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Editorial and Contributed.

OVER-CROWDING THE RANKS.

IN the February number of the WRITER there appeared a letter from "Protectionist," in which he expressed alarm at the rapidly increasing number of shorthand writers and fears that employers will reduce salaries when they find they can get 75 words per minute men at \$35 per month. We have young men in Canada who write this speed and will work at lower rates, yet our first-class writers have no fear of being supereded; they feel that the young aspirant has the same rugged steps to climb that they have with patient assiduity surmounted, and that his only method of getting a footing is to offer his services at a nominal figure and fight his way inch by inch until he has reached the same vantage ground, when they know full well he will estimate his services, as he does now, at their proper value. There is, and always will be, ample room at the top.

THE CANADIAN "HANSARD."

THE GREATEST OFFICIAL REPORT IN THE WORLD.

Such is the Opinion of the House of Commons—A Herculean Task—The Difficulties Caused by the Use of Two Languages Overcome—Contrasts with Other Parliamentary Reports—Triumph of Canadian Skill.

THE following is a very condensed report of the debate on the present system of official reporting in the House of Commons by permanent reporters who are officers of the House. The discussion took place on February 17th:—

Mr. ROSS said:—The task of reporting in English and French is a herculean task. It is something that has never been achieved in any Legislature in the world before, either as to quantity, excellence or rapidity of execution. The experiment we are now practising is a new one. I think it has met with a marvellous success.

Mr. CHARLTON.—I presume that some hon. gentlemen may not be aware that the report of the debates of this House, which is now being

issued, is the most voluminous of that of any legislative body at the present time. I believe that the *Hansard* staff of the English House of Commons employs a staff of eighteen reporters, though it is not as voluminous as ours. The amount of the work which the reporters of this House perform is very much greater according to the number employed, than is performed by the staff of the United States Congress, or, in fact, of any other legislative body that I am aware of. I think, taking into account the amount of work which is done, and the pressure which has been placed upon the reporters during the heavy debates which have taken place this session, we must conclude that the work has been extremely well done.

Mr. BLAKE said the reporting had been satisfactory, but the proof-reading was defective.

Mr. JONES.—I say with regard to the whole work, that the speeches made in this Chamber are wonderfully well reported, that everything about the report is well done.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell) and Mr. MILLS offered some practical suggestions as to the further improvement of the work by strengthening the staff and securing accurate proof-reading.

Mr. PLUMB.—I have no doubt that every member who addresses the House has found a great deal of satisfaction in the prompt manner in which his speeches have appeared in the *Hansard* within a few hours, and he has found also that the reporting is, in the main, exceedingly satisfactory. I understand that during the great stress that was thrown upon the staff during the long debates we have had, and the more than usual amount of business they had thrown upon them at the outset, they have been greatly overworked. My own impression is that if this thing is worth doing well, that the best talent should be employed for the purpose, that it should be properly remunerated, and that we should not attempt to get too much work out of these gentlemen who are doing us an excellent service. I have reason to suppose that the staff is very much overworked. I have reason to believe that it would be very much better if the House should enlarge it somewhat. I do not think there is any one in the House who would like to go back to the old system of not having the official reporters on the floor of the House. I, for one, wish to bear my testimony to the thoroughness and promptness with