

The Merit System and the Veteran

It is the conviction of the Oregon State Employees Association that the extension and maintenance of the merit principle in government will result in great benefit to the state. The merit system is recognized throughout the nation as contributing to efficiency and economy in government by raising the character and efficiency of the public service.

We feel that the extension of the merit principle in government is a high purpose and one which every honest citizen can wholeheartedly endorse.

General public concern for the veteran treatment under the merit system does not appear unreasonable. Veterans preference has come to be recognized as the custom of the land and a common practice in which the Federal Civil Service has taken the lead. Recent federal legislation provides 5 point preference on examinations to all honorably discharged service men and women who have served on active duty during a war or campaign. Ten point preference will be allowed disabled veterans. Similar veterans preference in state merit systems should meet no opposition. Some restrictions might be added in a state system such as have been added in Seattle, Washington, where the preference is granted only when the veteran was a resident of the state at the time of entry into military service. The danger is that the conscientious objector or the recruit discharged for psychiatric defects after the briefest training will receive the same consideration as the veteran seriously disabled overseas or more consideration than the able-bodied veteran who has been in the thick of combat on the battlefield.

Another concern of the public should be the holding open of govern-

mental appointments until the veterans have had opportunity to return from the war and to return to peace-time pursuits. The veterans are in the war for the duration plus six months. Most of the great mass of war production workers will be turned loose the day the war is over and they will be the first to return home to secure first choice of all peace-time jobs available. A merit system law enacted by the next legislature could declare all appointments from Pearl Harbor to one year after the war to be temporary appointments. This would give returning veterans an opportunity to return home, adjust themselves to peace-time pursuits, and qualify for appointment to state employment. A merit system law appears to be the only measure which will assure the returning veteran an equal chance with the shipyard worker when the war is over.

The Oregon State Employees Association is pledged to support the merit system in state government and commends the cause to every patriotic citizen of Oregon.

Quiet Waterwheel

By RALPH GIFFORD

Quiet now is the quaint waterwheel, with the frost upon the pumpkin and nature painting the Vine Maple a vivid hue. It waits for next Summer, when once again you may hear the splash of water and the creak of the wheel as it delivers the life giving moisture to the fields and garden of this little farm, nestled in a small valley on the banks of the Wallowa river near Minam, Oregon.