

Such morale, such interest and loyalty is the product of only the utmost confidence and trust in a meticulously fair and impartial administration. There was no suspicion of favoritism or impartiality. Every man knew he would get all due credit and promotion when there was opportunity.

The merit system responsible for this high morale was designed and installed by R. H. Baldock, State Highway Engineer, and C. B. McCullough, Assistant State Highway Engineer, in 1937. Under this system, rating cards are made out annually by each employee's superior, appraising his character, initiative, and industry, and these reports together with education and service records provide a composite merit rating, which ratings form the basis of all promotions. New applicants are rated likewise by references and education and experience records. Coupled with this is a published schedule of wage rates whereby all employees performing equivalent work receive equal pay throughout the state. A uniform policy relative to vacations, sick leave, and overtime pay has been established and is administered to all employees alike.

This merit system has paid big dividends and although limited in scope has been most successful in the Highway Department. It is felt that the same beneficial results would accrue to those departments which do not now have a merit system. There is, however, no assurance that a change of administration might not chuck the whole system overboard, and for that reason, it is our petition that the merit system of civil service be made law to assure continued beneficial operation throughout the future.

During the present scarcity of man-

power incidental to the war effort, many of the State Highway Department's old-time employees have regretfully left the department because the attraction of high wages in other activities has outbalanced their belief in the dependability of a merit system not stabilized by the statutes.

The State Highway Department merit system not only lacks legal status, but is limited in certain other functions, which a permanent statutory civil service may readily be made to include. One function to be assumed is that of examinations to definitely establish each employee's proper rating, position, and grade, and to establish definite specifications defining the duties and responsibilities of the various grades for each position or work classification. These classifications and grades accurately equalize the pay with the actual work performed and tend to further increase the confidence of both the employees and the public in the fairness of the system. Examinations and classifications are of such a complex nature, however, that they have not been included in our Highway Department merit system. As an example, we point to the man in a certain position for 15 years who receives the same rating and pay as the recruit in the same position. The new employee should be able to start at the bottom and with experience advance to higher grades.

"How much will a state-wide merit system of civil service cost the State of Oregon?"

The best information we have been able to locate on the cost of merit systems is a tabulation found on page 71 in a book entitled "Public Personnel Administration" by Mosher and Kingsley published in 1941. This tabulation