

Relations of Ottawa to Parliament.

THE Capital of the Dominion bears peculiar and intimate relations to Parliament as the host. Senators and Members are essentially the guests of Ottawa. They come here thousands of miles, in many instances, to put in an enforced residence of several months duration. Many of them live at hotels, some in boarding houses, and others take rooms and, practically, live in the Houses of Parliament. In these Houses are dining rooms, barber shops, bath rooms and working apartments. There are the reference library, post office, reading rooms, telegraph offices and other conveniences.

To say that ordinary municipal rules applicable to the dispensing of liquor, or the hours for keeping open a barber shop should apply to those Houses of Parliament would be manifestly absurd. Yet on Sunday last two city detectives were despatched, presumably by order of the new chief of police, to visit the House of Commons basement and spy around. They found no bar in existence, but discovered one man in the barber shop. They extorted an admission from him that he had shaved one man who was not "a member" and ordered him to appear at the police court. How the civic Dogberry discovered that it was lawful to shave "a member" and unlawful to shave attaches of the House requires explanation. How about members of the Press Gallery whose duties compel even longer hours within the build-

ing than members of the House, and who are under the rules of the Sergeant-at-Arms, permitted the same privileges downstairs as are members of the House? How about the officers of the House and the official debates reporters, and the secretaries, and others?

This action of the chief of police and these questions prove how impossible it would be to enforce some petty municipal rule within the precincts of Parliament. It would be intolerable to have detectives intruding at any hour into what is practically the club quarters of the highest court in the land. Is the keeper of the smoking room to be prohibited from selling to a member on Sunday a package of smoking tobacco? If not how will the police prevent a member of the Press Gallery or the Speaker's secretary from replenishing occasionally his tobacco pouch?

The whole attempt to place under police surveillance the men who are compelled to work and live in these Houses of Parliament is "meddlesome, and; totally uncalled for. The officers of the Houses are quite competent to maintain discipline, decency and order within the precincts of Parliament.

It enforces the view that this should be made a federal district direct under government, as at Washington. The aldermen in the meantime should protest against the servants they pay making of themselves a meddlesome nuisance.