HELP SPREAD the LIGHT

All the pioneer work in behalf of civil service reform is not yet done. Much has been done, many victories have been won, but the end is not yet. While large numbers of Chicago city employees, officials and aldermen have come to see the advantage of civil service over the old spoils system, yet when a further extension of civil service laws is suggested, lukewarmness, secret opposition or open hostility is encountered, even from those who should be the warmest friends of the merit system. County and state employes, almost without exception, are still on the side of partisanship as against merit. They do not realize nor appreciate that genuine civil service laws mean a betterment of their condition; they are slow to see it is better to stand on a firm ground or honest merit than on the uncertain footing of personal or political favoritism; they do not grasp the fact that their own interests are synonymous with the best interests of the public service as a whole. We as civil service men know such to be the case under the perfect administration of civil service laws for which we are constantly working.

The foregoing does not apply to that class of ward heelers and bosses' pets who are holding better places than their abilities entitle them to. Of course they require all the backing they can get to bolster them up in the places they unsuccessfully fill, but it is not from this kind of men that civil service advocates need expect any aid. We want co-operation from men who are able to stand on their own bottom.

The great mass of faithful hardworking county and state employes should be made to understand that their best interests will be conserved and protected by and through wise civil service laws. Members of an organization like the Chicago Civil Service League can do a valuable service to the community simply by spreading the light. There are still many absurd misconceptions concerning the character and scope of civil
service examinations, and considerable skepticism exists as to whether a city employe really wins and holds his place by merit alone. There is also another theoretical bugaboo known as the fear of "an office-holding class". "You fellows from Chicago come down here and work for civil service laws so we will have to lose our jobs or else pass examinations in geometry, astronomy and ancient history", say the state employes at Springfield. They must be convinced to the contrary, and no one is better able to tell them the facts than men who are actually in the classified service of the City of Chicago.

They have to contend with mistakes of administration, with the corruption of past civil service commissions, and with whatever loopholes there may be in the law, but that is what our organization is for. If the state and counties are given civil service laws we can enlarge the League, should it then seem advisable, to take in employes from those services. Or they can form a law-enforcing organization of their own, if they find it necessary. In any event, the more civil service positions that are created, the better it will be for civil service principles and civil service men in general. Therefore it is incumbent upon every civil service man to spread the light, to make it known that conditions in 1905 are a big improvement over those of 1895. The present movement for municipal ownership is a striking argument for civil service, as has already been pointed out by the writer and others. Municipal ownership and civil service are Siamese twins.

All this means that the public service can be made a career. The day will soon come when a young man who enters the public employment fairly, who does good and faithful work, who studies to comprehend his duties and improve his mind, will have before him the certain prospect of moving onward and upward just as certainly as he would in private business or professional life.

Harry L. Bird.
The Civil Service League is to be congratulated on the fact that the Norden civil service bill reported to the House of Representatives at Springfield contains a provision for the filing and investigation of charges against an employee whom it is sought to discharge. As first presented the bill permitted the summary discharge of an employee without a hearing or trial, and it was largely due to the showing made by the legal representatives of the League at Springfield and before the legislative committee that the section protecting employees from immediate dismissals was inserted. At this writing it is too early to foresee just what legislation will finally be enacted, but the outlook, apparently, is promising.
THE LEGISLATIVE SITUATION.

Considerable opposition exists in the Legislature towards any civil service legislation whatever, but both party platforms have declared for civil service laws, and some attempt will be made to meet those pledges. Several bills are now pending in the Legislature providing for the introduction of civil service into the drainage board, election commission, certain of the County offices and various State institutions. A disposition exists to pass an Act applying only to the State charitable institutions, which would amount to little more than a taste of civil service reform. Furthermore, it is proposed to embody in such an Act, or any other one which may be passed, a provision permitting heads of departments to summarily discharge an employee without a hearing or trial of the charges which may be made against him. This is what is meant by the so called "open back door", and it is being strongly urged not only by the politicians, but by many of the genuine, though mistaken, friends of civil service.

So far as the Chicago Civil Service League is concerned, representing city employees who know by experience of the advantages and disadvantages of the present Chicago law, two things are wanted from the Legislature:

First: Broad and comprehensive civil service legislation, to include the State charitable and penal institutions, the various State offices and most of the County offices; in other words, we believe in a comprehensive civil service program and not patch-work legislation along that line. The time has come to drop the old spoils system.

Second: Any civil service law which is passed for the State or Counties should be at least as strong as the present Chicago law. While there are certain defects in our Chicago law, yet if the new Acts followed the Chicago Act with the omission to protect employees from unjust dismissal, such new Acts would be, in just that point, inferior to the Chicago law. The protection of employees against discharge except upon sufficient cause properly shown, is a vital principle of
civil service administration. To permit department chiefs unlimited freedom to chop off employees' heads would be to emasculate and weaken the civil service law. It would allow large opportunities for juggling with the law, and we, as civil service employees, know that there are already too many loopholes for political or personal trickery. Favoritism must be barred, and the only way to bar it and place every man on his merits is to have an honest and public method of appointment and an equally honest, strict and public method of discharge.

NOTE: If summary discharges were permitted, the head of a department (who in a large majority of cases, a politician or a member of some machine) could, by means of such discharges, soon reach any particular favored individual on a civil service eligible list, and appoint him to a vacancy, which vacancy the department head had himself created by means of the "open back door" policy. Or the head of a department could intimate, either directly or indirectly, that eligible outside of a favored few had better waive appointment in order to avoid dismissal later. This would have the ultimate effect of deterring men of ability from taking civil service examinations at all, owing to their fear that "pull" or "influence" would prove more powerful than merit. Again, the tenure of office of even the best and most conscientious employees now in the service would become very uncertain, if the mere say so of a department head should be accepted without any proof whatever. No employee should be deprived of his position on the mere allegation of charges which his superior is unwilling or unable to substantiate. It is very easy to make vague charges, and under such a cloak petty spite and other injustice might have almost full away.

The best good of the public service at this time demands strict and strong civil service laws, rigidly and honestly enforced.
To the President, Board of Directors, and Legislative Committee,
Chicago Civil Service League, Chicago.

Gentlemen:—

I have the honor herewith to submit my report upon the
mission to Springfield which was intrusted to me with reference to the
various bills which have been introduced in both branches of the State
Legislature with reference to Civil Service.

It was found that there have been four or five separate bills
in the House and at least one in the Senate to establish a form of civil
service in various political divisions of the State and local government.
One bill provides for the placing of the sanitary district of Chicago
under civil service, although couched in general terms as required by the
Constitution: one bill contemplates the placing of the Election Commission
under civil service: another contemplates the extension of the county
civil service to include the various county offices, such as sheriff,
county clerk, county Treasurer and some other offices under civil service.

There were at least two bills providing for the establishment of a State
civil service with reference to certain state institutions.

With reference to the State bills, it should be observed
it is not the desire of the state administration to extend the operation
of its principle beyond the Charitable and Reformatory institutions of
the State at the farthest. Neither is it desired to have a law passed
which requires adequate grounds for discharge of employees; nor is it
contemplated by the State authorities that any law will be passed which
will go into actual operation, so far as appointments are concerned, prior
to October 1st, of this year.

It was the expressed statement of the Governor to the delega-
tion of civil service advocates who called upon him on the 8th, inst.,
that it would be impossible to pass a bill requiring that appointees
should be entitled to have charges filed against them, upon which a hear-
ing could be had prior to discharge, or that a bill could be passed which
embraced more than the Charitable and Reformatory institutions of the
State. The penal institutions and the executive Commissioners of the
State, together with the employees in the various State offices,
were held not at this time to be ready for the extension of civil service.
The dramatic proceedings in the body of the House in connection with Comerford made it impossible for your delegation to meet the joint committee at the time originally appointed and subsequent proceedings so encroached upon the time awarded to the Committee than when on the 9th, inst., the Committee met it was impossible for any adequate presentation of the views of this organization to be heard. The committee however adjourned on Thursday of last week to meet on the 22nd, of February, at 1.30 P.M., and while the day fixed appears to be the anniversary of the birth of Washington, it is not doubted that either upon that day or the subsequent one the committee will meet. It was guaranteed to the undersigned that a hearing would be granted; that no bill would be reported out of the Committee until such hearing was given.

It is respectfully submitted that the civil service sentiment of the State is sufficiently aroused to make it desirable that any bill which may be reported out by the committee may be an adequate and genuine civil service measure and not a measure intended to gratify the vanity of party managers, while preserving for their use the privileges of the Spoils system. In the judgment of the undersigned it would be quite possible to prevent the passage of a half way and utterly inadequate measure, and it is also my judgment that if this session fails to pass such a measure as will be entitled to the respect of the awakened intelligence of the people of Illinois, that the next session of the Legislature will undoubtedly pass a measure that will be satisfactory.

I have felt that it was our duty to take the attitude, not of opposing the passage of any bill which may be proposed, but of declaring our conviction before the Committee, that an inadequate bill would be a serious misfortune to the cause of civil service and to show the committee by the resources of our experience, in what respects the bills were inadequate and the probable consequences of their adoption.

This organization in my judgment cannot afford to be placed in the position of opposing civil service, no matter how inadequately it manifested itself or howsoever inefficient such a bill as reported might be, but that it was our duty to place the responsibility for inefficient measures where they belonged.

Another feature has suggested itself as highly important in this connection and that is that instead of having a civil service bill for every political sub-division of the State...
every political sub-division of the State, county, drainage district, Park district, and whatsoever, which gives the opportunity for separate distinct and utterly inharmonious measures that aside from the bill which is intended to apply to State offices a general bill might be passed to be taken charge of by all different counties of the State at their option, for this reason; if it is permitted for different cities to employ different bills and different counties and drainage districts and Park districts to employ different enactments it will tend to assimilate all civil service bills to the lowest civil service standards and to approximate toward the Spoils system in all particulars. If it is permitted for a sound civil service bill to be in operation along side of an unsound bill, it will be precisely the case of counterfeit and debased currency to extinguish the sound to be replaced by the debased. I have therefore thought it well to propose to the committee that while the matter is now in incubation to urge this feature of the measure to the end that a general Act may be passed under which any political sub-division or municipal corporation, such as counties, Park districts, drainage districts or others may by referendum adopt the civil service principle uniformly, to the end that there may be one civil service standard rather than separate standards for separate communities. It is my opinion that the work begun by your representative should be continued and another effort made to secure the presentation of the views of the organization to the Committee.

I herewith append my expense account as follows:

February 7th, Debtor to Cash-----------------------------$50.00

" " " 7th, Railroad Fare and Sleeper, Chicago to Springfield,----- $6.75

" " " 7th, Street car fare,------------------------ .05

" " " 7th, Supper,----------------------------- .40

" " " 8th, Cab (Springfield)------------------------ .25

" " " 8th, Telegram,----------------------------- .25

" " " 9th, Hotel (Springfield)----------------------- .50

" " " 9th, Railroad Fare, Springfield to Chicago,---------------------- 5.50

" " " 9th, Street car fare, (Chicago)-----------------.10 $17.80

Total,--------------------------------------------- $17.80

Balance,------------------------------------------- $32.20
President, Board of Directors and Legislative Committee,
Chicago Civil Service League, Chicago.

Gentlemen:

I have the honor to submit my supplemental report upon a supplemental mission to Springfield for the purpose of addressing the joint committee on civil service with reference to the bills pending in the legislature.

It was my good fortune to secure a hearing under favorable circumstances on Wednesday, February 22nd, in the Capitol Building, at which meeting of the committee there were present, including the members of both Houses, not members of the committee, in the neighborhood of forty or fifty people.

The committee gave me a very attentive and respectful hearing and it seemed that much interest was manifested in the question under discussion. Very many questions were presented by various members of the committee, to all of which exhaustive and apparently satisfactory reply was made. Without going into details and without attempting to again state the attitude of this organization and my own feeling with reference to the pending question, it was quite evident that our views were not without support at Springfield, and it is also evident that the real essence of the pending bill as reported by the committee is doomed to defeat.

I took the position, in response to question that the bill as reported was merely an attempt to satisfy the demand for a valid civil service while preserving the full practice of the spoils system. It is regarded as quite doubtful whether any bill can be passed under the circumstances.

I herewith append my expense account as follows:

February 21st, Debtor to Cash, Balance as shown by previous report, ---------------- $32.20
February 21st, Railroad Fare and Sleeper, Chicago to Springfield, ---------------- $6.75
February 22nd, Supper and Car fare, Chicago, .......... $5.50
" " " 21st, Hotel (Springfield) ---------------- 2.00
" " " 22nd, Railroad Fare, (Springfield to Chicago), ............ 5.50
" " " 22nd, Dining Car, ---------------- 1.00
Total, ---------------- 15.75
Balance, ---------------- $16.45

Respectfully submitted,
To the President and the Board of Directors of the Chicago Civil Service League.

I herewith present a report in connection with the case of the People of the State of Illinois ex rel. Dennis E. Byrne et al. vs. The City of Chicago, known as the Time Keepers case, concerning which I have been requested to give an opinion as to the advisability of the League interesting itself to secure a hearing and a decision from the Supreme Court upon the questions involved.

I beg to say that in my judgment, the record of this case does not include the main question upon which the League desired a final ruling. Some features of the case might be construed into such a position, but fairly stated, there is a distinction between the Byrne case and the form of case in which the issue might properly be raised as to the abolition of an office by a transfer of the duties to another incumbent. A careful examination of the Byrne case and all of the cases cited in the opinion given by Judge Stein in the Byrne case, shows that the office of Time Keeper was itself abolished, and the duties thereof were transferred to other employees, to be, by them performed in connection with their own duties, a performance of which was easily possible by them owing to the fact that their duties did not consume their entire time; and it must be apparent that such being the case the abolition of the mere office of Time Keeper would result, if faithfully enforced, in an actual salvage to the City. As a matter of fact it does not appear that much actual salvage results, but this is owing to the disposition on the part of the Foremen in the Water Pipe Extension Service to avoid the performance of such duties as it is possible for them to evade.

If the Byrne case were one in which the duties of a Time Keeper had been actually transferred to one other individual appointee, acting as Time Keeper under another name, it would furnish, in my judgment, such a case as it was felt possible the Byrne case was, and would afford grounds for further appeal with a justifiable hope of a favorable opinion from the Upper Court. It must be stated that the Byrne case hews very close to the line, but I doubt very much whether on the record made in the Circuit Court, where the case was decided by Judge Dunne in one way, and in the Appellate Court, where it was decided by Judge Stein in another way, would justify an appeal with any hope for a reversal of Judge Stein's
opinion and the substitution therefor of the opinion of the Circuit Judge.

In the matter of Technical questions asked at recent examinations for School Engineers, Supervising Mechanical Engineers, and others, I beg to report that orders have been issued by the President of the Commission to have copies thereof prepared and sent to me at the earliest possible opportunity.

With reference to Sixty day appointees in the office of the Board of Local Improvements, I beg to report that upon presentation of the matter to the Civil Service Commission with the request for information for authority for the employment of Special Assessment Expert Accountants temporarily, I am advised by the President of the Commission that an eligible list was prepared about two years ago, which list has been exhausted by waiver and by certification, and that the Commission has decided to certify from another list in the future, rather than to extend further temporary authority.

They have also under consideration the advisability of requiring as far as may be possible, that permanent appointees shall be appointed in sufficient number, only, to render continuous service in this particular class of work. The practice has been in the Department to suspend operations in this class of work until arrears have accumulated or emergency makes necessary the speedy performance of arrearages of work. This, as I have reported to the Commission, is a subterfuge, or is liable to abuse as a subterfuge, in order to avoid the necessity of certifying as eligibles in order to reserve certain patronage for such uses, as periodic or political emergency might make necessary or advisable. The Commission will inform me at a later date of such disposition as may be made of this matter.
Your Special Committee appointed at the last meeting of the League "to secure an advisory Committee for the Organization" offers this as its report.

The Committee recommends that the Secretary be directed to address a letter, a copy of which, is herewith attached, to the persons below named:

Dear Sir:

At a recent meeting of the Civil Service League, it was decided to address you and other public spirited men of Chicago, in the hope of enlisting your moral support and encouragement. The purpose of the League is the scrupulous enforcement of the Civil Service Law and the building up in Chicago, under its operation, of a municipal service based upon ability and merit in its servants, and not upon their partisan affiliation and preference.

2nd. The League has been organized some three years and its regular membership embraces men of ability from almost every grade and department of the City's service, both mechanical and clerical. It has worked for the fair, uniform enforcement of the law, and it has not, nor will it, support or defend a member whose conduct and work are not in keeping with the law requirements and with an efficient public service.

Our roll of honorary members embraces the names of business and professional men only, public spirited men interested in the betterment of the public service. Permission to add your name to our Honorary membership roll would be an esteemed favor. We need the encouragement and moral support of men like yourself and we are certainly putting forth our best efforts to merit your encouragement and favor. There are no fees or dues attached to honorary membership with the League. We want only your kindly advice and encouragement, confident that the endorsement of such men will best aid in the accomplishment of the League's object, as their advice will best guide its action, when legal or other action is necessary to secure the end desired. In fact the Advisory Committee of the League is made up wholly from the roll of its honorary members, and this Committee passes upon the merits of all cases, requiring or involving legal action by the League to secure the just enforcement and administration of the law.

Trusting we may have the favor of an early reply and your per-
mission to add your name to our roster of Honorary members, I am,

Truly yours,

[Signatures]

And for defraying the expense of stationery, postage and printing, the Committee further recommends that the sum of $10.00, or so much thereof as is necessary, be appropriated.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signatures]
The just enforcement of law, and the honest and intelligent conduct of public works are essential to the welfare and prosperity of the community.

Such conception of duty to the public can be best secured through the merit system of certification of employees, thus freeing of spoils chains and their tenure of office depending solely upon their ability and faithfulness in office.

The present Civil Service Commission has failed to carry out either the spirit or the letter of the law, and,

The details of the enforcement of the law are in the hands of the Secretary of the Commission.

The article in the March issue of The Civil Service Gazette shows this honor, J. D. Dunne, to be not only a friend of the law, but an earnest advocate with a thorough understanding of the importance of the honest enforcement thereof.

We believe it to be the purpose of this honor to make pressing the highest degree of efficiency in all appointments.
Resolved: If number among our membership one whose public and private life and whose record are such as to merit most kindly being especially well qualified for the position of Secretary of the Civil Service Commission, then by all means.

Resolved, By the Chicago Civil Service League in regular monthly meeting assembled that it urges the appointment of Mr. William V. Farrell, one of our charter members, to the position of Secretary of the Chicago Civil Service Commission and be at further

Resolved, that a committee of three consisting of our president, our first president, and junior council be and hereby are authorized to wait on the Hon. Mayor Edward H. Dunne and present a copy of these resolutions and to solicit the appointment heretofore noted.
Adopted April 29, 1905

The Chicago Civil Service League

Secretary

President

Approved

Board of Directors
Chicago Civil Service League

Incorporated

51 Portland Block
107 Dearborn Street

Chicago,

Whereas, the Civil Service League was organized for the purpose of promoting the merit system and the impartial enforcement of Civil Service laws, and

Whereas, the members of said Civil Service League are in the public service of the City of Chicago as well as the County of Cook, the State of Illinois and in the Federal Service, the political affiliation of the different members being absolutely of no influence so far as the League and its purpose are concerned, and

Whereas, several Chicago papers in recent issues have published articles misrepresenting the aims and purposes of this League, to the great detriment and injury to the said Civil Service League,

Now therefore, Be it Resolved that we, the Civil Service League, in mass meeting assembled, do hereby emphatically deny that the Civil Service League is a political organization, or connected in any way with any partisan organization, and that we earnestly request that the Chicago press publish this resolution and,

Be it further Resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to each of the leading papers of the City of Chicago.
BE IT RESOLVED by the Chicago Civil Service League that Mr. Clayton F. Smith is to be congratulated on his appointment as a member of the Board of Local Improvements. We feel that his duties will be discharged faithfully and that in his new position he will reflect credit on this organization of which he is a member.

Further, the wisdom of the Mayor in selecting a man who is fully acquainted with the routine and details of the work of the department shows an appreciation of the merit principle and gives assurance that the public interest will receive more intelligent and capable treatment.