

FAMILIAR OUTLINES.



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SUSANNAH AT OTTAWA.

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IT'S getting to be pretty hot weather for politics, especially when politicians is mostly busy in stirring up strife, which they are at present. The Grit folks appear to be holding on to them estimates so's to git in all their talking, and praying hard about the Ontario elections on the quiet, and the Tories are hurrying up to get their prospective expenses passed. Both of them are perspiring hard and blaming the other side for keeping the House sitting in this weather.

It's the curiousest thing to me how your common sense 'll fool you in politics. You would think they'd pick out a real smart farmer with a head for figgers and make him Minister of Agriculture and let him run that farm that seems to have been a-groping after experience quite a spell now. Well, the funny thing is, he aint a farmer—he's a lawyer, and that's where your common sense would be out. Then the Minister of Militia, he's a lawyer, too—no colonel nor major nor nothing—just a lawyer, book-larnt in fighting matters. The Public Works man he is a lawyer too, not a practical man come away from work a spell to advise the Cabinet about things he knows of right in his own fingers and head. It seems as if they got beckoned to top places for some reason that don't show up in daylight.

Another curious thing is, who the members talk at. Some of 'em are talking to their electors at home, and ramble on in a dreamy, humble, grateful and comfeting sort of way. Some talks to Hansard and take dreadful good care to face that way, and speak out, and be careful what words they use and where they put their stops. Some talk to the Press Gallery, and say catchy things so's to get what fame and dis fame comes out of getting into print. Some talk to the galleries above, where the admiring

women and envious men critters sit and listen. Some of 'em seem to be getting mad at Mr. Speaker, and some talk to their own little circle, waving their arms around so's to make 'em know they're all meant. It's all dreadful fascinating, and the queer thing is that you might sit there and wait for something funny to happen till you were dead tired and as soon as you go out, it'll happen. The night you go home early they vote, and the night you come late they vote about half-past eight.

Seeing a vote is a good deal of fun. Mr. Speaker he says something, kinder smiling, and the members yell "question" several times. Then he says something more, and they mob him with roars of "carried" and "no." He seems to lose his patience with 'em for being so disagreeing and says out loud and firm "Call in the members!" Then all over that whole place there's a jingle-jangle of bells. They ring on continual for what seems longer the nearer you are to them. When the members get in their places, Mr. Rouleau counts them. He's one of the men that wear gowns and sit in arm chairs by the table. He's indispensable to the House, but it puzzles me worse than 'rithmetic. I can't never tell which he's at till he's got most done. Then if it's English, I've generally made out a landmark or two. But this voting business—it's queer as can be. The men stand up first and get called out afterwards, which is a pretty mixy way. Some of 'em stand right up as if they were voting for their rights. Sometimes they act kinder shamed, like 's ef they'd said "I'm follering, but 'taint my choice." Once in a while a man forgets and jumps up quick, sometimes he creeps up, looking round to see who he's voting with, other times he jerks up, and the lazy ones just lift their hats to Mr. Rouleau, who calls 'em out just as impartial as ef they stood right up proper.

The other day there was a feeling of something happening in the House. The members were mostly in their seats, the Press Gallery was packed, and the other galleries were pretty well took up. The Seargeant-at-Arms was fussing around, and the assistant-seargeant was there, white gloves and all, and he was minding two men that he'd been sent to fetch. There they were outside the brass bar which seems to be a comp'ny fixing, seeing it aint there regular. Seems they'd been doing as they'd a mind to, stead of coming up and witnessing for some of the committees, and this being drug before the House was to teach 'em not to trifle with anything so high and mighty as the Parliament.

Sir John Thompson asked Mr. Speaker to ask one of 'em a question. He asked it in English, Mr. Rouleau did it into French. The man answered in French, and the French was made over into English. This went on for some time, seeing there was two of 'em. It was pretty tiresome, but it



FISH BAWLS.