown and clerical bands. To-day the Master of the Rolls seated on that bench would be as much out of place as would be the Chaplain.

IN PEEL'S PARLIAMENT. Another and better-known picture of the House of Commons, since it has longer been a national possession, is Sir George Hayter's view of the interior of the House during the morning of the Address to the Crown at the meeting of the first Reform Parliament on the 5th of February, 1833. In the serried ranks on the bench immediately behind his leader, Sir Robert Peel, is seated "the

rising hope of the Conservative Party"—Mr. W. E. Gladstone, at the time in his twenty-fourth year, member for Newark. There is nothing about the face or figure that recalls the statesman we have known in recent years, the sole survivor of that now ghostly gathering.

The muster-roll contains some names familiar in Parliamentary history. Lord John Russell is on the Treasury Bench. Near him his esteemed colleague Lord Palmerston. Seated in various parts of the House are Sir Francis Burdett, Thomas Fowell Buxton,

William Cobbett, John Evelyn Denison, afterwards Speaker; Sir James Graham, Grote, the historian; Gully, the sometime prize-fighter; Lord Althorpe, afterwards Earl Spencer; Lord Ashley, longer known as the Earl of Shaftesbury; the two Barings, who later severally became Lord Ashburton and Lord Northbrook; Cam Hobhouse, Jeffrey, of the *Edinburgh*; Henry Labouchere, who, unmindful of his nephew's later developed prejudices, became Lord Taunton; Macaulay, then sitting for Leeds; Daniel O'Connell, who in this Parliament preceded Lord Randolph Churchill in his

preference for the corner seat below the gangway to the left of the Chair; John Arthur Roebuck, Lalor Shiel, Christopher Talbot, who only the other day, as it seemed, sat in the House of Commons with the proud title of its Father, now passed on to Mr. Villiers; Poulett Thompson, Sir Harry Verney, not long passed away, and John Walter, proprietor of the *Times*.

THE FASCINATION OF THE DIVISION LOBBY.

The average member of the House of Commons displays what the public are inclined to regard as disproportionate anxiety to figure in the division list. This ambition would be as intelligible as it is honourable if it were confined to important occasions, and was exercised in circumstances that made every vote tell. But whatever be the question, however local, even trivial, there is shown the same deathless determination to be in at the division.

Strangers in the Central Hall are occasionally surprised, even alarmed, to see



VERY LIKE SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD.

a file of gentlemen, some stout, many elderly, trotting at breathless speed over the space that divides the House of Lords from the Commons. They have been in the Lords listening to some important debate. There

the part of members. In view of future contests in his constituency a member feels the desirability of building up a record whose official authority shall silence slander hinting at remissness of duty. With some members



“THE RUSH FOR THE DIVISIONS.”

who cannot hope to reach the height of Mr. Gladstone's eloquence, or the position of Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Arthur Balfour, there is the laudable ambition of coming out at the end of the Session one of ten members who have been in the largest number of divisions. It comes to pass that the drudgery of an all-night sitting is gladly suffered, since in the course of it there may be opportunity of adding appreciably to the score of divisions.

comes a messenger with news that a division is called. Instantly a stampede takes place. There is just time between the clearing of the House and the putting of the question a second time to cover the ground between the two Houses. There is perhaps upon the round earth no figure so pitiful, no face so distressed, as that of the member who, having made this, or other, dash for the division, finds the door closed even as he crosses the lobby. The looker-on would be inclined to think that for the country all was lost, even honour. If in remorse for his inability to avert calamity by his vote the disappointed member were straightway to repair to the Terrace and there shoot himself, no one would be surprised. Whereas the probability is that he does not even know upon what question the House is dividing, and if he has gathered so much information, he, not having been present through the debate, has not till he sees the Whips the slightest idea into which lobby he should go.

The explanation of the burning zeal, the over-mastering desire, is found in the fact that attendances upon the division lobby are carefully recorded, and at the end of the Session are tabulated, with the effect of showing more or less constant attendance on

If these remarks serve to impress  
A SMART the outsider with the high value  
TRICK. set by members upon the opportunity of running up their division account, he will, at least partially, understand the alarm and indignation which followed upon discovery of a temporarily successful attempt at what may without disrespect be called rigging the market. Among the Standing Orders added in recent years is one whereby the Speaker or Chairman of Committees, deeming a demand for a division frivolous, may refuse to waste the time of the House in sending members round the lobbies. In such cases he calls upon members crying for the division to stand up in their places. The division lobby clerks are called in, the names of the small minority are taken down, and printed in the papers distributed on the following day.

For many Sessions this ordinance was passively operative. A fractious minority, knowing what was in store for them if they persisted, shrank from the ludicrous position of standing up like naughty boys whilst their names were taken down in presence of a jeering majority. This Session an ingenious mind discovered quite unexpected opportunities in Standing Order No. 30. He

observed that the names of the minority, printed in the Orders of the Day, were reckoned as if they had taken part in an ordinary division. This was worth double an average opportunity. Not only did the minority get a mark each in the table of divisions, but others of the majority, who might be pressing them close for precedence, were out of the running. The discovery was followed by an epidemic of frivolously claimed divisions within the meaning of the statute. Loyal Ministerialists, staying up late at night to back up the Government, sat in anguished impotence whilst some five or a dozen members opposite, frivolously claiming divisions, ran up their score three or four points in a single night.

After enduring this experience for what seemed an interminable period, an appeal was made to the Speaker, who, amid loud cheers, ruled that the practice, as far as it affected the division table, was an infringement of the spirit of the rule. Hereafter, the names of these minorities, though they will be taken down and printed, will not be included in the division list. This ruling was marked by a sudden and complete cessation of the practice of frivolously claiming divisions.

I hear a pretty story about a  
 A NEW visit recently paid by Lord  
 HAT TRICK. Charles Beresford to a Yorkshire  
 town famed for its ironworks.



"ANGUISHED IMPOTENCE."

commander of the *Condor*, the captain of the boat that went up the Nile and mended its boiler under a heavy fire, was not the man to flinch from the ordeal. He took off his hat and placed it under the hammer.

Down flashed the enormous weight, stopping short within a hair's-breadth of the roof of the hat. Lord Charles, with his child-like smile, resumed his prized possession.

Amongst the visitor's escort was a local member, a blatant person well known in the House of Commons and out of it.

"Most wonderful!" said Lord Charles, turning to the M.P.

"Oh! not at all," said he; "a mere nothing. They never fail. Now I'll try mine."

He placed his hat (not quite so glossy a specimen as Lord Charles's) under the hammer. At a given signal down it came, smashing the astonished hat much flatter than a pancake.



"CRUSHED AGAIN!"

## From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XXXIX.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

MR. GLADSTONE'S MAIDEN SPEECH.

IN his preface to White's "Inner Life of the House of Commons," published in the summer by Fisher Unwin, Mr. Justin McCarthy writes: "Mr. Gladstone's maiden speech fell so utterly unnoted that, until some recent publications had settled the question, he was almost invariably set down as having made his first speech at a later date and on a more important subject."

More than sixty years have elapsed since the speech was made. Few are now living who heard it. Record is slight, and, as Mr. McCarthy points out, is a little mixed as to the precise occasion. But Mr. Gladstone vividly remembers it. "Mr. McCarthy," Mr. Gladstone observed on reading the passage quoted, "has fallen into a slight error about my maiden speech. It was noticed in debate in a marked manner by Mr. Stanley, who was in charge of the Bill."

The memorable speech was delivered on the 17th of May, 1833. The occasion was the introduction by Mr. Stanley, then Colonial Secretary, of a series of resolutions on which it was designed to found an Act abolishing slavery in the British Colonies. (Thirty-five years later Mr. Gladstone adopted the same form of Parliamentary procedure as a preliminary to his Bill for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church.) Parliament, the first after the Reform Act, met on the 29th of January, and the 17th of May was a little early for a new member to claim a hearing. Mr. Disraeli, however, was even more prompt. He was returned for Maidstone in the first Parliament of the Queen. On the 20th of November, 1837, it was opened by Her Majesty in person, and on the seventh day of the following month Mr. Disraeli delivered what remains as the most famous of his Parliamentary speeches, the one brought to abrupt conclusion with the passionate

prophecy, "The time will come when you shall hear me."

Mr. Gladstone has the excuse that he was directly dragged into the controversy. Lord Howick, afterwards Lord Grey, in the course of his speech pointedly referred to the estate of Mr. Gladstone's father in Demerara, drawing from its domestic history alleged proof that slave labour in the West Indies meant early death for the slaves. The Mr. Stanley whose commendation the new member was justly proud of became in due time Earl of Derby, Prime Minister, patron and colleague of Mr. Disraeli.



MR. WILLIAM WHITE.

DOOR-KEEPERS IN THE COMMONS.

Mr. Gladstone's memory of persons and incidents connected with his first Parliament is so precise as to extend to the door-keepers. He remembers their names, "Scott and Williams, one tall, the other short, but both with snow-white or powdered hair and florid faces."

In this connection, Mr. Gladstone mentions a fact which will be new to the present generation of Parliament men. In his time, and for many years after, the door-keepers were not paid by salary charged on the Civil Service Estimates, but were dependent upon fees voluntarily paid them by members. An old official, whose memory goes back over thirty years, tells me he heard that the sum given was "two guineas each." This must mean a contribution per member of two guineas, one for each doorkeeper. As there were then 658 members this sum, duly paid up, would bring nearly £700 per man for six months' attendance. There was a current belief amongst the less highly paid servitors of the House that these coveted posts were obtained by purchase. It was said that £1,000 was paid to someone. As the someone must needs have been the Serjeant-at-Arms of the day, the story is not credible. It is quite possible for the student of advertise-

ments in the Church newspapers to believe that places for the cure of souls under the ægis of the Church are bartered and sold. But the mind shrinks from contemplation of a Serjeant-at-Arms, even in the unreformed Parliament, selling the place of doorkeeper, and guiltily secreting the £1,000 in the pocket of his tight breeches.

I believe Mr. White, the doorkeeper whose interesting book has recalled Mr. Gladstone's reminiscences of his early Parliamentary life, was the first doorkeeper whose salary was carried on the Votes. He was appointed by Lord Charles Russell, who was certainly far above the £1,000 suspicion, even had grounds for it not been removed by the altered circumstances of payment. Lord Charles made Mr. White's acquaintance at a time when the future historian of the Inner Life of the House of Commons was taking an active part in local affairs of the ducal town. He liked him so much that, a vacancy in the chair at the door happening, he, fortunately for posterity, inducted the Bedford citizen.

A COM-  
FORTABLE  
BERTH.

The salary of the principal doorkeeper to-day is £300 a year, his colleague in the chair opposite drawing £250. It is one of the anomalies of the relations of the two Houses that, whilst this modest salary suffices for the really hard-worked officials in the Commons, the doorkeepers in the Lords, whose task is by comparison a sinecure, are paid at precisely the same rate. Moreover, there are two principal doorkeepers in the Lords, who between them draw £600 a year. This arrangement did not escape the attention of a Committee recently reviewing the expenditure of the House of Lords' staff. Vested interests have been preserved, to the extent that one or two assistant doorkeepers on the way to promotion will, when they attain it, receive the same salary. Thereafter the wage of the principal doorkeeper in the House of Lords will be £200 a year.

There are probably many poor baronets, not to mention earls' younger sons, who would thankfully take the berth at the reduced scale of payment. Its duties are not exhausting, either to mind or body. Day after day in the early period of the Session, the Lord Chancellor, with full pomp and ceremony, takes the Chair at a quarter-past four. Prayers are read, and a pause for private conversation fills up the time till half-past four, the hour at which public business is appointed to commence. There usually being none, noble lords straightway go home, cheered by the consciousness of having deserved well of their country. This privilege the doorkeepers, of course, share, as they also enjoy much longer recess at Easter and Whitsuntide than falls to the lot of their brethren at the door of the Commons. Then there is the long recess of something like five months, during which they sit, the centre of admiring family circles, recalling how the Earl greeted them with "Good-morning!" when it was really twenty-five minutes to five in the afternoon; and what the Royal Duke said (this indicated only by initials) when one day he found another peer had in mistake taken his umbrella, there being a review at Aldershot on the following day.



"WHERE'S MY UMBRELLA?"

THE CHIEF  
DOOR-  
KEEPER.

As far as my memory goes back, and it just touches

the time when Mr. White was principal doorkeeper, I have found the occupant of the chair a gentleman specially fitted for discharge of its onerous and important duties. The position is one requiring tact, patience, presence of mind, and unvarying good manner. These are cheap at £300 a year, and the selection of the Serjeant-at-Arms, at least for the quarter of a century that I have had opportunity of closely observing it, has been singularly fortunate.

By chance rather than by ordered progress, the latest chief doorkeepers have reached the blue ribbon of the service *via*



the Ladies' Gallery. Mr. Wilson, the present incumbent of the chair, is still spoken of kindly by ladies frequenting the gallery in recent Parliaments. The exceptional popularity he secured in the delicate position of custodian of ladies in a chamber where silence is peremptorily imposed has been established with equal universality in the more stirring air of the Lobby.

ANSWERS THAT TURN AWAY WRATH. The House of Commons is quick to resent anything approaching rude smartness, or attempt on the part of a Minister replying to a question to score off an unoffending member. Inability to recognise this honourable prejudice had a good deal to do with the unpopularity and final downfall of Mr. Ayrton. On the other hand, there are few things delight the House more than a sly hit dexterously dealt by a popular Minister at a too obtrusive member. But the conditions here set forth must be rigorously observed. Moreover, there must be no malice in the quip.

A well-known example of successful adventure in this direction was, I think, quoted in this page in an obituary notice of the late Sir George Campbell. In the Session of 1889, when Mr. David Plunket, now Lord Rathmore, was First Commissioner of Works, new staircases were erected in Westminster Hall. They were decorated with carving in stone of impossible birds and beasts, which excited much acrid criticism. One evening, questions relative thereto having been answered by Mr. Plunket, Sir George Campbell interposed, and in his most aggressive manner, uplifting to querulous pitch his memorable voice, insisted upon knowing "whether the First Commissioner of Works was responsible for these fearful creatures?" Mr Plunket coming back to the table replied:—

"No, sir, I am not responsible for the fearful creatures in Westminster Hall or in this House either."

The smiling face, the dexterous stammer, the pleasing nod of recognition of Sir

George Campbell with which this remark was uttered, added much to the delight of the House.

That is hard to beat; but this "PLATITUDINIZER." Session there have been two quiet flashes of this peculiar humour, that have had almost equal success. In the first, the interlocutors were Mr. Caldwell and the Lord Advocate. Students of the Parliamentary reports have no opportunity of realizing the individuality of Mr. Caldwell. He has a rich gift of what an eminent American, at present on a visit to this country, calls "platitudinizing." The word will not be found in the New Oxford Dictionary. But it is most effective as indicating a constant, ever-fed supply of pointless words, wrapped up in cotton-wooly sentences. Amongst other attractions,

he has a loud, level voice, a rapid intonation, and an almost inhuman staying power. He can go on talking for two hours just as conveniently as he can gabble through one, and probably will, in the double time, say less to the point than he might by accident have compressed in a spin of sixty minutes.

One day a suffering colleague on the Select Committee on the Scotch Public Health Bill cut a notch on a stick every time Mr. Caldwell rose to make a speech. When the Committee adjourned the stick was found to contain forty-one notches.



MR. WILSON, THE DOORKEEPER.



MR. CALDWELL, M.P.

Of course, the member for Mid-Lanarkshire is never reported, for the managers of newspapers have to consider their interests with the public. That reflection does not lessen the anguish of those who, whether in Select Committee or the House, have to suffer Mr. Caldwell at length.

It was late at night, in debate on a Superannuation Bill, that the Lord Advocate quietly scored off this contribution from Scotland to the business resources of the House. The proposal of the Bill was that superannuation should take place at the age of sixty. Mr. Caldwell, anxious for economy, moved an amendment extending the period for five years. No man, he argued, could be claimed to be laid on the shelf before he had reached the age of sixty-five.

"Oh, yes," said the Lord Advocate, sternly regarding Mr. Caldwell; "some persons become incapable long before they are sixty-five."

Members roaring with laughter turned up "Dod," and found that Mr. Caldwell is only fifty-eight.

The second instance this Session

PUBLIC is the more welcome as coming NUISANCES. from an unexpected quarter. A

member put a question to the Home Secretary as to the powers of County Councils or other local authorities to deal with the nomad population of gipsies and tinkers living in vans. Sir Matthew White-Ridley replied that provision is made in the Housing of the Working Classes Act to enable local authorities to deal with nuisances caused by dwellers in tents and vans. Mr. Swift MacNeill's ready wit here saw an opportunity of dealing a backhander at the Primrose League, whose agents are accustomed to go about country places in vans.

"Do these powers," he slyly asked, "apply to persons in Primrose League vans?"

"They apply," said the Home Secretary, staring straight at his interlocutor, "only to persons who become nuisances."

The laughter which bubbled round Mr. MacNeill's sally became a universal shout at the Home Secretary's subtle, though effective, retort.

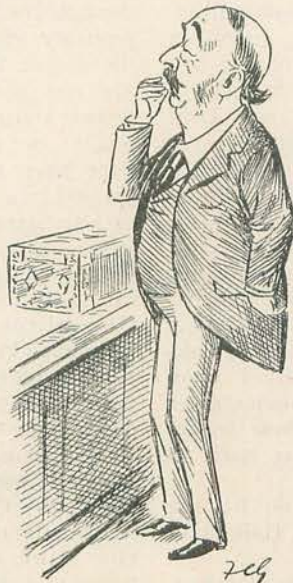
One of the notable points about AN OLD the Session just closed is the BOY. advance made by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach in the esteem of the House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ranks amongst the oldest members, having taken his seat for East Gloucestershire in



SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH.

1864, four years before Sir William Harcourt, who justly counts himself one of the oldest inhabitants. Long ago, Sir Michael made his reputation as a sound debater, a safe administrator. In his fourth Session, Mr. Disraeli, who had a keen eye for capacity, picked him out for a minor Ministerial post. Gradually advancing, he seemed to reach his highest point when, in 1885, he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. But not at that time or before has he filled so large a place in the estimation of the House as he has won during the past two years. This may in part be due to better health. It may in some measure be traced to the greater ease which comes of fuller self-confidence following on success. Sir Michael is, undoubtedly, somewhat lighter of touch than was his earlier habitude. Still, in the main, life is to him a serious thing, to be regarded through grave eyes with face unlit by laughter.

Perhaps, after all, he is himself unaltered, and owes his fuller success to his personal environment. His solid



SIR MATTHEW WHITE-RIDLEY IS FUNNY.

knowledge, his unfaltering consistency, supply sharp contrasts that make members involuntarily turn to him with fuller appreciation.

A country member confides to me VOICES IN a gruesome experience that has THE NIGHT. befallen him in connection with the discharge of his legislative duties. He did not take a house in town this season, and after some experience of private lodgings, engaged rooms in one of the most lately built of the palatial hotels that lift their lofty heads above the streets of London. He was much pleased with everything on the first day of his stay. The dinner was excellent, the wine good, if a little dear, the attendance unexceptional, bedroom and sitting-room thoroughly comfortable. He went to bed glowing with pleasure at his good fortune, and soon fell asleep.

How long he slumbered he cannot say, but was awakened by an unfamiliar voice close at his ear. "Are you there?" it shouted.

He certainly was, but was not expecting anybody else. He turned on the electric light convenient to his hand, and found he had the room all to himself. Again the voice resounded, this time a little sharply:—

"Are you there?"

Then he grasped the situation. There was a telephone in the room, the latest resource of civilization, at the disposal of tenants on the first and second floors. It must be urgent business that would call a man up at this time of night—illness at home, perhaps, and urgent recall.

Jumping out of bed, he approached the telephone, through which came again the sharp challenge. "Yes," he replied, breathlessly; "who is it?"

"It's me," said the voice. "Come away directly; your uncle's asking for you, and the doctor says he can scarcely last through the night."

The M.P. rapidly reviewed his family relations, and knew that he had not an uncle anywhere nearer than Baltimore, in distant Maryland.

"Who are you?" he asked, through the telephone. "What's your name?"

"I'm Thompson, the butler, you know," hoarsely whispered the voice. "Mistress says, come away directly, your uncle's asking for you, and the doctor says he can scarcely last through the night."

"There's some mistake," the member signalled back, a little pettishly. It was early in the Session, and the nights were cold. "My name is B——. You're on the wrong connection."

"Oh!" said the voice, in pained surprise, and then there was silence.

The member returned to his couch and was soon asleep again. He seemed only to have dozed when the silence was broken

by a well-known voice with the old cry, "Are you there?" Angrily jumping out of bed, he roared through the telephone, "What's the matter now?"

"Your uncle's sinking fast," cried the too familiar voice, now tremulous with emotion. "Mistress says——"

"Go away!" bawled the member; "you're on the wrong line."

The story is too painful to pursue,

but as a matter of sober fact, twice before morning broke were the member's slumbers disturbed by the ringing of the telephone bell and the peremptory inquiry, "Are you there?" Whether this was preliminary to further news of his sick uncle he does not know, remaining under the sheets resolutely irresponsive. He made angry remonstrance with the manager on the following morning. The manager was exceedingly sorry, but the connections had got mixed and the member had been awakened to receive someone else's message.

The other day a Royal Academician, a famous portrait painter, LIKENESSES. made a remark on which I have since hopelessly pondered. He asked if I had noticed the strong facial resemblance between the Marquis of Salisbury and his nephew, the Leader of the House of Commons. At first sight there are, I suppose, no two personages more



THE MIDNIGHT TELEPHONE.

distinct in appearance. Lord Salisbury, with his leonine head, his bowed shoulders, his great girth, his almost elephantine trot; Mr. Balfour, with his rather small head, his unchubby cheeks, his maypole-like figure, his long, swinging stride.

In the now little read if not quite forgotten "New Timon," which Bulwer Lytton gave to the world a little more than fifty years ago, there is a passage descriptive of O'Connell which applies with graphic accuracy to the Premier of to-day:—

But who, scarce less by every gazer eyed,  
Walks yonder, swinging with a stalwart stride?  
With that vast bulk of chest and limb assign'd  
So oft to men who subjugate their kind;  
So sturdy Cromwell push'd, broad-shoulder'd, on;  
So burly Luther breasted Babylon;  
So brawny Cleon bawl'd his Agora down;  
And large-limb'd Mahmoud clutch'd a Prophet's crown!

If that is, truly, like Lord Salisbury, the uncle cannot be said to recall the personality of the nephew. It was simply in respect of the face that the R.A. made his allegation of strong personal resemblance, supporting it with a wealth of detail whose erudition I will not attempt to chronicle.

COUSINS  
AND  
BROTHERS.

Whatever may be the case as between uncle and nephew, there is no doubt that the personal resemblance among off-shoots of the Cecil family is remarkable. It does not occur in the case of Lord Cranborne, who, whether in personal appearance, manner, or public speech, has no resemblance to his father or his cousins on the front bench of the House of Commons. But Lord Hugh Cecil is in some isolated respects exceedingly

like his cousin Arthur. He has many of the inflections of his voice. His phrasing and his general style of speech-making, even to the extent of occasional hesitation for the proper word, and the certainty of finding it, recall Mr. Arthur Balfour's earliest House of Commons efforts whilst he was yet attached to the flank of the Fourth Party. To see Lord Hugh crossing the lobby of the House of Commons, or walking along the

street, is to have instantly recalled his most famous cousin. A back view of his figure startlingly resembles the First Lord of the Treasury, the illusion being completed by his long, swinging stride.

It is probable that, if Lord Hugh retains his health and strength, and spends his days and nights in the House of Commons, he will at no distant day complete the parallel by drawing near to the Parliamentary position of his illustrious kinsman. A man of wide culture, he has also strong convictions, which, whether right or wrong, are rare things much appreciated in the House of Commons. He has in him, moreover, the making of a polished and pungent debater.

In the case of Mr. Arthur Balfour and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, family resemblance is in one particular development carried to an embarrassing perfection. Mr. Gerald Balfour's voice and inflection of speech are so identical with those of his brother that, entering the House when one or other is on his legs, one has to look towards the Treasury Bench to see who is "up" before deciding the question that presents itself when the voice first strikes on the ear.



SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW.



LORD HUGH CECIL.