

site of the old exploitation concept and is responsible for the adoption of the Oregon Civil Service Law which requires that

"All appointments and promotions to positions in the State Service shall be made on the basis of merit and fitness, to be ascertained by competitive examinations."

Under this new merit system, political patronage is made most difficult and the retirement system will care for many of the hidden pensions. Administrators will not find it necessary to keep their wage scales so low that political patronage will be unattractive. Also, under the merit system, unscrupulous administrators can not auction employment to those bidding for work at the lowest substandard wage.

The adoption of a merit system law however can not immediately change the thinking habits of the public, the officials, the administrators, and the employees. We heard upon the end of the war, that all reasons which had justified equalizing state wage scales with those of neighboring jurisdictions and industry were upset and not valid now because there would be an unknown number of unemployed next winter. We heard that public wages should be reduced, when all about us we see industrial wages about to be raised to offset reduction in working hours. We cannot help but believe that these ideas hark back to the old concept of the exploited public service and do not in any way line up with the merit system concept of the public service.

The task facing the Association then is to advance the principle of merit in the public consciousness, in every way, at all times and in all places. Employees, themselves, must realize their vital interest in the merit system which in time will so raise the efficiency of the public service that the matter of adequate wages will meet no opposition.

Actuaries to Set Up System

W. C. Schuppel, chairman of the public employees retirement board, announces that the board has employed the firm of Coates & Herfurth, nationally-known consulting actuaries with offices in San Francisco and Los Angeles, as actuaries for the public employees retirement system. This consulting firm will establish the system created by the Oregon state legislature at its last session.

The board held a preliminary unofficial meeting in June so that many of the questions to be considered might be reviewed by the individual members of the board sufficiently in advance that well considered action could be taken at the first official meeting.

Jerry Sayler was employed as the executive secretary of the board and was authorized to secure temporary office space and office assistants for the preliminary work incident to contacting the groups covered by the act.

Forms necessary for assembling personnel data to be used in calculating rates of contribution by individual employees are being prepared for the printer. Mr. Schuppel said detailed costs would not be available until after the actuarial calculations are completed. It is hoped that these may be ready early in December.

Members of the board in addition to Chairman Schuppel are Ralph A. Coan, attorney, Portland; James M. Burgess, superintendent of schools, The Dalles; I. A. DeFrance, highway department, Salem, and Frank L. Emery, insurance department, Portland.

There is more wisdom in public opinion than is to be found in Napoleon, Voltaire, or all the ministers of State, present or to come.

—TALLEYRAND.