

surveys now receive an extra \$300.

The position of accountant can now only be reached by passing an Excise examination. Formerly, only the civil service qualifying examination was necessary.

There seems to be no provision for an immediate increase to the Excise, such as the \$150 which was given to the inside service. Perhaps, however, this may be equalized by making the first increment, coincident with the increase.

The Excise service in general is to be congratulated on the substantial increase it has obtained. The spirit of liberality shown by the government in this instance is of good augury as indicating that its settled policy is the steady extension to all branches of the service of the benefits accorded to the inside service in 1908. The fact that the Excise service is among the first on the outside to profit is a further proof of how much easier is the progress of reforms where conditions are well organized and the service well ruled and classified. That the Excise service is so is due again to the fact that it has at its head a Deputy Minister who has passed through all the ranks in his own person, and who knows at first hand all that is to be known of his Department. The new order is the direct fruit of the well planned policy of Mr. Gerald.

THE TRIUMPH OF A PRINCIPLE.

The New York Fire Department is under a system of appointments and promotions by merit. Recently the Fire Chief, in a moment of vexation, (it was under the prick of criticism for a tragic disaster) declared that the examinations frightened off from applying for positions on the force the kind of men whom it was most desirable to enlist in it. The New York Evening Post, in replying, pointed out that the examinations by actual computation were

responsible for only 10% of the rejections. It then continued:

Only a few years ago, such a criticism as that of Chief Croker would have been the signal for an attack on the principles of civil service reform all along the line. Nothing could furnish more striking demonstration of the completeness with which those principles have taken possession of the public mind than does the total absence of any such effect in this instance. The people are told that the application of the competitive-examination system in a field in which they are vitally and directly interested has had ruinous results; and yet we hear no echo. No contemptuous references to doctrinaires and closet-reformers; no sneers at the silk-stockings who want to run the fire department on a kid-glove plan. Time was when the moment anything went wrong in a government office to which the merit system had been applied, a howl went up among the spoilsmen; a hundred newspapers and a score of Congressmen were ready with their jubulations over the exposure of the "snivel-service" hypocrisy. This was not long ago, but it seems like ancient history. What a foolish charge, based on evidently worthless evidence, was capable of effecting in those days is not brought about now even by a complaint which has a respectable source and presents a plausible appearance. Nobody thinks of giving up the principle of appointment by merit and competition in the Fire Department. People want, first of all, to know whether there is any real basis for Mr. Croker's complaint; and if there is, they want to have the complaint removed, not by changing the system, but by making such changes in detail as experience may have shown to be necessary. And if this is true of the Fire Department, how much more is it true of the great branches of government service generally in which the competitive system has been established. It is worth while, for once in a way, to have such an outburst as this of Chief Croker, just to show how solidly the principle of the merit system has become established in the court of public opinion.

THE COST OF LIVING — ONE PHASE.

A recent cartoon of the New York World represents Uncle Sam regarding with a very long face an account just handed to him by Congress for \$23,000,000, being the price of two new battleships. In a docket of the year 1900 which he has just been consulting, the price for two similar luxuries is shown as \$9,000,000.