

## LIFE IN PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

AS long as Parliament is in session our capital city is full of bustle and excitement. Parliament Hill is the great centre of life. Here excellent opportunities are afforded to study man in his many different degrees of accomplishment. This is true, more especially, in the case of the members of Parliament. We meet with almost every type, from the intellectual Nova Scotian to the rough, illiterate Frenchmen of the back counties in Quebec province. On the occasion of the last Dominion elections there was a number of members elected who had never been in Parliament House. Some of these were clever enough to conceal their ignorance of the plan of the House by not venturing into it unless accompanied by some veteran member or employee. Others, anxious to familiarize themselves with their new quarters, stalked right in and soon became lost in the winding corridors of the Senate and Commons. Hither and thither they wandered in their pitiable attempts to find their way out. One poor old farmer, who wore a slouched hat and coarse boots, strayed about for a whole forenoon and was finally rescued by a page, who found him in the basement of the Senate, nearly one hundred yards from the main entrance.

The Commons Chamber is the scene of many amusing incidents. During the summer of 1891, a peculiar character, whom all called Abel, made himself familiar with the employees of the Commons. Abel was quite rational on all subjects except one. He believed himself to be the only Canadian qualified to succeed Sir John MacDonald. The clerks and messengers of the House, took advantage of Abel's hallucination and made him the instrument of a practical joke on the members. One quiet Saturday they ran an election among themselves, the result of which was his election to fill the vacancy caused by Sir John's death. After congratulating him on his victory, they informed him that he must now take his seat in the House when a great speech would be expected from him. Abel believed that he was really raised to the premiership, and was delighted beyond measure. As the House did not sit on that day the doorkeepers were off duty and he passed quietly into the Chamber. Standing at the desk of Sir John MacDonald, he began a spirited address in which he referred to his recent honor, "an honor which would have been his long ago but for the lack of foresight on the part of the Canadian people." Immediately the eyes of a score or more of astonished members, who sat at their desks writing letters, were turned towards him. Soon the chief of the pages appeared on the scene and hurried poor Abel away. A score of grunts followed and all was quiet once more.