

duct the examination. He usually does this without pay. Applicants are examined in just two subjects, viz., training and experience and technical knowledge, which latter includes an operative test. In the subject of technical knowledge they are given written examinations lasting, perhaps, three hours. Also each applicant is notified in advance that he must bring to the dental laboratories in the City Hall at a certain hour on a certain day a patient, and under the eye of the examining dentist he must prepare, for example, a root canal in a tooth. This operative test, together with the written test, enables the examining dentist to get at not only the technical knowledge of the individual, but his operative skill.

Moreover, that the merit system of civil service is able to meet emergencies has been, I think, well demonstrated in Philadelphia. At the close of the last session of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania an act was passed creating the department of city transit, which department was authorized to have charge, control and management of the transit facilities of the city. The act was approved May 9, 1911, to become effective July 1, 1913. The necessities of the new department required that all of its 140 employees, with the exception of about eight, be high class engineers, draftsmen, rodmen, chainmen and tracers. Their salaries and titles were not known until the passage of the appropriation ordinance by city councils and its approval by the mayor June 12, 1913. Therefore, although the new department was to begin work on July 1, it was not possible for the Commission to take the first step toward filling the positions until after June 12. Not less than two weeks' public notice of examinations is required by law, and a complete survey of the duties and requirements of each position had to be made before such advertisement

could be issued. The immediate problem confronting this new department was the construction of a subway with branching elevated lines involving an expenditure of vast sums of money. Public sentiment was very strongly in favour of immediate action looking toward this gigantic task, and it was, therefore, especially essential that the department of city transit be immediately manned with competent people. The Commission held a conference with the head of the new department, and the requirements and duties for each of the positions were standardized and published with the announcement of the proposed examinations. I cannot go into details here as to the manner in which that work was expeditiously done, but the Commission reports that at no time since the creation of that department has it been unable to fill all requisitions made by the appointing power. There has never been a word of complaint, either orally or written, from the director of that department, or his assistants, because of the lack of eligibles at the time when needed, or because of any lack of qualifications of those certified. On the other hand, the Commission has received strong expression of their approval of the examinations given, the quality of the men certified and the celerity with which the work was done, and the department has made its appointments almost in the exact order in which the men stood on the lists.

Our Commission has never met any essential difficulties in devising the adaptation of the merit system to the various positions to be filled. We have not by any means covered the field or solved all the problems, but we feel that the system is based on principles that are sound, and that it only remains for citizens interested in good government to work out its intelligent application.

—Good Government...