

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLVIII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)



A BEEF-EATER TEMP. HENRY VIII.

THE SEARCH FOR GUY FAWKES.

THE proceedings at the opening of the forthcoming Session, the fifth in the fourteenth Parliament of Queen Victoria, will be fully reported in the morning papers. There is a proceeding preliminary to the Speaker's taking the Chair which, from its history and character, is of necessity conducted

in secret. It is the search through the underground chambers and passages of the House with design to frustrate any schemes in the direction of a dissolution of Parliament that descendants or disciples of Guy Fawkes may have in hand. The present generation has seen, more especially when a Conservative Government have been in power, some revolutionary changes in Parliamentary procedure. The solemn search underneath the Houses of Parliament, preceding the opening of the revolving Sessions ever since Gunpowder Plot, is still observed with all the pomp and circumstance attached to it three hundred years ago.

The investigation is conducted under the personal direction of the Lord Great Chamberlain, who is answerable with his head for any miscarriage. When a peer comes newly to the office he makes a point of personally accompanying the expedition. But, though picturesque, and essential to the working of the British Constitution, it palls in

time, and the Lord Great Chamberlain, relying upon the discretion, presence of mind, and resource of his Secretary, usually leaves it to him. Oddly enough, the House of Commons is not officially represented at the performance, the avowed object of which is not, primarily, to secure the safety of the Lords and Commons, but to avert the conclusion aimed at by Guy Fawkes—namely, to blow up the Sovereign. It is as the personal representative of the Queen that the Lord Great Chamberlain takes the business in hand.

To this day the result of the inquiry is directly communicated to Her Majesty. Up to a period dating back less than fifty years, as soon as the search was over, the Lord Great Chamberlain dispatched a messenger on horseback to the Sovereign, informing him (or her) that all was well, and that Majesty might safely repair to Westminster to open the new Session. To-day the telegraph wires carry the assurance to the Queen wherever she may chance to be in residence on the day before the opening of Parliament.

Whilst the Commons take no official part in the performance, the peers are represented either by Black Rod or by his deputy, the Yeoman Usher, who is accompanied by half-a-dozen stalwart doorkeepers and messengers, handy in case of a fray. The Board of Works are represented by the Chief Surveyor of the London District, accompanied by the Clerk of Works to the Houses of Parliament. The Chief Engineer of the House of Commons, who is responsible for all the underground workings of the building, leads the party, the Chief Inspector of Police boldly marching on his left hand.

These are details prosaic enough. The nineteenth century has engrafted them on the sixteenth. The picturesqueness of the

scene comes in with the appearance of the armed contingent. This is made up of some fourteen or sixteen of the Yeomen of the Guard, who arrive at the place of rendezvous armed with halberds and swords. The halberds look well, but this search is, above all, a business undertaking. It is recognised that for close combat in the vaults and narrow passages of the building halberds would be a little unwieldy. They are accordingly stacked in the Prince's Chamber, the Yeomen fearlessly marching on armed with nothing but their swords. Clad in their fifteenth century costume, they are commanded by an officer who wears a scarlet swallow-tailed coat, cocked hat, and feathers, gilt spurs shining at his martial heel. The spurs are not likely to be needed. But the British officer knows how to prepare for any emergency.

Following the Yeomen of the Guard stride half-a-dozen martial men in costumes dating from the early part of the present century. They wear swallow-tail coats, truncated cone caps, with the base of the cone uppermost. They are armed with short, serviceable cutlasses and bâtons, such as undertakers' men carry, suggesting that they have come to bury Guy Fawkes, not to catch him.

Most of the underground chambers and passages of the Houses of Parliament are lit by electricity. Failing that, they are flooded with gas. When search for Guy Fawkes was first ordered, the uses of gas had not been discovered, much less the possibilities of electricity. Lanterns were the only thing, so lanterns are still used. As the dauntless company of men-at-arms tramp

along the subterranean passages, it is pretty to see the tallow dips in the swinging lanterns shamed by the wanton light that beats from the electric lamps.



INSPECTOR HORSLEY.

PARLIAMENTARY CAVES. Her Majesty's Ministers meeting Parliament at the opening

of their fifth Session remain happy in the reflection that their position is not endangered by any mines dug within the limits of their own escarpment. It is different in the opposite camp. The first thing good Liberals do as soon as their own party comes into power is to commence a series of manœuvres designed to thrust it forth. Sometimes they are called "caves," occasionally "tea-room cabals." But, as Mr.

Gladstone learned in the 1868-74 Parliament, in that of 1880-85, and, with tragic force, in the Parliament which made an end of what Mr. Chamberlain called "The Stop-Gap Government," they all mean the same thing. Lord Rosebery when he came to the Premiership found the habit was not eradicated.

The condition of men and things in the House of Commons when Parliament met after the General Election in July, 1895, was rarely favourable to the formation of "caves" on the Ministerial side. To begin with, the Government had such an overwhelming majority that the game of playing at being independent was so safe that its enjoyment was not forbidden to the most loyal Unionist. Given that condition, there were existent personal



▲ CAVE-MAN.

circumstances that supplied abundant material for cave-making. The necessity imposed on Lord Salisbury of finding

place in his Ministry for gentlemen outside the Conservative camp made it impossible not only to satisfy reasonable aspirations on the part of new men of his

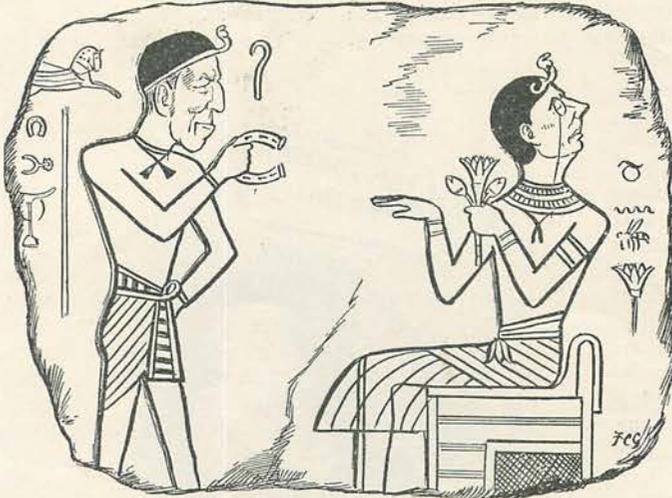


SHELVED WITH A PEERAGE. (BARON DE WORMS.)

own party, but even to reinstate some ex-Ministers. Some, like Baron de Worms, were shelved with a peerage. Others, overlooked, were left to find places on back

cold. Whilst most of the leading members of the Liberal Unionist wing, including Mr. Jesse Collings and Mr. Powell Williams, were provided with office, Mr. Courtney's claims were ignored, and Sir John Lubbock's were probably never considered.

Amongst Conservative members who had not been in office but were not alone in their belief that they were well fitted for it were Mr. Gibson Bowles and Mr. George Wyndham—the latter since deservedly provided for. Moreover, to a corner seat below the gangway returned Mr. James Lowther, thought good enough in Disraeli's time to be Under-Secretary for the Colonies and Chief Secretary for Ireland. Since the death of Lord Beaconsfield kings had arisen in Egypt who knew not "Jemmy," or, at least, forgot his existence at a time when Ministerial offices were dispensed. The member for East Thanet, first returned for York in the summer of 1865, is not only personally popular in the House, but has high standing as an old Parliamentary hand. If he had liked to turn rusty, he might have done the Conservative Party at least as much harm as Mr. Horsman when in the same mood wrought to the party with which, to the last, he ranked himself.



"WHO KNEW NOT JEMMY."

benches above or below the gangway. Of men who held office in Lord Salisbury's former Administration, Mr. Jackson, Sir James Fergusson, Sir W. Hart-Dyke, and Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett were left out in the

From time to time Mr. Lowther has vindicated his independence of Ministerial discipline by dividing the House on the question of the futility of reading, at the commencement of recurring Sessions, the standing order

forbidding peers to interfere with elections. He has not gone beyond that, and whenever attempt has been made from the Opposition side to inflict damage on the best of all Governments, he has ranged himself on the side of Ministers.

Sir W. Hart-Dyke, Sir James OVER- Fergusson, and the late Sir W. LOOKED. Forwood, instead of openly resenting neglect, on more than one occasion went out of their way to defend the colleagues of the Prime Minister who slighted them. Mr. Wyndham was last Session not less generously loyal. Mr. Tommy Bowles, it is true, has been on occasion fractious. As for Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, when he recovered from the shock of realization that Lord Salisbury had not only formed a Ministry without including him in its membership, but looked as if he would be able to carry it on, he showed signs of resentment. Through successive Sessions he has sedulously endeavoured to embarrass an unappreciative Premier by cunningly devised questions addressed to the Colonial Secretary or to the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Curzon alike proved able to hold their own, and the Sheffield Knight coming out to kick has found himself fulfilling the humble function of the football.

A more serious defection was threatened last Session as the MR. YERBURGH. result of the distrust and discontent in Ministerial circles of Lord Salisbury's foreign policy. Mr. Yerburgh, moved by apprehension that the interests of the British Empire in the Far East were at stake, instituted a series of weekly dinners at the Junior Carlton, where matters were talked over. The dinners were excellent, the wines choice, and Mr. Yerburgh has a delicate taste in cigars. This meeting at dinner instead of at tea, as was the fashion in the Liberal camp at the time of Mr. Gladstone's trouble over the Irish University Bill in 1873, seemed to indicate manlier purpose. But nothing came of

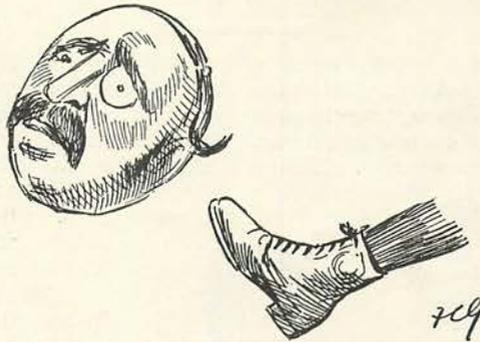
it, except a distinct advancement of Mr. Yerburgh's position in the House of Commons. He, as spokesman of the malcontents, found opportunity to display a complete mastery of an intricate geographical and political position, combined with capacity for forcibly and clearly stating his case.

Thus Lord Salisbury remained master of himself though China fell. Had Mr. Gladstone been in his position, under precisely similar circumstances, it would have been Her Majesty's Ministry that would have fallen to pieces.

As usual the recess has seen the JOINED THE MAJORITY. final going over to the majority of old members of the House of Commons. Two who have died since the prorogation were distinct types of utterly divergent classes. There was nothing in common between the Earl of Winchilsea and Mr. T. B. Potter, except that they both sat in the 1880 Parliament, saw the rise of the Fourth Party, and the crumbling away of Mr. Gladstone's magnificent majority. Mr. Potter was by far the older member, having taken his seat for Rochdale on the death of Mr. Cobden in 1865. Except physically, he did not fill a large place in the House, but was much esteemed on both sides for his honest purpose and his genial good temper.

This last was imperturbable. It was not to be disturbed even by a double misfortune that accompanied one of the Cobden Club's annual dining expeditions to Greenwich. On the voyage out, passing Temple Pier, one of the guests fell overboard. At the start on the return journey, another guest, a distinguished Frenchman, stepping aboard as he thought, fell into the gurgling river, and was fished out with a boat-hook. Yet Mr. Potter, President of the Club, largely responsible for the success of the outing, did not on either occasion intermit his beaming smile.

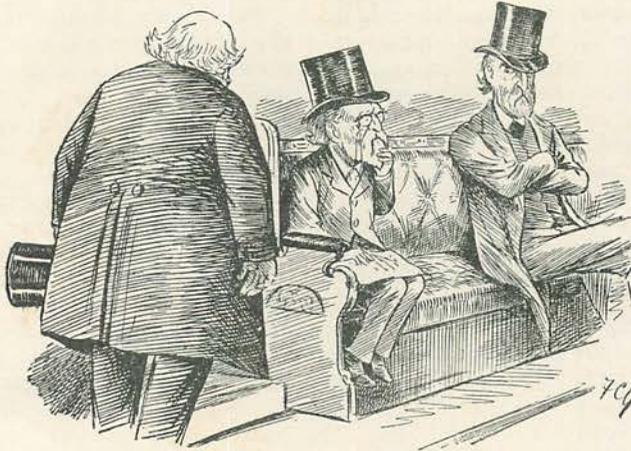
He was always ready to be of A BUFFER STATE. service in whatsoever unobtrusive manner. The House cherishes tender memories of a scene in 1890. The fight in Committee Room



THE HUMBLE FUNCTION OF THE FOOTBALL.

No. 15 had recently closed. Its memories still seared the breasts of the Irish members. Members were never certain that at any moment active hostilities might not commence even under the eye of the

Thames barge slipping down the river with the tide. He made his way to the bench where the severed Irish Leaders sat, and planted himself out between them, they perforce moving to right and left to



THE BUFFER STATE.

Speaker. One night a motion by Mr. John Morley raising the Irish question brought a large muster of the contending forces. Mr. Parnell, who had temporarily withdrawn from the scene, put in an appearance with the rest. He happened to seat himself on the same bench as Mr. Justin McCarthy, whom the majority of the Irish members had elected to succeed him in the leadership. Only a narrow space divided the twain. The most apprehensive did not anticipate militant action on the part of Mr. McCarthy. But, looking at Mr. Parnell's pale, stern face, knowing from report of proceedings in Committee Room No. 15 what passion smouldered beneath that mild exterior, timid members thought of what might happen, supposing the two rose together diversely claiming the ear of the House as Leader of the Irish Party.

At this moment Mr. T. B. Potter entered and moved slowly up the House like a

make room. Seeing him there, his white waistcoat shimmering in the evening light like the mainsail of an East Indiaman, the House felt that all was well. Mr. Parnell

was a long-armed man; but, under whatsoever stress of passion, he could not get at Mr. McCarthy across the broad space of the member for Rochdale.

Lord Winchilsea sat in this same Parliament as Mr. Finch-Hatton.

He early made his mark by a maiden speech delivered on one of the interminable debates on Egypt. He was content to leave it there, never, as far as I remember, again taking part in set debate. His appearance was striking. Many years after, when he had succeeded to the earldom, I happened to be present when he rose from the

luncheon-table at Haverholme Priory to acknowledge the toast of his health. By accident or design he stood under a temporary portrait of his great ancestor,



THE LATE LORD WINCHILSEA.

Christopher Hatton, Queen Elizabeth's Lord Chancellor. The likeness between the founder of the family and a scion separated by the space of more than three hundred years was almost startling.

Lord Winchilsea aged rapidly. When he made his maiden speech in the House of Commons he had not advanced beyond the stage of the young dandy. His face was a shade of ivory, the pallor made more striking by the coal-black hair. His attitude, like his dress and everything about him, was carefully studied. His left hand, rigidly extended, lightly rested behind his back. His right hand, when not in action, hid his finger-tips in the breast of a closely-buttoned frock-coat. Occasionally, he withdrew his hand and made stiff gestures in the air as if he were writing hieroglyphs. Occasionally, he emphasized a point by slightly bowing to the amused audience.

The matter of his speech was excellent, its form, occasionally, as extravagant as his get-up. The House roared with laughter when Mr. Finch-Hatton, pointing stiff finger-tips at Mr. Gladstone smiling on the Treasury Bench, invited members to visit the Premier on his uneasy couch and watch him moaning and tossing as the long procession of his pallid victims passed before him. This reminiscence of a scene from "Richard III." was a great success, though not quite in the manner Mr. Hatton, working it out in his study, had forecast.

A man of great natural capacity, wide culture, and, as was shown in his later connection with agriculture, of indomitable industry, he would, having lived down his extravagancies, have made a career in the Commons. Called thence by early doom he went to the Lords, and was promptly and finally extinguished.

MUSTERED
AT J. J.
COLMAN'S.

Another old member of the House who died in the recess is Mr. Colman. The great mustard manufacturer, whose name was carried on tin boxes to the uttermost ends of the earth, never made his mark in the House of Commons. I doubt whether he ever got so far as to work off his maiden speech. A quiet, kindly, shrewd man of business, he was content to look on whilst others fought and talked. He came too late to the House to be ever thoroughly at one with it, and took an early opportunity of retiring.

Mr. Gladstone had a high respect for him, and occasionally visited his beautiful home in Norfolk. One of these occasions became

historic by reason of Mr. Gladstone unwittingly making a little joke. Coming down to breakfast one morning, and finding the house-party already gathered in the room, Mr. Gladstone cheerily remarked, "What, are we all mustered?"

He never knew why this innocent observation had such remarkable success with Mr. J. J. Colman's guests.

MR. GLADSTONE'S TABLE-TALK.

A few more recollections of Mr. Gladstone whilst still in harness. I remember meeting him at a well-known house during the Midlothian campaign of 1885. He came in to luncheon half an hour late, and was rallied by the host upon his unpunctuality. "You know," he said, "only the other day you lectured us upon the grace of punctuality at luncheon-time."

Mr. Gladstone took up this charge with energy familiar at the time in the House of Commons when repelling one of Lord Randolph Churchill's random attacks. Finally, he drew from the host humble confession that he had been in error, that so far from recommending punctuality at luncheon-time he had urged the desirability of absence of formality at the meal. "Anyone," he said, "should drop in at luncheon when they please and sit where they please."

Through the meal he was in the liveliest humour, talking in his rich, musical voice. After luncheon we adjourned to the library, a room full of old furniture and precious memorials, chiefly belonging to the Stuart times. On the shelves were a multitude of rare books. Mr. Gladstone picked up one, and sitting on a broad window seat, began reading and discoursing about it. Setting out for a walk, he was got up in a most extraordinary style. He wore a narrow-skirted square-cut tail-coat, made, I should say, in the same year as the Reform Bill. Over his shoulders hung an inadequate cape, of rough hairy cloth, once in vogue but now little seen. On his head was a white soft felt hat. The back view as he trudged off at four-mile-an-hour pace was irresistible.

Mrs. Gladstone watched over him like a hen with its first chicken. She was always pulling up his collar, fastening a button, or putting him to sit in some particular chair out of a draught. These little attentions Mr. Gladstone accepted without remark, with much the placid air a small and good-tempered babe wears when it is being tucked in its cot.

AN OLD
LONDON
HOUSE.

In the Session of 1890, Mr. Gladstone rented a house in St. James's Square, a big, roomy, gloomy mansion, built when George I. was King. On the pillars of the porch stand in admirable preservation two of the wrought iron extinguishers, in which in those days the link-boys used to thrust their torches when they had brought master or mistress home, or convoyed a dinner guest. Inside hideous light-absorbing flock wall-papers prevailed. One gained an idea, opportunity rare in these days, of the murkiness amid which our grandfathers dwelt.

Dining there one night, I found the host made up for all household shortcomings. He talked with unbroken flow of spirits, always having more to say on any subject that turned up, and saying it better, than any expert present. His memory was as amazing as his opportunities of acquiring knowledge had been unique.

MEMORIES
OF
CHILDHOOD.

As we sat at table he, in his eighty-first year, recalled, as if it had happened the day before, an incident that befell when he was eighteen months old. Prowling about the nursery on all-fours, there suddenly flashed upon him consciousness of the existence of his nurse, as she towered above him. He remembered her voice and the very pattern of the frock she wore. This was his earliest recollection, his first clear consciousness of existence. His memory of Canning when he stood for Liverpool in 1812 was perfectly clear; indeed, he was then nearly three years old, and took an intelligent interest in public affairs.

Of later date was his recollection of Parlia-

mentary Elections, and the strange processes by which in the good old days they were accomplished. The poll at Liverpool was kept open sometimes for weeks, and the custom was for voters to be shut up in pens ten at a time. At the proper moment they were led out of these inclosures and conducted to the polling-booths, where they recorded their votes. These musters were called "tallies," and the reckoning up of them was a matter watched with breathless interest in the constituency.

It was a DOCTORING point of A TALLY. keen competition which side should first land a "tally" at the polling-booth. Mr. Gladstone told with great gusto of an accident that befell one in the first quarter of the century. The poll opened at eight o'clock in the morning. The Liberals, determined to make a favourable start, marshalled ten voters, and as early as four in the morning filled the pen by the polling-



AT A FOUR-MILE-AN-HOUR PACE.

booth. To all appearances the Conservatives were beaten in this first move. But their defeat was only apparent. Shortly after seven o'clock a barrel of beer, conveniently tapped, with mugs handy, was rolled up within hand-reach of the pen, where time hung heavy on the hands of the expectant voters. They naturally regarded this as a delicate attention on the part of their friends, and did full justice to their hospitable forethought. After a while, consternation fell upon them. Man after man hastily withdrew till the pen was empty, and ten Conservatives, waiting in reserve, rushed in and took possession of the place.

"The beer," said Mr. Gladstone, laughing till the tears came into his eyes, "had been heavily jalaped."

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

XLIX.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

MR. GLADSTONE'S MAIDEN SPEECH.

WRITING in the August number of THE STRAND about Mr. Gladstone's first speech in the House of Commons, I quoted a passage from a private letter, drawn from him on perusal of Mr. McCarthy's preface to White's "Inner Life of the House of Commons." The historian of "Our Own Times" asserted that the speech fell utterly unnoticed. Mr. Gladstone, jealous of the fame of the young member for Newark, corrected this statement with the remark: "My maiden speech was noticed in debate in a marked manner by Mr. Stanley, who was in charge of the Bill."

Reading over again the memoirs of the Earl of Albemarle, published more than twenty years ago, and now forgotten, I came upon a passage vividly illustrating contemporary opinion about this, now famous, then, in the main, uneventful, epoch in Parliamentary history.

"One evening, on taking my place," Lord Albemarle writes, "I found on his legs a beardless youth, with whose appearance and manner I was greatly struck. He had an earnest, intelligent countenance, and large, expressive, black eyes. Young as he was he had evidently what is called 'the ear of the House,'

and yet the cause he advocated was not one likely to interest a popular assembly—that of the Planter *versus* the Slave. I had placed myself behind the Treasury Bench. 'Who is he?' I asked one of the Ministers. I was answered, 'He is the member for Newark—a young fellow who will some day make a great figure in Parliament.' My informant was Edward Geoffrey Stanley, then Whig Secretary for the Colonies, and in charge of the Negro Emancipation Bill, afterwards Earl of Derby. The young Conservative orator was William Ewart Gladstone—two statesmen who each subsequently became Prime Minister and Leader of the Party to

which he was at this time diametrically opposed."

A CONSECRATED ERROR.

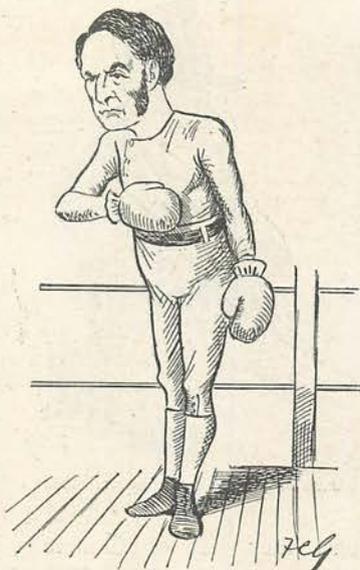
It is curious to note that Mr. Gladstone, adopting Mr. McCarthy's version, long current without question, speaks of this discourse as "my maiden speech." It was, as contemporary records show, so accepted by the House. As a matter of fact, supported by the irrefragable testimony of the *Mirror of Parliament*, his first speech was delivered on the 21st of February, 1833, the subject being the alleged discreditable state

of things in Liverpool at Parliamentary and municipal elections. The speech of the 3rd of June in the same Session, to which Mr. McCarthy alludes, was delivered in Committee, upon consideration of resolutions submitted by Stanley, Colonial Secretary, as a preliminary to the emancipation of the West Indian slaves.

On turning back to the *Hansard* of the day, Mr. Gladstone's recollection of the Ministerial compliment is fully justified. Evidently it made a deep impression on the mind of the young member, remaining with him for more than sixty years. "If the hon. gentleman will permit me to make the observation," said the Colonial Secretary, "I

beg to say I never listened with greater pleasure to any speech than I did to the speech of the hon. member for Newark, who then addressed the House, I believe, for the first time. He brought forward his case and argued it with a temper, an ability, and a fairness which may well be cited as a good model to many older members of this House, and which hold out to this House and to the country grounds of confident expectation that, whatever cause shall have the good fortune of his advocacy, will derive from it great support."

It will be observed that the Minister spoke without contradiction of Mr. Gladstone's



AN EARLY APPEARANCE IN THE PARLIAMENTARY RING.

speech as his first appearance on the Parliamentary scene, a circumstance which probably did much to crystallize the error.

Last month when the Speaker, having as he observed "for greater accuracy" obtained a copy of the Queen's Speech, read it from the Chair, members with few exceptions uncovered, sitting bare-headed whilst the Speaker lent to the bald sentences the music of his voice. In the heyday of Irish obstruction the Parnellites were wont to assert their national independence by stubbornly keeping their hats on whilst the Saxon on these occasions bared his aggressively loyal brow. This contumacy excited profound indignation among British members, suffusing a corresponding gleam of satisfaction over the expressive countenance of Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar and his colleagues from Ireland.

The member for Cavan would turn in his grave with mortification if he only knew—perhaps by this time he has learned—that in this designedly overt breach of order and decorum the Irish members were right, the loyal Saxons being in error. The rule which governs the House in these matters is that when the Sovereign—as in case of a reply to an address—dispatches a message personally and directly to the Commons, they sit uncovered to hear it read. But the reading by the Speaker of the Queen's Speech does not constitute the delivery of a message direct from Her Majesty to the Commons. As a matter of fact, the Speech is addressed to Lords and Commons collectively, with one paragraph exclusively addressed to the Commons. The message they receive standing at the Bar of the House of Lords.

In earlier Parliamentary times, when there were no special editions of evening papers forthcoming with verbatim reports of the Speech from the Throne, it was found a matter of convenience for the Speaker to read the document for the edification of those who had not been able to attend the ceremony in the other House. The custom, like many others that have become ana-

chronisms, is still observed. But it does not import the necessity of removing the hat. Last Session note was taken in one of the newspapers of the fact that Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman kept on his hat whilst the Queen's Speech was read from the Chair. He was strictly following the manner of the *vieille école*, observing a custom common when he first entered the House.

PICTURES
IN AN OLD
PARLIA-
MENT.

More than a hundred years ago a young Prussian clergyman, Moritz by name, visited this country, travelling on foot from London through Oxford as far north as Derby and home by Nottingham. He described his impressions in a series of homely letters written to a friend. The book found modest publication, appearing in this country in a slim volume bearing date 1795. Moritz visited the House of Commons, and in his quiet, matter-of-fact way paints the scene in which Pitt, Fox, and Burke loomed large.

"Passing through Westminster Hall," he reports, "you ascend a few steps at the end, and are led through a dark passage into the House of Commons." Westminster Hall remains to-day as it was when the quiet-mannered, observant Prussian passed through it. The steps at the end are there, but the House

of Commons, to which he presently obtained entrance, was, more than half a century later, burned to the ground. Entrance to the Strangers' Gallery in those days was approached, as it is now, by a small staircase.

"The first time I went up this small staircase," says the ingenuous visitor, "and had reached the rails, I saw a very genteel man in black standing there. I accosted him without any introduction, and I asked him whether I might be allowed to go into the gallery. He told me that I must be introduced by a member, or else I could not get admission there. Now, as I had not the honour to be acquainted with a member, I was under the mortifying necessity of retreating and again going downstairs, as I did much chagrined. And now, as I was sullenly marching back,



A GLEAM OF SATISFACTION ON MR. BIGGAR'S FACE.

I heard something said about a bottle of wine which seemed to be addressed to me. I could not conceive what it could mean till I got home, when my obliging landlady told me I should have given the well-dressed man half a crown or a couple of shillings for a bottle of wine. Happy in this information, I went again the next day; when the same man who before had sent me away, after I had given him only two shillings very politely opened the door for me, and himself recommended me to a good seat in the gallery."

Strangers visiting the House of Commons will know how far we have advanced beyond the level of morality here indicated.

Mr. Moritz found the House of Commons "rather a mean-looking building, not a little resembling a chapel. The Speaker, an elderly man with an enormous wig with two knotted kind of tresses, or curls, behind, in a black cloak, his hat on his head, sat opposite to me on a lofty chair." The Speaker of the House of Commons long ago removed his hat, which in modern Parliamentary proceedings appears only when he produces it from an unsuspected recess and uses it pointing to members when he counts the House. "The members of the House of Commons," he notes, "have nothing particular in their dress. They even come into the House in their great-coats with boots and spurs," which to-day would be thought a something very particular indeed. "It is not at all uncommon to see a member lying stretched out on one of the benches whilst others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges, or whatever else is in season."

We have changed all that. During the all-night sittings in the heyday of the Land League Party an Irish member brought a paper bag of buns with him, and proceeded to

refresh himself in the intervals of speech-making. This outrage on the Constitution was swiftly and sternly rebuked from the Chair, and was never repeated. Another old-world custom of the House noted by the stranger who looked down from the gallery

a hundred and seventeen years ago was that members addressing their remarks to the Speaker prefaced them, as they do at this day, with the observation "Sir."

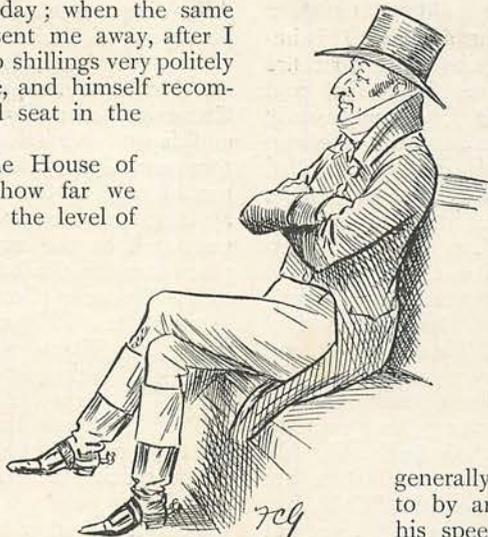
"The Speaker on being thus addressed generally moves his hat a little, but immediately puts it on again." The Speaker not now wearing a hat cannot observe this courteous custom. But it exists to this day among members

generally. A member referred to by another in the course of his speech always lifts his hat, in recognition of the attention, complimentary or otherwise.

In the House of Lords, more conservative of old customs than the Commons, the Lord Chancellor is upon certain occasions seen of men with a three-cornered hat crowning his full-bottomed wig. This happens when new peers take the oath and their seat. As the new peer is conducted on his quaint peregrination and salutes the Lord Chancellor from

the Barons' or Earls' bench, to which he has been inducted, the Lord Chancellor responds by thrice gravely uplifting his three-cornered hat. Another time when he wears his hat in the House is when acting with other Royal Commissioners at the opening of Parliament, at its Prorogation, or at the giving the Royal Assent to Bills.

The Prussian chanced to visit the House on the historic occasion when proposal was made for doing honour to Admiral Rodney, the



M.P., OLDEN TIME.



CHARLES JAMES FOX.
(From an Old Portrait.)

gallant victor at Cape St. Vincent. "Fox," Mr. Moritz reports, "was sitting to the right of the Speaker, not far from the table on which the gilt sceptre lay. He now took his place so near it that he could reach it with his hand and, thus placed, he gave it many a violent and hearty thump, either to aid or to show the energy with which he spoke. It is impossible for me to describe with what fire and persuasive eloquence he spoke, and how the Speaker in the Chair incessantly nodded approbation from beneath his solemn wig. Innumerable voices incessantly called out, 'Hear him! hear him!' and when there was the least sign that he intended to leave off speaking they no less vociferously exclaimed 'Go on.' And so he continued to speak in this manner for nearly two hours."

"Charles Fox," writes this precursor of "Pictures in Parliament," "is a short, fat, and gross man, with a swarthy complexion, and dark; and in general he is badly dressed. There certainly is something Jewish in his looks. But upon the whole he is not an ill-made, nor an ill-looking, man, and there are strong marks of sagacity and fire in his eyes. Burke is a well-made, tall, upright man, but looks elderly and broken. Rigby is excessively corpulent, and has a jolly, rubicund face."

"STRANGERS WILL WITHDRAW." This command of the Speaker to-day precedes every division in the House of Commons. But it is peremptory only

with the few otherwise favoured strangers who have obtained seats beneath the gallery. The reason for this is obvious. Being actually on the floor of the House, they might, by accident or design, stray into the division lobby, leading to grievous complications in the voting. Mr. Moritz makes the interesting note that when the division on the Rodney vote was pending, members, turning their faces towards the gallery, called aloud, "Withdraw! Withdraw!" "On this," he writes, "the strangers withdraw, and are shut up in a small room at the foot of the stairs till the voting is over, when they are again permitted to take their places in the gallery."

In our time, strangers in the gallery, despite the order to withdraw, retain their seats. Only those who, with pride of port, have been conducted to the special seats under the gallery are marched out, conducted across the lobby, and left outside the locked doors till the division is over. According to Mr. Moritz's testimony, the Strangers' Galleries were not exclusively allotted to men, ladies mingling in the closely-packed company. The old House of Commons had no Ladies' Gallery, though in addition to permission to enter the ordinary Strangers' Gallery, ladies were admitted to a sort of cage in the roof, railed off from the aperture provided for the escape of hot air generated by the candles. It was from this place that Mr. Gladstone, in his first Session of the House of Commons, saw a fan flutter down in the middle of an important debate.

REPORTERS IN THE HOUSE. There was, of course, no such thing as a Press Gallery in the days before the earlier Revolution in France. "Two shorthand writers," says the stranger in the gallery, whose quick glance nothing escapes, "have sat sometimes not far distant from me, who, though it is rather by stealth, endeavour to take down the words of the speaker. Thus all that is very remarkable in what is said in Parliament may generally be read in print the next day."

Dr. Johnson often sat in this gallery, though he did not use shorthand in reporting the speeches. The omission would doubtless be to the advantage of some speakers. Mr. Moritz heard that those in constant attendance with the object of reporting the debates paid the door-keeper a guinea for the privilege of the Session. The fee was paid in advance.

There was no Strangers' Gallery in the House of Peers at that time, but the irresistible Prussian seems to have gained admission. He writes: "There appears to be much more politeness and more courteous behaviour with the members of the

Upper House. But he who wishes to observe mankind and to contemplate the leading traits of the different characters most strongly marked, will do well to attend



DR. JOHNSON WATCHING PARLIAMENT.

frequently the lower rather than the upper House." Those familiar with both Houses of Parliament will know how admirably this shrewd advice pertains to the present day.

The Session is already three weeks old, but the lobby has "FERDY." not yet lost a certain sense of desolateness since Baron Ferdy Rothschild comes not any more. He was not, in the ordinary sense of the term, a Parliamentary figure. I have no recollection of hearing him make a speech. He was not given to sitting up late at night in order to save the State or (the same thing) serve his party. But he was a man of wide human sympathies, and the House of Commons, the microsm of humanity, irresistibly attracted him.

His habit of an afternoon was to enter the lobby, generally after questions were over. With one hand in his pocket, and a smile on his face, he made straightway for a friend, standing in an accustomed spot by the doorkeeper's chair, and "wanted to know" everything that had happened since the House met, and what was going on next. Baron Ferdy, otherwise a distinct individuality in his notable family, had, in marked degree, their characteristic of acquiring information. He always "wanted to know." This habitude was indicative of the universality of his sympathy. He was one of the most unaffectedly kind-hearted men I ever knew. Looking in upon him one morning in his study at Waddesdon, I found him seated before two heaps of opened letters, one very much smaller than the other. "All begging letters," he said, glancing, with a faint smile, towards the larger bundle.

Undeterred by their predominance and persistency, Baron Ferdy had, in accordance with his custom, spent an early hour of the morning in going through them himself, fearful lest he might miss a genuine case of distress that he could alleviate.

HIS WAYS OF CHARITY. It was not money only he bestowed. Out of its abundance a cheque more or less was nothing. More self-sacrificing, he gave time and personal attention, not shrink-

ing from putting himself under a personal obligation in order to assist someone who really had no claim upon him. The longest letter I ever had from him begged me to obtain an appointment on the London Press for a country journalist. He followed it up with renewed personal applications, impatiently treating my plea that, there being no vacancy within my knowledge, it would not be possible violently to supersede any one of the leading contributors to London

journals in order to make room for his *protégé*. Judging from the ardour of the pursuit, I concluded the gentleman in question must in some way be closely connected with the Baron or his establishment. On inquiry I found he had never seen him—knew nothing about him save particulars set forth in a letter the youth had written to him. It was the old story of unrest and yearning ambition, familiar to all of us who have served on the treadmill of the Press. It was new to Baron Ferdy. It touched his kind heart, and he espoused the youth's cause with fervour that could not have been excelled had he been a kinsman.

"A CUP OF WATER." Another of his quiet kindnesses, of which I had personal knowledge, befell on the day of the wedding of the Duchess

of York. He had invited a few friends to view the scene from the balcony of his mansion in Piccadilly. The crowd at this favoured spot, commanding the *débouchement* from Constitution Hill, was enormous. The day was intensely hot, men and women fainting in the crowd, gasping for water. Baron Ferdy, observing this from the balcony, ran downstairs, ordered the servants to bring buckets of fresh water into the barricaded space before the house, and stationed two of them in a position overlooking the barricade, whence they could hand down tumblers of water to the thirsty and grateful crowd. Last year but one, on the occasion of the Queen's Golden Jubilee, Baron Ferdy, never neglectful of opportunity to do a kindness, made, in advance, preparations for relieving the discomfort of the crowd at his gates. Finding in the



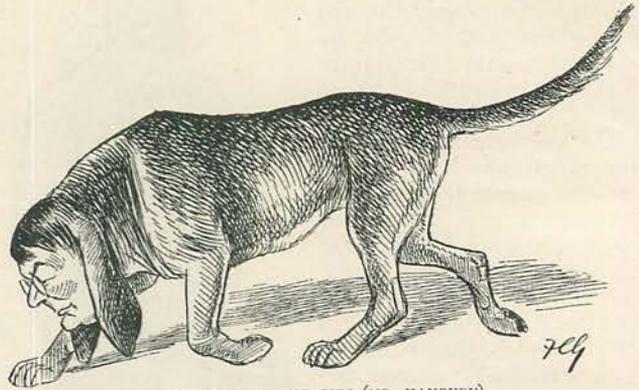
BARON "FERDY."

course of the day that the police on duty had had nothing to eat since they turned out in the morning, he, as soon as the business of the day was over, sent out into the highways and by-ways, and compelled the not unwilling police to come in and partake of the sumptuous banquet he had prepared by way of luncheon for his personal friends, watching the scene from the balcony.

These are but trifling things. I tell them as happening to have come under my personal observation. They are indicative of the sweetness of Baron Ferdy's nature, the boundless charity of his disposition. The catalogue would be indefinitely extended if everyone who knew him were to contribute his item. The House of Commons could better have spared a more prominent politician, a more frequent contributor to its daily debates.

It would be interesting to know whether, in all respects, Scotland stands where it did since the salary of its Heritable Usher is no longer carried on the books of the Consolidated Fund. What were precisely the duties of the Heritable Usher is not known. Long ago the inheritor did his last ushering, his heirs selling for a considerable mess of pottage the salary pertaining to the office. It was created in the year 1393, and by solemn Act of the Parliament of Scotland was conferred upon Alexander Cockburn, of Langton, and his heirs. Subsequent Acts of the Scottish Parliament, passed in 1681 and 1686, confirmed the original grant, the latter Act attaching a salary of £250 a year to the office. When the union of England and Scotland was effected the Heritable Usher, with many similar useful persons, was established in possession of his dignity and emoluments by a special clause in the Treaty of Union providing that "all heritable offices, superiorities, etc., being reserved to the owners thereof as rights of property in the same manner as they are now enjoyed by the laws

of Scotland, notwithstanding of this treaty." At the beginning of the century the office with the salary, being a marketable commodity, was acquired by one Sir Patrick Walker, who, with nice precision, paid a sum equivalent to thirty-one and a quarter years' purchase. The office and, what is much more important, the salary finally came into the possession of the Dean and Chapter of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Mary's, Edinburgh. Mr. Hanbury, who, in his capacity of Financial Secretary to the Treasury, has a keen scent for these ancient jobs, has concluded a transaction for the computation of the salary. The Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral of



A KEEN SCENT FOR JOBS (MR. HANBURY).

St. Mary's will pouch a trifle under £7,000, and the Heritable Usher of Scotland will be ushered into final obscurity.

It will be a nice task for any boy home for the holidays to reckon up with compound interest what the Heritable Usher of Scotland has cost Great Britain since he stepped on the scene in the year of Our Lord 1393.

This transaction has been conducted in pursuance of a Treasury Minute founded upon the report of a House of Commons' Committee which met twelve years ago to consider the subject of perpetual pensions. They recommend that holders of pension allowances or payments which the Law Officers of the Crown consider to be permanent in character, but to which no obligation of an onerous kind attaches, should be invited to commute.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

L.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THERE is a general impression that Lord Rosebery's accession to the Premiership in 1894 was directly and absolutely due to Mr. Gladstone's nomination. The fact is the appointment was made on the personal initiative of the Queen. The selection of the Prime Minister remains, even in these democratic days, the absolute prerogative of the Sovereign. But the prerogative is not now enforced in antagonism to the obvious drift of popular feeling.

The last time it was exercised in anything approaching autocratic manner happened sixty-five years ago, when William IV. was King. When Lord Althorpe (of whom we had in the House of Commons a singularly close replica in the person of Lord Hartington) went to the House of Lords it became necessary to appoint a successor to the leadership in the House of Commons. Lord John Russell seemed inevitable. But it was known that the King did not like him, distrusting the Radical element he represented. Lord Melbourne cheerily undertook to put the matter through. He drove down to Brighton, where the King was staying, suggested the appointment, and was dumfounded by the reply. The King commanded him to give up the seals of office, and intrusted to his care, on the return journey to London, a letter commanding the Duke of Wellington to form a Ministry.

THE BED-
CHAMBER
WOMEN.

In the second year of the Queen's reign a procedure only less arbitrary took place in connection with the Premiership. Lord Melbourne, defeated on the Jamaica Bill, resigned. The Queen, like her uncle, turned to the Duke of Wellington, who recommended Sir Robert Peel. Sir Robert insisted as a condition of his undertaking the Government that the Whig Ladies-in-Waiting, who

surrounded the Queen, should be dismissed. Her Majesty resented this dictation, with the result that Lord Melbourne came back with foredoomed endeavour to carry on an impossible Government.

IN 1880. On the eve of the twentieth century neither King nor Queen would think of pitting preference for Bedchamber women against the claims to the Premiership of a popular statesman. That the tendency to enforce the prerogative in spite of popular feeling is nevertheless ineradicable in the Royal breast was testified so recently as 1880. The General Election had been won for the Liberals by the magic of one name, the tireless energy, the bound-



LORD ALTHORPE (AFTER H.K.B.).



WILLIAM IV. (AFTER H.K.B.).

less genius of one man. Lord Beaconsfield overthrown, Mr. Gladstone was inevitable. But the Queen did not disguise her hankering after another. She sent for Lord Hartington, and invited him to form a Ministry. He pointed out the impossibility of ignoring Mr. Gladstone's claims, but,

loyally yielding to pressure, went back to town and spent a day in endeavour to meet the Queen's wishes. The result was to confirm him in his earliest conviction.

Even then Her Majesty, with womanly persistence, fought against the inevitable. Lord Granville was sent for, and the command to form a Ministry transferred to him. He, like Lord Hartington, pleading the hopelessness of such endeavour, Mr. Gladstone was reluctantly summoned, and an interval that had filled the political world with marvel and disquiet happily closed.

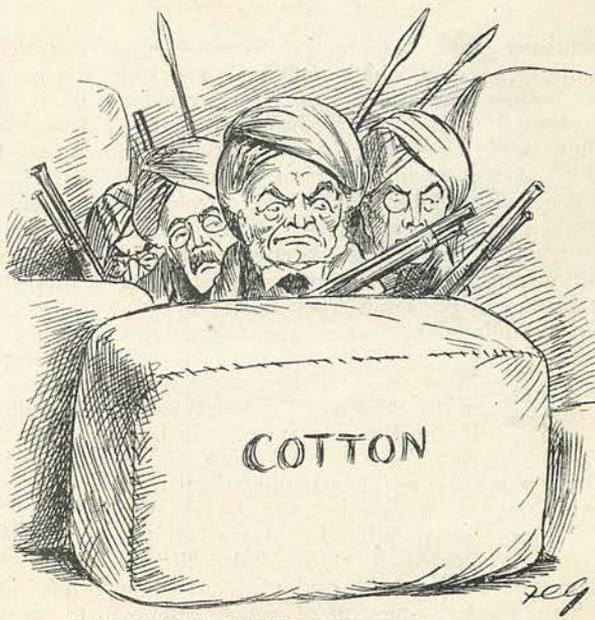
WHAT FOURTEEN years later Her Majesty MIGHT HAVE BEEN. was more fortunate in finding her preference for Lord Rosebery coincide not only with popular opinion, but with the personal predilections of the retiring Minister. A year or two before he withdrew from the Parliamentary stage, Mr. Gladstone publicly nominated Lord Rosebery as his successor. To that circumstance is attributable the impression, which still obtains, that it was Mr. Gladstone who selected Lord Rosebery. It was well known in the Cabinet of 1894 that what proved to be a crown of thorns was placed on Lord Rosebery's head by the Queen's own hands. Another arrangement privately talked of at the time, had it been regarded favourably by Her Majesty, would have pleasantly varied subsequent events as regarded from the point of view of the interests of the Liberal Party. It proposed Lord Spencer as Premier, Lord Rosebery as Foreign Secretary, Sir William Harcourt as Home Secretary and Leader of the Commons. In such case we should not have had the Death Duties Budget. But the circumambient atmosphere in Downing Street would have been more placid, and the example of discord in high places would not have spread through humbler party tracts.

MOMENTS FOR RESIGNATION. Talking of the troublous times between 1892 and 1895, a member who sat through both Mr. Gladstone's and Lord Rosebery's Cabinets is of opinion that two opportunities were lost for the sorely beset Liberal Government to retrieve its position by a General Election. Sustained by the advantage of reviewing the situation with full knowledge of subsequent events, this high authority

insists that Mr. Gladstone should have straightway gone to the country when the Lords threw out the Home Rule Bill. For him later to descend to the level of the Parish Councils Bill was to fritter away a great opportunity; whilst keeping members with their nose to the grindstone up to Christmas Eve, with prospect of resumption of the sittings in January, was a waste of priceless energy and endurance that would have been much better directed on the field of battle at the polls.

Mr. Gladstone was personally in favour of immediate resignation, counting upon the resentment created in the popular mind by the action of the Lords. It will be remembered with what persistence he, in the last speech delivered in the House of Commons, piled up the account against the Lords in the long Session then drawing to its close. He was out-voted by colleagues in the Cabinet, who did not think that even the joy of battering the doors of the House of Lords would counteract the apathy, verging on distaste, possessing the mind of the British elector in view of the Home Rule question.

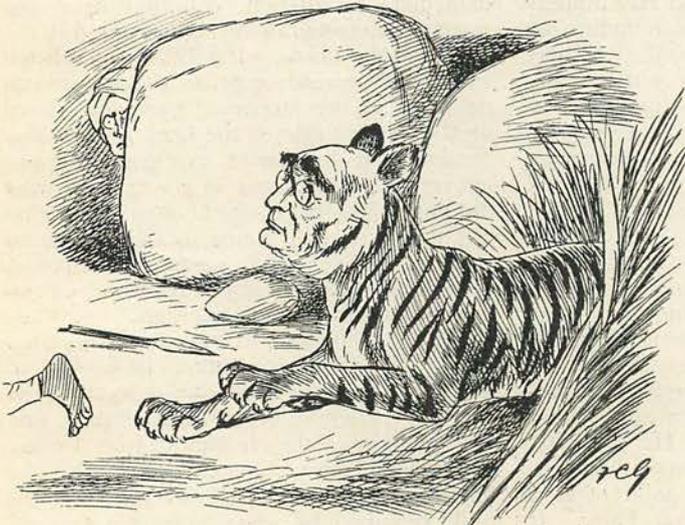
A LIGHT THAT FAILED. The other fortunate moment for resignation that promised to present itself during Lord Rosebery's Premiership flashed on the question of the Indian Cotton Duties. When Sir Henry James, backed by the full strength of the Unionist party temporarily recruited by some Liberals represent-



SIR HENRY JAMES AND THE COTTON DUTIES TRIBESMEN.

ing cotton districts, brought forward his motion in the interests of British cotton spinners trading in India, defeat of the Government seemed inevitable. In Cabinet Council Lord Rosebery was insistent that, immediately on the blow falling, Ministers should resign and an appeal be made to the country. He was confident that the answer of the electors to the commercial heresy of the Opposition would be highly satisfactory to sound Liberals.

It was Sir Henry Fowler who spoiled this



SIR HENRY FOWLER'S CHARGE.

promising game. He replied to Sir Henry James in a speech which completely knocked the bottom out of his case, and turned a threatened rout into a brilliant victory. Thus Lord Rosebery's Government had no luck. At a particular moment when disaster in the division lobby might have proved the herald of permanent access of strength in the country, they found themselves flushed with victory. This was the more aggravating as instances of a set speech in a party debate influencing votes are exceedingly rare.

LADIES IN THE HOUSE. Mention of the presence of ladies in the House of Commons made by the Prussian traveller in England, quoted last month, is the more remarkable as it is generally understood that at the date of his visit, 1782, the presence of ladies was prohibited. Access to the House was forbidden them under circumstances interesting to consider in connection with the modern question of women's rights.

On the 2nd of February, 1778, the House was densely crowded in anticipation of debate on the state of the nation. It was to be raised upon a motion by Mr. Fox declaring that "no more of the Old Corps be sent out of the kingdom."

What happened is set forth in the current issue of the *London Chronicle*. "This day," it is written, "a vast multitude assembled in the lobby and environs of the House of Commons, but not being able to gain admission by either entreaty or interest, they forced their way into the gallery in spite of the doorkeepers. The House considered the intrusion in a heinous light, and a motion was directly made for clearing the gallery. A partial clearing only took place; the gentlemen were obliged to withdraw; the ladies, through complaisance, were suffered to remain; but Governor Johnstone observing that if the motive for clearing the House was a supposed propriety, to keep the state of the nation concealed from our enemies, he saw no reason to indulge the ladies so far as to make them acquainted with the arcana of the State, as he did not think them more

capable of keeping secrets than the men. Upon which, they were likewise ordered to leave the House. The Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Norton, and nearly sixty other ladies were obliged to obey the mandate."

Referring to Hansard of the date I find it recorded that, the scene over, Mr. Fox rose, and after an apology for the trouble he was about to give the Committee, extolled his own personal good fortune in having his audience reduced, "being persuaded he should not have answered the great expectations which had brought them there."

The learned Hatsell thus discourses on the incident:—

THE LAW ON THE MATTER. "When a member in his place takes notice to the Speaker of strangers being in the House or gallery, it is the Speaker's duty immediately to order the Serjeant to execute the orders of the House, and

to clear the House of all but members, and this without permitting any debate or question to be moved upon the execution of the order. It very seldom happens that this can be done without a violent struggle from some quarter of the House, that strangers may remain. Members often move for the order to be read, endeavour to explain it, and debate upon it, and the House as often runs into great heats upon this subject; but in a short time the confusion subsides, and the dispute ends by clearing the House, for if any one member insists upon it, the Speaker must enforce the order, and the House must be cleared."

"The most remarkable instance of this that has occurred in my memory," Hatsell writes, "was at a time when the whole gallery and the seats under the front gallery were filled with ladies. Captain Johnstone, of the Navy (commonly called Governor Johnstone), being angry that the House was cleared of all the 'men strangers,' amongst whom were some friends he had introduced, insisted that 'all strangers' should withdraw. This produced a violent ferment for a long time; the ladies showing great reluctance to comply with the order of the House; so that by their perseverance business was interrupted for nearly two hours. But at length they were compelled to submit. Since that time ladies, many of the highest rank, have made several powerful efforts to be again admitted. But Mr. Cornwall and Mr. Addington have as constantly declined to permit them to come in. Indeed, were this privilege allowed to any one individual, however high her rank, or respectable her character and manners, the galleries must soon be open to all women, who from curiosity, amusement, or any other motive, wish to hear the debates. And this to the exclusion of many young men, and of merchants and others, whose commercial interests render their attendance necessary to them, and of real use and importance to the public."

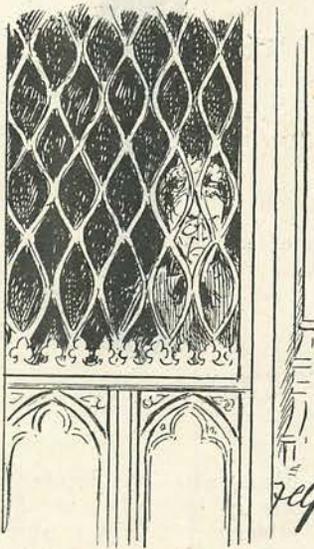
A FACETIOUS SPEAKER. The earliest reference to the presence of ladies in the House of Commons is to be found in Grey's Debates: "During a debate on the 1st of June, 1675," says this precursor of Hansard, "some ladies were in the gallery, peeping over the gentlemen's shoulders. The Speaker spying them, called out, 'What borough do those ladies serve for?' to which Mr. William Coventry replied, 'They serve for the Speaker's Chamber!' Sir Thomas Littleton said, 'The Speaker might mistake them for gentlemen with fine sleeves, dressed like ladies.' Says the Speaker, 'I am sure I saw petticoats.'"

THE DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER. Sir John Hay, whose handsome presence long decorated the bench behind the Conservative leaders, used to tell a charming story about ladies in the House. Debate coming on on the still perennial subject of the Deceased Wife's Sister, Mr. Henley, thinking the question was not one to be discussed with fullest freedom in presence of ladies, induced the Speaker to order the Serjeant-at-Arms to have the gallery cleared. This was done with one exception. A strong-minded female announced her readiness to sit it out however disquieting the ordeal might be.

Mr. Henley, looking up to see if the Speaker's order had been obeyed, caught a glimpse of an angular and bonneted visage peering through the bars. He called the Speaker's attention to the defiance of his rule, and a messenger was dispatched with peremptory repetition of the order. The lady declined to move, threatening to scream if she were touched. This difficulty being communicated to Mr. Denison, then

Speaker, he beckoned Sir John Hay to the Chair.

"Tell Henley," he said, "I have twice sent the Serjeant-at-Arms up to clear the gallery. He reports all gone but one, and she won't budge. I believe her to be the deceased wife's sister. Better take no notice and go on with the debate."



THE DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

MR.
CHRISTOPHER SYKES.

At the time of his death Mr. Christopher Sykes was not a member of the House of Commons. But he lived there through many Sessions, and has left behind him deathless memories. Few men equally silent gave the House larger measure of delight. To behold him was a liberal education in deportment. Perhaps no one could be so proper or so wise as he habitually looked. But it is something for mortals to have at hand a model, even if it be unattainably high.

One night in the Session of 1884 Mr. Christopher Sykes startled the House by bringing in a Bill. If any member boldly imaginative had in advance associated the Yorkshire magnate with such an undertaking, he would instinctively have conjured up a question of enormous gravity—say the repeal of the Union, or the re-establishment of the Hephartarchy. When it was discovered that Mr. Sykes's bantling was a Bill to amend the Fisheries (Oysters, Crabs, and Lobsters) Act, 1877, the House shook with Homeric laughter.

CHRISTOPHER'S
MANŒUVRES.

Circumstances were favourable to the high comedy that followed. Ordinary members bring in Bills in the prosaic opening hour of a sitting. Mr. Sykes selected the alternative opportunity presented at its close. At that hour the House is always ready for a lark. The discovery of Mr. Sykes standing behind the empty Front Opposition Bench, grave, white-waist-coated, wearing in the buttonhole of his dinner-coat the white flower of a blameless life, promised sport. He held a paper in his hand, but said never a word, staring blankly at the Speaker, who was also on his legs, running through the Orders of the Day. For a member to remain on his feet whilst the Speaker is upstanding is a breach of order of which Mr. Sykes was riotously reminded. For all answer, he looked around with the air of a stolid man surveying, without understanding, the capering of a cage of monkeys.

The Speaker, charitably concluding that the hon. member was moving for leave to bring in the Bill, put the question. Sir Wilfrid Lawson observed that the Bill was evidently one of great importance. It was usual in such circumstances for the member in charge to explain its scope. Would Mr. Sykes favour the House with a few observations?

Mr. Sykes took no notice of this appeal or of the uproarious applause with which it was sustained. Leave being given to bring in the Bill, Christopher, who had evidently carefully rehearsed the procedure, rose and with long stride made his way to the Bar. Members in charge of Bills, having obtained leave to introduce them, stand at the Bar till, the list completed, the Speaker calls upon them by name to bring up their Bill, which they hand to the Clerk at the table. To the consternation of the Speaker and the uncontrollable amusement of the House, Mr. Sykes, having reached the Bar, straightway turned about, walked up the floor, Bill in hand, and stood at the table solemnly gazing on the Speaker. As nothing seemed to come of this, he, after a while, retired a few paces, bowed to the Mace, again advanced, halted at the foot of the table, and again stared at the Speaker. The Solicitor-General and another Minister who happened to be on the Treasury Bench took him by each arm, gently but firmly leading him back to the Bar, standing sentry beside him in preparation for any further unauthorized movement.

Other business disposed of, the Speaker called him by name. Mr. Sykes, whose unruffled visage and attitude of funereal gravity were in striking contrast with the uproarious merriment that prevailed on both sides, again advanced, handed the Bill to the waiting Clerk, and forthwith departed. This was a fresh and final breach of Parliamentary rules. It is ordered that a member, having brought in a Bill, shall stand at the table whilst the Clerk reads out its title. In reply to a question from the Speaker he names a day for the second reading. Swift messengers caught Mr. Sykes as he was crossing the Bar and haled him back to the table, where at



"THE AIR OF A STOLID MAN
SURVEYING THE CAPERING OF
A CAGE OF MONKEYS."

last, preserving amid shouts of laughter his impregnable air of gravity, he completed his work.

But he never brought in another Bill, and, though he did not immediately retire from Parliamentary life, he withdrew more

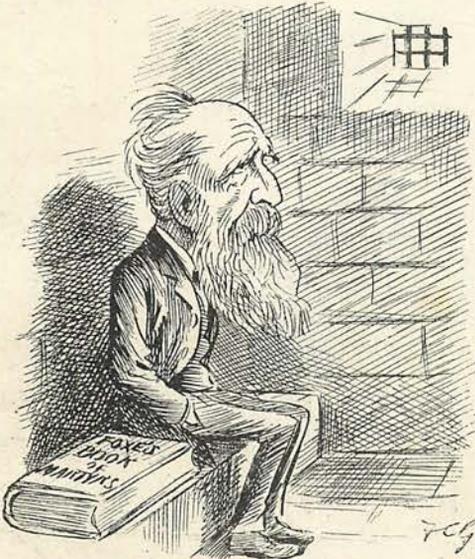
by no means always coming off worst in the encounter of wit.

There is one important particular in which Mr. Johnston can claim common ground with Irish members in the opposite camp. He has been in prison. The event happened long ago, and Mr. Johnston being then of only local fame did not loom large in the newspapers. Consequently it passed from recollection, the House being startled when, one night last Session, in Committee on the Irish Local Government Bill, Mr. Dillon, whose memory for such matters is fresher, made passing allusion to it.

It was one of the incidents consequent on the glorious celebration in the year 1867 of the Twelfth of July in County Down. There was at that time in existence a statute known as the Party Processions Act, which prohibited street demonstrations in Ireland. Mr. Johnston thought he observed that whilst the Act was negligently administered when there was question of Catholic or Nationalist street processions, no two or three Orangemen wearing harmless ribbons, beating the peaceful drum, and roaring "To — with the Pope!" might parade the streets of Belfast without straight-way being haled to prison. He resolved to offer himself as a martyr to the cause of truth. Accordingly, on this 12th of July, now more than twenty-one years past, he arrayed himself in full fig, and placed himself at the head of an Orange procession. He was arrested, and committed for trial. Brought before the genial judge now (through the London season) an exile from his country under the style of Lord Morris, he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

It was intimated to him that, if he pleased, he might go forth from prison on his own recognisances. As that involved a pledge not to do it any more, he stoutly declined. He served his two months, and found in the discipline the making of his political fortunes. In 1868

came the General Election, pregnant with Mr. Gladstone's great boons for Ireland. The men of Belfast returned Mr. Johnston of Ballykilbeg at the head of the poll, and have since remained faithful to him.



MR. JOHNSTON IN PRISON.

closely in his shell, even as the perturbed periwinkle or the alarmed cockle shrink from the rude advance of man.

JOHNSTON
OF BALLY-
KILBEG.

In some particulars the member for South Belfast fails to realize the popular idea of an Irish member. He is certainly not boisterous in his humour, and never emulates Sir Boyle Roche. Yet humour he has, rather of dour, Covenanting style, highly successful in tickling the fancy of the House. The highest tribute to his excellent qualities of heart and mind is found in the fact that though a typical Orangeman, on whom glimpse of the flutter of the skirt of the Scarlet Lady has the same effect as the waving of a red rag on an infuriate bull, he is on friendliest terms with his Catholic compatriots. To the delight of the House, they fence with each other at question-time, Ballykilbeg



BEATING THE ORANGE DRUM.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LI.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

A DEAD Session fluttered the breast of HOPE. the Chancellor of the Exchequer was doomed to disappointment. When discovery was made that Mr. Villiers, who for years had been in receipt of a Cabinet pension of £2,000 a year, died worth £354,687 15s. 9d., it was assumed that the executors would make haste to repay with compound interest the aggregate of the pension drawn. There had evidently been a mistake somewhere. The pension of ex-Cabinet Ministers is a plan devised towards the middle of the century with the commendable object of preventing statesmen out of office from suffering in their personal estate. Proportionately the emoluments of Ministers who serve the British Crown are pitiful. Mr. Gladstone, who for more than sixty years devoted his time to the service of the country, died leaving a personal fortune amounting to about one-seventh of that bequeathed by Mr. Villiers. Mr. Gladstone never drew the pension of an ex-Cabinet Minister, taking his salary only when in office. At one time he even saved the Exchequer the annual amount of a first-class Ministerial salary by combining the work of two offices for the remuneration of one.

Mr. Gladstone inherited a modest "GRAND personal fortune, and never had CROSS." occasion to make the indispensable declaration that accompanies application for Cabinet pension—that its allotment is necessary in order that the suppliant may maintain the position of an ex-Minister of the Crown. Mr. Disraeli was in other circumstances, and, very properly, availed himself of the privilege of a pension the country cheerfully paid.

Another man of genius whose case the Cabinet pension fund fortuitously fits is Lord Cross. There is a general impression that he is a man of supreme business capacity, whose knowledge of financial affairs in connection with the investment of private property is justly valued in the highest quarter. There is even a dim notion that he is beneficially connected with a flourishing banking institution. This, like much other talk about public men, must be a popular delusion. Lord Cross is a patriot statesman who, having for a brief time enjoyed in succession the emoluments of Home Secretary and Secretary of State for India, has for many years regularly drawn his £2,000, paid quarterly from the pension list.



"A PENSIONER."

When Mr. A MISTAKE SOME- WHERE. Villiers began to draw his pension he, like Lord Cross, must needs have made the statutory declaration that the money was necessary to enable him to maintain a position compatible with his former Ministerial office. That the solemn declaration agreed with his circumstances at the time is beyond the shadow of a doubt. Obviously they must have changed at some later period, or the pensioner would not have been in a position to bequeath to his nephews something over a third of a million sterling. Mr. Arthur Balfour, approached last Session on the subject, privately intimated to the member who placed the question on the paper that, in his opinion, the published statement of Mr. Villiers's personalty did not affect the question of the pension. He had, Mr. Balfour said, been enriched by the bequeathal of the fortune of a lady, but had resolutely declined to benefit by the bequest, now transferred to his heirs.

There is evidently a serious misunderstanding here, either on Mr. Balfour's part or on that of the member with whom he communicated. The lady in question was Miss Mellish, who died at her residence in Great Stanhope Street on the 17th of February, 1880. She left personal estate sworn under £120,000 value. This she bequeathed in trust to pay the income to Mr. Villiers during his life, it passing absolutely on Mr. Villiers's death to another gentleman, named co-executor with him. These yearly payments, accruing only since 1880, would not amount to anything like £354,687, not to mention the fifteen and ninepence.

A PARALLEL CASE. I understand that during the present Session an attempt will be made to enforce a regulation preventing recurrence of this scandal. Some years ago an ex-Liberal Minister, who at a particular date found himself in a position to make the statutory declaration which is an essential preliminary to receiving such pension, came into a fortune. Whilst in his mind was crystallizing the simply honest intention of writing to the Treasury to inform them of his good fortune, and begging that his name might be removed from the pension list, hon. gentlemen seated opposite in the House of Commons, zealous for public economy, began to move in the matter. Questions were with relentless pertinacity addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was speedily able to announce that the pension was stopped.

What is needed is a further regulation that once a year, or at least triennially, recipients of these pensions shall be required to renew their declaration as to the condition of their private resources. Mr. Villiers had been for so long in receipt of a pension granted in recognition of a few years' service at the Poor Law Board, that he came to regard it as a matter of course, forgetting the definite condition upon which it had been allotted. Had he been reminded by some such communication as is here suggested, he would have awakened to a true sense of the situation, and as an honourable man would forthwith have relinquished the pension, possibly even have repaid what he had inadvertently overdrawn.

A ROMANCE OF THE PEERAGE. When the late Lord Barrington, seventh in succession to the Irish Viscounty, was made a peer of the United Kingdom, people asked why. He had long sat as member for that intelligent constituency of Eye, immediately afterwards connected with quite another order of statesman. He never, as far as I remember, took part in debate, and such services as he rendered to the State appeared to be adequately rewarded by his appointment as Vice-Chamberlain of the Queen's household. Nevertheless, Lord Beaconsfield, finding his Government crushed by the General Election of 1880, made haste, before it fell, to make Lord Barrington an English peer.

Members of the House of Commons, ransacking their memories for suggestion of reason, recalled how one night, whilst Dizzy was still with us in the Commons, he, awakening from profound reverie, could not find his eye-glass. He wanted to stick it in his right eye and take his accustomed survey of the House. With a haste and perturbation foreign to his impassive manner, he rooted about in the recesses of his waistcoat, tugged at his shirt-collar, peered on the ground at his feet, had given it up for a bad job, when Lord Barrington, who was sitting near him, quietly put his hand between the Premier's shoulders and brought round the errant glass.

Dizzy, though not demonstrative, never forgot a friend or a favour. So it came about five years later, when the reins of power were slipping out of his fingers, he held them for a moment longer to give Lord Barrington a seat in the House of Lords

and a place on the roll of the English peerage. At least, that was what was said at the time in the private conversation of Lord Barrington's friends.

HERSCHELL'S MAIDEN SPEECH.

The late Lord Herschell made his mark in the House of Commons at the very first opportunity. I have occasion to remember it, for the member for the City of Durham, after he came to the Woolsack, more than once alluded in terms of quite undeserved kindness to an episode connected with the event. When Herschell came into Parliament he was quite unknown outside Bar and Circuit circles. Over a space of a quarter of a



"THE LOST EYE-GLASS."

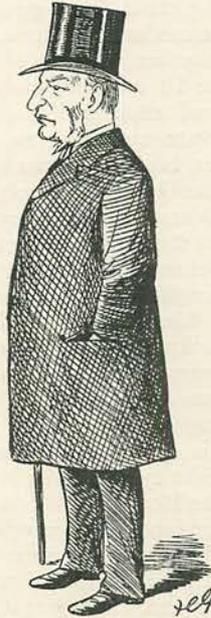
century I well remember how one night there rose from the third bench above the gangway, on the Opposition side, a dark-visaged, self-possessed, deliberately spoken young man, who, making his maiden speech, addressed the House as if he had been born and nurtured on the premises. The topic was the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, the audience small, and not demonstratively appreciative. I was much struck with the new-comer's capacity and promise, and noted them (I think) in the articles "Under the Clock" then commencing in the *World*.

In later years praise and appreciation came full-handed to the Solicitor-General, the Lord Chancellor, the chosen representative of Great Britain in International conferences. Lord Herschell, not given to gushing, more than once said that appreciation coming at that particular time was more useful in its encouragement, more gratefully remembered, than was the din of applause that greeted and sustained his prime.

Herschell did admirably in the House of Commons, steadily working his way through it to the Woolsack. But he was at his best in the House of Lords. The place, its surroundings, and its associations were more in unison with his unemotional, somewhat cold, stately nature and manner. He had not the light touch that delights a jaded House of Commons. He always spoke as if he were seated, wigged and gowned, on the Bench, never varying from judicial manner. In the Lords, whilst the same style was prevalent, there was something in the prevailing atmosphere, and in the relative position of the party to which he belonged and the overwhelming numbers opposed to it, that stirred the depths of his nature. When he stepped aside from the Woolsack to take part in debate,

he spoke with an animation of voice and gesture quite unfamiliar with him in the Commons. Perhaps the associations of the wig and gown with their memories of assize conflict had something to do with the increased animation. However that be, it was strongly marked, and added considerably to the effect of his speech.

As years advanced and honours increased, Herschell's conscientiousness, his shrinking from any step that savoured of a job, grew in predominance. He raised quite a storm by his disinclination to make use of the magisterial Bench as a means of distributing rewards among good Liberals. The same extreme, perhaps morbid, delicacy ruled his conduct in the appointment of judges. There was a time during his Lord Chancellorship when the long-overlooked claim of Mr. Arthur Cohen to a judgeship seemed certain of recognition. Everybody said Cohen would be the new judge. Lord Herschell did not question his capacity or suitability. But Mr. Cohen had sat in the House of Commons for Southwark, and had taken active part in furthering the cause of the Liberal party. Herschell felt conscious of a disposition to recognise party services of that character and lived them down. Someone else who had



LORD HERSCHELL — A SKETCH IN THE LOBBY.



LORD HERSCHELL AS LORD CHANCELLOR.

done nothing for the Liberal party got the judgeship.

"Cohen at least oughtn't to be surprised," said one of the wittiest judges still in ermine. "He would know that he could not expect anything from a Jew but a passover."

I once asked the late Sir William WHIPS Adam, the popular and able AND HATS. Liberal Whip of the 1874 Parliament, why Whips stand or walk about the lobby without their hats on. "I don't know," he answered, with Scottish caution, "unless it be to keep their heads cool. That, you know, is a necessary condition of success in our line of business."

That a Whip should never wear his hat whilst the House is in Session is one of the quaint unwritten laws of Parliament. Its origin, like the birth of Jeames, is "wropt up in a mystery." It probably arose in the case of some hot-blooded, bustling Whip, who found head-gear heating. However it be, the custom has reached the status of an immutable law. It would not be more surprising to see the Speaker sitting bare-headed in the Chair when the Mace is on the table than to find the chief Whips or any one of their colleagues going about his business in the lobby with his hat on.

So intimate is the association of ideas, that when one day last Session Lord Stalbridge looked in and stood for awhile by the door of the lobby with his hat on, old members gasped. It is many years since Lord Stalbridge, then Lord Richard Grosvenor, acted as Whip. So abiding are old associations that it was not without a shock he, after long interval, was observed wearing his hat in his old place on guard by the door, where he had instinctively planted himself.

THE CAMEL OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. The fascination which pertains to the office of Whip is incomprehensible to some minds. It is, at best, a thankless post. If things go right in the division lobby the result is accepted as a matter of course. If they go wrong, woe to the Whip! He is the camel of the House of Commons, doing all the drudgery, taking none of the honour. Moreover, he is not allowed to share the privilege of the camel, whose haughty "don't-know-you" air as it regards mankind must be some recompense for all

the toil and indignity it suffers. A Whip, on the contrary, must always be in beaming good humour. Like Cæsar's wife (according to the version of the Yorkshire mayor), he must be all things to all men.

LORD — There was in an elder Parliament a well-known exception to the rule that enforces equanimity of temper on the Whip. Many members of the present House retain memories of a noble lord, now gathered to his fathers, who was a terror to evil-doers. It was the epoch of all-night sittings, when fathers of families had a yearning desire to go home not later than one o'clock in the morning. Seated on the bench by the lobby door the Whip, who had been up all the previous night, might be forgiven if he dropped asleep. But he slept with one eye and one ear open. The anxious parent, closely watching him and timidly making for the door, never did more than touch its framework before a hand was on his shoulder, and there rattled in his ear observations which seemed quotations from the conversation of our army when in Flanders.

That was an exceptional personal idiosyncrasy, and the energetic remonstrator was not the Chief Whip. He was useful in his way. But his particular method of address had no precedent and has not been imitated.

THE PRIZES OF THE WHIPS' ROOM. The attraction of the Whips' office is certainly not based on pecuniary considerations. The Patronage Secretary has a salary of £2,000 a year, his colleagues, who rank as Junior Lords of the Treasury, receiving half that sum. When their party is out of office, the Whips, with very nearly as much work to do, draw no pay. It is true that the Whips' room is the rarely failing avenue to higher Ministerial office. In two recent cases, that of Mr. Brand and Mr. Peel, it led to the Speaker's Chair and a peerage. Mr. Arnold Morley was made Postmaster-General, Sir. William Dyke became Vice-



ON GUARD—SIR WILLIAM WALROND, CHIEF CONSERVATIVE WHIP.

President of the Council, his colleague, Mr. Rowland Wynn, being made a peer. The present First Commissioner of Works was long time Conservative Whip. The late Colonel Taylor was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The long services of Sir William Adam received niggardly reward by appointment to the Governorship of Madras.

In former times the Chief Government Whip, who still retains the style of Patronage Secretary, had a multitude of good things to give away. Beginning his career fifty years ago, and not having his steps directed towards the Woolsack, the Patronage Secretaryship would have just suited Lord Halsbury. Now the Patronage Secretaryship is, like friendship, "but a name." The Chief Whip has nothing in his wallet for hungry dependents, or for influential constituents—not even a tide-waitership or a country post-mastership. Nevertheless the post of Whip continues to wield potent fascination for young, active, and ambitious members of the House. It is a life of constant, in the main, obscure drudgery, rarely illumined, as it happily was last Session, by the flash of silver cigar caskets and the sheen of golden match-boxes.

The great gilt instrument that rests upon the table of the MACE. House of Commons, when the Speaker is in the Chair, is the third of its race. The first that lives in history has no birth-date. But its disappear-

at spectacle of a symbol, put the Mace in the melting-pot and the proceeds of the transaction in his pocket. However it be, the first Mace was seen in its resting-place on such and such a day and, like ships posted up at Lloyd's, has not since been heard of.

When Cromwell came into power, and Parliamentary proceedings were resumed, he ordered another Mace to be made. This lives in history as the bauble which, later, Cromwell himself ordered to be taken away. His command was literally obeyed. The second Mace was so effectually removed that, like the first, it was never more seen or heard of.

The Mace which now glistens on the table of the House of Commons, and is carried before

the Speaker when he visits the House of Lords, is of considerable antiquity. It was made in 1660, on the restoration of Charles II. It is watched over with infinite care, being through the Session in personal charge of the Serjeant-at-Arms. During the recess it is, as was the wont and usage of traitors in olden times, committed to the Tower, where it is guarded as not the least precious among the jewels of the Crown.

Whilst Lord Peel was yet "GONE TO SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, JAMAICA." mons, he, from information received, was momentarily flushed with hope that Cromwell's Mace had been discovered in Jamaica. Diligent inquiry on the spot blighted this hope. It turned out that there are two Maces in the Colony, but



THE LATE MR. T. E. ELLIS—CHIEF LIBERAL WHIP.



THE MACE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ance is authoritatively recorded. On or about the very day when Charles I. lost his head on the scaffold, the Mace of the House of Commons disappeared. Probably some stern Roundhead, his Puritanic gorge rising

they are comparatively modern, dating from the uninteresting Georgian period. One, like the lamp-posts in the neighbourhood of St. James's Palace, has stamped on its head the initials "G. R." There is the date-mark,

1753-4. The other is stamped with the King's head, and the date-mark 1757-8. Both are silver gilt.

The Speaker's inquiries brought to light the interesting fact that Jamaica at one time possessed a Mace presented to the Colony by Charles II. Doubtless it was ordered at the same time as the one at present in the House of Commons. It cost nearly £80, and was conveyed to Jamaica by Lord Windsor, the first Governor commissioned by Charles II. By an odd coincidence this Mace also disappeared. In 1672 Jamaica suffered one of its not infrequent earthquakes. Parliament House was amongst the many public buildings in Port Royal that were engulfed. It is believed that King Charles's Mace went down with the rest. However it be, like Cromwell's bauble, it has vanished from human ken.

Referring to a recent note
 BAPTISM about a member of the
 BY present House of Com-
 IMMERSION. mons, originally a clergy-
 man of the Church of
 England, who inadvertently united a blushing bride with the best man instead of with the bridegroom, another member writes to remind me of even a worse case of absent-mindedness. The reverend gentleman in this case was George Dyer, an intimate friend of Charles Lamb. Early in his career he did duty as a Baptist minister, his ministration being on the whole not unattended with success. One day, performing the rite of baptism by total immersion, he fell into a train of profound thought, meanwhile holding an old woman under water till she was drowned.

This led to some unpleasantness, and Mr. Dyer retired from the ministry. But he never overcame his proneness to absent-mindedness. One night, on leaving Charles Lamb's hospitable house, he walked straight ahead out of the front door and strode plump into the New River.

THE PRE-
 DICAMENT
 OF A NEW
 PEER.
 Lord Rathmore has many good stories. One, not the worst, is autobiographical. Shortly after he was raised to the peerage he took a trip to the Riviera. The French railway company, desirous to do honour to a distinguished English *confrère*, reserved a carriage for his private use. He made the most of the opportunity, getting a good sleep shortly after leaving Paris on the journey south. At some unknown hour of the night, at some unrecognised station, the

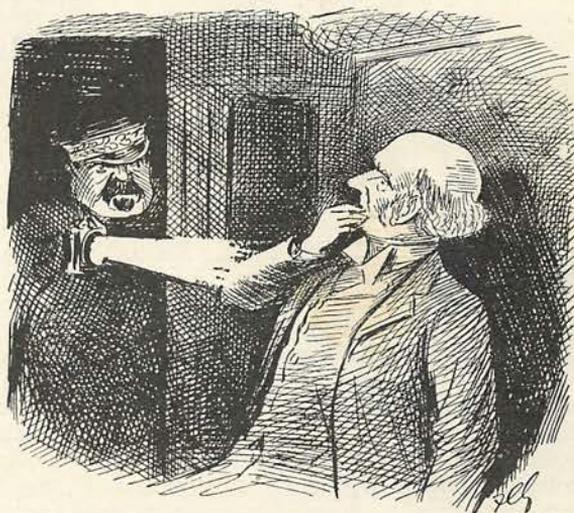
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door of the carriage was suddenly opened. A lantern was flashed upon him, and a voice sharply cried, "*Votre nom ?*"

Lord Rathmore, wakened out of his sleep, looking up in a partly dazed condition, discovered a railway official on his way round for tickets. Lord Rathmore's name was on the paper affixed to the window, marking the compartment as reserved. The official, in performance of his duty, and with that passion for regularizing everything which besets Frenchmen in uniform, merely desired to identify the occupant of the carriage with the person to whose use it was inscribed.

"*Votre nom ?*" he sternly repeated, seeing the passenger hesitate.

In response there sprang to Lord Rathmore's lips the familiar "David Plunket." Happily he remembered in time that he was



"WHAT ON EARTH IS MY NAME?"

no longer David Plunket, but for the life of him, wakened out of his sleep, and thus abruptly challenged, he could not remember what title in the peerage he had selected.

Here was a pickle! Anyone familiar with the arbitrary ways of the French railway official will know what would have happened supposing the passenger had confessed that he really didn't know his own name. Cold sweat bedewed the forehead a coronet had not yet pressed. The new peer began to regret more bitterly than ever that he had left the House of Commons. The interval seemed half an hour. Probably it was only half a minute before recollection of his new name surged back upon him, and he hurriedly but gratefully pronounced it.

From Behind the Speaker's Chair.

LII.

(VIEWED BY HENRY W. LUCY.)

THE Lobby does not yet look "TOM" itself, lacking the cheery, bustling presence of poor Tom Ellis. It is a significant peculiarity, shared with very few members, that the late Liberal Whip was always spoken of by the diminutive of his Christian name. Another Whip, also like Lydias and Tom Ellis, dead ere his prime, won the distinction. Through the angriest days of Mr. Parnell's ruthless campaign against the dignity of Parliament and the stability of its ancient institutions, his cheery, warm-hearted, mirth-loving Whip was always "Dick" Power. To-day we happily still have with us Sir Robert Threshie Reid, Q.C., sometime Solicitor-General, later Attorney-General, in the House of Commons always "Bob" Reid. These two instances show the kind of man the House delights to honour by this rare mark of friendly feeling.

A DARING EXPERIMENT. It was a bold stroke on the part of Lord Rosebery, at the time Prime Minister, to promote the member for Merionethshire to the post of Chief Ministerial Whip on the submergence of Mr. Marjoribanks in the House of Lords. With Liberals only less exclusively than with the Conservative party, it has, from time immemorial, been the custom to appoint as Chief Whip a scion of the peerage, or a commoner sanctified by connection with an old county family. Tom Ellis had neither call to the high position. His father was a tenant farmer. He himself was a Welsh member, having neither social standing nor pecuniary resources. To make such a man what is still known by the ancient style of Patronage Secretary was a bold experiment. That even at the outset it was not resented by the party is a striking tribute to Tom Ellis's character.

It would not be true to say that, in private conversation, heads were not shaken, and that tongues did not wag apprehension that the thing would never do. The new Whip speedily lived down these not unnatural and scarcely ill-natured doubts. He had a sweet

serenity of temper impervious to pin-pricks, a sunny nature before which spite thawed. It was an immense lift for a young, obscure Welsh member at a bound to be made the confidant of Cabinet Ministers, the trusted agent and instrument of the most powerful governing body in the world. It did not even begin to spoil him. There was no difference between Tom Ellis, member for Merionethshire, and Tom Ellis, Chief Ministerial Whip, except perhaps that the latter was more diffident in his demeanour, a shade nearer being deferential in his intercourse with fellow-members. His most marked failing was his extreme modesty, a unique default in a Parliamentary Whip. It did not, however, cover weakness of will or



TOM ELLIS.

hesitancy when he heard the call of duty. He was genuinely sorry if any particular course for the adoption or the carrying out of which he was responsible hurt anybody's feelings, or did not fully accord with one's material interests. If a thing had to be done, it was got through, smilingly, gently, but firmly.

Tom Ellis was so unassuming in manner, so persistently deprecatory of his own claims to thanks or approval, that his great capacity was often underestimated. Alike in the House of Commons and in Parliament Street we have time now to sum it up at its real value.

LORD SALISBURY'S MEMORY. The Prime Minister rarely takes notes as a preliminary to taking part in a debate. Among many instances of this habit I well remember his speech on the second reading of the Home Rule Bill in the Session of 1893. He sat out the course of long and, on the first night, dreary speaking in his familiar attitude, with head bowed, legs crossed, the right one persistently shaken in fashion tending to drive mad neighbours of nervous habit. He did not as he listened take a single note. When at ten o'clock on the second night of the debate he stood at the table, he laid upon it a square of paper

about the size of an ordinary envelope. This presumably contained the notes of his speech brought down from his study. If so, they were almost entirely ignored. He went steadily on, his speech a stately river of perfectly-turned phrases. He omitted no point in the argument of speakers in favour of the Bill, and more than once quoted them textually.

That, a by no means infrequent occurrence, is the chiefest marvel. Debaters most chary of note-taking invariably write down the very words of an earlier speaker when they intend to cite them in support of their argument. A sentence that strikes Lord Salisbury is burnt in upon his memory. When the proper moment comes he quotes it without lapsing into paraphrase.

A colleague of the Premier's tells me he once spoke to him admiringly of this wonderful gift. Lord Salisbury explained that he adopted the habit from necessity rather than from choice. He felt hopelessly hampered with written notes, often finding difficulty in reading them. Feeling the necessity of mastering the precise turns of particular phrases as they dropped from the lips of a debater, he gives himself up to the task, and rarely finds himself at fault.

Mr. Arthur Balfour in lesser degree shares his uncle's gift of precise memory. When, as happened this Session, he has to expound an intricate measure like the London Government Bill, he provides himself with sheafs of notes, and his speech suffers in perspicacity accordingly. That laboriously prepared effort was his one failure of the Session. As a rule he is exceedingly frugal in the matter of note-taking. More frequently than

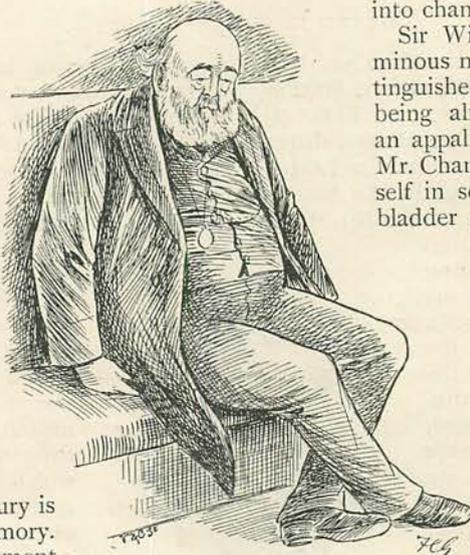
otherwise he speaks without the assistance of notes. Like Mr. Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt, and all Parliamentary debaters of the first rank, he is at his best when, suddenly called upon, he plunges into chance debate.

Sir William Harcourt is a voluminous note-taker, his big, as distinguished from his great, speeches being almost entirely read from an appalling pile of manuscript. Mr. Chamberlain rarely trusts himself in sea of debate without the bladder of notes. But they are not extended. A sheet of note-paper usually serves for their setting forth.

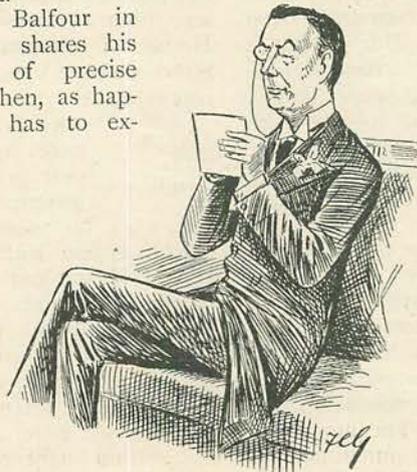
The new
LORD Viceroy of
MAYO. India was-
more fortunate

in the attitude of public opinion towards his appointment than was a predecessor nominated exactly thirty years earlier. When Mr. Disraeli

made Lord Mayo Governor-General of India, the announcement was hailed with a storm of opprobrium from newspapers not marshalled solely on the Opposition side. The Viceroy-designate was chiefly known to the House of Commons and the public by a once-famous, now forgotten, speech, delivered in the spring of 1868. John Francis Maguire, forerunner of the Parnellite organization, submitted a series of resolutions on the condition of Ireland. In the course of his speech he dwelt upon the evil effects wrought to his country by the existence of the Irish Church. That was the burning question of the hour. A month later, Mr. Gladstone's Resolution decreeing the disestablishment of the Church was carried in the teeth of the Ministry by a large majority. It was known that the pending General Election would turn upon the issue. Lord Mayo, at the time Irish Secretary, was put up to answer Mr. Maguire.



"SITTING OUT A DEBATE."



"MR. CHAMBERLAIN TAKES A NOTE."

There are some (exceedingly few) members of the present House who recall the speech and the scene. For four hours the Irish Secretary floundered along. Just as he seemed to be collapsing from physical exhaustion, shared by his audience, he pulled himself together and spluttered out a sentence that instantly agitated the House. Mr. Maguire had denounced the Church Establishment as a scandalous and monstrous anomaly. The Irish Secretary, hinting at a scheme for making all religious denominations in Ireland happy without sacrificing the Established Church, talked about "levelling up, not levelling down."

The phrase was instantly recognised as coming from the mint of the Mystery Monger sitting with bowed head and folded arms on the Treasury Bench. What did it mean? Was Dizzy going to dish Gladstone by dealing with the Irish Church question before the enemy got the chance? No one off the Treasury Bench ever knew. Some day the mystery may be unravelled. Up to this time Lord Mayo fills the position of

Him who left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold.

On the last day of July in the same year Parliament was dissolved, and within a week it was whispered that Lord Mayo was to be the new Governor-General of India. Exile seemed a just punishment for a four hours' speech murmured before a hapless House of Commons. But there was a general impression that this kind of exile was, in the circumstances, too splendid.

One of Lord Mayo's intimate friends who saw him off on "MANY A SLIP." his journey to India tells me a curious incident illustrative of the situation. Expressing hope of some time looking in to see the Viceroy at Calcutta, or Simla, Lord Mayo said: "You may see me again much sooner than that. I should not be a bit surprised if, when I get to Suez, I find a telegram recalling me."

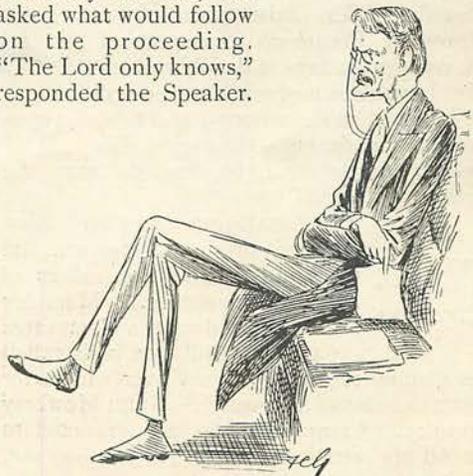
Since his appointment, and pending his departure, Mr. Gladstone had been returned by a majority that placed him in a position of autocratic supremacy. There was, unquestionably, something out of the way in the haste with which the fallen Government had filled up the greatest prize at their disposal. There was at the time no question of the possibility of Lord Derby's Administration being reinstated. As my friend (a Conservative member of the last Parliament elected under the Reform Bill of 1832) put it, "Defeated about twice a week in the

House of Commons, going to certain doom in the country, Dizzy pitchforked Mayo on to the Viceregal throne." It would have been a strong course to recall him, but the circumstances were unprecedented. Certainly Lord Mayo did not feel safe till he had passed Suez, going forward on a journey which, three years later, the assassin's knife ended on the Andaman Islands. Meanwhile, "Dizzy's dark horse" had come in the first flight in the race for enduring fame among Indian Viceroy.

In 1816 Sir Robert Peel, then Chief Secretary, wrote: "I believe MANY DAYS. an honest despotic government would be by far the fittest government for Ireland." Sixteen years later Lord Althorpe, another statesman not prone to form a rash opinion, wrote to Lord Grey: "If I had my way I would establish a dictatorship in Ireland."

The Irish members complain that what was refused to Peel, to Althorpe, and to a long list of statesmen directly concerned for the government of Ireland has been granted to so mild a mannered man as Mr. Gerald Balfour. His appearance is certainly out of keeping with the part. But, as the Irish members found one Friday night this Session, when Mr. Davitt brought up the case of distress in Ireland, within the Chief Secretary's fragile frame, behind his almost maidenly reserve, glow embers of a fire that can, upon occasion, be fanned into furious flame.

An ancient House of Commons' PEERS AND ELECTIONS. tradition tells how the Speaker of the day, having solemnly threatened a member that he would "name him" if he did not refrain from disorderly conduct, was asked what would follow on the proceeding. "The Lord only knows," responded the Speaker.



"THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S FRAGILE FRAME."

Early in the present Session there came to the front two other examples of consecrated cryptic doom. At the opening of every Session the Speaker, amid a buzz of conversation among reunited members, reads a series of Standing Orders. One forbids any peer of Parliament to concern himself in the election of members to the House of Commons. For generations this formula has passed unchallenged. The peers have been solemnly warned off, have received the injunction in submissive silence, and (some of them) have taken the earliest opportunity of disregarding it.

It is a frailty of the human mind that repetition blunts its power of discrimination. Hearing this Order read Session after Session, old members grow so accustomed to the rhythm of its sentences that their purport passes unheeded. Young members make no move, not because they lack presumption, but because they believe that what has been so long endured must necessarily be right.

It needed a man of the mental and physical youth of Mr. James Lowther to put his finger on this anomaly. This Session, as in one or two of its predecessors, he has moved to expunge the Standing Order from the catalogue. He has shown, and no one has disputed the fact, that in spite of its pompous assumption of authority the rule is absolutely impotent. If a peer pleases to violate the ordinance the House of Commons has absolutely no power to enforce it. With an ordinary business assembly that would suffice to make an end of the absurdity. The conservatism of the House of Commons in respect of its own procedure is deeply rooted. Mr. Lowther's motion was rejected by a considerable majority, and next Session, as through the ages, this *brutum fulmen* will be hurled from the Speaker's Chair.

DOG BERRY AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS' WATCH.

The analogous anomaly that cropped up in debate was the position of truant members of Select Committees. Members are nominated to the Committee on a private Bill by a body called the Committee of Selection, over which, for just a quarter of a century, Sir John Mowbray presided. Committee-men are expected to attend the various sittings. If they do not, the Chairman reports the delinquents to the

House, and a formal motion is made, that the errant member "do attend the said Committee at half-past eleven to-morrow."

That is plain sailing. "You shall comprehend all vagrom men," said Dogberry, in his charge to the watch. "You are to bid any man stand in the Prince's name." "How if he will not stand?" the shrewd watchman inquired. That is a question that occurs to the mind in connection with the rules governing the attendance of members on private Committees. The House of Commons has met the difficulty by unconsciously adopting Dogberry's ruling. "Why, then," the sublime City officer answered to the watchman's poser, "take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God you are rid of a knave."

Of late Sessions the House, sensible of the false position it was placed in by this procedure, has varied it. Instead of the formal injunction that used to appear on the votes commanding the attendance of the peccant member, the report is simply ordered to lie on the Table, and thus the House is thankfully rid of a knave.

A very proper distinction in this matter is made between the sacred persons of members of the House and mere citizens. It sometimes happens that a busy man summoned to give evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons fails to obey the summons.

Then doth the thunder roll and the lightning flash. The Chairman hurries off to tell the shameful story to the shocked House. A peremptory order is issued for the attendance of the recalcitrant witness, and the Serjeant-at-Arms is instructed to see that it be obeyed. A communication by post, or by messenger if the witness reside within the Metropolitan area, usually brings him up to the scratch at the appointed place and hour. If he pushes resistance to extreme the Serjeant-at-Arms will go and fetch him *vi et armis*. He will be brought to the Bar of the House and committed to the Clock Tower till purged of his contumacy.



"MENTAL AND PHYSICAL YOUTH"—MR. JAMES LOWTHER

DEMA-GOGUES IN THE HOUSE DR. KENEALY.

In "Mr. Gregory's Letter Box," being the correspondence of the Right Hon. Wm. Gregory from 1813 to 1835, he during the greater part of that time being Under Secretary for Ireland, there is quoted a striking sentence from Canning. "I have never," he said, "seen a demagogue who did not shrink to his proper dimensions after six months of Parliamentary life."

This acute observation remains as true to-day as it was in the earlier Parliaments Canning adorned and occasionally dominated. Two modern instances suffice to prove the case. When, in 1875, Dr. Kenealy entered the House, triumphantly returned by the men of Stoke, he was an undoubted power in the land. I remember Mr. Adam, then Opposition Whip, showing me an appalling list of constituencies, some held by Liberals, others by Conservatives, common in the peculiarity that if a vacancy occurred the next day Kenealy could return his nominee. He was conscious of his power, and meant to make the House of Commons feel its influence. The crowded benches that attended his utterances furnished flattering testimony to his power and the interest excited by his personality.

DEWDROPS ON THE LION'S MANE.

On the occasion of his first appearance, the House was filled as it had not been since critical divisions on the Irish Land Bill, or the Irish Church Bill, of the preceding Parliament. Amongst the spectators from the galleries over the clock were the Prince of Wales, Prince Christian, and the ex-King of Naples, at the time a visitor to London. Mr. Evelyn Ashley, at the safe distance of the Isle of Wight, had been saying something about Kenealy,



"THE SERJEANT-AT-ARMS WILL GO AND FETCH HIM."

who made it a question of privilege. In this speech was set that gem of oratory remembered long after the rest is forgotten. "Of one thing I am certain," said Kenealy, in deep chest-notes, wagging his head and his forefinger, as through many days of the

Tichborne trial they had been wagged at hostile witnesses and an unsympathetic judge, "that the calumnious reflections thrown on my character will recoil on their authors. As for me, I shake them off as the lion shakes the dewdrops from his mane."

Before his first Session closed, Kenealy flickered out like a damp torch. He tried again and again to obtain a footing in the House. Without being

rudely repelled he was set back, and long before the Parliament ran its course he became a nonentity.

MR. KEIR HARDIE.

Mr. Keir Hardie, a man on an infinitely lower plane than Kenealy, who, after all, was a consummate scholar and displayed occasional flashes of genius, is a later illustration of the truth of Canning's axiom. He came in in 1892 as member for West Ham, numbered among the narrow majority of

forty that placed Mr. Gladstone in precarious power. From the first he made it clear that he was no hack—like Mr. Burt, for example—but would let bloated patricians know that the working man is their master. To that end he wore the Cap of Liberty, of somewhat dingy, weather-worn cloth. Also he sported a short jacket, a pair of trousers frayed at the heel, a flannel shirt of dubious colour, and a shock of uncombed hair. On the day of the opening of Parliament he drove up to Westminster in a break, accompanied by a brass band. His first check was received at the hands of the police, who refused to allow the



"ENTER MR. KEIR HARDIE."

musical party to drive into Palace Yard. So the new member was fain to walk.

His appearance on the scene kindled keen anticipation in the breast of Lord Randolph Churchill, who saw in him a dangerous element in the Ministerial majority. The member for West Ham did his best to justify that expectation. At the outset the House listened to him with its inbred courtesy and habitual desire to allow every member, however personally inconsiderable, full freedom of speech. It soon found out that Mr. Keir Hardie was as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. His principal effort to justify his appearance on the Parliamentary stage was a motion made in his second Session to discuss the widespread destitution among members of the working classes. He rose after questions, claiming to have the matter discussed as one of urgent public importance. When the Speaker asked if he were supported by the statutory number of forty, only thirty-six rose. The bulk of members, not unmindful of the prevalent condition of the working man or unwilling to help him, did not care to march under Mr. Keir Hardie's flag. His six months of probation were over, and he had shrunk to his proper dimensions.

When the dissolution came he, almost unobserved, sank below the Parliamentary horizon.

The baths recently added to the luxuries of the House of Commons have been so much appreciated, that there is prospect of necessity for extension. The accommodation is certainly poverty-stricken, compared with that at the

debate there is a great run on the bath-room, it being at Washington the legislative habit to take a bath preliminary to delivery of an oration.

In addition to ordinary hot and cold baths there is a Russian steam bath. I never saw



"A RUSSIAN BATH IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS."

the like in England. The operation commences in a small, windowless room, which has for sole furniture a wooden bench, coils of steam-pipes garlanding the walls. When the door is shut and the steam turned on the hon. member gasps in a temperature as hot as he is likely to experience in this stage of existence. When he is parboiled he goes through a cooling process, beginning with a tub of hot water and on through a succession, the temperature gradually decreasing.

This process occupies an hour and a half, and is obviously not a luxury to be indulged in when an important division is expected. It is recommended as admirable for rheumatic cases, infallible for a cold. It might be tried in the House of Commons should it be decided to extend the bathing accommodation.



"EXIT MR. KEIR HARDIE."

disposal of denizens of the Capitol at Washington. The baths that serve America's legislators are luxuriously fitted below the basement, approach being gained by a service of lifts. Each marble tank is set in a roomy chamber, furnished with every appliance of the dressing-room. During the progress of an important