

## How the Employment Manager Works

He is after all is said and done, a social engineer. He is dealing with human beings rather than with commodities

By J. W. MACMILLAN.

The new calling of Employment Manager means so much to industry in the way of social engineering that it is worth while to study it with attention. In my last article I set forth the need of such an official. In this I shall try to show the methods he has been led to adopt.

When an employment department is started in any industry it takes over the work of hiring and firing employees. But very soon it inevitably widens its scope of operations. Indeed, it sometimes finds it advisable to turn its energies first upon the wider and apparently incidental phenomena of employment, leaving the formal engaging and discharging of the workers to the foreman in the meantime. The problem of hiring and firing immediately reveals itself as a big human enterprise. As soon as you look closely at a man he ceases to be a "hand." The programme is as follows:

**Build up a list of applicants available.**—This will begin with the names of men who apply at times when they cannot be engaged. Some of these will have applied in person, some have been recommended by other employees, some obtained by scouting, some by advertising, and some will have been recommended by employment agencies. Many on this list will not be available at the time they are wanted; many will be unemployable at any time. But the list will always contain such a residue that, when a man is needed for any job, there will be a choice of men for it.

**Select the best talent available for positions open.**—If not at once, at least after a time the employment manager takes over the work of engaging and dismissing from the foremen. He cannot fill his own job unless he gains through experience the ability and knowledge to select competently. So he will gather for himself advance knowledge concerning vacancies, educating the workmen to give notice of their intended leaving, and also providing that the business give notice on its part of an intended dismissal, save in cases of insubordination and the like. The employment manager will possess himself of a working knowledge of the whole industry, and will keep a record of standard specifications for all classes of help needed. He will know the rates of earnings too. He will investigate the applicants record, submit him to a physical examination, seek knowledge of his character, and perhaps test him out before finally adding him to the labor force.

**Introduce new employees.**—It is well worth while to make a new man feel at home at once. Some one from the employment office takes the new arrival in hand, introduces him to his foreman and fellow workers, explains the rules and policies of the company, shows him the hospital and other welfare equipment, and generally gives him in a friendly fashion the freedom of the establishment.

**Follow up performance of employees.**—It is here that the employment manager gets to know his men. He finds out where the "deadwood" is, and where the round peg is misfitting the square hole. He finds out the character and efficiency of each employee, and is ready to deal with his case when it comes before him for promotion or dismissal.

**Render decisions on recommendations for discharge.**—It has been found that there is great waste in the prevailing methods of peremptory discharge by foremen. No foreman should have authority beyond his own department. He should have the right to say that any man may not work under him, but not that he may not work somewhere else in the plant. Moreover, it often happens that the foreman's judgment is hasty or biased. The worker is at his mercy, with no chance to tell his side of the case. It is the duty of the employment manager to hear both sides, and settle the matter calmly and justly. Thus, an employee is protected when he is in the right and punished more severely when he is in the wrong.

**Arrange for transfer of men not making good.**—There is great variety in the abilities of men. Many who are commonly turned out would succeed in another place in the plant. Every such case found and provided for is the means of saving, as has been estimated, about fifty dollars.

**Render decision on change of rate of pay, transfer or promotion.**—These are matters which require a careful scrutiny of the record of employees concerned. The employment manager, with his records and

knowledge is the man best equipped to deal with them. He can tell where rates on piece-work should be increased or lowered, and when a worker's pay should be raised. It is unwise to wait until the employee has become dissatisfied and asks for a "raise."

**Prepare chart of understudies for positions of responsibility.**—Every prudent concern aims to have within its organization men in training for executive positions. Some industries have adopted a "three-position" plan of promotion, by which every employee is a member of three groups. He belongs to the group above him as a learner, to the group below him as a teacher, and to the group he is attached to directly as a worker. He is thus constantly getting ready to move up higher, and to provide some man to take his place when he leaves it.

**Keep adequate records.**—Besides the applications on file, there will accumulate a mass of information regarding the labor force of the plant, some of which will be gained at the time of hiring and some during the period of employment, telling of rates of pay, transfers, promotions, and general efficiency. These may be compiled into periodic reports which will show what is the labor turnover of the plant. The value of such reports is now recognized. They are necessary to any wisely conceived attempts to reduce the cost of hiring and firing, and this is the chief justification of the existence of employment managers.

**Investigate cases of absentees.**—Here we reach the borderland of social or welfare work. Indeed, the necessary duties of the employment manager spill over into this region. He is, after all is said and done, a social engineer. He is dealing with human beings rather than with commodities. His work

is human, and not material, in its nature. He must know his men as they are, and so must follow them beyond the shop. So, when a man is absent he follows him up. If he goes to see him in the right spirit he will be welcomed. A visit to a sick employee, or to one who has been injured, or to the home of one who has been led to sin against that home, may be the best and the only means of saving the man and benefiting the plant. In this way, when tact and kindness are used, many a misunderstanding is adjusted and many a grievance removed.

**Aim to give the plant a good name.**—If the most desirable employees are to be gotten and kept the plant must bear a good reputation among workmen. One "knocker" can do endless harm. So applicants should be treated with promptness and courtesy. Employees should be treated as if they were men while within the plant. And on leaving it should be managed, if possible, that the outgoing worker should not go away with resentment in his heart.

Such is the programme which experience is defining for the employment manager, as set forth at their last conference. No wonder that it is provoking deep interest among social students. Like every other similar new venture, much hangs on the class of men who are appointed to hold the new position. If they are dull, mechanical men, mostly concerned about their card-index systems and efficiency methods, the results may easily be very unhappy. The workers will quickly resent what will look like meddlesomeness in their private affairs. But if they prove to be men of originality, enterprise and sympathy they may help to bridge the wide and dismal chasm which now separates capital and labor. After all, the chief cause of the warfare between the workers and their "masters" is lack of acquaintance. Social contacts are needed. The employment manager needs to be a big man. He should be well paid, clothed with much authority, allowed much range of initiative, and chosen for his human qualities. Such a man may not only save many times the amount of his salary to the firm who pays him, but may also contribute much to the well-being of the third party to all labor contracts, which is society.

## Stock Raisers of Beauharnois

District Association holds Annual Convention at Huntingdon.

The 36th annual convention of the Beauharnois District Dairyman's Association was held in the O'Connor Hall, Huntingdon. Despite the severe cold and bad roads there was a large attendance of farmers from the counties of Huntingdon, Chateaugay and Beauharnois, which form the district.

The president, Mr. D. H. Brown, in his opening remarks, referred to the progress of the association since its commencement thirty-six years ago. He also spoke of the great changes in farm operations and in conditions since that time. He further said that the consumers were under the impression that the farmers were just coining money because they were receiving a high price for all their products, but such was not the case, as the high price of feeds and everything that entered into the output of the farm was higher, hence the cost of production was increased from fifty to one hundred per cent. He also said that notwithstanding the great labor shortage the farmers were going to do their best this year to increase production to the utmost limit.

The secretary, Mr. W. F. Stephen, gave figures to show the production of butter and cheese during the past season, which indicated that there had been a falling off in cheese. This was due to the fact that the price of cheese was lower correspondingly than the market for milk. He also referred to the fact that the Food Controller's milk investigating committee had clearly proven that the farmer was receiving little more than the cost of production for his milk and that he was not a "profiteer," as had been claimed by certain of the city press.

Prof. A. A. McMillan, of Macdonald College, gave an interesting and practical address on "The Sheep a Necessary Cog in the Wheel," and proved conclusively the need, value and wisdom of every dairy farmer keeping a small flock of sheep. By their doing so it would give a greater meat production, and a bigger wool clip and no line of farming was more profitable at the present time than that of the sheep industry.

Dr. McEwen, also of Macdonald College, spoke on "The Control and Eradication of Tuberculosis in our Herds." He spoke of the need of healthy animals, if we were going to improve the live stock industry of our country. He stated that tuberculosis was one

of the most dangerous diseases which affected our herds, and that farmers should do their utmost to keep their herds clean, to see that nothing but clean and healthy animals were brought into their stables. Herds should be tested at least once a year by a competent veterinary, and all re-acters and suspicious looking animals isolated. In the discussion which followed, the consensus of opinion was that the present system of the Federal Department of Agriculture of punching the ears of re-acters and allowing them to go through the country was not in the best interests of the stockmen, as when they went into clean stables they conveyed diseases to the other animals. A resolution was passed requesting the Federal Department to slaughter animals that re-acted on tubercular test and compensate the owner.

Prof. H. Barten, of Macdonald College, gave a helpful address on "The Conservation of Our Young Stocks," and said the watchword of the present time was efficiency and this should be considered in the conservation of young stock as in the rearing of young animals only those that would be efficient at maturity should be raised. There were many cows in the country at the present time that were worth more for beef than for dairy purposes and should be sent to the block. He spoke of the big propaganda and advocated the household pig and stated that thousands could be reared throughout the country by people in towns and villages at little expense from the garbage and refuse from the house and garden. He also spoke of the conservation of labor, by the making of larger fields on the farm, the use of larger implements, and one man handling a four-horse team instead of a two-horse team. While he said a few words favorable to the tractor as a hauling power he considered that the horse had the advantage here, but were it for stationary power the tractor was of value.

The following officers were elected: President, D. H. Brown; vice-president, R. E. Ness; secretary-treasurer, W. F. Stephen. Directors—Alfred Alseph, George Tenent, Neil Sangster, D. A. McCormack, John McDougall, M. M. McNaughton, Hector Gordon, David Pringle, Geo. Bustard, and R. T. Brownlee.