

THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

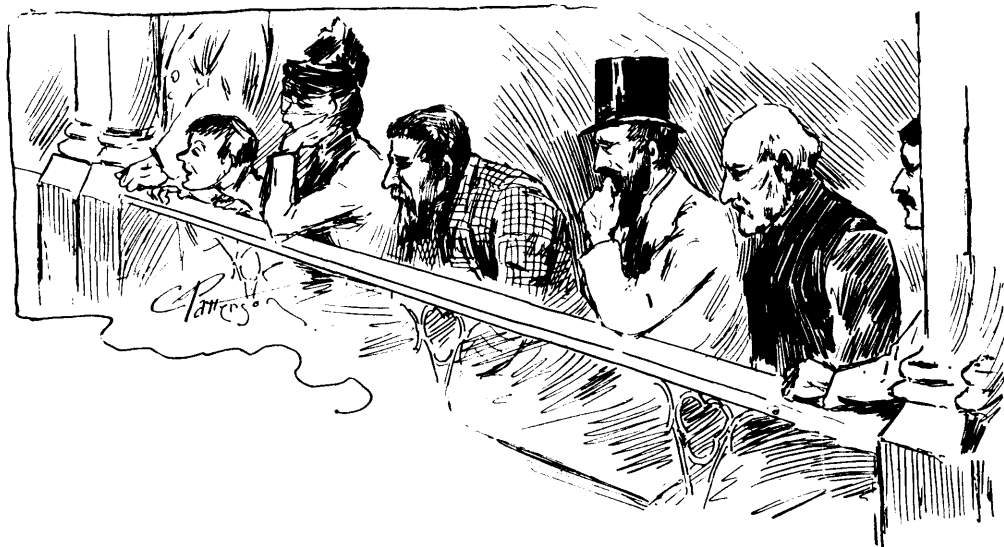
(With Sketches by our Special Artist)

The formal opening of Parliament is, of course, the event of the year at Ottawa; and, as persons from every section of the Dominion participate, it follows that the all-engrossing interest aroused at the capital is more or less faintly reflected even in the most remote of the eastern or western constituencies. No other event of the year is attended with so much of pomp and pageantry. To a lover of severe simplicity this certainly would not be a recommendation, but there is never a dearth of spectators on that score at Ottawa. The crush of frantic and sometimes not too well-mannered sight-seers is one of the features of the day. People who on all other days of the year are sedate and philosophical, on that day are found pushing, squeezing, groaning, laughing and perspiring in the midst of that surging mass that will wait thus for hours outside the barred doorway to the galleries of the Senate Chamber, and when it is opened will pour up the inner stairway and into the galleries until there is not an inch of standing room to be found on any of the four sides.

leaf at Ottawa, and the lawn mowers have already been out on the park and on Parliament Hill. Wednesday and Thursday of last week were charming days, with brilliant sunshine, and the city was free to rejoice and be glad. The hotels were crowded with visitors, and there was on every hand an unwonted stir and excitement.

The proceedings on Wednesday were merely preliminary to the grand exhibition on the day following. Yet they were not devoid of interest. The members of the new House of Commons met in their chamber at noon to take the oath of allegiance and sign the roll. Both Protestant and Douay bibles were at hand, and it is related that in the confusion a well known advocate of equal rights was sworn on the bible with a silver cross inlaid on its cover, while several well known Roman Catholic gentlemen took the oath on the other version. The only dramatic incident of the ceremony was furnished by the venerable premier, Sir John Macdonald, and his son, Mr. Hugh J. Macdonald, of Winnipeg,

famous bow. It was a remarkable bow that he made on Wednesday. Having been despatched to the Senate to announce to the waiting Commoners that they were being waited for in the red chamber, he entered and bowed. As there was as yet no Speaker he could not bow to that official, and to bow to Dr. Bourinot, the Clerk of the Commons, who presided pending the choice of a Speaker, would be contrary to precedent, an act unworthy a Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, and a gross insult to the house. So the Gentleman Usher bowed to everybody. Beginning at the extreme right he brought the upper portion of his body to a horizontal position and in a series of undulating bows carried it around to the extreme left, his toes meanwhile pointing straight toward the Speaker. It was such a bow as a Boneless Wonder might be expected to make, and the hero of the



A GALLERY GROUP.

These remarks do not, of course, apply to the favoured ones whom kind providence, in the person of some one or other of the powers that be, provides with a decorous entrance by a private door. But even of the crowd that fills the galleries admission is by ticket only, for otherwise there would probably be eminently respectable people climbing the stately pillars, hanging by their toes over the rail of the gallery and occupying various other coigns of vantage, from whence to



THE YOUNGEST MEMBER.

survey the proceedings in the chamber below, that are not available under the guard and ticket system.

The lateness of the opening of Parliament this year, and the beautiful weather that prevailed, lent an unusual attraction and brilliance to the affair. The buds are bursting into

who were sworn and signed the roll together. It is the young man's first parliament, and is at least nearing the old man's last. To the followers, at least, of the "old leader," the incident was one of almost pathetic interest. There was a great deal of congratulation and good natured banter while the oath taking went on, both sides of the House appearing to be in cheerful fighting trim. To the Liberals belongs the honour of having the tallest and heaviest man in the house, D. C. Fraser, M.P. for Guysboro, N.S., the possessor of a clear head as well as a giant frame, and an ardent advocate of the interests of his native province. It is believed that Dr. Legere, M.P. for Kent, N.B., is the youngest man in the house. He sits on the Conservative side, and is disposed to resent the claims of some elderly-looking followers who say they are younger than he. Dr. Legere is about 25 years of age, and is a fine representative of the Acadian race. Two honourable members, who had had the misfortune each to break a leg while crushing the hopes of their opponents in the recent campaign, entered the chamber on crutches. As was fitting, one sits on the Liberal and the other on the Conservative side. There was a goodly sprinkling of new faces in the House and some of the old timers were not to be seen. The leader of the government and Hon. Mr. Laurier had a hearty shake hands and a joke together, and their respective followers were not less cordial on the first day, however much of fierce invective they may hurl across the floors of the house at each other during the next few months. The swearing in of members was soon accomplished, and the next business of the Commons was the election of a speaker. According to usage, however, they must first be called to the Senate Chamber and receive the mandate of that venerable body. It is an amusing little farce, if a useless one, and puts everybody in good humour. The members, however, had lunch before going on with the performance on Wednesday. They were summoned to the bar of the Senate about two o'clock, the Senators having previously installed their new Speaker, Hon. Mr. Lacoste, and disposed of certain other preliminaries. It is in connection with this summons that the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod makes his



THE TALLEST AND HEAVIEST MEMBER.

occasion was greeted with loud cheers of good natured derision by the honourable members and by the occupants of the galleries. The Commoners, led by Dr. Bourinot, marched to the Senate Chamber, where the Deputy Governor, Sir William Ritchie, in the scarlet and ermine of the supreme court, intimated, in parliamentary phrase, of course, that if they were good and went back and elected a Speaker they might come in again next day (and stand outside the bar) while the speech was being read by the Governor-General. They went back, and Mr. Peter White, M.P. for North Kennew, proposed by the Premier, seconded by Sir Hector Langevin, was unanimously elected Speaker of the House. Sir John's remarks were brief in proposing Mr. White for the Speakership, and the only other speaker to the question was Hon. Mr. Laurier, who, while felicitously complimenting the nominee of the government, did not lose the opportunity to let fly a shaft or two at the enemy, for which he was loudly cheered by his followers. Sir John and Sir Hector