

**FOR A TRAINED SERVICE.**

A prominent member of the civil service expressed his views to *The Civilian* about a number of things of interest to all. Other points of the interview can be mentioned later, but one especially is worthy of record now.

"Civil servants have not sufficiently taken advantage of the opportunities offered under the promotion clauses of the existing law. There is too general a belief that promotion depends wholly upon a man's record at his desk. That is only one point. The men needed for the higher grades in the service are not merely beaverish persons who can show that they have signed the attendance book with regularity and have been assiduous in their daily work. These things are important, but they are not the only things that are important. The higher offices in the service call for men of capacity, of initiative, men who know their work not merely as their work but as something having relations with the work of others. In fact we need men not merely trained but educated.

"The service as a whole ought to take up this matter and ought to provide means for the education of the younger men. The actual work of the civil service is a good school of training, but it has not the power to evoke the enthusiasm of those who are to be trained. Consequently, it is slow. It is much surer than many would think. If you had to deal with a lot of raw young people and to try to make efficient clerks of them, you would feel like sympathizing with the heads of branches and others who have this job in hand. The percentage of inattention, of mere foolery, and even of covert insubordination, is high among many of those who join the ranks. But it is wonderful how the constant turning of the big machine of governmental administration and the imperative necessity of putting

through the daily grist wears these people down into shape. The first few months sometimes seem almost hopeless, but have patience for a year or two and you find the young colt who was all friskiness and inefficiency settles down into the steady worker and possibly develops even into the capable administrator.

"But the work could be so much more quickly and efficiently done by means of direct education. And this education the civil service should undertake as a body. The youngsters would be the principal beneficiaries, of course, but not the only ones, for the efficiency of the service as a whole would be increased and its tone improved.

"Classes ought to be established under the auspices of the civil service for the training of all those who aspire to promotion. A great deal of the instruction would be merely technical for many civil servants are engaged in technical work. But nothing that can be taught would come amiss. One might not be able to say in advance, for instance, just how a study of the dead languages would help a clerk in the department of Railways and Canals. But the knowledge thus gained would come in handy some day. In any case, however, the mere habit of study and the broadening effect of knowledge would make the student a better man than the one who studied for promotion mainly in the pool room or the dancing parlor.

"And if those in charge of the government saw that the civil service was thus bent on self-improvement, they would take more pride in the service and its members; and whenever a grievance arose they would pay more attention to the representatives who came to lay that grievance and its proposed remedy before them. There is something extremely human as well as divine in the desire to help those who help themselves."