

# THE CIVILIAN

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**Ottawa, Aug. 28th, 1908**

## THE CIVIL SERVICE AND THE COMMUNITY.

There are signs on every hand that the civil service at the present moment is hewing out for itself a new, or at any rate a better defined, place in the community. The past year has for the first time witnessed the phenomenon of a thoroughly united service pressing forward to a common goal. The organization of the Civil Service Association has achieved, above everything else, the birth of a new class consciousness. Even the failures of the year have contributed, in the sharp knowledge they have brought of the differentiation of the service, at least at points, from the rest of the body politic. The result has been a steady, if unconscious, advance toward a perception on the part of the service as to precisely where it stands in the community.

With the inception alone of a way of thinking in this manner, something substantial has been accomplished. With its crystalization into a habit, the future will undoubtedly hold much in store for the civil service that the past has not.

Consider, for a moment, the relations of the service to the business community. In the curious atmosphere in which the civil servant has found himself enveloped in the past in his daily work, it is small wonder if loose thinking and loose methods have distinguished him in his dealings with the public. In the world of business he is, to speak for the type, unbusinesslike. Half through inertia, half through prejudice, he has given the rein to custom and sentiment as perhaps no other person of his opportunities. He has relied on the community to be at his back in emergencies, and in some vague way he has taken it for granted that the community was always more or less alert to see that his interests were not invaded, the presumption being that what concerned so large a number of citizens would inevitably be made more or less the concern of all. Now, this is neither right nor proper as an attitude, for the civil service's interests are no affair *per se* of the community, and the class that does not look out for itself is, in the modern way, entitled neither to assistance nor to respect.

We have a fair illustration of the thought we are seeking to express in the career of the humble journal in which these words appear. When THE CIVILIAN first saw day, the question of its existence depended very largely upon the initial favour with which it was received at the hands of the service. Advertising depends on circulation, and circulation in turn to a degree on publicity. We own that, with the objects we had set before us, we had expected, in spite of the chasm which cut off our fulfillment from our desire, some cordial assistance from the city press. A friendly