

THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE—Continued.

Regarding "a definite programme of work for the ensuing year," this only means systematic work, as against aimless endeavor with no definite aim in view. The inclusion of a programme in the proposition to be put before prospective members will also have the effect of showing the importance and need of the chamber of commerce. It will present the object of the organization to them in a new light and cannot help but create enthusiasm and a desire to do their share, particularly when they are made to see that their interests are vitally concerned.

The clause which concerns the formation of committees to carry out each part of the programme is the motive power which makes an efficient machine out of a Chamber of Commerce. Every community has certainly many problems which demand consideration by the Chamber of Commerce Committee. There should be a City Beautifying Committee, an Amusement and Playgrounds Committee, a City Planning Committee, a Civic Affairs Committee, a Retail Merchants' Committee, and last, but not least, an Agricultural Committee.

"The issuing of an annual bulletin dealing with the success of the different committees in carrying out the work entrusted to them," means, of course, a record of the work done during the year and shows, in a tangible way, that the Chamber of Commerce is a serious organization. The men who participate in bringing about the results contained in the bulletin should be encouraged to continue their service to the community. Non-members, more than members, should be made to realize that their help, personal and financial, is needed to continue the good work, and they must indeed be very inferior citizens if they are not inspired to become members and do their share.

The last clause referring to a paid secretary is perhaps one of the most important of all, inasmuch as the other clauses are more easily and effectively carried out under the direction of an efficient paid secretary. Having no other interests at stake but the development of the Chamber of Commerce and the city in which it lives, he is enabled to formulate programmes for the different committees, according to the greatest needs of the community. He could work hand in hand with the business men as there is a great deal of work connected with city development which can only be incompletely done, when left in the hands of one individual. To ask a secretary to devote his whole time to the service of his community, simply to prove his sense of love and devotion would be rather presumptuous. The profession of secretary is so important to-day that the large universities throughout the United States are now instituting special courses for the training of efficient secretaries. This secretary, if efficient, would more than make his own salary the first year, by formulating plans for membership campaigns to be conducted under his guidance.

He would have no difficulty in showing the business men that a fee of \$25 per year, instead of the usual \$5.00, would indirectly revert back to them through an active organization, made possible by adequate funds. He could make any business man admit that he would rather invest \$25 in goods that will bring him a profit, instead of \$5 in goods which nobody wants. Members of successful organizations never consider their membership fee, be it \$50 or \$100 as a contribution. They are forced to admit that it is the most profitable investment they can make.

Influence of a Chamber of Commerce in Securing Factories.

I will now point out the principal reasons why a city's growth and development is regulated and influenced by the activities of its Chamber of Commerce.

One of the first questions which outside manufacturers put when considering a town for the location of their plant is: Have you a live business men's organization. If the answer is yes, they naturally conclude that the city is progressive, and bound to prosper. That answer implies that the health of the citizens is looked after, that living conditions are right, that amusements are provided for the workers, that playgrounds exist for children, that the morals of the town are good, that the civic heads are efficient men. In a word, that there is an organization which operates for the upbuilding and betterment of the community at large.

An efficient organization, therefore which would get credit for all I have mentioned, has an important task in hand. They must consider the relation between good environment and economic progress. They must protect the public health, destroy preventable diseases which means lowering the doctor's bills. This gives the city an increased efficiency among its people that will be of tremendous value, and of which new industries will seek to take advantage. A healthy, strong, vigorous and contented body of citizens is a most valuable asset to any industrial enterprise. The same is true of public morality. If the city allows gambling and other immoral conditions to run riot, it is undermining human character, human happiness and human welfare and these things are absolutely essential to economic efficiency. Housing conditions must be carefully looked after. The business community can well afford, and should not hesitate to build simple model houses, on a basis of minimum returns in rent and justify it as a sound business measure. It is true that most small towns in Canada have been spared the disgraceful conditions existing in larger centres with their slums, tenements, and hovels, which tend to undermine the efficiency of the workman, and which lead to industrial conflicts which are inevitable under such conditions. It is to prevent such conditions that laws covering building restrictions, should be enforced while the community is still small.

To build an industrial centre without proper provision for the housing, education and health of the laborer is to fly in the face of certain danger. Eventually revolt against such conditions is inevitable. The absence of labor disputes, and the existence of sympathetic relations between labor and capital are, in this day and age, an absolutely essential to industrial efficiency. The business men of to-day can make no worse mistake than to think that the limits of their activity should be the confines to their private business. Efficient organization is recognized as the great essential to commercial and industrial progress. There is no sphere of commercial activity, which, in the long run, will pay bigger dividends, than the activity of business men which is responsible for a clean, honest and efficient organization. The organized forces of aggressive business men, bent on laudable purposes, are irresistible.

Chamber of Commerce and the Farm.

In all well conducted cities situated in the midst of an agricultural district, one of the first things that are considered, is that the productivity of the rural community must be increased. Government reports show that the agricultural lands of the country are not producing 50 per cent of their possible yield. This is the first problem. An Agricultural Committee should be formed to co-operate with the Provincial and Federal Governments. It must see that the farmers are brought in contact with what they have to offer. They should be taught the necessity of a farmer's institute. They should be made to realize that scientific farming is the only kind that pays. When the chamber through its committee will have thus doubled the product of the rural community it will have doubled the basis of the city's growth. Very often agricultural lands have doubled in value and tripled in productivity, through the application of new methods, and the raising of new crops, which was all done through the aid of a visiting expert.

The possibilities of scientific agriculture are unlimited. Daily discoveries are increasing the value of land. It is the duty of the Chamber of Commerce of every city to bring these new inventions and discoveries to the attention of the farming community.

Better farming involves first of all scientific soil conservation, a matter which is already attracting wide attention in Canada. Soil fertility is the greatest national resource of the nation and there is no reason why this fertility should become depleted providing proper methods are taught and practiced. Soil surveys and experimental stations are the chief means by which scientific agricultural knowledge is acquired. The surveys should be extended and experimental stations should be increased in number and properly maintained, and this information which is so important to the future of Canadian agriculture should be carried right home to the farm by farm demonstrators and through extension courses under the auspices of the agricultural colleges.

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