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How Positions on Hansard are now filled.

A good deal of discussion has taken place during the past fortnight on the methods followed by the government in filling two vacancies which had occurred on the staff of Hansard. The old way is well-remembered: the positions would have been filled by political nomination; the men might have been good or bad: they would have been chosen in great part on other grounds. This method is still open to the government under clause 21, and it is greatly to the credit of the Speaker that he set his face against it and threw the positions open to competition.

In adopting the latter course the Civil Service Commission was required to suggest a method of procedure. The test was arranged somewhat as follows: Of a total of 1,000 marks, 500 were allotted to the reporting of an actual debate in the House, the candidates being placed in the reporters' gallery. Of the remainder, 200 marks were allotted to the writing of a précis of an actual debate in Parliament. This paper read as follows: "Give, in brief form and in your own words, the substance of the debate reported in the accompanying section of Hansard, Columns 622 to 635. Special attention should be given to literary form, and to clearness and accuracy of expression." Of the remaining 300 marks, 100 each were allotted to an examination in history, geography, and literature. The papers follow:

History.

March, 1912. Time: 3 hours.

(Candidates are required to observe the regulations strictly.)

Note.—Six questions only are to be attempted: three from each section.

ENGLISH HISTORY.

1. Trace the development of the British Empire from the beginning of the Seven Years' War to the close of the Boer War, giving names of leading battles and treaties of peace wherever you can.

2. Name, in their chronological order, the chief constitutional landmarks in English history from Catholic Emancipation to the retirement of Mr. Gladstone from public life, giving an account of each measure mentioned, and describing, where you can, the part taken by leading statesmen in the parliamentary contests connected therewith.

3. Write on the Irish question, as it enters into English politics, from 1798 to the present day.

4. Give an account of the relations of England and France from the beginning of the French Revolution to the death of Edward VII.

5. Write briefly but clearly on the invention of the steam-engine and the locomotive; the origin of the Crimean War; the part of England in the Treaty of Berlin, 1878; the Chartist Movement; the career of Lord Palmerston or Sir Robert Peel.

CANADIAN HISTORY.

1. Describe the struggle for Responsible Government, and discuss its operation from the union of the two Canadas to Confederation.