NINTH AND TEN ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION OF ILLINOIS TO THE GOVERNOR FOR THE PERIODS FROM JANUARY 1, 1914, TO DECEMBER 31, 1914 AND FROM JANUARY 1, 1915, TO DECEMBER 31, 1915

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649316359

Ninth and Ten Annual Report of the State Civil Service Commission of Illinois to the Governor for the Periods from January 1, 1914, to December 31, 1914 and from January 1, 1915, to December 31, 1915 by Various

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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VARIOUS

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State Civil Service Commission of Illinois

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[Printed by authority of the State of Illinois.]

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
ILLINOIS STATE JOURNAL CO., STATE PRINTERS.
1917

COMMISSIONERS.

JAMES H. BURDETT.

A. B. CULHANE.

WILLIAM B. MOULTON.

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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR 1914.

December 31, 1914.

Hon. Edward F. Dunne, Governor of Illinois.

DEAR SIR: The State Civil Service Commission respectfully submits its ninth annual report for the year ending December 31, 1914.

In this, the fourth year of the amended Civil Service Act covering State departments, and the second year of Your Excellency's administration, a better understanding of the law by the public and department heads contributed to make the work of the commission pleasanter and to assist its progress.

By its decision in the case of Sellars v. Brady et al. in which the constitutionality of the Civil Service Act was attacked upon multitudinous grounds, the Supreme Court for the second time held the law to be valid. The opinion in the Sellars case is so sweeping and the points decided so numerous, it would seem that this question is settled for all time and that never again can the constitutionality of the statute be called in question.

In so definitely dissolving all doubts as to the permanency of the law and the validity of acts performed under it, the decision noticeably strengthened the authority of the commission and helped to make the year one of progress by enabling us to undertake improvements with confidence of their stability and by assuring us the cooperation of administrative heads. Our chief accomplishment in consequence has been a revision of our classification and the adoption of a new method which we are confident from nearly a year's experience will soon recommend itself to others.

THEORY OF CLASSIFICATIONS.

Civil service laws generally require that commissions shall classify positions with reference to examinations. In England, whence our first civil service methods were derived, examinations were formerly, and still are largely, educational, and positions were classed according to the degree of education needed to enter them. Candidates were not expected to know the practical work of government offices; they were admitted to be trained in service. Thus in one grade were positions for which a university education was required; and in another grade positions for which a secondary school training was sufficient. The first classification of the United States Government service was made on the same method and the first examinations were not practical but educational.

The plan of testing an applicant's ability to sort mail by examining him in common school subjects, however, met with great criticism in this country and gradually the policy of all commissions has changed. Examinations have become practical, based upon the duties to be per-