

As explained in the May number of the *WRITER*, the Canadian *Hansard* has hitherto been operated under the contract system; but, at last, the Government, so far as the House of Commons is concerned, have taken a step in the right direction in abandoning the contract system, and substituting a new one—that of making the *Hansard* reporters officers of the House.

During the past session the contractor, Mr. Richardson, had (not reckoning himself) a staff of five reporters, who practically did the whole of the reporting. In the discharge of their duties each of these five reporters took twenty minutes' "turns" or "takes" during the sittings of the House, that is to say, each in rotation took notes in the House for twenty minutes at a time. For the use of the *Hansard* reporters there are on the floor of the House two small tables with suitable seats beside them; these tables are placed at a short distance from the entrance to the Chamber, in the central space separating the Government benches from the Opposition benches, which central space contains, at its upper end, the Speaker's chair; so that members, thus occupying opposite sides of the House, and therefore facing each other, do practically, in addressing the House through the Speaker, address themselves to the *Hansard* reporter, seated at his little table on the floor of the House. On the first day of the session the order in which the reporters are to take their turns is fixed by the chief. A sort of marking board, called the "Tally," is fixed up on the wall of the *Hansard* office—a room in close proximity to the House of Commons—and this tally points out the time when each reporter is to take his "turn," and relieve his predecessor. The following gives a rough idea of this indicator:

DATE.....

	Time.	Name of Reporter.	Business discussed.	Names of Speakers.
A	3-10	Jones.....		
B	3-30	Johnson.....		
C	3-50	Brown.....		
D	4-10	Thomson.....		
E	4-30	Jackson.....		
F	4-50	Jones.....		
G				

Following the "tally" as above marked, Jones would enter the House at ten minutes past 3; and his first "take" for that day would be called "A." Johnson would relieve him at half-past three, his first "take" for that day being called "B." Brown, Thomson and Jackson would follow in their appointed turns, their "takes" being respectively named "C," "D," and "E." Following Jackson would come Jones again, now taking his second "take," which would be called "F." In this way the five would continue relieving each other every twenty minutes until the House adjourned for the day, each succeeding "turn" taking a higher letter in the alphabet; and if the alphabet were thus exhausted before the adjournment for the day, the letters would be doubled, thus: "AA,"

"BB." On each succeeding day, at the opening of the House, the order of taking the "turns" is changed; but the first "take" on each day begins with the letter "A." The change of order is made thus: the reporter who takes the first "turn," or "take" "A," on the first day, has the fifth "turn," or "take" "E," on the following day; and the reporter who took the second "turn," or "take B," on the first day, has the first "take," namely "A," on the second; and so the change of order goes on from day to day through the session, in such a manner that each of the five has his fair and proper share of the work. As each reporter comes out of the House into the *Hansard* office after taking his "turn," he marks on the "tally" opposite the letter of his "take," the nature of the subject discussed, and the names of the speakers he has had to report during that particular "turn." In transcribing his notes the reporter numbers separately the sheets of each take, thus: "A1," "A2," "A3," &c., marking the date at the commencement, and indicating on the last sheet of the "take" the "take" which follows, thus: (in the case of "A" "take") "B follows." Some members speak in French; and one of the reporters (Mr. S. A. Abbott), performs the double duty of reporting the French speeches and of taking his turn in reporting the English speeches. If a member rises to speak in French whilst one of the other reporters happens to be taking a "turn," a page is immediately sent out into the *Hansard* office to fetch Mr. Abbott.

As fast as the reporters transcribe their notes the speeches are sent in to the members for revision.

To be Continued.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS AND REPORTERS.

(From the New York Sun.)

THE campaign for President is at hand, and two armies of speakers will soon be in the field. From many of the leaders of both parties have often come complaints that the newspapers have not dealt fairly with them in the reports of their speeches.

There are several reasons why reports cannot always please, the most prominent of which are the haste, the excitement, and often the downright carelessness of the speakers themselves. As a rule, there is no just ground for complaint against reporters, for, while a few speeches may be sometimes seriously damaged, most of them are greatly improved.

It should be remembered that extemporaneous speaking, except by trained and skillful orators, generally reads badly. The reproduction on paper of an off-hand speech is sure to reveal errors and imperfections at which the speaker himself is sometimes astonished, and for which the reporter is often blamed.

By the public speaker there are two great errors to be guarded against—a rapid delivery and the habit of using long and involving sentences. The first may put his speech beyond