Civil Service Reform.

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If Charles Lamb has been an American by birth, as he certainly is an American by affectionate literary adoption, he would have added probably to his list of Popular Fallacies the following doctrine, under which so many of our countrymen labor, that a republic is a self-adjusting system of liberty and equal rights, and that to rectify a theme is to rectify injustice.

Although we may justly claim that a republic, upon the whole, secures fair play for every citizen than any other government, it is not necessarily or even warrantable to claim everything.

What may be the state of affairs
generations hence, the establishment of a
republic by our forefathers has not yet
produced
commercial political virtue or developed
absolutely honest government. Like
all human devices, government must be
carefully repaired and improved even
though that government may seem to be
the best of republican governments.

The demands of reform in methods
of the administration of government are
not therefore, revolutionary, surprising or
unnatural but merely the sign of a healthy
and progressive political life.

Progress does not come unforth
but is everywhere the golden fleece
which can only be won after a fierce struggle.
As the English barons, in the phrase
of an old English writer, cut the claws of
King John, as the English Parliament taught the King that not he but the Eng.
lish people was the real sovereign, as the American colonies taught the English Parliament, in turn, that the American people would rule America; so, by every law and custom demanded by public opinion, the Americans must teach the Americans practice that the people—and not the practice rule.

The fulness of liberty in the United States lay, therefore, in the responsibility on the shoulders of the citizens for the right management of public affairs, and for procuring and main.
taining the purity and integrity of our government! If anything is wrong or unjust in the administration
Of government the fault lies at the citizen's door since the very nature of American institutions gives him full opportunity to guide them as he will. If public servants are amiss, it is because the citizen is either criminally indifferent to public welfare or too ignorant to make them do otherwise.

"The Civil Service of the United States comprises those offices and that machinery, excepting the Army and Navy, which are essential to the executive functions of government."

These offices number at present 170,000. According to the constitution, they are filled by appointment by the President and not by suffrage of the people. These are but a few of their offices which
may properly be considered political officers. Those officers who are appointed are concerned in carrying out the distinctive policy of the administration.

There are two distinct and antagonistic theories upon which appointments to civil service positions may be made. The first permits them to be used for the personal pleasure of the appointing power, regarding them as his property, gifts or bribes with which to reward those who have fought to advance his interests. This is properly called the "spoils system," because it regards officials as private spoils and not public trusts. In the language of the admiral, "To the victor belong the spoils." The second theory regards
all offices to which the executive appoints
the incumbents, excepting those the
functions of which are directly concerned
with carrying out the distinctive policy
of the administration, are the property
of the nation, and declared that appoint-
ments to said offices should be made
solely with a view to the general welfare
and impartial service of the people. This
theory aims only to secure the most capa-
able men in office, and is called
the "merit system."

When the barons of England obtained
the "Magna Charta" from King John in 1215,
they made him promise that he would
not appoint any "justices, constables, sheriffs
nor bailiffs and such as knew the laws of
the realm and meant to obey them."
This began the most system of
appointments in the history of English
Christian nations. Through an age
long struggle, the growth of popular intell-
ignce opposed the misus and abuse of
Government with a resistance which has
at last, been rewarded with a high
degree of success.

Two governments have been founded
under such favorable circumstances
as our own, and few finer compliments
have been paid to the American Colo-
nies than that conveyed in the follow-
ing observation of Lecky in his History
of England in the Eighteenth Century:

"Formation even started on its career will
- a larger proportion of strong character
- or a higher sense of moral conviction
than the English colonies in America. They almost entirely escaped the corruption that so deeply stained the government at home.

Now our constitution was forming, men fearing the irresponsible use of appointments to office, which had so often characterized the actions of English prime ministers, were unwilling to place the appointing power in the hands of the President alone and so it was finally determined that the President should appoint officers "by and with the consent of the Senate."

Washington, even before his election, was the recipient of many applications from persons seeking appointments in governmental offices. To relations,
friends or strangers, he returned the same reply. I go to the chair under no preengagements of any kind or nature whatever. He rules which guided his selections were: 1) fitness of character to fill the office. 2) Comparative claims by reason of service in the Revolution. 3) as far as possible, proportionate distribution among the various states. 4) appointment of well-known men. Among personal friends of Washington applied for an office together with a political enemy of the president. All interested were amazed at the impudence of the latter but he received the appointment.

Washington said: "My friend... Imagine..."
of business. His opponent, while all this politics are tunnel to me, is a man of business. My private feelings have nothing to do with the case. As George Washington, I would do this man any kindness in my power. As President of the United States I can do nothing."

Jefferson, animated by the same high sense of political honor and duty, said: "Of the thousands of officers in the United States a very few individuals only, probably not twenty, will be removed, and those only for doing what they ought not to have done. I know that in stopping short the career of removal I will give offence to many of my friends ....... but my motives
fist justicia, must celibate." In a letter, in 1801, he said concerning appointments: "The only question concerning a candidate should be is he honest, is he capable, is he faithful to the constitution."

Washington made his removals:
John Adams nine, Jefferson thirty-nine, Madison five, Monroe nine, and J. Q. Adams two.

With the inauguration of President Jackson, however, all previous notions of political virtue were utterly destroyed.

Rising from the ranks of the common people, Jackson possessed many of the faults as well as the virtues of the Western frontiersman. It's believed that by refusing to install
his political bulletin offers he
would be committing a gross breach
of gratitude. I entered into the exec-
utive policy of the American government
an apparent indifference to public
welfare and a corruption whose harm-
ful consequences can never be es-
timated.

Daniel Webster, in speaking of the
condition of the civil service at the close
of Jackson's second administration,
said: "As far as I know, there is
no civilized country on earth in which,
on a change of rulers there is such an
ingenious form of rule as we have witnesed
in this free Republic...... The same
fruity selfishness which drives good
men out of office will push bad men
in. Political corruption leads necessarily to the filling of offices with incompetent persons, and to certain consequent maladministration of official duties. "At another time in these remarks," Quo Public duties, not private spoils.

In Mr. Lincoln's presidency the influence and clamor for offices had grown so great that he declared it to be as great a strain upon him as guiding the country throughout the whole civil war.

President Garfield's death by the bullet of a disappointed office seeker finally startled the whole country into a realization of the magnitude of the danger which was threatening the very existence of our republican
Government

In 1872 the Republican platform had declared: "Any system of the civil service, under which the subordinate
functions of any government are con

sidered rewards for mere party zeal is
fata]]ally demoralizing, and we therefore
favor a reform of the system by laws
which shall abolish the evil of patron
age, and make honesty, efficiency and
fidelity the essential qualifications
for public positions, without prac
tically creating a life tenure of office."

From that time forward, no political
party has dared to come before the
people without a distinct recog
nition in its platform of the claims
of civil service reform. In spite
of all true protestations, however, no
truth has actively carried into oper-
atation any Hue system of civil service
reforms.

Washington once said of party spirit,
"it exists under different shape in dif-
ferent governments, more or less stifled
controlled or repressed, but in those
of popular form, it is seen in its great-
est rankness and is truly the worst
enemy." The experience of a century
has justified his words. He expe-
rienced that a king can do no wrong; his
come to be the practical faith of the
common people of our country in regard
to party. Strengthened by the power
of patronage, party overthrows the free
expression of the popular will and arms
itself to struggle for its own aims, regardless of the welfare of the state. Party patronage makes the civil service—a skilled and disciplined army whose existence depends on carrying elections at any costs. It compels the voter to support a party with bad measures and unfit candidates rather than risk the success of another party with good measures and superior candidates. The end of such a course can only bring about the lowering of the political tone of our national action and the destruction of those very institutions which our forefathers industriously and capably labored to establish.

Let us picture the course of a can-
... dorse for congress under the influence of the "Dove's System." At the outset he is a man of good character with no ambition to serve his country honestly and to the best of his ability.

This is the year of a presidential election with a new deal of patronage in prospect. Our aspirant has just to get the nomination from his party convention. The funds are necessary to secure the aid of some alert and influential politicians and their return demand that their services be rewarded by governmental positions which it will be possible for him, as a senator, to secure for them.

Our friend is honest and has been for conducted all his actions in a perfectly honorable and upright manner.
He is as firmly unwilling to bargain in this way for his nomination or election but finally he is persuaded that all senators act similarly and resolves to win the nomination at almost any cost.

He receives the nomination and now the campaign begins. It needs local stump speakers who can discus opposition by personal work or who can do a great deal in his behalf by wise expenditure of a little money. These men are not to go unrewarded naturally if he wins. To accept their service and thus gives them claims on him. The election is going to be very close and more and more aid must be secured and the "claims" become more numerous and strong.
The election comes and our nominee

The has resolved previously
to devote his time entirely to his duties
as adjutant of the nation and a
public servant. He now begins to
prepare himself for his different
duties. Business he finds he has no
time for them. Other business demands
his instant attention. His political
friends flock to him and demand that
he secure for them governmental
positions. He is surely not going to
throw away grateful to his friends. They
have caused his election and must
be rewarded. The friends that in the
beginning of the campaign he has
promised a certain host of office appoint-
ments to his different men. He must
get rid of one of the claimants and yet not cause the enmity of the unsuccessful friend. It decides that Jones shall receive the appointment and that Smith must be appeased in some way. Then our congressman with Smith by his side appears before the departmental chief at Washington and makes a glowing speech on the ability of Smith and tells the chief that he of all men should be appointed to a certain office - while the departmental chief this address has been advised before hand by the same new congressman that he cares nothing about Smith but wants Jones to secure the appointment.

Then the one trustful and confiding
Smith thanks the congressman in the warmest terms for the splendid effort of friendship.

Other complications arise. The administration wishes to follow a policy which our congressman feels to be wrong and not in accordance with the true needs of the county. This has to not receive favors from the executive in the appointment of his friends to political offices? May not the need at some future date to be friendly with the administering power? This moral independence is at stake but he can in his own strength not resist future dangers through which powerful friends can aid him but which will prove too much for him if unaided. His fears congress and
our noble-minded and right-thinking congressman has degenerated to a moral condition which he would have believed impossible of him, only a year ago!

Perhaps the picture I have tried to draw is merely a creation of the fancy, but unfortunately it is painfully like the truth in many cases and at least is within the bounds of possibility under the corrupt influences of the "spoils system."

I can imagine, then, but two classes of congressmen who would resist those Civil Service Reforms: those under the merit system, all minor appointments would be made without the influence of members of Congress favoring
of any avail to any candidate.

The fact is that classes of congressmen who are too indolent to champion any
reform which will necessitate much
labor. The second class is com-
posed of those political bosses who, but for
the influence given them by the "Spirit
System," would never become a congress-

ional appointment.

These two classes of officials are un-
worthy of any office of trust and so
might to have no influence with honest
and fair minded voters.

Let us now turn to the "Mail System."

This method of appointment represents
principles which are diametrically opposed
in those of the "Spirit System." It recog-
nizes the public welfare as the greatest good
2) It reverts upon merit as the greatest and best test of fitness for public offices.
3) It maintains that public offices are public trusts, not private spoils; it affirms that patriotism condemns the use of the power of appointment and removal for mere selfish ends.

Under the merit system our aspirant for congressional honor is nominated and elected to his position without bending him self down by allowing political friends to have any just claims on his attention or time or influence. Our nominees are not permitted to guarantee any governmental office for their friends and consequently he is not forced to enter into any underhand dealings. He is elected with the knowledge that his own merit has caused his
appointment and consequently he felt bound to prove to all that their confidence in his ability has not been misplaced. He thus struggles upward and onward perfecting not only himself but also the general moral tone of politics. till finally he stands before the world an honor to his state and an example of true and noble American manhood.

Under the 'merit system,' the higher officials are not the only ones who prove the superiority of the reform for the universal testimony of the chiefs of bureaus at Washington proves that under the reform method of appointment, the clerks and lower

John F. Noble (former Secretary of the Interior)
once said: "The department of the In-
terior and its 7,000 clerks could not run
six months without the great body of the
employees being under the civil service
reform rules." Such expert testimony
cannot fail to be conclusive as to the ben-
efits of the system.

Let us now see the grounds on which
the "Devils System" is defended.

It is not pretended by even its stron-
gest adherents that the "Devils System"
secures a more honest or efficient
system. If such were the case the con-
tinuance would be quickly ended.

For allegations are made on behalf
of this system by our government is a
government of parties, parties can only
be maintained by necessary rewards
...and therefore all offices must be tested as
Frankly I reply: i.e. "to the victors belong the
spoils." 2) Appointment by merit is
un-American and un-Democratic and creates
a class of landed aristocracy which is
undesirable.

As to the first allegation and decided with Daniel
Webster: "Offices are public trusts, not
private spoils."

As to the second affirmation: As politicians
have as yet shown why it is un-American
and un-Democratic to select officials from
a crowd of applicants by ascertaining their
relative merits and selecting the one
who is most likely to prove the most
efficient and capable. Nothing is so
thoroughly American and Democratic
as fair play and nothing can be fairly
than that every aspirant should enter the
competition on a fair and equal footing
and he who proves the most competent
win. If this is any aristocracy in poli-
tsice it has much certainly been restricted
—to three politicians who, by means of pull,
are enabled to procure for themselves
and unqualified friends and decri-
able offices.

The claims on which the justice of
the "spirits system" are based are, then,
utterly false and unjustified.

It has been shown that the effects of the
"spirits system" are most harmful and that
ceaselessly follows that it should be opposed
and as soon as possible done away with.
It is one of the greatest evils which confront our nation and even imperiling the existence of our free institutions. It teaches men something else in politics than the fundamental principle of the general good. It attaches into our politics the worst elements of our population and changes party contest into a mere scramble for plunder. It replaces the statesman with the political "boss." It has tainted two of our Presidents. It has ruined by money and Garfield by the assassin's pistol. It degrades our senators and representatives into mere office seekers. These are a few, but only a few, of the evils which have been brought into the government of our country by the "spirits system," but it is not possible to see the total all the injury which the inclusion
of its false notions has brought about.

The reforms summed up in substance in the words of Mr. Carl Schurz is that "for a place in the administrative part of the government not the mere henchman of some party leader or committee, but he who proves himself best qualified for the duties of the office than his competitors; for the conuncler service, not a mere political drummer or a man who has patronized member of Congress under political eligation, but he who proves himself especially well versed in commercial affairs and law and in command of the necessary equipments for the performance of conuncler duty; for the police force, not the mere graduate of a Whig.
which whoever comes handy is to be rewarded.

He can neither yield the place to any but
the man is found in posit of moral char-
acter, as well as mental and physical
qualifications, to be a person of super-
ior fitness for the duties of a policeman;
and for promotion in the service, not the
merit of some political magnate or
his wife or daughter, but truth has shown
that he deserves the promotion by
superior capacity, efficiency, and fidelity.

"This is what it means to
free public functions out of politics. This
is the merit's system. This is Civil Service
Reform."

From being, at the start, a mere exper-
enment the reform has steadily gained
strength until now there are about 57,000
places in the national civil service to which the sole test is merit.

The benefits which the merit system confers upon the people are direct and indirect. The direct benefits are those derived from securing for government employment the most efficient and reliable services. The indirect benefits are those arising from the stimulus and encouragement given to the general education of the people. The industry which comes from genuine rivalry between candidates for civic offices which are the rewards of merit alone, and the incentive to exertion which produces character and attainment, and manly thought and independence which makes men the leaders in the
community.

In three of the states of our union, Illinois, Massachusetts, and New York, the merit system has been put to a good and thorough test, and in each of these states the result has shown to the people that the system is practical, efficient and absolutely necessary in bringing the civil service of our country.

In Pennsylvania, however, the people seem to have paid but little regard to the principles of good government in connection with removals and appointments of public officials.

Instituted fifteen years ago, the Civil Service Reform Association of Pennsylvanias has steadily increased in membership and strength until now...
there are enrolled under its banner
about 800 active members who are try-
ing to advance, in every way, the polit-
ical morale of the state.

Wherever reforms are instituted, the
struggle for their existence must of nec-
essity be prolonged and severe and
Pennsylvania has proved no exception
to this rule.

Shortly after the genesis of the move-
ment in Pennsylvania, there came a
period of inactivity on the part of re-
formers. This arose partly through
an unavoidable prominence of economic
questions which assumed greater im-
portance in the public mind than the
question of political reform, and partly
by from the feeling that an experiment
had been begun which required careful watching, but which, if properly con-
ducted, was certain to grow in public favor and gradually to extend from its
own merit until it became established in our national polity.

But reformers are temporarily rest
less—and it soon became apparent
that in this new field there was ample
opportunity for the exercise of full
energy.

The government of cities was becom
more and worse and though occasion-
ally spasmodic efforts at reform had
been successful, the people began to
realize that something must be done
as once on behalf of good government.

For a long time their efforts were
conducted in a feeble and ineffectu
matically, but finally organization has been effected and the reforms are now being urged in a way which cannot fail to produce good results ultimately.

Philadelphia reformers are at present seeking especially to take the Twenty-fourth Amendment or order to policeman or other public employees to refrain from activity at general or primary elections will be of any avail as long as the appointments and retention of such persons in office of such persons depend in the slightest degree upon the favor of a party or ward leader.

The state society carry on their agit-
atone mainly by means of an execu-
tive committee composed of fifteen men. This committee act for the
association by advancing in a systematic way, the interests of the move-
ment.

Throughout the past year their efforts have been characterized by earnest and persistent
watchfulness. They have revised the State Civil Service Bill and have made cer-
tain needed amendments which if adopted by the Legislature would greatly aid in
purifying Pennsylvania state politics. They have drawn up a carefully con-
ceived "corrupt practice" act which aims at the various corruptions which have crept in
state politics. They have presented a memorial to the state senate urging
in investigations by a senatorial committee
and have visited with complaints made
by discharged civil service officials with
a view to the punishment of higher officials
should their discharge have been unjustified.

The committee has also endeavored to
secure the passage of a state law which
would cancel appointments in the postal
system, police and firemen force to
be regulated by the Civil Service Examinations.

Having labored thus as a unit, the
committee has done much towards hasten
the adoption of the reform.

They have also worked as individuals
and tried to secure among the votes
of the state a greater interest in Civil
Service Reform.

The state legislature has shown itself
be unwilling to do any thing at
present, for the main system but mere
less, the friends of this reform have
labor on in its cause hoping that
our legislators, state and national,
will realize the efficiency and deser-
ability of the reform.

Under the national presidency of
Mr. Carl Schurz and the State leader-
ship of Mr. Herbert Wetli, the reform
is steadily growing in popular confidence
and favor.

That this reform will be ultimately
adopted there can be no doubt but to
secure this success, it is necessary that
the interest and cooperation
of the citizens be secured on behalf of
this movement.
Then the people of the United States in view of the national peril which confronts them, and realize that in civil service Reform alone lies their only safety, are not till then will our citizens bring our government once more to what it was designed to be—a government not for the benefit of politicians or machines, but a true government of the people, for the people and by the people.