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Report of the New York City Civil Service Commission on the First Six Months of its Administration

In its report on the work of the first half year of its existence the Municipal Civil Service Commission of New York City states, at the outset, that its lines of improvement lay in the following several directions: The use of more advanced methods of examination, the complete revision of the classification and grading of the service and the strengthening of the system of efficiency records, which, in the past, were largely perfunctory and wholly inadequate.

For the purpose of analysis, the Commission divides its work into three main divisions: (1) Office organization; (2) administration; (3) examination.

After three months' independent investigation the Commission undertook a complete reorganization of its office force in order to place it on a more efficient working basis. It established rules for employees after consultation with the bureau heads. It endeavoured to eliminate all duplication in the work of the various bureaus through a method of centralizing and simplifying the organization.

In the examination division the Commission is developing a policy of seeking the co-operation of experts in the handling of various examinations connected with technical positions.

It is the intention of the Commission that all candidates for entrance in the municipal service and for promotion in the same shall be subjected to a physical examination to determine their physical fitness and to discover the presence of any conditions which might later be a cause of incapacity or of retirement for disability. A woman medical examiner and two women monitors have been assigned to the bureau. In addition to the medical examiners, a physical examiner, having special knowledge of physical examinations, has been employed.

Other matters which the Commission has improved and is continuing to improve in the matter of examinations are the preparation of experience papers of candi-

dates for higher positions; the holding of examinations for one single position all on the same day (that is, not to allow an examination which involves a very large number of candidates to extend over several days and thus allow the possibility of candidates not competing under the same conditions); the inauguration of progress charts whereby the Commission can discover at once the progress or retardation in the giving and rating of examinations and in the certification of eligible lists. The Commission is preparing a civil service manual for the information of the public, which will give the qualifications for positions in the city service, and, as far as possible, the method of rating papers.

The Commission is strengthening the regular examining force and reducing the use of per diem examiners. Criticism of candidates certified by the Commission according to the report may often be traced to faults in the examination. The report says: "The need, not only of experts for technical services, but also for examiners with broad education and ideas will be met in large part, at least, by the reduction in the cost of per diem work and by searching examinations for additional examiners of this live type."

In regard to the life of eligible lists, the Commission expects to adopt the policy of terminating lists after the expiration of two years. The Commission is developing a system of anticipating examinations and of holding examinations for such positions