From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XL.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

POSSIBLE PREMIERS.

IN the leisure of country-house life, and the confidence of the smoking-room, I have enjoyed opportunity of learning the views of a high authority on the delicate question of proximate Premiers on either side. If I were permitted to name the oracle, his expressed views would gain alike in personal interest and in weight. That privilege is withheld; but I am at liberty to record the dicta, which, though not professing to be a verbatim report of intermittent conversation carried over some period, may be accepted as an accurate record, since it has been seen in proof by the statesman to whom I am indebted for permission to publish the review of the situation as it stands at the opening of a new Session.

"A TOWERING IMPATIENCE."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT.

"Harcourt will never be Premier," said my friend, "and, though not personally enamoured of his company, I profoundly regret it. It is an unexpected, undeserved termination of a hard-working, brilliant, and, I believe, purely patriotic career. Harcourt has made great sacrifices of ease, time, and money for the public service. As you know, when he decided upon a political career he deliberately sacrificed a large and increasing income at the Parliamentary Bar. What he has since received in the way of Ministerial salary is probably not equal to sixpence in the pound on what he would have netted had he stuck to his work in the Committee-rooms upstairs. As far as Ministerial life is concerned, ill-luck pursued him from the beginning. Scarcely had he, running in double harness with Henry James, worried Gladstone into making him, conjointly with his comrade, a Law Officer of the Crown, than the Liberals were swept out of Downing Street, and remained in the wilderness for six years.

"When in 1893 Mr. G.'s hint at desire to resign the Premiership was somewhat hurriedly snapped at by his stricken colleagues in the Cabinet, Harcourt had good reason to expect that the reversal of the office would fall to him. Perhaps it would, had not his temper been rather Plantagenet than Archiepiscopal. He has a towering impatience of anything approaching—I don't say stupidity, but — mental slowness. At heart he is one of the kindest men in the world. But he has a way of sitting upon people, and, his weight being elephantine, the experience of the sufferer is neither forgettable nor forgivable. The story goes that in January, 1893, his colleagues in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet with one accord began to make excuse from serving under him as

"ONE OF THE KINDEST OF MEN."

Premier. I don't know whether that's true. But I can testify that, very early in the run of the Rosebery Cabinet, there were persistent rumours of Harcourt's approaching resignation. I took the liberty of asking one of the least excitable of his colleagues whether there was any foundation for the report. 'I don't know what Harcourt is going to do,' he said, 'but I'll tell you what. As things are going now, if he doesn't resign soon, *we* shall.'

"A WAY OF SITTING UPON PEOPLE."

"There was evidently a tiff on at the time, which blew over, and they all lived happily after up to the unexpected and, in ordinary circumstances, inadequate cordite explosion.

"Mr. G.'s resignation naturally opened up a prospect of Harcourt's advancement to the vacant post. By common consent he had earned the preferment. There was no one on the Treasury Bench of the House of Commons who might reasonably compete with him. That he should have been passed over in favour of a colleague of less than half his term of service, one who more than a dozen years earlier had actually served as his junior at the Home Office, was sufficient to disturb a temperament more equable than that of the Lord of Malwood. The latecomers to the toil of the vineyard, paid on equal terms with those who had laboured from break of day, were in quite ordinary case compared with Lord Rosebery exalted to the Premiership over the head of Sir William Harcourt. But things were so ordained, and if, whilst acquiescing in the arrangement, Harcourt did not enthusiastically contribute to its success, it must be remembered that, after all, he too is human.

"The bitterness of the case is intensified by consciousness of irrevocable disappointment. It was then or never. It was not then. If he were ten years younger the prospects would be different. The success of leaving him to play second fiddle was not so conducive to harmony as to recommend renewal of the experiment. The present Government will unquestionably live into the next century. In the year 1900 Harcourt will be seventy-three. That, of course, is not an impossible age for a Premier. When in August, 1892, Mr. Gladstone for the fourth time became Prime Minister, he was nearly ten years older. Palmerston did not reach the Premiership till he was in his seventy-first year, and returned to the office when he was seventy-five. Earl Russell was for a few months First Lord of the Treasury at seventy-three. These were exceptional cases, and at best do not supply precedent for a statesman in his seventy-third year for the first time succeeding to the Premiership. What has not been found convenable in past history will not grow more likely of acceptance in the more strenuous political times of the twentieth century. What Mr. G. is accustomed to call the incurable disease of old age will bar Sir William Harcourt's enjoyment of a justly-earned prize.

LORD ROSEBERY.

"Lord Rosebery is still in the running, but is handicapped by a disqualification that, when the time of trial comes, will probably prove as fatal as that which, with quite different bearing, hampers his esteemed friend and former colleague. During his brief tenure of No. 10, Downing Street, Rosebery left nothing to be desired from a Prime Minister—nothing save peace and harmony in the Cabinet. In the concurrent office of Leader of the House of Lords he was without a rival, a foeman worthy of the sword of the veteran Leader of the Opposition. Regarded as a public speaker, he was as effective on the platform as in his place in Parliament. In brief, he has but one disqualification for the high position to which he was called. He is a peer. Even with the Conservatives, of whose party the House

"A PRISONER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS."

of Lords is a rampart, the inconvenience of having the Premier outside the House of Commons is acutely felt. With Liberals such an arrangement is a contradiction of first principles.

"That the disqualification should have been overlooked in the case of Lord Rosebery is the supremest recognition of his high capacity and his peculiar fitness for the post. But it is not an experiment that can be tried again. The Liberals can come back to power only as the result of deep stirring of the popular mind such as Mr. G. accomplished on the eve of the General Election of 1880. The militant section of the Liberal electorate, the men who move the army, have distinctly made up their minds that they will not have a peer for Premier, even though his lordship be so sound and thorough-going a Liberal as is the Earl of Rosebery. The Liberal Party, closing up its ranks for a pitched battle, cannot afford to march on to the battle-ground with avoidable cause of dissension riving its ranks. If Lord Rosebery were plain Archibald Primrose he would as surely be Prime Minister in the next Liberal Government as it is certain that the whirligig of time will bring its revenges at the poll to the Liberal Party. But the Earl of Rosebery is impossible.

"Rosebery's personal testimony on this point is interesting and conclusive. It will be found in his monograph on Pitt, where, dwelling on the difficulty that surrounds the accident of the Prime Minister being seated in the House of Lords, he writes: 'It would be too much to maintain that all the members of a Cabinet should feel an implicit confidence in each other; humanity—least of all, political humanity—could not stand so severe a test. But between a Prime Minister in the House of Lords and the Leader of the House of Commons such a confidence is indispensable. Responsibility rests so largely with the one, and articulation so greatly with the other, that unity of sentiment is the one necessary link that makes a relation, in any case difficult, in any way possible. The voice of Jacob and the hands of Esau may effect a successful imposture, but can hardly constitute a durable administration.'

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

"Apart from Sir William Harcourt and Lord Rosebery, the Front Opposition Bench is not lacking in men who would make passable Premiers. Campbell-Bannerman for example, would be a model Leader of the House of Commons, and a safe Prime Minister. That he should not have come more rapidly and more prominently to the front is one of the unexpected turns of political life. The main reason is, I believe, that, uninfluenced by a well-known example in other quarters, he lets things slide. Stafford Northcote, harried by Randolph Churchill, once pathetically confessed that he was 'lacking in go.' Campbell-Bannerman is wanting in push. Someone has truly said that if he had been born to a patrimony not exceeding £300 a year, he would long ago have been Leader of the House of Commons. A naturally indolent disposition completes the swamping influence of excessive wealth.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

"Oddly enough, the only occasion since middle age when

he felt the blessed influence of personal ambition, and really strived to get himself a place, was when Peel retired from the Speaker's Chair. Strange as it may seem, Campbell-Bannerman really, almost fervidly, desired to be Speaker. One of the reasons confided to me was quaint. He has a horror of recessional speech-making. When he gets a holiday he likes to have it all the way through. The Speaker is not expected to conciliate his constituents by making speeches in the recess, and Campbell-Bannerman looked with large desire on an unruffled holiday from the date of the Prorogation to the opening of the new Session. He would have made a Speaker as good as the best of them. He has the judicial mind, the equable manner, the intellectual alertness, and the wide political and Parliamentary knowledge indispensable to success in the Chair. He is, moreover, master of that pawky humour grateful to the House of Commons, especially when it edges the sable mantle of the majesty of the Chair. His willingness to accept the office relieved the Government and the House from an awkward position. Whilst ready to fight anyone else, the Unionists would have accepted Campbell-Bannerman. It was Harcourt who upset the coach. He raised constitutional objections to a Minister stepping out of the Cabinet into the Speaker's Chair. I believe he even threatened resignation if Campbell-Bannerman insisted upon pressing claims to the Speakership. His colleagues in the Cabinet, appalled by such a prospect, desisted from urging the candidature, and Campbell-Bannerman, possibly not without grateful consciousness of having narrowly escaped a burdensome responsibility, acquiesced.

MR. ASQUITH.

SIR H. FOWLER.

"Sir Henry Fowler is another thoroughly safe man, perhaps a little too safe to aspire to satisfy the popular idea of a Prime Minister. He is more akin to the type of the present Lord Kimberley, and the late Lord Iddesleigh, than to that either of Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Gladstone. Yet few men of less than twenty years' standing in the House of Commons have made such steady advance in their political career as has the ex-Mayor of Wolverhampton. Whatever he has been appointed to do, he has done well. Sometimes, notably in his speech on Henry James's motion raising the question of the Indian Cotton Duties, he has revealed to the House unsuspected depths of statesmanship and debating power. His conduct of the Parish Councils Bill was a masterpiece of adroit Parliamentary management. As an all-round Minister, a dependable man, he has no superior on either Front Bench. I am not sure that that is the type in which successful Prime Ministers are cast. It might possibly be better for the country if such were the case. But I am dealing with matters as we find them.

ONE OF TWO.

"Assuming, of course, that they live and work, I think you will find a future—I do not say absolutely the next — Liberal Prime Minister in one of two of Sir William Harcourt's colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench. If you ask Asquith which of the two will come out first in the running, he will have no difficulty in deciding. He is not a man who wears his heart upon his sleeve, nor is he given to vain boasting. Yet eight years ago, whilst he could not be said as yet to have made his mark upon the House of Commons, I heard him, at a friend's dinner table, quietly announce that he intended some day to be Prime Minister. The third party to the conversation was Lord Randolph Churchill, who afterwards agreed with me that the aspiration, bold as it seemed at that time, was by no means improbable of fulfilment.

MR. ASQUITH.

"What Asquith lacks for the rapid achievement of his settled plan is more blood. Iron he has in plenty, and of excellent quality. He is failing in that sympathetic touch with the multitude which was one of the chief and abiding causes of Mr. G.'s supreme power. Asquith addressing a mass of humanity, whether in the House of Commons or from a public platform, can bring conviction to the mind. He cannot touch the passions. His hard, somewhat *gauche* manner is, I believe, due rather to shyness than to self-assertion. That is a hopeful diagnosis, for it implies the possibility of his sometime letting himself go, with results that will astonish his audience and himself. At present he is too

cold-blooded, too canny, to capture the populace.

"It was characteristic of him that, on losing his position as Cabinet Minister and Secretary of State for the Home Department, he should have gone back to the drudgery of the Bar, to plead before judges whose decisions in matters of life and death he but the day before was empowered to override. The decision was, in some aspects, creditable to him. To an able-bodied, high-spirited man nothing can be more distasteful than the lot of living upon a wife's dowry. Asquith would have done well if he had found any other means of satisfying his honourable instincts. In political life, when running for the highest prizes, the axiom that no man can serve two masters is pitilessly true. Even to attain ordinary success in the House of Commons a man must spend his days and nights in the Chamber. Apart from the conflict of interests and the imperativeness of diverse calls, there is one inexorable matter of fact that makes it impossible for a Leader at the Bar to concurrently fill the place of a Leader in the House of Commons. The House now meets at three o'clock. Public business commences half an hour later, and it frequently happens that the portion of the sitting allotted to questioning Ministers is the most important of the whole. A member absent through the question hour cannot possibly be in close touch with the business of the day. This is more imperatively true in times of storm and stress. It is obvious that, as the Courts of Law do not usually rise before five o'clock, a member of the House of Commons in close attendance on his private business at the Bar cannot be in his place at Westminster during the lively, often critical, episode of questions.

SIR EDWARD GREY.

"Knowledge of this detail will help to explain the conviction borne in upon old Parliamentary hands that, in returning to his work at the Bar, Asquith seriously handicapped himself in the race for the Premiership.

SIR EDWARD GREY.

"Asquith's only rival in sight among the younger men in the Liberal camp is the grand-nephew of the great Earl Grey. I have heard Mr. G. say Edward Grey is the only man he knew in the long course of his experience who might be anything he pleased in political life and seemed content to be hardly anything. The public know little of the young member for Berwick-on-Tweed. The present House of Commons knows little more, and was, perhaps, not deeply impressed by the rare opportunity of forming a judgment supplied towards the close of last Session.

"It is Gladstone and other Nestors of the Party whose profound belief in the young man fixes attention upon him. Here, even more hopelessly than in the case of Campbell-Bannerman, the potentialities of a possibly great career are influenced by total absence of pushfulness. Edward Grey does not want anything but to be left alone, supplied with good tackle, and favoured by fine weather for fishing. He would rather catch a twenty-pound salmon in the Tweed than hook a fat seal of office in the neighbourhood of Downing Street. But he is only thirty-five, just ten years younger than Asquith, and no one can say what chances and changes the new century may bring."

THE OTHER SIDE.

It will be perceived that, enjoying the irresponsibility of the pen that merely transcribes these *obiter dicta* for the Press, I have not attempted to blunt any of their frankness. My Mentor was equally unconventional in subsequent conversations in which he reviewed the chances of succession to the Premiership on the other side. That is a record that will keep till next month.

SIR ISAAC HOLDEN.

The House of Commons was distinctly poorer when on the eve of the General Election of 1895 Sir Isaac Holden resolved not to offer himself for re-election. During the recess the world became poorer by his

death. He was in various ways a type of the best class of Englishman. His father was a Cumberland man; he was born in Scotland; he lived and worked in Yorkshire. More than thirty years ago, having accumulated a vast fortune, he bent his thoughts on Westminster. He was elected for Knaresborough towards the close of the Session of 1865, and represented that borough till the General Election of 1868. At the dissolution he flew at higher game, fighting the Eastern Division of the West Riding. But even the high tide that carried Mr. Gladstone into power in 1868 could not establish a Liberal in that Tory stronghold.

Four years later Isaac Holden tried the Northern Division of the West Riding with similar ill-fortune. At the General Election of 1874 he attacked the Eastern Division again, and was again beaten. But he was not the kind of man to accept defeat, whether in dealing with wool-combing machinery or politics. In 1882 he made a dash at the North-West Riding and carried it. At the time of his retirement from Parliamentary life he was seated for the Keighley Division of the same Riding.

SIR ISAAC HOLDEN.

NO TALKER BUT A WALKER.

I do not remember hearing Sir Isaac speak during the thirteen years I knew him in the House of Commons. But he was an assiduous attendant upon his Parliamentary duties. Through the turbulent times which saw Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill carried through the House of Commons, there was none among the meagre majority of forty upon whom the Ministerialist whip counted with more certainty than the octogenarian member for Keighley Division. One night when the Bill was being forced through Committee by the automatic action of the closure, Sir Isaac took part in every one of ten divisions which the Unionists insisted upon walking through. So high did party feeling run at the moment, that Mr. Villiers came down to the House and voted in the first two rounds taken immediately after ten o'clock, when the closure came into operation. After that, he reasonably thought he had done enough to save his country, and went off home. But though Ninety judiciously retired, two members of more than Eighty stopped to the last, going round and round the lobbies for two hours on a sultry night. One was Mr. Gladstone, then approaching his eighty-fifth year. The other was Isaac Holden, two years the senior of the Premier.

Meeting Sir Isaac after one of the divisions, I asked him if he did not think he would be better in bed.

"Not at all," he said, with his bright smile. "You know, I always walk a couple of miles every night before I go to bed. I have stepped the division lobbies, and find that the length traversed is as nearly as possible 200 yards. You see, if they give us nine divisions, I shall have done a trifle over a mile, and will have so much less to walk on my way home."

As it turned out, ten divisions were taken at this particular sitting, those two young fellows, Mr. Gladstone and Isaac Holden, walking briskly through each one. When it was over, Sir Isaac went out to complete his two miles, taking Birdcage Walk on his way to his rooms in the Westminster Palace Hotel.

THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE.

Much has been said and written about his peculiar dieting. He certainly was most methodical. An orange, a baked apple, a biscuit made from bananas, and twenty grapes—neither more nor less—made up his breakfast. He dined lightly in the middle of the day, and supped in the bounteous fashion of his breakfast. No whim of this kind was ever more fully justified. Almost up to the last Sir Isaac walked with rapid step, his back as straight as a dart, his eyes retaining their freshness, his cheek its bloom. It was his pride that he had grapes growing all through the year in his vinery at Oakworth House, near Bradford. During his stay in London he had the fruit sent up every day. When, some years ago, I visited him at Oakworth, he was at the time of my arrival out walking on the moor. Coming in, having done his then accustomed seven miles' spin, he insisted upon straightway escorting his

guest all over the spacious winter garden. One of his panaceas for lengthening your days was to live in an equable temperature. Sixty degrees was, he concluded, the right thing, and as he walked about bareheaded he begged me to observe how equable the temperature was. It may have been, but it was decidedly chilly. As he wore no hat I could not keep mine on, and caught a cold that lingered till I left Yorkshire.

Another time, he and I, being neighbours in London, driving home from the house of a mutual friend where we had foregathered at dinner, he stopped the carriage at the top of St. James's Street and got out to walk the rest of the way home. It was raining in torrents, but that did not matter. He had not, up to this time, completed his regulation walk, and it must be done before he went to bed.

Thus day by day he wound himself up with patient regularity, living a pure and beautiful life, dying with all that should accompany old age, as honour, love, obedience, troops of friends. If he suffered any disappointment in his closing hours, it would be because Death came to him at the comparatively early age of ninety-one. One day he told me in the most matter-of-fact manner that, given an ordinary good constitution at birth, there was no reason in the world why a man should not live to celebrate his hundredth birthday.

"A BARON OF HIGH DEGREE."

"THE NOBLE BARON."

At Folkestone the other day, I came across a tradition of the time when Baron de Worms, then a member of the House of Commons, was an occasional resident on the Leas. Combining business with pleasure, he, on one occasion, took part in a political meeting in anticipation of the General Election of 1892, which meant so much to him and to others. "The noble baron," as the late Sir Robert Peel, in a flash of that boisterous humour that delighted the House of Commons, once called the member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool, desirous of casting a glamour of ancient nobility over the cause of the friend it was his object to serve, dwelt with pardonable pride on his own lineage.

"My brothers are barons," he said; "my great-grandfather was a baron; my grandfather was baron; my father was baron."

"Pity your mother wasn't the same," cried a voice from the crowd.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLI.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

MORE SMOKING-ROOM CONFIDENCES.

LAST month I was privileged to record the opinion of an eminent publicist on the chances and probabilities of the next Liberal Premier. The conversation, or, to be more precise, the monologue, later extended to the Conservative field. Here, as in the earlier chapter, my part is absolutely confined to the humble duty of recorder. I can only repeat that if I were at liberty to mention the name of the authority for these *obiter dicta* they would gain alike in personal interest and in political importance.

"The question of who is to be the next Conservative Premier is one," my mentor said, "more likely to present itself on an early day than is the other we have been talking about. Lord Salisbury is not of a resigning disposition. 'I will never,' he has wittily said, 'consent to be in politics the Dowager Lord Salisbury.' He is a man of indomitable pluck, with a high sense of his duty to his country, and an honest conviction that it is most completely performed when Robert Cecil has his hand on the helm of State. But no one who watched him in the House of Lords last Session, or who has had personal dealings with him during the past six months, can fail to perceive that the state of his health leaves much to the desire of his many friends and innumerable admirers. At best he is not likely to form a Fourth Administration. Inevitably within a year or two the Conservative Party will be face to face with the necessity of electing a new Leader.

THE UNEXPECTED FOOTPRINT.

MR. GOSCHEN.

"I fancy when Goschen finally made up his mind to cross the Rubicon, on the marge of which he had long dallied, he was not free from expectation that some day he might be called upon to lead the Tory Party. When he went over, Arthur Balfour was untried; Hartington had declared against fusion of the two elements of the Unionist Party; whilst Chamberlain was yearning after what he called a Nationalist Party, presumably made up of Jesse Collingses and Powell Williamses. It was quite on the cards when Goschen delivered the Conservatives from the dilemma in which Randolph Churchill's defection left them that events might so shape themselves as to bring him to the Leadership of the House of Commons. But events took other shapes, notably in the development of Arthur Balfour into a first-class Leader. Hence Goschen's opportunity has finally eluded his grasp. So far from leading the party, it is doubtful whether the inexorable age limit will not preclude his inclusion in the next Conservative Ministry, whenever, by whomsoever, it is formed. No one recognises that fact more clearly than does the present First Lord of the Admiralty, and none will accept the situation with greater dignity.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH.

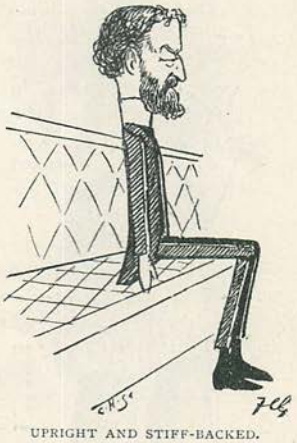
"Failing Arthur Balfour, the man on the Treasury Bench whom the Conservative Party of all sections would hail with acclamation as Leader is Hicks-Beach. I saw last year you noted the curious—as far as my personal knowledge goes, the unique—case of a man who has by ordinary

stages, dating from early manhood, won a high position in politics and Parliament, remaining stationary for a period, beginning again, and making steady, unmistakable advances in public favour. Last Session, though not marked on his part by any special achievement, was the high-water mark of Hicks-Beach's Parliamentary career. It is possible that he benefits by comparisons suggested by near companionship. In matters of fact, especially of finance, he is more reliable than his more brilliant colleague, the First Lord of the Treasury. Against the ultimate supremacy of Chamberlain he offers a barrier which good Conservatives fondly contemplate. 'If,' they say to each other, 'anything were to happen to Arthur Balfour, Joe would be inevitable save for Hicks-Beach.'

"That is a fresh bond between this upright, stiff-backed, uncompromising Conservative country gentleman and the party whose best instincts and habits he worthily represents.

MR. CURZON.

"It is too soon to speak of George Curzon. But if there did not hang over him the extinguisher of a coronet, I should confidently look for him seated in due time in the place of the Leader of the House of Commons, with the Premiership to follow. He holds on the Treasury Bench a position closely analogous to that of Edward Grey in the Opposition Camp. Young, of good birth, impelled by Parliamentary instincts, a clear thinker, a forcible speaker, he has the advantage over his predecessor at the Foreign Office that he means to get to the top of the Parliamentary ladder. It is the fashion among some people to sneer at his superior manner and alleged affectation of speech. These superficial judges regard him as a sort of Parliamentary dandy. Wherein they are mightily mistaken. George Curzon is not physically a strong man, though hard work happily agrees with him, and since he went to the Foreign Office his health has been better than at any time since he left Oxford. But confronted with what he regarded as the duty of mastering the Eastern Question, he set out on an arduous journey, visiting Persia, Siam, Central Asia, Indo-China, and the Corea, scaling the Pamirs, making a morning call on the Ameer at a time when Cabul was in unrest, and the Khyber Pass promised to renew its old character as a death-trap for adventurous Englishmen.



UPRIGHT AND STIFF-BACKED.

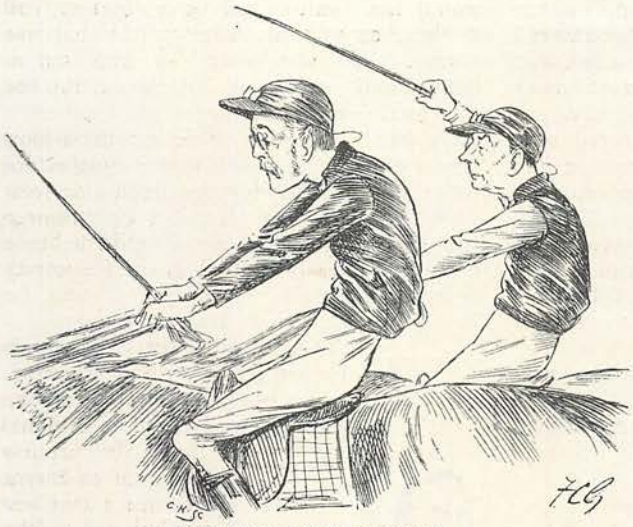
"A man that goes to work in this fashion is the kind out of which able Ministers are made. Met in a drawing-room or seen lolling on the Treasury Bench, George Curzon looks a lath. He is really a blade of tempered steel, and will go far. The pity of it is that his father is a peer, and he the eldest son.

MR. BALFOUR AND MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

"These reflections deal with contingencies at present remote. The actual competition for the Leadership of the Constitutional Party lies between the nephew of the Marquis of Salisbury and the ex-Mayor of once Radical Birmingham, the Jack Cade of Stafford Northcote's startled fancy, the politician who in 1885 affrighted staid Liberals with his unauthorized programme.

"The surprise of such a position of affairs is so dazzling in the case of Mr. Chamberlain as to obscure all lesser lights. Nevertheless, Mr. Arthur Balfour's contribution is part of the romance of political life. There were none even among the far-seeing who, sixteen or even a dozen years ago, ventured to predict the Arthur Balfour of to-day. The Leader of the present House of Commons has been a member for nearly a quarter of a century, and though perennially young, may commence to reckon himself among the old stagers. In his first Parliament, from 1874 to 1880, so far from having made a mark, he passed absolutely unrecognised. Very early in the next Parliament, incited by the vitality of Lord Randolph Churchill and his colleagues of the Fourth Party, the young member for Hertford began to come to the front."

[The first note made of his appearance by a long-time student of Parliamentary men and manner bears date August 20, 1880. As it was placed on public record at the time, I may quote it here without risk of accusation of being wise after the event. "The member for Hertford," it was then written,



THE RACE FOR THE LEADERSHIP.

" is one of the most interesting young men in the House. He is not a good speaker, but he is endowed with the rich gift of conveying the impression that presently he will be a successful Parliamentary debater, and that in the meantime it is well he should practise. He is a pleasing specimen of the highest form of the culture and good breeding which stand to the credit of Cambridge University. He is not without desire to say hard things of the adversary opposite, and sometimes yields to the temptation. But it is ever done with such sweet and gentle grace, and is smoothed over by such earnest protestation of innocent intention, that the adversary rather likes it than otherwise."]

"At the date of publication," said my mentor, to whom I showed the note, "that would doubtless be regarded as a somewhat exaggerated estimate of Balfour's position and potentiality. He was, in truth, then regarded as a sort of fragile ornamentation of the hard-headed, hard-working Fourth Party. They suffered him, liked him, but could very well do without him. In his first Ministerial office as Secretary for Scotland, Balfour did not stir the pulses of the House. His chance came when illness drove Hicks-Beach from the Irish Office, and a belated Premier was peremptorily called upon to find a successor. From the very first, Arthur Balfour set his back against the wall and let it be seen that if the Irish members wanted fight, here was a man who would give them plenty. From the time he went to the Irish Office up to the present day, he has, with occasional temporary lapses due to physical lassitude and exhausted patience, steadily pressed forward. On the death of W. H. Smith he was the inevitable Leader of the House of Commons, and took his seat on the Treasury Bench, with Randolph Churchill finally out of the running, John Gorst in subordinate office under him, Drummond Wolff comfortably shelved in Ambassadorial quarters. Thus shall the last be first and the first last.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN.

"Arthur Balfour is, as he deserves to be, popular with the Conservative Party. I should say his personal popularity exceeds that of any of his colleagues, not excepting the Prime Minister. Lord Salisbury is highly esteemed in the City of London, now, as Goschen must sometimes reflect with surprise, the beating heart of British Toryism. I well remember a time when Arthur Balfour in his chivalrous manner made excuses for non-attendance at Lord Mayors' Banquets and the like, being painfully embarrassed by the exuberance of a reception which thrust his uncle for the time into the second place.

"Of the many causes of his popularity with good Conservatives this stands forth with supremest force: 'Arthur Balfour,' they say, 'keeps Joe out of the Leadership.' That, I fancy, is as near the exact truth as club axioms run. If Arthur Balfour were to-morrow to be removed from the House of Commons, Chamberlain would, within possibly a decent interval of twelve months, be seated in the place of Disraeli and of Sir Robert Peel. For a long time after his secession from the Liberal camp I personally clung to the conviction that, however far he might go in his opposition to Gladstone and to those who remained faithful to the old chief, he would never appear in public and in history as Leader of the Party of which he was up to January, 1886, the most violent denouncer, the most relentless foe. I have to-day no particle of such faith. I do not believe Chamberlain's Radical instincts and convictions have faded by a shade. But I perceive he has convinced himself that they may, for all practical purposes, be just as well exploited from the Conservative camp as from the Liberal. The Conservative Party, scarcely yet recovered from the surprise of their majority,

having passed the Workmen's Compensation Bill of last Session, and with other kindred memories crowding upon them, perceive that Chamberlain is, as usual, pretty correct. Ever since he went over to help them they have feared him more than they have loved him. They will not, save *in extremis*, accept him as Leader. Chamberlain, not unconscious of this prejudice, may console himself with reflection on the fact that, fifty years ago, analogous circumstances existed with at least equal bitterness to the detriment of Disraeli, who yet lived to become not only the Leader but the idol of the Tory Party.

"Still, there is always Arthur Balfour, over whom no deadly peerage hangs, and who is twelve years younger than his esteemed friend and admired colleague, the Secretary of State for the Colonies."

FRANK LOCKWOOD.

Although the Session is nearly a month old the House of Commons has not yet grown accustomed to the absence of Frank Lockwood. His burly figure with its more than 6ft. of height was not one easy to miss in a crowd. Superadded were a sunny countenance and a breezy manner, that made their influence promptly felt.

IN THE PLACE OF DISRAELI.

The position finally secured by Lockwood in Parliamentary debate disappointed some of his friends, who looked for fuller development of his great gifts. Lockwood himself felt somehow he ought to have done better. But the situation did not affect his loyal esteem for the House of Commons, a feeling deepening almost to personal affection. He had good cause to be satisfied with his success at the Bar. He would have bartered a large slice of it for a stronger hold on the House of Commons. That he did not secure it was due to temperament rather than to lack of capacity. He was, up to the last, afraid of the House, a superstition that had to some extent the effect of paralyzing his powers. If he could have flung himself into Parliamentary debate with the same *abandon* that he tackled a witness in court or addressed a common-law jury, he would have carried all before him at Westminster, as was his wont in the courts of justice. He was aware of this curious failing, and strove to overcome it, with increased success, notably in his last Session. In a brief rejoinder or in a remark flung across the table in debate he equalled his own renown. When taking part in set debate, he felt it due to the House of Commons to make elaborate preparation, and the more prolonged the labour the less striking was the measure of success.

HIS FIRST BRIEF.

It is quite true, as was stated at the time of his death, that Frank Lockwood, regarding the world as his oyster, resolved to open it from the stage of the theatre. The lady who is now Mrs. Kendal helped him to engagement with a travelling company of players. His explanation of his reason for withdrawing from the alluring prospect of histrionic success was the chagrin that filled his breast on regarding the bills at the theatre door and on the walls of the towns the troupe visited.

"There was," he said, in indignant tones, belied by the twinkle in his eye, "Miss This and Mr. That, in letters half a foot long, whilst my name was incidentally mentioned in smallest type at the end of the list. When I looked at the bill I felt my vocation had nothing to do with the call-boy at the theatre."

Mrs. Kendal did something better than help Lockwood on to the stage. She obtained for him his first brief, which at her personal entreaty was sent by Sir Albert Rollit, then in business as a solicitor at Hull.

HIS SKETCHES.

In the House of Commons, as at the Courts of Justice, Lockwood was as well known for his sketches as for his wise and witty sayings. His drawings lacked the finish that made possible reproduction in pages of established artistic merit. But they were full of humour, with rare knack of hitting off the situation. The execution was remarkably swift. Many a time through the Session Lockwood came to me with

From a Sketch by] SIR RICHARD WEBSTER LED CAPTIVE. *[the late Sir Frank Lockwood.*

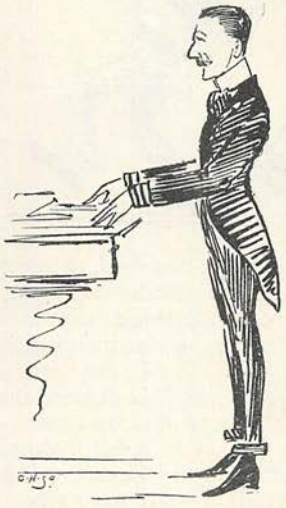
among the possessions of his friends. The only fee Lockwood sought for his really valuable *Punch* work was that he should be placed on a footing of equality with the staff, and receive an early copy of the week's number. Of this privilege he was gleefully proud.

His pen, travelling rapidly over the sheet, was wonderful at catching a likeness, with just sufficient caricature to make it more attractive for the friends of the model. His favourite subjects in the House of Commons were Sir Richard Webster and Sir Robert Reid, whose gravity of mien had irresistible fascination for him.

At the time of the last visit to London of the Shah there was some talk of his authorizing missionary enterprise in Persia. This suggested to Lockwood's vivid imagination a picture of Sir Richard Webster led captive by his business-like Majesty *en route* for Teheran.

Another pair of sketches commemorates a famous sentence in a speech by Mr. Robert Spencer, delivered in debate on a Bill affecting the agricultural labourer. In one sketch we have "Bobby," as the sometime member for Mid-Northamptonshire was affectionately called, standing at the table of the House of Commons arrayed in the last resources of civilization as provided in the tailor's shop, diffidently deprecating the possible assumption that he was an agricultural labourer. In the other, we see him got up as he probably would have ordered matters had he been born to the estate of Hodge, instead of to that of the Spencer earldom.

suggestion of treatment of some episode adaptable for *Punch*. Having discussed the matter, he would withdraw to one of the writing tables in the division lobby, returning in five or six minutes with a bright sketch. It was one of his most cherished ambitions to draw for *Punch*. His sketches were usually redrawn by a more practised hand, but the fun was all there in the hurried sketches on House of Commons' note-paper, or waste places on briefs, of which hundreds are scattered about



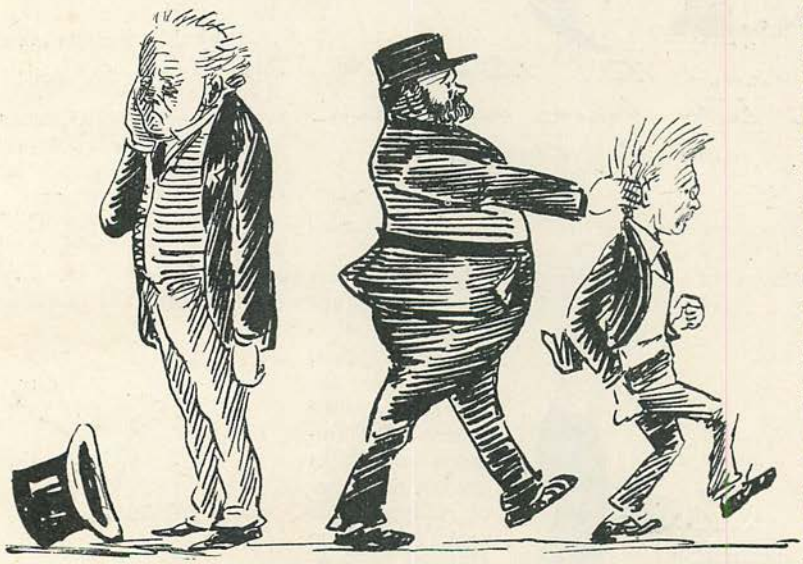
From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

"BOBBY," AS HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN.
From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

In another sketch that bears no date, but evidently was circulated about the time of a Lobby incident, in which an Irish M.P. and a well-known artist in black-and-white figured, Lockwood illustrated the following extract from a leading article which appeared (if I remember rightly) in the pages of the *Daily Telegraph*:—

"If one could imagine so untoward a proceeding as, say, Mr. Henry Lucy slapping the face of Mr. Frank Lockwood in the Lobby of the House of Commons, the issue would be very different. It would not be the insulted M.P. who would be ordered to move on, but the brawling journalist who would be removed. The gigantic personality of Mr. Inspector Horsley would intervene with neatness and dispatch."

He sent the sketch to me with the injunction, "Brawler, Beware!"



From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

In a letter dated from Lennox Gardens, 21st July, 1894, he writes: "My dear Lucy,—Don't you think that when Haldane and I spoke on Thursday night it was something like Preachers on probation—the calm and philosophical and the fire and fury?—Yours ever, FRANK LOCKWOOD." The note inclosed the two sketches next reproduced, illustrating the theme. As a portrait, Mr. Haldane's is not so successful as some. But Lockwood's own is capital, and shows how freely he extended to himself that measure of humorous exaggeration he was accustomed to bestow upon others.

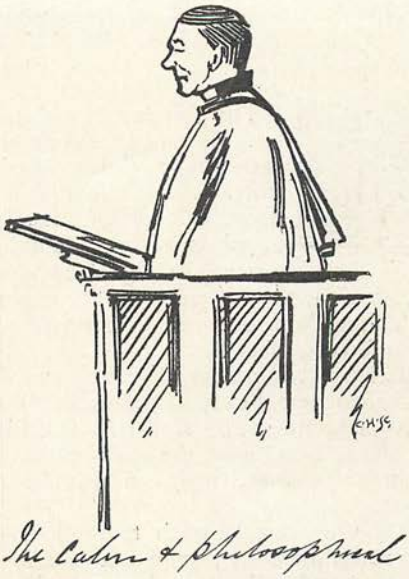
The late Lord Chief Justice was another tempting subject. Lord Coleridge, dining one evening at Lennox Gardens, was much interested in the overflowing gallery of portraits of contemporaries at the Bar and on the Bench, drawn by this facile pen. "But, Mr. Lockwood," said Lord Coleridge, "you don't seem to have attempted me." "The fact is," said Lockwood, relating the story, "I had come home early from the Courts, and spent an hour hiding away, in anticipation of his visit, innumerable portraits I had done of the Chief."

His first important pictorial work is bound up in the volumes of evidence taken when he sat as Commissioner in an election inquiry heard at Chester nearly twenty years ago. With the red and blue pencils supplied by a confiding State, Lockwood illustrated the broad margins of the printed evidence with an illimitable procession of witnesses and scenes in court. As far as I know, that is the only case where he used other media than pen and ink for his sketches. For many years he superseded the ordinary Christmas card by sending to his friends a sketch drawn with his own hand. On the next page is a reproduction of the last one designed, in serene unconsciousness of the shadow hanging over the happy household and the far-reaching circle of friends and acquaintances.

HIS LAST ASPIRATION.

In conversation with his friends, Lockwood did not hide the desire of his heart. He wanted to be a judge. Although a diligent attendant at the House of Commons, and always ready to serve his party with a speech in the country, he was by no means a keen politician. When a man of his native ability becomes Solicitor-General, there is no reason why he should not look forward to steadily walking up the ladder till he reaches the Woolsack. Lockwood would have been content at any

From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.



From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

time during the last two years of his life to step aside to the quiet dignity of the Bench.

The estimation in which he was held in the House of Commons was testified to on the retirement of Mr. Peel from the Chair by his name being prominently mentioned in succession to the Speakership. He would have admirably filled the Chair, and was, I have reason to know, ready to take it had acceptance been pressed upon him. But the project blew over, and through a curious avenue of chances, his old friend, Mr. Gully, came to the opportunity, modestly accepted, splendidly utilized.

From a Sketch by the late Sir Frank Lockwood.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE RIFT IN THE LIBERAL LUTE.

WHEN the history of the influence of the Home Rule movement on the fortunes of the Liberal Party comes to be written the world will learn how, at a particular juncture, the riven party came near to closing up its ranks. Between the introduction of the Bill in the Session of 1886 and its second reading, negotiations went forward with the object of bringing back Lord Hartington, Mr. Chamberlain, and other life-long Liberals to the fold from which they had strayed. An active politician who holds prominent place on the Front Bench below the gangway on the Liberal side was the principal mover in the work. His benevolent labours were rewarded by what looked like certainty of success. He felt himself authorized to convey to Mr. Chamberlain a definite undertaking which he understood had been accepted by Mr. Gladstone. It was to the effect that in moving the second reading of the Bill, Mr. Gladstone would announce the intention of the Government to withdraw the measure after its principle had been affirmed in the division lobby, bringing in another Bill in the following Session.

"STRAYED FROM THE FOLD."

In the new measure the views of the Liberal Unionists would be met on certain points, notably the retention of Irish members at Westminster. On receiving this assurance Lord Hartington, Mr. Chamberlain, and their following would vote for the second reading of the Bill, and the threatened split in the Liberal party would be abandoned.

So precise was the understanding that Lord Hartington and Mr. Chamberlain nominated an able member for a Scotch constituency to make the first signal of renewed friendship. He was to follow Mr. Gladstone, and was commissioned to announce that, in the altered circumstances presented by the speech, he, for one, did not see any reasons why good Liberals should stand apart from their old companions-in arms. In due course, Mr. Chamberlain was to rise and complete the truce.

AVOIDING THE GOLDEN BRIDGE.

This was the programme of the evening, as arranged, when on the 7th of April, 1886, Mr. Gladstone rose to move the second reading of his Bill. The conspirators—a late Speaker admitted the word to be Parliamentary—seated above and below the gangway, listened attentively to Mr. Gladstone's opening sentences, prepared, presently, to play their several innocent parts. The Premier went on and on. The minutes passed, and among those in the plot marvel grew that the concerted signal was so long delayed. At the end of an hour and a half Mr. Gladstone resumed his seat, not having said a single word in the direction expected. The active politician below the gangway sat gnashing his teeth. The Scotch member of the Liberal Unionist camp designated to hold out the olive branch was instructed to keep his seat. Thus the precious opportunity, the seizing of which would have meant so much to the Liberal Party, and eventually to Ireland, sped.

For this branch of the narrative I can personally vouch. How so carefully contrived, and for Mr. Gladstone so enticing, a manœuvre failed is a matter of conjecture. It was believed by the active politician below the gangway, and his Liberal Unionist correspondents above it, that the Irish members, getting wind of what was to the fore, waited upon Mr. Gladstone and delivered their ultimatum. They would have the Bill as described on its introduction. The Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill. Otherwise they would march into implacable opposition to the Liberal Government. Placed between two fires, having to weigh the advantages of recalling his mutinous followers or losing the Irish vote, Mr. Gladstone decided upon sticking to his Bill, and,

as it turned out, losing all.

It is easy to be wise after the event, and everyone, not excepting Mr. Gladstone, had early occasion to perceive how fatal and irrevocable was the error committed on this memorable day. Had the Premier followed the lines laid down for him, understood to have been accepted by him, the history of England during the last twelve years would have greatly varied in the writing.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY.

The advancement of Lord Halsbury to the status of an Earl was succeeded by a rumour that the event was preliminary to his retirement from the Woolsack. Up to the present time of writing no sign in that direction has been made, his lordship still lending the grace and dignity of his presence to the House of Lords. It cannot be said by the boldest flatterer that Sir Hardinge Giffard's advancement to the Woolsack was due entirely, or to any extent appreciably, to his success whether in the Commons or in the Lords. The former was necessarily the stepping-stone to his high preferment. But he never made his mark in debate. It is therefore well to know, and to me particularly pleasant to record, the opinion of those brought in contact with him in his judicial capacity—that Lord Halsbury is supremely capable as a judge.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY.

MR. HARDINGE GIFFARD AND GOVERNOR EYRE.

The first time I was privileged to look upon the Lord Chancellor and hear him speak dates back some thirty years. At that time I was trying my 'prentice hand on a country newspaper, and had been deputed to report the proceedings taken before the Shropshire magistrates against Governor Eyre, in the matter of what were known as the Jamaica massacres. Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, afterwards raised to the judicial Bench, prosecuted ex-Governor Eyre, who was defended by Mr. Giffard. The inquiry, upon which the eyes of the civilized world were fixed, took place in a little court-room in the sleepy town of Market Drayton. The chairman of the Bench of magistrates was Sir Baldwin Leighton, for years member for South Shropshire, who has bequeathed to the present House the member for the Oswestry Division of the county.

Mr. Giffard threw himself into the defence with an energy not to be accounted for by the fee marked on his brief. The case was one in which political partisanship was deeply engaged, the Conservatives backing up Governor Eyre in his vindication of what in later times, in a nearer island, came to be known as Law and Order, whilst Liberals, especially the more advanced section, strenuously called for the Governor's conviction on a criminal charge. Mr. Giffard, though preaching to the converted, addressed Sir Baldwin Leighton and his fellow-magistrates at merciless length. I remember how at one point, having pictured Governor Eyre protecting the lives intrusted to him by the Queen from fiendish outrage, barbarity, and lust, the learned counsel passionately asked whether for doing that the Governor was to be persecuted to death. "Good God!" he cried, "is this justice?" and answered his question by bursting into tears.

"IS THIS JUSTICE?"

It was a touching episode, a little marred by Sir Baldwin Leighton's naïveté. Slowly recovering from the depth of his emotion, the learned counsel apologized for his weakness. "Oh, don't mention it," said Sir Baldwin; "but will you be much longer? Because, if you will, we had better go to lunch now."

The ludicrousness of the contrast—a sturdy Queen's Counsel in tears, and a prim Chairman of Quarter Sessions thinking of his luncheon—spoiled the effect of an

otherwise powerful passage. The remark was made with such chilling artlessness that Mr. Giffard, drying his eyes and resuming his natural voice, went out with the crowd to luncheon.

A DEADLY DILEMMA.

Eleven years elapsed before I saw Hardinge Giffard again. It was in the spring of 1877, when the defender of Governor Eyre, having been made Solicitor-General in Mr. Disraeli's Government, came to be sworn in. He had a hard tussle before being privileged to cross the bar. For the preceding eighteen months he went about from place to place wherever vacancies occurred, looking for a seat. Defeated in succession at Cardiff, Launceston, and Horsham, a second vacancy occurring in the Cornish borough, he stood again and got in by a small majority.

"THE LOST WRIT."

Ill-luck pursued him over the threshold of the House. Arrived at the table, Sir Erskine May, then Clerk of the House, made the customary demand for the return to the writ. Sir Hardinge Giffard forthwith, amid a scene of uproarious merriment, proceeded to search for it. First of all he attacked his breast coat-pocket, which proved to be bulging with letters and documents of various kinds. These he spread on the table, littering it as if a mail-bag had accidentally burst on the premises. Not finding the return there, he dived into his coat-tail pockets on either side, the merriment of a crowded House rising at sight of his perturbed face and hurried gestures. The document was not to be found among the papers that filled his coat-tail pockets, in quantity excelled only by the stuffing at his breast.

"PLACING A CORONET ON HIS BROW."

Having got to the end of the tether, the Solicitor-General stood helpless at the table, looking at the inexorable Clerk, who made no advance towards administering the oath pending the production of the return to the writ. Sir William Dyke, Ministerial Whip, who had brought up the new member, struck by a happy thought, bolted down the floor of the House, and, reconnoitring the seat below the gallery the new member had occupied before being called to the table, found the missing document quietly reposing in the Solicitor-General's hat. He brought it up and, amid cheering as wild as if he had won the Victoria Cross, the member for Launceston was sworn in.

SIR WILLIAM GLADSTONE, K.G.

Politics apart, it is unquestionably pleasing to the public mind that Mr. Gladstone should close his long and illustrious career a plain citizen as he began it. To many "Mr. Disraeli" is a more illustrious style than is the "Earl of Beaconsfield." It seemed somehow natural that the author of "Coningsby," and of that less-known but even more remarkable work, "Early Letters to His Sister," should, when opportunity presented itself, place a coronet on his own brow. Mr. Gladstone, following early exemplars, Mr. Canning and Sir Robert Peel, is content to be known amongst men by the simple name of his fathers. Peel, it is true, had the title of a baronet, but that was not his fault or his seeking, being part of the family hereditaments. Mr. Gladstone's father also was a baronet, but the title descended over his head, and no accident marred the majestic simplicity of his plain "Mr."

Had he pleased, he might at any time during the past quarter of a century have taken rank as a peer. Happily, all his instincts and impulses have been opposed to submission to that form of mediocrity. But there is one rank and title, the supremest open to a commoner, which Mr. Gladstone might accept without derogation. The style of a Knight of the Garter would, as far as common speech and ordinary address are concerned, slightly vary the proud simplicity of the style he has borne since he went to the University. The Order is encumbered with surplusage in the way of foreign Royalty, but it is the highest guerdon of the class open to an Englishman, and has always been

reckoned as a prize of distinguished political services. Of Knights of the Garter who have fought by the side of or in front of Mr. Gladstone during the last sixty years are, mentioning them in the order of their investment, Earl Spencer, Earl Cowper, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon, Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Argyll, Lord Kimberley, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Cadogan, the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Rosebery, Lord Lansdowne, and the Earl of Derby. Of this list Mr. Gladstone has of his personal initiative made Knights of six.

The noblest Knight of all is not named upon the roll. Granting the existence of a strong and widely-spread popular feeling of satisfaction that Mr. Gladstone, springing from the ranks of the people, has, like the Shunamite woman, been content, in despite of titular rank, to dwell among them, I believe few events would cause such a thrill of national satisfaction as the announcement that, under gentle pressure from Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone had accepted the Garter.

"NOTO CORONARI."

THE GLADSTONE MEMOIRS.

Who will write the Life of Mr. Gladstone when the time comes for the stupendous task to be undertaken? Mr. John Morley's name is sometimes mentioned in connection with the work. But I have the best reason to know that he has never contemplated undertaking it. It seems too big a thing to be approached single-handed. Fairly to grapple with the task would require the combined effort of a syndicate of skilled writers. The amount of material is even greater than may be surmised from outside contemplation of Mr. Gladstone's long and always busy life. I have heard on high authority that he has preserved for more than sixty years all papers and correspondence that might properly serve the purposes of a memoir. They are stored in a fireproof room at Hawarden—in what precise order was indicated by an incident that happened a few years ago. Reference was made in Mr. Gladstone's presence to an episode in the life of Cardinal Newman. He remembered that his old friend had, half a century earlier, written him a letter bearing on the very point. He undertook to find it, and did so, apparently without any trouble. It was dated 1843.

Talking about the writing of memoirs, Mr. Gladstone once emphatically expressed to me the opinion that the publication of a memoir, to be a full success, should promptly follow on the death of the subject. He did not cite the case, but there is a well-known instance in support of his argument. For more than half a century the world had to wait for publication of the correspondence of Talleyrand. When at length it came out it fell as flat as if the letter-writer had been a grocer at Autun or a tailor in Paris.

MR. DISRAELI.

It is now certain that Disraeli's Life, if ever published, will have to run the risk of failure by reason of delay. Lord Rowton will certainly never undertake accomplishment of the task left to his discretion by his friend and leader. No one else has access to the papers—and there are boxes full of them—without whose assistance it would be impossible to accomplish the work. This is rather hard on the present generation, who must needs forego the pleasure of reading what should be one of the most fascinating books of the century.

THE FATHER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

On the death of Mr. Villiers, the *Times* made haste to proclaim Mr. W. B. Beach, member for the Andover Division of Hants, successor to the honoured position of Father of the House of Commons. That is a conclusion of the matter not likely to be accepted with unanimous consent. The Father of the House is, by a rare combination of claims, Sir John Mowbray, member for Oxford University. Returned for Durham in 1853, he has continuously sat in Parliament four years longer than Mr. Beach, who came in as member for North Hants in 1857. Sir John has sat in eleven Parliaments against Mr. Beach's ten. He has, in this comparison, all to himself the honour of having been a Privy Councillor for forty years. He has held office under three Administrations, Lord Derby being his chief in 1858 and '66, Mr. Disraeli in 1868. For twenty-four years he has acted as Chairman of the Committee on Standing Orders and of the Committee of Selection. That is a

record unique in the present Parliament, and it has been carried through with steady acquisition of personal popularity almost as rare.

It is presumable that the judgment of the *Times* has gone against Sir John Mowbray on the ground that he has not during his long membership represented the same constituency. Entering the House as member for Durham, he, in 1868, transferred his services to Alma Mater, a safe and honourable seat he retains to this day. It is quite true that Mr. Villiers and his predecessor, Mr. Talbot, uninterruptedly held their several seats at the time they came into succession to the Fathership. But I am not aware of any definite ruling on that point. If there were such Mr. Beach would be disqualified, for, coming into the House in 1857 as member for North Hants, he now sits, and has sat since 1875, as member for the Andover Division of the county.

SIR JOHN MOWBRAY.

PÈRES POSSIBLES.

Whilst nothing is said in the written or unwritten law about the Father of the House necessarily having sat uninterruptedly for the same constituency, it is required that he shall have continuously sat in the House from the date at which his claim commences. It was this rule that placed Mr. Gladstone out of court. First elected for Newark in 1832, he would have taken precedence of Mr. Villiers in the honourable rank but for the hiatus of some eighteen months in his Parliamentary career which followed on his leaving Newark on his way to Oxford University. This gave Mr. Villiers his chance, though the date of his entering the House is three years later than that of Mr. Gladstone.

In the present House, Sir John Mowbray is the only relic of the Parliament of 1852 the course of Time has left to Westminster. Recent deaths and retirements removed several well-known members who otherwise would, on the death of Mr. Villiers, have come in competition for the Fathership. Of these are Sir Charles Foster, Sir Rainald Knightly, Sir Hussey Vivian, and Mr. Whitbread, who all sat in the Parliament of 1852.

One thinks with kindly recognition of what a pathetic figure-head of a Father Sir Charles Foster would have made, wandering about corridors and lobbies in search of the hat he, through a long and honourable career, persistently mislaid.

"OUR ARMY SWORE TERRIBLY IN FLANDERS."

To the full success of a Ministry a variety of quality in its constituent parts contributes. The more varied the basis the brighter the prospect of prosperity. In Her Majesty's present Government not the least distinguished, or least popular, Cabinet Minister is said to be gifted with an accomplishment that would have obtained for him brevet rank with our Army in Flanders. To look at him seated on the Treasury Bench, to hear him addressing the House, above all to watch him repairing to his parish church on peaceful Sabbath mornings, no one would suspect this particular accomplishment. I should say I have no personal acquaintance with it, but I have heard the fact stated by so many intimates of the right hon. gentleman, that I fear there is some foundation for the assertion.

It certainly receives confirmation from the recent experience of a member of the Ministerial rank-and-file. A short time ago there was some ruffle of discontent in the well-drilled ranks immediately behind the Treasury Bench. This esteemed member, an eminent solicitor, a severe church-goer, who is accustomed to fancy himself in debate, and to estimate at its proper value the position of a member representing a populous centre of industry, volunteered to bring the matter personally under the notice of the Cabinet. The particular member of that august body selected for the confidence was the right honourable gentleman whose name wild horses will not drag from me. It was agreed that, whilst the Minister should not be troubled with the attendance of a deputation, half-a-dozen of the malcontents should accompany their spokesman to the door of his private room, remaining in the corridor whilst the interview took place.

The spokesman bravely marched into the room, pride in his port, his attitude being perhaps generously tempered by consideration of the pain he was about to give an esteemed Leader. His fellow-conspirators began to

stroll up and down the lobby expectant of having to wait some time whilst the matter at issue was being discussed between their spokesman and the Minister. In a surprisingly short time their representative issued from the Minister's door with a scared look on his expressive visage.

"Well?" said the deputation, eagerly.

"Well," replied the spokesman, with a pathetic break in his voice. "I don't think I've been very well treated by either side since I entered the House of Commons. But I was never before called a d——d canting attorney."

"AFTER THE INTERVIEW."

FAMILY LIKENESS.

Writing last Session about the Cecil family I mentioned that a Royal Academician, a famous portrait painter, had asked me if I noticed the strong facial resemblance between the Marquis of Salisbury and his nephew, the Leader of the House of Commons. I confessed I did not, whereupon the R.A., expatiating on the subject, pointed out some minute details in support of his view.

On this subject a correspondent writes from Belfast: "I am interested to hear that the likeness between Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour has at last been noticed. Only once have I been able to get anyone to see it. Going with some friends through one of the Oxford Colleges (University, I think), we came on a full-length portrait of Lord Salisbury, taken at a time when he was a much younger and a thinner man. The likeness between uncle and nephew here becomes very striking. Should Mr. Balfour ever get fat and grow a beard, it will be apparent to all."

A FAMILY LIKENESS.

The prospect of the lithe and graceful Prince Arthur thus disguised makes the flesh creep. But all things are possible in a changing world.

OSBORNE MORGAN.

In addition to Mr. Villiers', another familiar face vanished during the recess from House and Lobby is that of Osborne Morgan. Returned for Denbighshire at the historic General Election of 1868, he had come to rank amongst the oldest members Only a year ago he sent me a list of members sitting in the present House of Commons who also had seats in the House that disestablished the Irish Church and brought in the first Irish Land Bill. I forget the precise number, but it was startlingly small.

Like Sir Frank Lockwood, but for other reasons, Osborne Morgan did not fulfil expectation reasonably entertained of his Parliamentary success. Early in the fifties he went to the Bar, having gained a brilliant reputation and several scholarships at his University. Like Mr. Gladstone, he to the last, amid whatever pressure of modern daily life, preserved ever fresh his touch with the classics. Trained in law, fed from the fount of literature (ancient and modern), gifted with fluent speech that sometimes surged in flood of real eloquence, he was just the man who might be counted upon to captivate the House of Commons. The melancholy fact is, that when he rose he emptied it.

His conspicuous failings as he stood at the table were lack of humour and a style of elocution fatally reminiscent of the uninspired curate in fine frenzy preaching. Yet, when he spoke from the platform he was a real force. Mr. Gladstone, accustomed to his failures in the House of Commons, spoke in private with unqualified admiration of a speech he chanced to hear him deliver at a crowded political meeting in North Wales. This dual character Osborne Morgan shared in common with the counsellor of Kings, the sustainer of Sultans, who represents one of the divisions of Sheffield. The House of Commons insists on making Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett a butt, and in regarding him as a bore. Inasmuch as his advocacy of any particular question has effect upon this uncompromisingly critical audience, it is hurtful rather than helpful to his client. Yet I have heard upon competent authority that on the platform, even faced by hard-headed Yorkshiremen, "Silomo" is a really effective speaker.

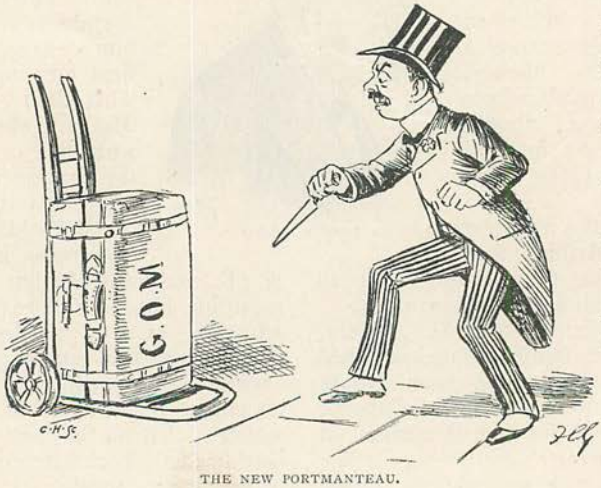
JUDGE ADVOCATE-GENERAL.

The doctors gave an orthodox name to the sickness of which Osborne Morgan died. What really killed him was disappointment suffered when, in August, 1892, Mr. Gladstone formed his last Administration. I do not know what he expected, but he was certainly mortally offended when offered his old post of Judge Advocate-General, even though it was considerately gilded with a baronetcy. He hotly declined the office, and when Mr. Gladstone, with patient benignity, pressed the baronetcy upon him, he would have none of it. It was only after the lapse of several days, when his ruffled plumage had been smoothed down by the friendly hands of two of his old colleagues, that he accepted the friendly offer. A warm-hearted, kindly-natured, hot-headed Welshman, those best liked Osborne Morgan who knew him best. He combined in his person in fullest measure the attributes of a scholar and a gentleman.

THE LATE SIR G. O. MORGAN.

"G. O. M."

Though, as is admitted, Osborne Morgan was not conspicuous for a sense of humour, he found grim enjoyment in recital of a true story. Travelling up to London one early spring day to resume his Parliamentary duties, he was conscious of a certain pride in a new portmanteau to which he had treated himself. It was fine and large, and carried in bold relief his initials —G. O. M. On arriving at Paddington, he found his prized possession had been subjected to an outrage comparable only with the Bulgarian atrocities which at the time Mr. Gladstone was denouncing with flaming eloquence. Some patriot Jingo, seeing the initials, and confusedly associating them with the Grand Old Man, had whipped out his knife and cut away from the unoffending portmanteau the hateful letters.



THE NEW PORTMANTEAU.

THE FOLKESTONE INCIDENT.

In the February Number I told a story current at Folkestone, cherishing a retort alleged to have been flashed upon Baron de Worms when addressing a political meeting in that town. Lord Pirbright writes to say that as far as he is concerned the story is without foundation. I should be sorry to have hurt the feelings of an old personal friend, and am glad of the opportunity, delayed only by the prolonged process of printing a month's issue of the Magazine, to give prominence to his disclaimer. At the same time I must point out that I avowedly did no more than report a tradition current in Folkestone. In proof of its existence I quote the following from the *Folkestone Chronicle* of the 5th of February :—

> Mr. Lucy's little tale is correct in the main, but the meeting alluded to had nothing to do with an election, as no contest was anticipated, or took place, in 1892. At the same meeting there was some consternation because a resident, of an eccentric turn of mind, attended the meeting in full uniform as a German soldier, and ascended the platform. This somewhat offensive action gave rise to some remarks as to the Baron's alleged foreign extraction, and caused the present Lord Pirbright to declare that he was an Englishman. The meeting altogether was a pretty stormy one.

This is apparently written by an ear-witness. But as Lord Pirbright has no recollection of the incident, the Folkestone folk are obviously in error.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLIII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE IRISH CHURCH BILL.

CLIVEDEN, once, as Pope genially put it,

> The bower of Wanton Shrewsbury and love,

now the modest home of an American millionaire, has still another claim to fame. It was at Cliveden, a few months more than thirty years ago, that Mr. Gladstone finally decided, not only upon a campaign against the Irish Church, but on the form in which action should be opened in the House of Commons. Under the auspices of the Duchess of Sutherland, then in residence at Cliveden, Mr. Gladstone was a frequent visitor. So also was the Duke of Argyll.

COLONEL SIR E. GOURLEY.

Another guest, at that time closely connected with one of these statesmen, tells me that Mr. Gladstone and the Duke had long consultations on the question of the Irish Church. Mr. Gladstone had set himself the task of bringing the Duke round to his views on the subject. The Duke hesitated, and was lost. One morning, after renewed discussion and explanation, he yielded. Strong in his powerful support, Mr. Gladstone went back to London, resolved to move for the Committee to consider his Resolutions for the Disestablishment of the Church in Ireland, the first blow given at its foundations.

RELICS OF 1874.

Counting his close connection with eleven Parliaments of the Queen, Sir John Mowbray has the advantage of me who have known only seven. A sight of a picture of one of these older Houses, or a glance down a division list of twenty or twenty-five years ago, shows with startling effect the mutability of the assembly. Without going so far back as the Session of 1873, when I commenced regular attendance upon the debates, I have gone carefully through the roll-call of members elected to the Parliament of 1874, and compared it with the list of to-day. I find that of the crowd of members sworn in in 1874, only twenty-six have seats in the present Parliament.

Of these the oldest is the Father of the present House, Sir John Mowbray. Next to him comes Mr. Beach, the Young Pretender in the claim to succession to the throne of the Fathership. He was, by the way, elected in the same year that John Bright was returned to Parliament by Birmingham. There is a notable group of veterans from the Parliament of 1868, of which I saw the closing Session. At their head towers Sir William Harcourt, with his present colleague on the Front Opposition Bench, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman. Others of this year are Mr. A. H. Brown, the gallant ex-Cornet, who represents a division of Shropshire in the present Parliament; Mr. J. Round (Essex), Mr. Chaplin, Colonel Sir E. Gourley, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Staveley Hill, and Mr. J. G. Talbot. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, though he does not look

MR. TALBOT.

it, is an older member than any of these, having taken his seat in 1864. Sir William Hart Dyke, Sir Joseph Pease, and Mr. M. Biddulph date from 1865. Mr. Abel Smith (I am not quite sure whether he has yet made his maiden speech) came in in 1866. Sir John Kennaway goes back to 1870. Of the 1874 brand are Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Burt, Sir Charles Cameron, Mr. T. F. Halsey, Mr. F. C. Morgan, Sir Charles Palmer, Mr. Ritchie, and Mr. C. H. Wilson, member for Hull in the present Parliament.

375 OUT OF 367.

At the close of every Session there is circulated a return setting forth the number of divisions taken during its progress, and giving the aggregate scored by individual members. When the last return was made up, lo! a strange thing happened. Three hundred and sixty-seven divisions had been taken in the Session. Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Hayes Fisher, the Government Whips, enjoyed the distinction, prouder than pertains to any amount of oration-making, of having voted in every one. That seemed about as much as man or member could do. But Mr. MacAleese had apparently established a claim to have voted 375 times out of 367 opportunities, whilst Mr. Donald Sullivan and Mr. Caldwell scored only one less!

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY.

How might that be? Explanation was speedily forthcoming. In the course of the Session there had been nine occasions when the muster of dissentients to the Speaker's or Chairman's ruling was so small that the right hon. gentleman ordered them to stand up in their place and be counted. To legislators of Mr. Caldwell's composition this process was of itself attractive. Shrewd Parliamentary hands began to discover an accidental advantage underlying it. Whilst the minority who stood up had their names taken down by the Clerks, entered in the division lists, and therefore counted as an attendance, the hapless majority—mute, inglorious patriots—were unrecognised and unnamed. As soon as this discovery was made, the practice of challenging hopeless divisions merrily grew apace. Mr. Caldwell's aggregate visibly swelled, and records, steadily growing through the Session by honest endeavour, were overhauled.

The thing was overdone, and the Speaker's opinion being challenged, it was ordered that though the names of members of the minute minorities should, as directed by the Rules, be taken down by the Clerks, they need not be entered in the return of attendance at divisions. After this the habit of vexatiously challenging divisions promptly lapsed.

A COLONIAL GRIEVANCE.

In respect of our Parliamentary usages, the Colonies are preferring a request which, though it may not lead to submersion of tea-chests in Sydney Harbour or other Australasian port, may, in time, seriously engage the attention of Mr. Chamberlain. When members of the Imperial Parliament visit any of the self-governing Colonies it is the pretty fashion for the Premier to move that chairs be provided for them on the floor of the House at the right of the Speaker. When members of Colonial Parliaments, not to mention Colonial Premiers and Ministers of the Crown, visit the House of Commons they have no privileges other than those shared in common by more or less distinguished strangers. If there is room they may have a seat in the Diplomatic Gallery; or, on the same conditions, under the gallery, with the proviso that they shall be bundled out whenever a division is called. The congregation of Colonial Premiers who flocked to London in honour of the Jubilee brought this condition of affairs to a head.

Mr. Hogan, M.P., whose birthplace was Nenagh, whose home is the world, with a special preference for Australia, has taken the matter in hand. He does not go the length of proposing that Colonial magnates shall have a seat on the floor of the House, but suggests that they may be admitted to the side gallery on the right of the Speaker, at present reserved for members. This point of view is not nearly so good as that provided by the front row of the Diplomatic Gallery. But honourable distinctions are of more account than is personal convenience.

LICENSE IN THE LORDS.

The laxer rules of the House of Lords as affecting the outside public is illustrated when foreign potentates or high Ministers of State visit this country. Last year we had the King of Siam, who diligently went the round of both Houses. In the Commons he was treated as an ordinary distinguished stranger, a seat being provided for him in the gallery over the clock. When he went over to the House of Lords a chair was placed for him on the steps of the Throne, literally on the floor of the House.

"POPPING ON AND OFF THE WOOLSACK."

This contiguity with the Woolsack enabled His Majesty to observe with close and audibly-expressed delight the graceful performance of the Lord Chancellor as, popping on and off the Woolsack, he formally placed the House in and out of Committee. No one present can ever forget the boyish delight with which the King, digging his *chaperon*, Lord Harris, in the ribs, pointed to the stately figure, which he seemed to think had been specially wound up to go through this quaint performance for his Royal pleasure.

When, a year earlier, Li Hung Chang was a visitor to these shores, he suffered the same reverse of fortune. In the Commons he was seated with Westminster boys and other distinguished visitors in the Diplomatic Gallery. In the House of Lords he had a chair set for him almost under the shadow of the Throne.

"MESSENGERS."

This constitutional jealousy of all persons, loftily and indiscriminately described as "strangers," applies even to the duly-appointed uniformed, and highly-respected, "messengers," as certain officials of the House are quaintly called. In the Lords, messengers may move about the Chamber even when full debate is going forward, with the Lord Chancellor on the Woolsack, and the Mace on the table. You may see them bringing in the boxes of Ministers, or handing messages to peers in various parts of the House. In the Commons, if one of the messengers were to cross the Bar by a foot span whilst the House is in session, he would probably be run through the body by the sword of the Sergeant-at-Arms, and subsequently hanged, drawn, and quartered.

The terror with which this overhanging fate imbues the breasts of a respectable community—most of them fathers of families, some I believe churchwardens—is shown in their movements when in charge of a card or message for a member seated in the House. If he happens to be seated anywhere near the Bar, the experienced messenger, elongating his body to what seems perilous extent, hands him the card without crossing the Bar by an unsanctified foot. If he is out of reach, the progress of the message is negotiated along a string of members till it reaches his hand. The only time messengers may cross the floor of the House of Commons when the Speaker is in the Chair, is when they are summoned to assist the Sergeant-at-Arms in casting forth a recalcitrant Irish member. But that is poor compensation for the habitual, regularly-enforced restraint.

THE CROSS BENCHES.

Per contra, this particular part of the House of Commons, in close proximity to the Bar, has its re-

strictions for members. The very best place in the Chamber from which a member might address an audience is the Cross Bench on either side of the Bar. It comes more nearly than anything else available to the Tribune, from which in Continental Parliaments the orator faces the House. So attractive is the place that a member seated there, and feeling suddenly impelled to take part in debate or to put a supplementary question, sometimes rises and commences an observation. It is promptly interrupted by a roar of execration, amid which the trembling member is projected or dragged forth, and made to stand before one of the side benches.

THE CROSS BENCHES.

The explanation of what to the stranger in the Gallery seems an unprovoked and unmanly assault is, that the Cross Benches are technically outside the House, whose area at this quarter is defined by an imaginary bar.

THE SIDE GALLERIES.

It is a fact, perchance little known to the majority of members of the present House, that though they may not ask a question from the Cross Benches on the floor of the House, they may, if they please, deliver an oration from the long side galleries above. Only once in my experience have I known this privilege availed of. It was in the early days of the Parliament of 1880, when the House was nightly crowded to overflowing, members drawn by the attraction of a succession of Bradlaugh scenes. Mr. Mitchell Henry one afternoon created a profound sensation by addressing the Speaker from this lofty eminence. When members recovered from their astonishment they broke forth into angry cries of "Order! Order!" But Mr. Henry, as he well knew, was quite in order. The side galleries are as much within the House as are the Front Benches below or above the gangway.

The obvious objection to their constant use as a rostrum is, primarily, the difficulty of catching the Speaker's eye. That accomplished, and the orator launched on his harangue, he would have the mutually uncomfortable consciousness that half the audience were under his feet.

DAYBREAK ON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

When morning after morning through the Session I hear the Speaker, a few minutes after midnight, put the question "That this House do now adjourn," I think of times that are no more, and wonder how members of the present House would like to have them resuscitated. Twenty years ago, nay a dozen years ago, the hour at which members now expect to go home, querulous if they are kept up for an extra half hour, was the epoch of the sitting at which business usually began to brisk up. Members flocking down for questions at half-past four never knew at what time of the next morning they would be free from their labours. For the cry, "Who goes home?" to echo through the lobby at half-past one in the morning was a sign of uncommonly quiet times. Two or three o'clock was more usual, and history records how, at frequent intervals, there was what came to be called an "All-night sitting."

Often leaving the House after a ten or twelve hours' sitting, I have stood on Westminster Bridge and seen what Wordsworth described as he drove over it on an early September morning in 1803:—

This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare.
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

The fields are built over, but there remained the truth which Wordsworth hymned, and his sister Dorothy described scarcely less charmingly in a prose letter, that earth has

DAYBREAK ON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

not anything to show more fair than the scene from Westminster Bridge at the break of a summer day. Naturally it was the more soothing after the heat and turmoil of a long sitting in the adjoining House of Commons.

THE TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE.

When the Twelve O'clock Rule was introduced it was avowedly an experiment, timidly made in face of that stern Conservatism that animates the House of Commons in all that relates to its procedure. Members were assured it would be easy to go back to the old order of things if after the experience of a Session return were found advisable. I suppose there is no power on earth that would to-day induce the House of Commons to revoke the Twelve O'clock Rule. From time to time, to suit Ministerial convenience, it is suspended for a particular sitting. It is necessary that motion to that effect should be formally made at the commencement of the sitting. The motion carried, the House is at liberty to peg away till two or three o'clock in the morning, or, if it pleases, till breakfast time. It turns out in a majority of cases that extension of time is not needed, debate being brought to a conclusion before midnight, just as if the Rule were still in force. When the limit is overstepped it is only by a few halting paces, members fuming with indignation if they are kept up as late as half-past twelve.

The best part of the story is, that at least as much legislative work is now accomplished in the average Session as was scored during the barbaric times that preceded the establishment of the Twelve O'clock Rule. It is true that the House meeting now at three o'clock instead of four has an hour to the good. By comparison with the old order of things, the rising of the House under the new rule is equivalent to dispersal at one o'clock in the morning. But, taking a Session through, the aggregate duration of a sitting is not nearly what it used to be, whilst there is added the wholesome certainty of members knowing exactly the hour of breaking up.

The Twelve O'clock Rule has effected an entire revolution in the order of debate. Formerly the fire began to burn up most brightly about half-past ten, and blazed away till all hours of the morning, the principal speakers reserving themselves till after the dinner hour. Now the chief business of debate is got through before the dinner hour. The rule is varied in the case of a full-dress debate, which is wound up on the eve of the division by leaders from either Front Bench. But in an ordinary way, the big men have their say before dinner. In this opportunity they are twice blessed. They not only have a full and unfagged audience, but reports of their speeches reaching editorial offices in good time, there is opportunity of their being fully considered and justly dealt with.

TORY REVOLUTIONISTS.

The Twelve O'clock Rule, like household suffrage and other beneficent revolutionary enactments, was carried under Conservative auspices. Had the proposal been made by a Liberal Minister, Mr. W. H. Smith and his colleagues on the Treasury Bench who carried it would have died on the floor of the House in resisting it. It is one of the advantages of having a Tory Government occasionally in power, that its tenure of

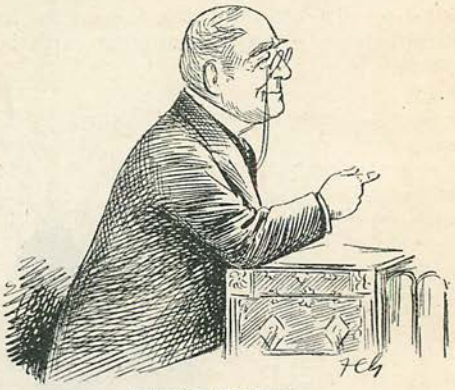
office frequently sees bold reforms accomplished. To Mr. Arthur Balfour, subservient to the same law of nature, the House is indebted for the scheme whereby Supply is regularly dealt with through a succession of Friday nights. This rule on its proposal was violently assailed by some Liberal critics as an infringement on freedom of debate, most jealously guarded in all that relates to Supply. It has come to pass that, under the new regu lation, Supply is more fully, and more calmly, discussed than it was in the good old days.

Incidentally, the close of the Session within reasonable time is automatically fixed. This is another rule aimed at obstruction—individual or organized—which, whilst it shortens the Session, does not practically narrow opportunity for accomplishing useful work. In spite of occasional suggestions to the contrary, the House of Commons is, after all, an assembly of business men. It is ready (sooner or later) to recognise the inevitable. Having a certain strict measurement of cloth dealt out to it, convinced that in no circumstances will it get an inch more, it cuts its coat accordingly. If there be any difference in the output of the work of a Session under the new and the old orders of things, I should say that, with the shorter sittings and the automatically-closed Session, more work is done than under the looser arrangements that made obstruction master of the situation.

PENSIONERS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The lamented death of Sir H. Havelock-Allan relieves the public purse from two distinct payments. Sir Henry was in receipt of £700 a year retired pay as Major-General and Honorary Lieut.-General. In addition, he received a pension of £1,000 a year for military services. In this respect he topped the list of members of the House of Commons drawing State pay. I think the nearest to him is General Fitzwygram, who draws retired pay to the amount of £1,185 a year. General Edwards, Member for Hythe, is comforted in his retirement with a pension of £770. General Goldsworthy draws only £466, but he commuted £256 per annum of his retired pay, receiving a lump sum of £1,951 16s. 6d. The odd shillings and pence recall the items in President Kruger's little bill.

General Laurie draws £610 retired pay.



SERGEANT HEMPHILL.

General Russell and General McCalmont each have £500 a year, the half-pay of a Major-General. Colonel Wyndham Murray, of Bath, draws £300 a year retired pay, with an additional £70 a year for arduous and gallant services as Gentleman-at-Arms. Sir John Colomb battens on the retired pay of a captain, amounting to £133 16s. 8d. But he has, or had, to the good £1,595 15s., amount paid for commutation of pensions. Mr. Arthur O'Connor preserves pleasant reminiscences of duties at the War Office in the shape of retired pay amounting to £172 10s. He commuted his pension for a lump sum of £2,420 18s. 6d. The Marquis of Lorne draws £1,100 a year as Governor and Constable of Windsor Castle. Sergeant Hemphill, some time Solicitor-General for Ireland, has a pension of 1,000 guineas a year in commemoration of his Chairmanship of County Kerry. From the same distressful country, Mr. W. J. Corbett draws a pension of £292 10s., he having for awhile been Chief Clerk of the Lunatic Department. Mr. Doogan, the member for East Tyrone, modestly assimilates £111 5s. 4d., the pension of a National School Teacher.

THE LATE SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN.

Sir Thomas Fardell has his new baronetcy supported by a pension of £666 13s. 4d., the pension of a Registrar in Bankruptcy. 666 is, of course, the Number of the Beast; the 13s. 4d. more directly pertains to the lawyer. Colonel Kenyon Slaney has £420 a year retired pay, and Mr. Staveley Hill receives, in addition to fees, £100 as Counsel to the Admiralty and Judge Advocate of the Fleet.

THE MINNOWS.

These are the whales among the pensioners in the House of Commons. There are some small fry who receive trifling recognition of military ardour devoted to the service of their country. Lord Cranborne, for example, draws £22 19s. annual pay as Colonel of the 4th Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment. He further has an allowance of £17 11s. 6d. Mr. Hermon Hodge sustains his distinctively military appearance on £6 11s. 3d., supplemented by an allowance of £2 1s. 7d. as Captain and Honorary Major of the Oxford Yeomanry. Sir Elliot Lees, Bart., draws a Captain's pay in the Dorset Yeomanry. Together with allowance it foots up to £8 11s. 3d. per annum. Mr. Legh, Captain and Hon. Major of the Lancashire Hussars Yeomanry, draws an aggregate of 1s. 10d. a year more. Mr. Walter Long supplements his salary as President of the Board of Agriculture by pay and allowance amounting to £10 3s. 6d., the guerdon of his colonelcy of the Royal Wilts Yeomanry. Mr. George Wyndham, Captain of the Cheshire Yeomanry, is put off with a paltry £8 13s. 4d. in annual pay and allowance. In worst plight of all is Lord Dudley's brother, Mr. Ward, who represents the Crewe division of Cheshire. As Second Lieutenant of the Worcester Yeomanry he receives in pay and allowance £4 19s. a year.

MR. HERMON HODGE.

The House of Commons will begin to understand why the gallant member has gone to the Cape, exciting the concern of Mr. Swift MacNeill at his prolonged abstention from Parliamentary duties. A man can't get on in London on £5 a year minus one shilling.

AN UNKNOWN POET.

The present Earl of Derby is one of the few members of the House of Lords who can bring to discussion of affairs in Crete personal knowledge of the island. Just twenty years ago, when he was Secretary of State for War, he made a semi-official tour in Eastern waters, accompanied by that gallant seaman Mr. W. H. Smith, at the time First Lord of the Admiralty. The event was celebrated in the following verse, the manuscript of which, in an unrecognised hand, I turned up the other day among some papers relating to the epoch :—

The head of the Army and chief of the Fleet
Went out on a visit to Cyprus and Crete.
The natives received them with joyful hurrahs,
Called one of them Neptune, the other one Mars.
They ran up an altar to Stanley forthwith,
And ran up a bookstall to W. H. Smith.

To the sensitive ear the rhyme of the last couplet is not everything that could be desired. But the intention is good.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: "HAVE YOU SEEN MR. WARD?"

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLIV.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

LORD SALISBURY'S SUCCESSOR.

DURING Mr. Gladstone's stay at Bournemouth in the early days of March conversation turned upon the prognostications about the next Unionist Premier published in the number of THE STRAND just issued. Asked whom he thought would succeed Lord Salisbury, Mr. Gladstone replied in that deep chest note he uses when strongly moved: "The Duke of Devonshire."

In reviewing probable candidates for the post, the authority whose opinion I was privileged to quote did not glance beyond the House of Commons. I fancy that, fascinated by consideration of possible rivalry in the running between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour, he "forgot Devonshire," as Lord Randolph Churchill on an historic occasion "forgot Goschen." Mr. Gladstone, who forgot nothing, seems to have hit the right nail on the head. The succession of the Duke of Devonshire to the post of the Marquis of Salisbury—men of all parties and politics will hope the occasion may be far distant—would, save from one aspect presently noted, be as popular as it would be meet. The Duke's promotion, on whatever plane or to whatever height it may reach, would never evoke the opposition instinctively ranged against the advance of a pushful man. Everyone knows that, if the Duke followed his natural impulse and gratified his heart's desire, he would stand aside altogether from the worry and responsibility of public life. As it is, he compromises by strolling in late to meet its successive engagements.

"STROLLING IN LATE."

It was under personal persuasion of Mr. John Bright that he first essayed public life. In deference to party loyalty and a sense of public duty he, on the retirement of Mr. Gladstone in 1874, undertook the thankless task of leading the disorganized and disheartened Liberal Party. Having twelve years later, for conscience sake, withdrawn from the Leadership of Mr. Gladstone, he again caught a glimpse of the land where it is always afternoon. Mr. Chamberlain at this crisis braced him up to meet the new call of duty.

"BRACING HIM UP."

In a long and not unvaried political career no one has ever hinted at suspicion that the Duke of Devonshire was influenced in any step by self-seeking motive. He may have been right, he may have been wrong. He always did the thing he believed to be right, irrespective of personal prejudice or desire. Neither on the public platform nor in either House of Parliament has he met with the success that marks the effort of some others. But it would be impossible to exaggerate the width and the depth of the esteem with which this shy, bored man, who would chiefly like to be let alone, is held in the hearts of the people. A Ministry formed under his Premiership would start with an enormous and sustaining access of popular confidence.

Apart from that, the arrangement would

recommend itself by shelving-off that otherwise inevitable conflict for final pre-eminence between Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain the prophetic soul of my Mentor discovered, and disclosed in his conversation recorded in the March number. Whatever may be the views of those statesmen with respect to playing second fiddle the one to the other, there would be no possible objection to either serving under the Duke of Devonshire as Premier.

A TORY PROTEST.

The quarter from which opposition to the Duke of Devonshire's advancement to the Premiership will come is the Tory wing of the Unionist camp. Just before Easter, a story with circumstance was circulated, indicating the immediate retirement of Lord Salisbury from the Premiership and the succession of the Duke of Devonshire. That was certainly not a *ballon d'essai* from Downing Street. It equally well served the purpose. It drew forth unmistakable testimony that proposal of such arrangement would occasion unpleasant protest.

A "BALLON D'ESSAI."

Objection was not taken on the ground of personal disqualification on the part of the Duke. What was bluntly said in private conversation was that, in the division of the spoils of office, the Liberal Unionists had secured something more than their full share. To confer upon a member of their body, however distinguished and, on personal grounds, however acceptable, was too great a sacrifice to be claimed for the altar of Unionism. This demonstration will, doubtless, have due influence in directing the final arrangement whenever circumstances call for its settlement.

MR. GOSCHEN'S LITERARY WORK.

Mr. Goschen has, I believe, made considerable progress with a labour of love, his solace in the comparative leisure of the recess. It is preparation of the life and correspondence of his grandfather, a publisher in Berlin a century ago. He lived through the time of the First Empire, his literary connections bringing him in contact with some of the principal men of the age. These letters he preserved, together with copies of his own correspondence.

Nobody wishes the First Lord of the Admiralty that prolonged leisure which would result from dismissal of Her Majesty's Ministers from office. Still, it would be a loss to the country, equal to the non-completion of a new ironclad, if he failed to find time to finish his book. I never read the First Lord's "Theory of the Foreign Exchange," and am not in a position to judge of his literary style. But he is a man of keen literary taste, who certainly has to his hand the materials for a memorable book.

A PRECEDENT FOR MR. BALFOUR.

One of the fables about Mr. Balfour that endear him to the public mind is that which pictures him as never reading a newspaper. It is only partially true, and like most true things, it is not new. The peculiarity finds parallel in so distinct a personage as Edmund Burke. In the interesting and curious autobiography of Arthur Young (Smith Elder), edited by M. Betham-Edwards, there is note of an interview with Burke. Under date May 1st, 1796, Arthur Young describes how he visited the great statesman, who "after breakfast took me a sauntering walk of five hours over his farm and to a cottage where a scrap of land had been stolen from the waste." Speaking on public affairs, Young records, "Burke said he never looked at a newspaper. 'But if anything happens to occur which they think will please me, I am told of it.'" Young observed that there was strength of mind in this resolution. "Oh, no," Burke replied, "it is mere weakness of mind."

With Mr. Arthur Balfour, the motive is probably philosophical indifference.

THREE ACRES AND A COW.

Another proof supplied by this book of the truth of the axiom about nothing being new under the sun is personal to Mr. Jesse Collings. That eminent statesman first came

into prominent notice as a politician by his adoption of the battle cry, "Three Acres and a Cow." A forebear of the present Lord Winchilsea, whose interest in agriculture is hereditary, was first in this particular field.

Writing in June, 1817, Mr. Young notes: "Lord Winchilsea called here and chatted with me upon cottagers' land for cows, which he is well persuaded, and most justly, is the only remedy for the evil of poor rates."

That is not exactly the way Mr. Jesse Collings put it. It comes to the same thing in the end.

"AH, YES, I USED TO SING IT. BUT THAT WAS YEARS AGO."

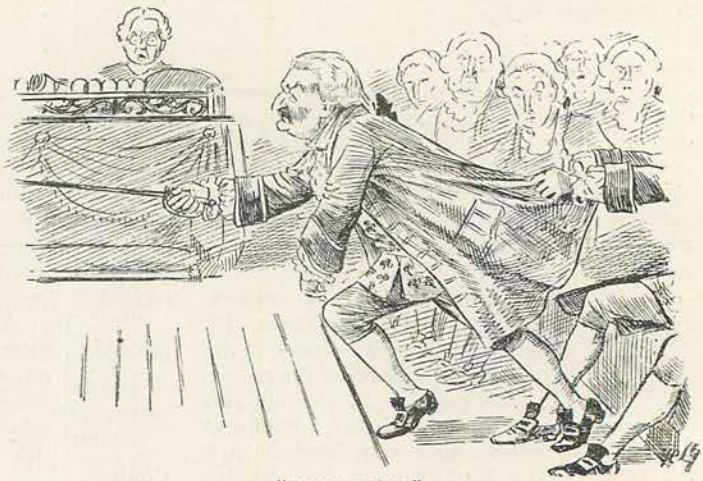
The innate Conservatism of the "THE THIN RED LINE." House of Commons is picturesquely shown in the retention of the thin line of red that marks the matting on either side of the floor, a short pace in front of the rows of benches on either side. Up to the present day it is a breach of order for any members addressing the Speaker or Chairman of Committees to stand outside this mark. If by chance one strays he is startled by angry shout of "Order! Order!"

Probably few members who thus vindicate order know the origin of this particular institution. The red line is a relic of duelling days. It then being the custom for every English gentleman to wear a sword, he took the weapon down with him to the House, with as easy assurance as to-day he may carry his tooth-pick. In the heat of debate it was the most natural thing in the world to draw a sword and drive home an argument by pinking in the ribs the controversialist on the other side. The House, in its wisdom, therefore ordered that no member taking part in debate should cross a line to be drawn on the floor. This was judiciously spaced so that members standing within the line were far beyond reach of each other's sword-point.

In spite of this SWORDS. grandmotherly precaution, duels arising out of quarrels picked in the House, and forthwith settled in its immediate precincts, became so frequent that a fresh order was promulgated forbidding members to carry arms during attendance on their Parliamentary duties. This rule is so effectively insisted upon, that at this day, when, as sometimes happens, the Lord Mayor of Dublin, or other peaceful city, attends at Westminster accompanied by his sword-bearer, the latter functionary, guiltless of blood-letting through a long life, is compelled to leave his weapon in charge of the doorkeeper. The only armed man in attendance on debate is the Serjeant-at-Arms, who carries a pretty sword. Once a year exception is further made in the case of the mover and seconder of the Address, who may wear the sword pertaining to their naval or military uniform.

The way it persistently gets between their legs as they walk up the floor, or try to sit down, consoles less distinguished members for general abrogation of the privilege.

One other nice distinction in the SPURS. matter of steel implements exists to the disadvantage (or advantage according as the case is regarded) of the borough member. A Knight of the Shire may, if he thinks fit, enter the House



"THE RED LINE."

of Commons and take part in debate with spurs on. This luxury is forbidden to the borough member. Sir Herbert Maxwell tells me he once saw a borough member who had ridden down to the House innocently attempt to enter the Chamber with armed heel. He was immediately stopped—whether by the doorkeeper or the lynx-eyed Serjeant-at-Arms, watchful in his chair, deponent sayeth not—and compelled to remove his spurs.

TYPE-WRITTEN PETITIONS.

A new-fangled notion the House of Commons cannot away with is that of typewriting. It is true that in recent years accommodation has been made for private members to use typewriting machines. That is a private affair, strictly guarded to the extent that members availing themselves of the machines must pay the typewriter.

It is quite another thing when, as sometimes happens, people ignorant of some of the more delicate of the foundations on which the safety and prosperity of the Empire rest forward typewritten petitions to the House. More than a century ago it was ordered that all petitions presented to the honourable House should be written in legible, clerkly hand. Neither lithograph nor printed type was permitted. Editors of newspapers and magazines, publishers, press readers, and the like, welcome the sight of typewritten manuscript in matter submitted to their judgment. The House of Commons is above petty considerations of the kind that influence this opinion. When it was established, there was no such device as lithography, typewriting, or, for the matter of that, a printing press. Petitions were then written by hand, and they must be so written now.

The Committee on Petitions, accordingly, make a point of returning every petition other than those written by hand, and in this decision it has the support of the Speaker, to whom the question has been solemnly submitted.

A MID-CENTURY BOWLES, M.P.

Our Cap'en Tommy Bowles is not the first of his clan in the House of Commons. There was one there more than fifty years ago, though (happy augury) he ranked as admiral. In *The Mirror of Parliament* of the Session 1845 I find the following entry: "Admiral Bowles alluded to the Duke of Portland having built the *Pantaloon* to improve naval architecture. But the Navy could not boast of a pair of pantaloons. (A laugh.) He (Admiral Bowles) had himself commanded the armament in the Shannon, which had distinguished itself in the collection of the Irish poor rates."

This last remark further shows how apt is history to repeat itself. There is no recent case of the British Navy in Irish waters being commissioned for the collection of rents or rates. But during Coercion days, between 1886 and 1890, detachments of the British Army were not infrequently invoked for assistance in the collection of rents.

CAP'EN TOMMY BOWLES, OF THE HORSE MARINES.

CORONATIONS.

At the time of the Queen's Jubilee there was published a list of people who, living at that happy time, had been present at the coronation of the Queen. One omission from the printed list was the name of the Marquis of Salisbury, at the time a small boy of seven summers, absolutely indifferent to the bearings of the Concert of Europe. In the matter of experience at coronations, Sir John Mowbray stands alone. He saw the Queen's Coronation Procession as it passed along the street. He was actually present at the Coronation of William IV. The Westminster boys had the privilege of being seated in Westminster Abbey just above the benches allotted to the Peers. Sir John, then at Westminster School, availed himself of the opportunity, and to this day declares that he and his school chums had a much better view of the scene than had the Peers.

Sir John, older by fifteen years than the Prime Minister, was at Oxford when the Queen came to the throne. On the occasion of Her Majesty's marriage, the University drew up a loyal address and sent a deputation of their members to present it. Young Mowbray (still young) was one of those intrusted with this pleasant and honourable duty. His keenest and still abiding recollection of the scene is the Duke of Wellington standing in close attendance on the girl Queen.

THE BALD TRUTH.

In the rough-and-tumble of electioneering contest, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett is more successful than he proves in the finer fence of the House of Commons. But he sometimes meets his match in Yorkshire. At one of the gatherings in an electoral campaign, he was frequently interrupted by a man in the body of the hall, who resented his uncompromising attacks upon political opponents. The Knight bore this trial with admirable good humour, till, seeing an opening for scoring a point, he said :—

"YOUNG MOWBRAY."

"Now I am going to tell you something about the late Liberal Government that will make my friend's hair stand on end," indicating, with smiling nod, the vigorous critic in the body of the hall.

"Wrong again!" shouted the irrepressible one, removing his cap and displaying a head smooth as a billiard-ball. "It can't be done."

PUBLIC AUDIENCES.

The other day, a member of Her Majesty's Government, one of the oldest living statesmen, whose acquaintance with public meetings is equal to that of any of his contemporaries left in the House of Commons, was talking to me about the varying quality of public audiences. As anyone accustomed to speak from the platform knows, audiences differ widely and inscrutably.

"Broadly speaking," said the right hon. gentleman, "the further north the political orator travels the better—I mean the more inspiriting—will he find his audience. Going into particulars, I should say that London, for this purpose, is the worst of all. The best audiences are Scotch, and I have found in my personal experience the pick of them at Glasgow. Newcastle-on-Tyne is excellent; Liverpool is second-rate; Birmingham, so-so."

It would be interesting to have these experiences compared. Doubtless a speaker's judgment would be biased by the practical result of his visit to particular towns. If, for example, he were elected at the head of the poll in Glasgow, and left at the bottom in London, he could hardly be expected to retain through life fond recollections of the community that had dissembled its love. The Minister to whom I allude never contested Glasgow, and for many years was returned at the head of the poll for a great London constituency. His testimony may therefore be regarded as unbiased by personal predilection.

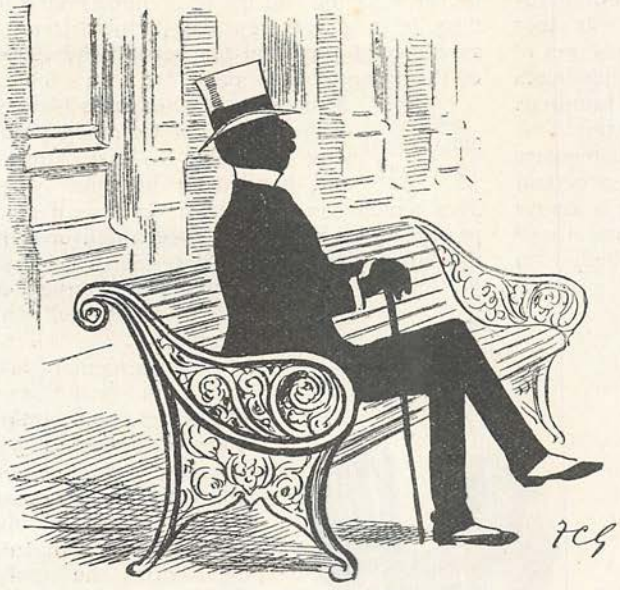
"WRONG AGAIN!"

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS' TERRACE.

The Terrace of Westminster Palace flanking the river is so intimately connected with the House of Commons, that it exclusively bears its name. "The House of Commons' Terrace," it is called, as it looms large through the London season. But members of the House of Lords have an equal share in its privileges. They might, if they pleased, on fine summer afternoons bring down bevies of fair dames and regale them with tea, strawberries, and cream.

By way of asserting their rights, the Peers some time ago caused to be set forth on the Terrace a few belated benches specially assigned to and reserved for their use. They are deposited at the further, bleaker end of the Terrace, whence the afternoon sun earliest flees. On very rare occasions a peer may be seen haughtily seated in solitary state on one of these benches. Somehow

the thing doesn't work, and noble lords strolling on the Terrace are humbly grateful if invited to sit at the table of a friend among the Commoners.



"IN SOLITARY STATE."

THE SPEAKER'S LETTER-BOX.

I suppose that, next to the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Speaker of the House of Commons is the recipient of the oddest correspondence in the world. Some time ago I cited one or two samples of the letters Mr. Gully is in the habit of receiving. The late Lord Hampden, presiding over the House of Commons at a time of extreme excitement consequent on the opening of the campaign of Irish obstruction, was specially enriched. Amongst his oddest experiences was the receipt by railway parcel of a box whose way-bill showed that it came from Ireland. Mr. Brand found it awaiting him on returning to Speaker's House after an uninterrupted sitting in the Commons of some forty-eight hours. He was piqued at the appearance of the box, and before seeking much-needed rest had it opened—discreetly, as became such undertakings in those troublesome times.

The uplifted lid disclosed a pair of torn and toil-worn trousers, the odour filling the room with pained sense of the absence of primroses. On the garment was pinned a piece of paper on which was written the text, "God's will be done!"

Its application to the trousers and their dispatch, carriage paid, to the Speaker of the House of Commons was and remains obscure. The incident was long anterior to the date at which Mr. William O'Brien's appendages figured largely in the political history of the day. It serves to show how intimately, if in this case obscurely, Irish politics are, so to speak, wrapped up in trousers.

MISDIRECTED ZEAL.

The member for a northern constituency tells me of a melancholy accident that recently befell him. He happens to represent a borough in which party spirit runs high, and finds outlet in physical demonstrations. On the occasion of his annual visit news reached his committee that the other side were planning, if not to pack the hall, at least to insert some formidable wedges of hostility. It was agreed that these tactics must be met on their own lines. The member accordingly recruited in London a score of stout fellows who had served lusty apprenticeship as chuckers-out at music-halls, public-houses, and other popular resorts. They were discreetly conveyed in groups of two or three to the borough, lodged out with instructions to gather in the body of the hall within touch of each other, and unite their forces in the event of a hostile demonstration.

The member got through his speech pretty well, attempts at criticism or interruption being drowned in the applause of his supporters. When he resumed his seat a meek-looking gentleman rose in the middle of the hall and said, "Mr. Chairman!" He was greeted with cheers and counter-cheers, through the roar of which he feebly tried to continue his remarks. The lambs, disappointed at the tameness of the business, began to warm up in prospect of work. As the mild-looking gentleman persisted in endeavour to speak, they, at a given signal from their captain, swooped down upon him, lifted him shoulder-high, and made a rush for the door with intent to fling him out. The townsmen in the body of the hall rallied to the rescue. A fight of fearsome ferocity followed. In the end the police were called in, and the hall cleared.

"This will be a nasty business for us at the

next election," gloomily said the chairman of the meeting to the member, as they made their way out from the back of the platform. "That was Mr. K——, one of your most influential supporters. He had risen to propose a vote of thanks to you when he was set upon in that infamous manner. It's not only him that was attacked. I saw scores of our best men going out with bleeding noses and blackened eyes. It'll tell some hundreds of votes against you at the next election."

PARLIAMENTARY FATUITIES.

It is a peculiarity of Parliamentary debate that whenever a certain journal is alluded to it is always styled "*The Times* newspaper." Any other paper mentioned is alluded to simply by its name. In private conversation or in correspondence, the very same members who mouth a reference to "*The Times* newspaper" would, as a matter of course, speak of "*The Times*." It is one of those little things which show how much there is among mankind, even in the House of Commons, of the character of the sheep. In a field you shall see one of a flock jumping over an imaginary obstacle, the rest following, doing exactly the same, though there is plainly nothing in the way. In the dim past some pompous person, stretching out his verbiage, talked of "*The Times* newspaper." Others followed suit. To-day the custom is as firmly rooted as are the foundations of Victoria Tower.

A kindred fatuity of Parliamentary speech is to talk of an hon. member "rising in his place," as if it were usual for him to rise in somebody else's, and, therefore, necessary for a variation in the habit to be noted. Funnier is the fashion amongst Ministers, especially Under-Secretaries, to talk about "laying a paper." What they mean is laying a paper on the table of the House. Tradition has grown up in the Foreign Office and elsewhere that a Parliamentary paper, whether Report, Despatch, or Blue Book, should be regarded as if it were an egg. The Minister accordingly always talks *tout court*, either of "laying it" or "having laid it" or of undertaking to "lay it in a very few days," the latter an assurance of prevision far beyond the scope of the average hencoop.

SHAKESPEARE UP TO DATE.

A member of the Press Gallery of the House of Commons, who long ago took his last "turn" and handed in his final copy, lives tenderly in my memory by reason of a passage in his report of a speech delivered in the country by a great statesman. I daresay it is not true; it is at least well invented.

"LAYING."

The particular passage ran as follows: "The right hon. gentleman concluded by expressing the opinion that the quality of mercy is not unduly strained. It dropped, he said, as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. In fact, he did not hesitate to assert that it was twice blessed, conferring blessing alike upon the donor and the recipient. (Loud cheers, amid which the right hon. gentleman resumed his seat.)"

It was another of the confraternity, a painstaking, conscientious colleague of my own, long since joined the majority, who, reporting a speech, happed upon the flawless couplet—

> Only the actions of the just
> Smell sweet and blossom in the dust.

Whether he did not catch the last word, or, having it on his notes, thought it would be kind to save the speaker from the consequences of a slip of the tongue—for how could a rose blossom in the dust?—he wrote the lines thus:—

> Only the actions of the just
> Smell sweet and blossom like a rose.