

## THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS.

BY THE EDITOR.

THE British Houses of Parliament, with their magnificent clock tower from which Big Ben booms the hours, are colossal and imposing, especially when viewed from the river on the bank of which they have been erected. The buildings cover eight acres, and consist of 1,100 rooms, one hundred staircases, and eleven courts.

One of the finest chambers in the whole pile is the famous Westminster Hall, the history of which would furnish many stirring incidents. Here several trials have taken place, full of romance, pathos, and tragedy. Here Charles I. received his death sentence. There are other halls and corridors, with unusually fine frescoes, and adorned with pictures, through which the visitor has to pass before reaching the House of Commons. To obtain admission a ticket from some member is necessary. I obtained mine from Hon. Edward Blake, who is always glad to extend any courtesies to Canadians. After climbing a number of staircases, and following a winding passage where the ticket has to be shown to officers a number of times, we come at last to the gallery of the House.

The Chamber appears quite small. Apparently it is not so large as our House of Commons at Ottawa. There are 600 members, and only seats for 400, so that on special occasions there is a great rush, with the result that one-third of the members are crowded out altogether. The galleries are well arranged for seeing and hearing, but there seems to be a special grudge against the fair sex, for all the best seats are assigned to visitors of the male persuasion, while the ladies are relegated to a small gallery up near the ceiling, enclosed with a wire netting like a prison cage. The occupants can neither see nor hear very much. The reason for this ungallant treatment of the ladies I have never heard explained, but possibly the legislators desire to be free from the distracting influences of showy millinery and sweet smiles.

In a heavy oaken box with gorgeous roof, at the upper end of the main aisle, sits the Speaker, with an enormous wig of wool on his head, while immediately in front of him there are three functionaries in gowns and wigs, who must be of some importance judging from their dignified air. The Conservatives occupy long, leather cushioned rows of seats to the right of the Speaker, while the Liberals are accommodated opposite. Most of the members keep their hats on, and in many instances their hands in their pockets. It is a very curious thing about the Englishman that he will not take off his hat if he can help it.

The business begins with prayers, read by the Chaplain standing at the table of the House, next to the Speaker who gives the responses, and does not ascend

his Chair till after the short service. The number of members present is usually small.

The average speaking ability of the members in the House of Commons, or in the House of Lords either, is not very high. If you go expecting a great display of oratory you will be woefully disappointed. You are liable to be treated to something like this: "Mr. Speaker, this is a question—ah, that should be—ah—ah—considered with—ahem, a good deal of—ah—ah, care. It is not—ahem, a matter to be—ah, ah, hastily decided upon," etc.

The subjects of discussion, during my visit, were of the most trivial character. The members were talking about roads, bridges, drains, and other matters which usually form the business of a County Council with us. At times, however, questions of the most stupendous importance to the British Empire are here considered and settled, and speeches are

favorite resort for members and their friends, where tea parties and receptions are frequently held.

## EASTER JOY.

BY REV. R. J. ELLIOTT.

EASTER-TIME is here again. We give it a cordial welcome. It is time's great bell ringing out in clear full tones joy to the whole world of men, commemorating the resurrection of our Lord. The beautiful picture on the title page of this number represents Mary in tears at the door of the empty sepulchre. Everywhere humanity is in touch with her, and meditating upon the death of the Christ stands at the grave weeping. Easter wipes away our tears and brings rejoicing. "Woman, why weepest thou?" the angel asks. Hear her answer! "I weep because they have taken away my



THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, LONDON, ENG.

made that command widespread interest and attention. It was not my fortune to hear or see any of the leaders on either side of the house, but it was an experience worth something to spend an hour or two in the room in which John Bright and Gladstone used to speak.

No applause, by clapping of hands, is permitted, and there are no desks to pound. The only cheering allowed consists of the words "hear, hear." Sometimes when a couple of hundred members shout "hear, hear," at the same time, there is quite a noisy demonstration.

The Parliamentary Library has five compartments, all opening into one another, each of which contains a separate branch of literature. It is considered a very excellent collection of books.

The Committee Rooms are in the upper story, and overlook the river, commanding a very fine view. They are well furnished and convenient.

What is known as "The Terrace" is a

Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." Hark! from another comes the same question. But, she has just given answer. Are they mocking her? Nay. Jesus, the risen One, speaks; He calls her by name; she in rapture addresses Him as "Master," and at His bidding becomes the first messenger of His resurrection to men. She now knows that the tomb is the gateway to life, tears the path to richer joys, and that pangs are factors in the eternal weight of glory. O glad and honored Mary!

"He is risen." Words of comfort, words of hope, inspiring a living faith in Him, "who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification." True Easter joy comes through knowing that we are risen with Him, and that "death hath no more dominion." Sin hinders, interrupts, counteracts, but the power that raised Jesus from the dead works in us and gives the mastery. This high tide period of the Christian year brings not only joy, but a conscious-