

of purpose has been effected among the various branches of the service, and there has been a crystallization of favorable consideration in Congress."

### Interview With President Taft.

At the close of the convention, a delegation from the Association sought and was granted an interview with President Taft. The delegation was headed by the newly elected officers, and the President received them with a manifest interest in their work, pronounced himself a staunch advocate of the merit system of civil service appointments, and declared for a liberal adjustment of the particular problem in hand. It will be of interest to Canadian civil servants to read how they do these things across the border, and THE CIVILIAN accordingly reprints the two main speeches of the occasion.

In introducing the delegation, the President of the Association said:

"Mr. President: We come as delegates of the United States Civil Service Retirement Association to pay our respects and those of our co-employees in the classified service of the United States, numbering a quarter of a million, more or less. We come to thank you, in the first place, for the words of cheer which you gave us before you were elected to your present exalted position, and to thank you still more for what you have said and done since. We have been taking notes, Mr. President, and we have seen that you declined to dismiss two aged employees in the Department of Justice, whose fate had been left hanging in the balance by the outgoing Attorney General; and we beg to link with your name, Mr. President, the name of the present distinguished and humane Attorney General, Hon. Geo. W. Wickersham.

"In a letter to you on one occasion,

Mr. President, I said the government employes, taken as a whole, were among the most intelligent and patriotic citizens of the United States. I add to that now that they are also the most loyal to its institutions and its President. No war has been fought on land or sea in which they did not take a distinguished part. And if ever the United States is assailed, either by invasion from abroad or by revolt from within, the first to rally to its banner will be the classified employes. We hold ourselves, Mr. President, to be the eyes and ears and hands of the President and Cabinet, and, holding that, we deem it our duty to sustain them in perpetuating the splendid institutions handed down to their care by the fathers of the Republic."

### President Taft to the Service.

In reply, President Taft spoke as follows:

"Your coming is rather a surprise to me. I had not anticipated it and, therefore had not prepared to say anything on the subject suggested in the address of your chairman. It goes without saying that I am strongly in favor of the merit system of appointment in all government positions.

"It fell to my lot in the Philippines to institute a system even more rigid in many regards than the system adopted by the Federal government. A necessary concomitant of that system, however,—a logical accompaniment—is a provision for those who have become too old to render proper service to the government. There has been in Congress a strong feeling against the civil pension list, on the ground, I presume, that the military pension list has been so large and heavy necessarily.

"Other methods have been proposed by means of either voluntary or in-