

**THE FINANCE COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF
BOSTON. REPORTS AND
COMMUNICATIONS, VOL. VI**

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The Finance Commission of the City of Boston. Reports and Communications, Vol. VI by Various

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THE FINANCE COMMISSION

OF THE

CITY OF BOSTON

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

VOLUME VI.



CITY OF BOSTON
PRINTING DEPARTMENT
1911

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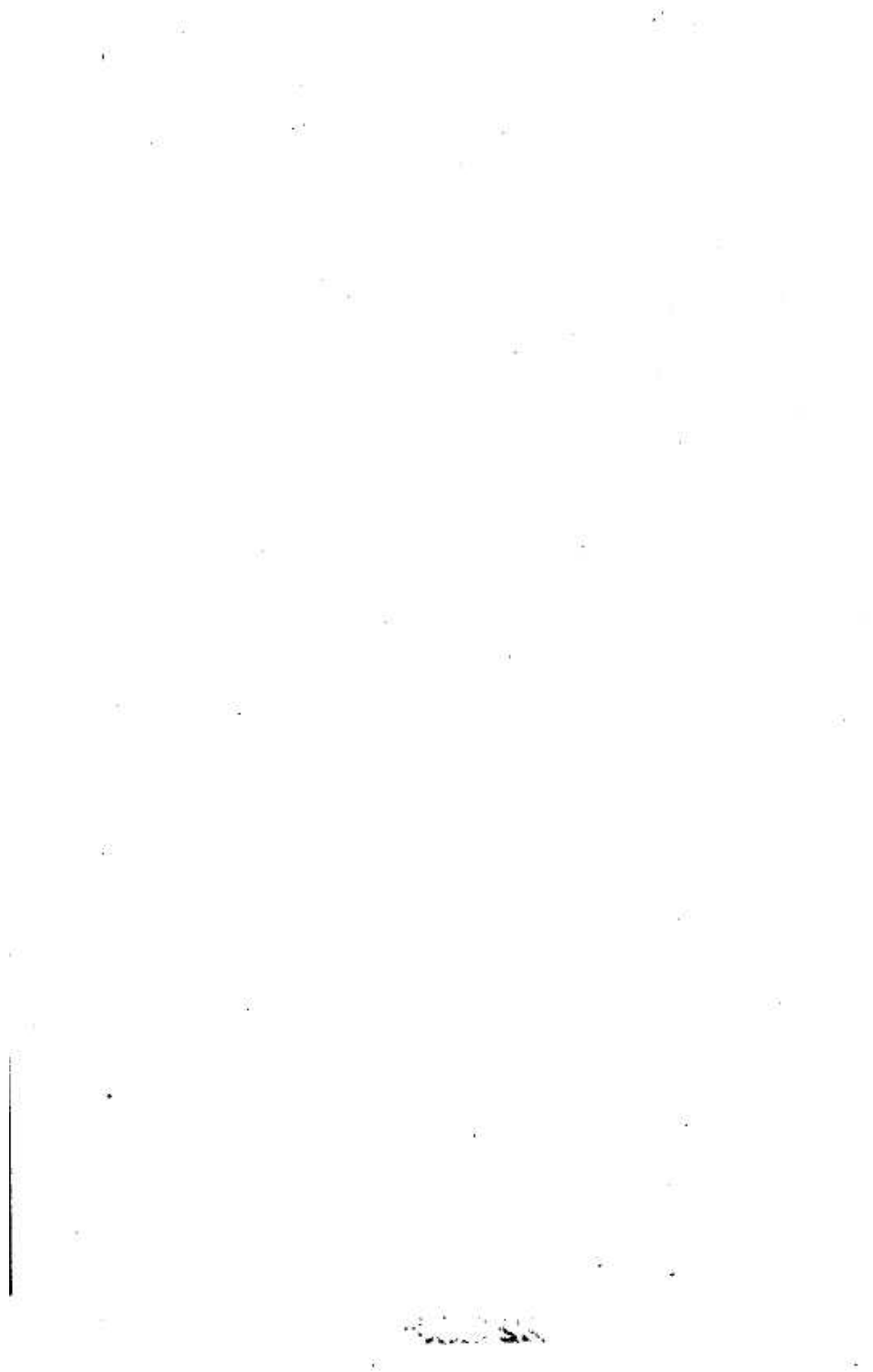
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PART I.

REPORT TO THE GENERAL COURT.



Boston, January 20, 1911.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives
in General Court Assembled:

The Boston Finance Commission submits herewith its annual report to the General Court, as required by section 18 of chapter 486 of the Acts of 1909.

I. APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE.

The estimate for the commission for the year was \$40,000, which was cut down by the Mayor to \$30,000. Afterwards the Mayor desired to have the commission make a special investigation of the schools, which involved heavy extra expense. He also desired the establishment of a bureau of municipal research. After considerable discussion an appropriation of \$40,000 was made by the Mayor and City Council. Although the use of the money was not specified in the vote of the Council, the commission has considered that it was intended to use half of the extra \$10,000 in the special investigation of the schools and half in the establishment and maintenance of the Bureau of Municipal Research. At least \$6,000 of the commission's entire appropriation will not be spent and will, therefore, be returned to the City Treasurer. The expenditures are as follows:

Salaries and wages	\$13,714 64
Service of experts	12,461 28
Expert stenographers	757 25
Books and atlases	730 80
Stationery and office supplies, etc.	655 08
Furniture	535 67
Typewriting and mimeographing	105 80
Telephone	220 06
Electric light	57 70
Postage	70 00
<i>Carried forward</i>	<hr/> \$29,308 28

<i>Brought forward</i>	\$29,308 28
Rent	2,166 64
Typewriter, adding machine, neostyle	517 70
Witness fees	26 05
Printing, binding, etc.	1,160 45
Miscellaneous	64 27
	<hr/>
	<u>\$33,243 39</u>

II. ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMISSION.

The personnel of the commission is unchanged, Mr. Geoffrey B. Lehy having been reappointed for the term of five years on the 29th of June, 1910. The organization has been strengthened in the past year by two important additions. The commission has secured the services as engineer of Guy C. Emerson, former Superintendent of Streets, whose special investigation of street lighting and of refuse disposal, experience in highway and sewer construction and familiarity with the theory and practice of municipal engineering works generally have made available for the commission's use both important information and competent advice upon difficult phases of the city's administrative problems. It has also secured the services as director of the Bureau of Municipal Research of George A. O. Ernst, whose study of municipal questions and service both on the School Committee and the former Finance Commission have been of great value in the investigation of school, budget and many other municipal matters.

III. THE COMMISSION'S WORK IN THE PAST YEAR.

1. *Character and Scope of the Work.*—The commission has held 79 meetings, conducted 88 hearings on various subjects and examined 205 witnesses. It has issued 25 public reports, copies of which are hereto annexed. It has also issued many unpublished official communications relating to different phases of the administration of the city's business. A large portion of the time of

the commission has been devoted to an investigation of the schools. This subject is enormous in its scope and will require considerable further investigation. The commission has already investigated several aspects of the administration of school affairs, which involved interviews with the superintendent of schools, the purchasing agent, the auditor, members of the School Committee and of the Schoolhouse Department. A large part of the time of the director of the Bureau of Municipal Research has been devoted to a study of the history of school administration in this city, to the various laws and ordinances defining the powers of the school authorities and regulating the conduct of school affairs and to a study of existing conditions of school management. Much of the commission's time has been consumed in hearing contractors who made the lowest bids on contracts for municipal work but were not given the contracts; to the discussion with heads of departments of the claims of the lowest bidders, as well as the bills of other contractors; to the examination of appropriations, loans, pay rolls, overtime charges; and to the city's purchases of land, materials and supplies. Two of the most important contracts which the present administration has under consideration, the contracts for lighting the streets with gas and for disposing of the city's refuse, have received a great deal of the time and attention of the commission, and have been the subject of special investigation by its engineer.

2. *Investigations by Experts.*—The commission has engaged experts for temporary service at various times in the past year for the investigation of the following departments: The Assessing, Cemetery, Collecting, City Clerk, Infirmary, Institutions Registration, Overseers of the Poor, Park, Public Buildings, Public Grounds, Registry, School, Schoolhouse and Street Laying-Out Departments and the Ferry Division of the Street Department. Reports upon most of these have already been submitted to the commission. All of the foregoing