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BIG BEN'S CLEAN-UP.

Among Parliament's many famous voices, only one is heard round the world, year in and year out - that of Big Ben himself, at the top of his great tower.

So great a public figure requires careful grooming to keep him in trim - and that's a major task. Thousands of feet of scaffolding must be erected for a start. The whole structure must be inspected. High above London, Ministry of Works architect Mr. Werricker, and Mr. Payne, Parliament's senior Clerk of Works, dismantle the cross and orb which crown the tower. If that's not firm, it has a long way to fall.

Not many people have seen Westminster from this angle. Come to think of it, not everybody would want to.

This must be mended - or every M.P. will have to be issued with a reinforced umbrella.

This big clock's just like a small boy - it's almost a hopeless task keeping his face and hands clean, if only because he never keeps still.

One hundred and fifty-six strokes is Ben's daily total. Anyone would be slightly cracked after keeping that up for years. But the experts will put it right, for London's best-loved voice must never be silent. Time - gentlemen - please!