



SERVING THE GOVERNMENT

A citizen of the Philippines may serve the country in many ways. But the most direct way of rendering this service is for one to be either a soldier or an employee or officer of the Government. The first class of service is called military service and the second, civil service.

There are different classes of civil service officers. Some are elected such as municipal presidents, provincial governors, and members of the legislature. Others are appointed, such as the heads of executive departments, chiefs of bureaus, clerks, stenographers, and other minor employees of the Government. All of them may be classified into two groups: political officers and non-political officers.

Most of the political officers are elected; but some are appointed, such as the heads of the executive departments. They represent in a way the political party to which they belong. They hold office during a brief period of time, generally three years. When defeated in the elections, or when their party fails to get a majority of the votes at the election, these political officers cease to hold office.

The non-political officers do not represent any political party. They may be grouped into two classes: (1) The judges and (2) the officers or employees performing the everyday functions of the Government. The judges, as we have already seen, are made by the Constitution independent of outside control. The highest political leader in the executive or legislative departments may not tell them what they should do. The independence of the judges has always been considered necessary by every person.

The officers and employees of the Government performing the routine duties of Government day by day, such as clerks, stenographers, assistant heads of bureaus and offices, are sometimes known as administrative officers. They have not always been given the independence that they should have. There was a time when these administrative employees were all removed whenever a change took place in the men having the power to appoint them. For instance, when the Republicans of the United States defeat the Democrats, most of the administrative employees are changed. They are replaced by followers of the Republican Party. This system is called the *Spoils System*. The party under this system uses Government positions as rewards to their men. This is a treacherous act to the taxpayer, because it is he who pays the salary of the government officers and employees. It is not the political party that furnishes the money for salaries. The taxpayer, therefore, has the right to complain against the *spoils system*.

A few weeks ago a member of the Philippine Legislature was said to have stated the following: "We do not appoint relatives to govern-

ment jobs. We give these jobs to our party henchmen. It is a privilege for them to hold these jobs." This legislator thinks that the *spoils system* is good as long as the men they place in government jobs are not their relatives. In order to prevent this bad practice, our constitution requires that appointments to the civil service must be made only according to the merit and fitness of the person to be appointed. These qualifications are to be determined by means of competitive examinations. There are positions, however, which need not be filled by examinations. These are the confidential or technical positions, and positions by which government policies are determined.

Once appointed to a civil service position, a person should not be changed just because a political leader does not like him. Neither should he be expelled from his office just because a political chief wants to put his favorite man in his place. So that these things may not happen, the constitution says that no person occupying a civil service position may be removed from office except when there is cause for his removal.

The constitution wants us to consider a public office as something belonging to the people, not as the property of any man or any political party. It should be used by the person who fills it for the benefit of the public, not for his personal benefit. Because of this, men should be chosen for a civil service position for only one reason. That reason is that he is able to do the work well and that he has the character required to hold the office in a proper manner.

DOG PROTECTS HIS MASTERS' HOME

Near a village in Malabar, India, a fight to the finish took place between a cobra and a house dog. The big cobra snake was trying to enter the house of the dog's masters. The dog seeing that the cobra was attempting to pass through a hole in the house went after it. The snake raised its head and struck the dog a number of times. Greatly angered

the dog rushed at the snake and grabbed the cobra's head between his teeth, shaking it violently. But the poison which the cobra had injected into the dog had taken effect and the faithful animal fell over dead. However, the dog too, had given the cobra its death stroke and it fell from the dog's mouth a lifeless body.