

# THE CIVILIAN

Devoted to the interests of the Civil Service  
of Canada.

Subscription \$1.00 a year ;  
Single copies 5 cents.

Advertising rates are graded according to position and space, and will be furnished upon application.

Subscriptions, MSS intended for publication, and all other communications should be addressed to

THE EDITORS,  
THE CIVILIAN,  
P. O. Box 484, Ottawa

Communications on any subject of interest to the Civil Service are invited and will receive careful consideration.

Ottawa, August 25th, 1911

## THE MERIT SYSTEM.

The "New York Evening Post" recently contained the following editorial:

"How long has it been since the idea of selecting a Chief for the largest Fire Department in the United States by competitive examination would have been received with the withering scorn of all 'practical' men? How ridiculous, they would have pointed out, to suppose that anything so academic could for a moment be considered as a test of what the candidate would do under the actual conditions that a Chief has to face. The most likely outcome of such an absurdity as shutting up a few men in a room to write down answers to questions dealing with the distance to Mars and the number of cubic feet in the Great Pyramid in order to ascertain what they would do with an ugly blaze on Broadway would inevitably be the choice of the least capable

candidate in the lot. Yesterday, however, the Mayor of New York unblushingly congratulated John Kenlon upon the fact that he had reached his responsible post by virtue of his own merits, tested in a Civil Service examination. What is more, the Mayor had previously taken away from the appointing officer his power of rejecting two of the three highest candidates on the list, thus putting the office squarely into the hands of the Civil Service Commission. And not a 'practical' individual protested! On the contrary, there was evident a general feeling of satisfaction over this method of choosing a successor to ex-Chief Croker. The very men who took the examination praised its adaptability to the end in view, while those whose property was at stake accepted the result with as much unanimity as they could have manifested if the place had been awarded by the old process of 'influence'. The circumstance is eloquent of the change that has been brought about in public standards and ideals within a few decades."



## AN INTERCHANGE OF CIVIL SERVANTS.

New Zealand's scheme for a regular interchange of Civil Servants between the Mother Country and the different Governments of the Dominions does not appear to have received more than a platonic support at the late Imperial Conference. Nevertheless, some definite advance was made in the principle. Mr. Harcourt, the Secretary for the Colonies, told the delegates that he would support the idea of the Dominion Governments sending Civil Servants to the Offices of the High Commissioners in London for varying periods. On the more serious proposal of an interchange he saw various difficulties in the way. It is unfortunate that the précis of the pro-