The National Administration Of The United States Of America

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THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF
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BY

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PREFACE

It is somewhat surprising that there has not been published long ago a comprehensive and systematic work on American national administration, but it must be acknowledged that with all that has been written on our governmental system this part of it has been hitherto almost entirely neglected, except in fugitive and scattered articles on particular phases of the subject. For a long time books on American government dealt only with the Constitution and its judicial interpretation, with special reference to the powers of Congress. Since Mr. Bryce's enlightening work appeared attention has been given to methods of legislative procedure and the influence of parties and party machinery. But the administrative organization and activities of the government have still been hardly mentioned in most works of a general nature.

At the same time the importance of administrative questions is evidenced by the attention given to them in public discussions, in current periodicals and in the volumes that have been published on many special topics. It may indeed be safely asserted that the problems of administration are the important problems of the present; and that they receive the attention which in earlier times was given to problems of constitutional organization. In view of these facts there seems to be a place for a general survey of the whole field of national administration which is presented in this book.

A glance at the table of contents will indicate more definitely the scope of the work. It will be seen that it is not an account of the national government as a whole, but simply of the administrative system. The legislative and judicial branches are

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mentioned only in their direct relations to the executive administration.

Such a study should be of service not only for itself, but also as a model, to some extent at least, for State and local administration. For, with its defects, the national administration presents an organized system, where responsibility can be fixed and a fair degree of efficiency secured; and contrasts sharply with the disorganized and heterogeneous mass of administrative officials in our states, cities and other local districts. And it may be hoped that an orderly presentation of the national system may have some influence in securing a degree of organization where there is now little but chaos.

In the main the book has been written from the primary official records: the Constitution of the United States, the statutes of Congress, administrative reports and judicial decisions. But I have not hesitated to make use also of statements from unofficial sources written by those who have had opportunity for more thorough observation and investigation in particular branches of the administrative service than is possible for any one person covering so wide a field. And in many matters I have been able to rely on personal acquaintance with the administration in action.

References at the beginning of each chapter furnish a select bibliography, covering the most valuable and accessible printed material bearing directly on the subjects here considered. These, however, do not include references to all of the original statutes or to the periodical reports of the various departments and bureaus. Additional information may be discovered scattered through the treatises on American history, government and law, and in the volumes of judicial reports of the United States courts. Finally, for a complete study of the national administration, there is a vast accumulation of unpublished records in the archives of the various government offices. An account of these unpublished records and their location has recently been prepared in the Guide to the Archives of the Government of the United States in Washington, by Claude Hal-