

*By the Chairman:—*

Q. You have never known a man to be superannuated who ought to have been dismissed?—Oh, no. The fact is, there is a certain limit of forbearance. When a man becomes too bad, we would set aside political and every other influence, and let him go.

Q. It is only when he is pretty bad that political influence can be set aside?—Necessarily so, I think.

Q. I would like to ask you your opinion about improvements. You have already stated that entrance examinations would be necessary?—I think so.

Q. I understood you to say that the competitive system, as it exists in England, would be difficult to carry out here?—It could not be carried out here.

Q. Would you please go into some little details for your reasons?—I would have this objection to it: That it would attract the attention of a large number of young men to the Civil Service, to their detriment. They would go in for these examinations, and their attention would be withdrawn from other means of establishing themselves in life. And the number of vacancies would necessarily be nothing in proportion to the number of such applicants. Hence, these young men, instead of being benefitted by it, would be injured. You will observe that when once a young man has found his name on the list of candidates for appointment, he would feel: "I have only to wait a little time, more or less, and I am sure to get into the Civil Service." In the meantime, if he had his eyes open, and his friends were exerting themselves, he might get better employment somewhere else, but the opportunity for which he would lose in consequence of his attention being thus detracted.

Q. But suppose he was appointed immediately after his examination, he would know whether he could get an appointment or not, and that the matter was final. That would do away with that objection.—That is what I advocate. I advocate that an examination should take place when there is a vacancy,

Q. And that only those required for this particular vacancy should have any claim on the Service?—Yes.

Q. That would obviate that difficulty?—Yes.

Q. At all events that is a difficulty with regard to the candidates and not with regard to the Civil Service?—Precisely.

Q. Do you not think, however, that the examinations could be so arranged that the knowledge acquired in working up for them would be useful in any section of business afterwards?—Unquestionably, if you could find a case in which a young man would have equally exerted himself without that incentive.

Q. What I mean is: do you consider that the acquirements of the knowledge a waste of time on the young man's part?—Oh, no; the acquisition of any knowledge cannot be a waste of time.

Q. So far, your objection refers to the candidate himself. As to the interest of the Service, do you think a competitive system of examination would give you a better class of men than you have now?—Educationally speaking, it would.

Q. Do you see any reason why you would get a worse class of men in any other respect?—There is a possibility that it might exclude some very deserving young men who could not afford the time nor the means to secure a good education.

Q. That might be. But of course every system must exclude some deserving young men. The present system excludes a great many?—Yes.

Q. Not speaking of those whom it excludes, do you think the class which it would bring into the Service would be superior to that now?—I think under any system of examination the class of officials would be improved.

Q. The competitive system, as you are well aware, brings in only the best of those who succeed in passing certain examinations. Do you not think the chance of getting good men would be equally great amongst comparatively highly educated men as amongst those that are chosen at random?—I think so.

Q. Do you think a year's probation would be sufficient to test particular qualifications?—Oh, yes; in our service it would.

Q. Do you think that a system of competitive examinations, combined with pro-