

HOUSE No. 1437.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, BOSTON, June 1, 1904.

The Honorable Senate and House of Representatives :

I return herewith, with my objections thereto in writing, an act entitled " An Act Relative to Appointments in the Cambridge Fire Department."

This act gives to the call men who may pass the examination with the minimum mark of sixty-five per cent. the right to preference in appointments to the permanent force of the Cambridge Fire Department over all other applicants at the pleasure of the appointing power, and practically excludes from the competition any person who does not happen to be so situated as to be able to accept the position of a call fireman.

Under the regulations of the Civil Service Commission men are now given credit for their experience in fire work to such extent as may be justified by that experience. To do more than this, to put them at the top of the list, when, notwithstanding the advantage of their experience, they are not able to pass the examination which entitles them to that position, is to violate the fundamental principle of the civil service law, which is, that men shall be entitled to enter the public service in accordance with their actual merit.

Permit me to call to your attention the message dated May 19th, 1904, accompanying my return to your Honorable bodies without my approval of the act entitled

“An Act Relative to Call Members of the Fire Departments in Cities and Towns.” The bill now under consideration is open to every objection stated in that communication, and to one more, namely, that this is special legislation applying to the City of Cambridge only, a rule, which, if advisable in the case of one city is advisable in the case of all.

JOHN L. BATES.