

city commission is like a board of directors in a private corporation, each one of whom attends to the supervision of some particular branch of the activities of the corporation but no one of whom is particularly responsible for the efficient and practical management of the concern as a whole. It is well known that that is not the way in which corporate affairs are run.

If we would be guided, then, by the analogy of private corporations we should not stop at the most important point by failing to provide an office corresponding to the general manager but we should adopt that feature of business corporation management which is perhaps more largely than any other responsible for the efficiency with which private business is conducted.

In order to show that, in the operation of the commission form as originally adopted, the lack of a city manager must result in friction, duplication, or lack of responsibility in some of the affairs of the city government. Mr. James divides the general affairs of the city into five or six groups and charges a man with the responsibility of the administration of each one of these groups. He states that that man should, in the first place, be an expert in his line and all these men should in the next place be responsible to some common superior. For, without the expert professional administrator the affairs of each department will suffer, and without the central authority the affairs of all the departments will suffer.

The division of the work of a city into five or six branches can in its very nature not be an absolutely inclusive and exclusive division. The nature of these affairs is such that many of the most important branches of municipal service will cut into the sphere of two or three departments. Simple co-operation cannot be relied upon to secure the harmony necessary for efficient working together, because many times the general public welfare may demand the subordination of what might seem to be the interests of one department to those of another.

It might be said, then, that commission government fails in two respects. In the first place it puts into the hands of elective officers the management of affairs which are extremely technical in their nature and demand professional experts, and in the second place it fails to co-ordinate the work of administration by subordinating it to one central responsible authority. Both of these defects the city-manager plan will remedy. The city manager is chosen because of expert qualifications, not because of friends and relatives who may like to see him in a public office. He in turn chooses his subordinate officers on the basis of the same qualifications. The heads of departments, being appointed and removed by him, under proper limitations, are responsible to him in every particular, and he is able to use that compulsion which is frequently necessary to secure successful co-operation.

Such, in brief, is the theory of the city-manager plan and it would seem to be too clear for argument that these changes must materialize if the plan is worked out on the foregoing principles. There are, however, some objections which have been urged against this plan and which it may be well to dwell on very briefly here.

Perhaps the commonest objection is that this plan is undemocratic; that it is bureaucratic because the central authority is in the hands of a single individual and he not even elected by the people. The answer to that, of course, is apparent. The control of the electorate is continuous over the members of the commission. The members of the commission appoint and remove the city manager and consequently have the absolute power of direction. If the elected representative body of the people is dissatisfied or

if their constituents are dissatisfied with the city manager he can be removed more easily than if he were an elective officer who might have succeeded in building up a strong machine.

There is, however, a real danger in this centralization of responsibility in those communities, and in those only, in which the electorate is unable to exercise its control over the members of the elected representative body. If a community is hopelessly boss-ridden the city manager would doubtless be the tool of the boss, but in any community in which that primitive stage of political development has been passed and the citizens can elect and keep elected a responsible and responsive commission, there need be no fear of an autocracy.

Another argument advanced against the city-manager plan, for larger cities at any rate, is that the entrusting of all administrative authority to one individual confers more than one individual can be expected to administer effectively. To this it may be answered that private corporations could easily be instanced whose capital and expenditure exceeded that of many large cities and yet which have found the general manager an indispensable officer. There is no distinction, as far as the question of administrative efficiency is involved, between the smaller city and the larger city. Every city, whatever its size, will gain by increased efficiency in its administration; and concentration of power and responsibility in the hands of a single individual chosen on the basis of professional qualifications cannot help but result in increased efficiency.

#### FIVE MILLION SHELLS FOR RUSSIA.

The \$83,000,000 contract now being handled by the Canadian Car and Foundry Company for the Russian government calls for 5,000,000 shrapnel and howitzer shells at an average cost price of \$17.85. According to the New York Journal of Commerce, the Canadian Car and Foundry Company's profit will be, it is said, 25 per cent. The following are the principal sub-contracts sublet by the Canadian company, and their value:—

Hydraulic Pressed Steel Company, \$475,000; American Rolling Mill Company, \$930,000; Barney and Smith Car Company, \$1,122,000; Dayton Manufacturing Company, \$463,000; Federal Pressed Steel Company, \$1,850,000; Northern Electric Company, Montreal, \$275,000; United Lead Company, New York, \$280,000; Recording and Computing Machine Company, Dayton, Ohio, \$6,000,000; Michigan Brass and Copper Company, \$2,400,000; American Brass Company, \$375,000; Auto Parts Manufacturing Company, \$650,000; Vermont Farm Machine Company, \$650,000; Consolidated Manufacturing Company, \$550,000; United States Steel Products Company, \$840,000; Mead Morrison Company, \$900,000; Crocker, Wheeler Company, \$450,000; Platt Iron Works, \$630,000; Lauzon Engineering Company, Levis, \$180,000; Dayton Manufacturing Company, \$320,000; Worcester Manufacturing Company, \$480,500; Bridgeport White Metals Company, \$360,000.

The total of these and other contracts awarded is \$21,724,000. Contracts still being negotiated include American Locomotive Company, \$10,000,000; Pressed Steel Car Company, \$10,000,000; United States Cartridge Company, \$10,000,000; Dayton Manufacturing Company, \$104,330; total, \$30,104,330.

The remainder of the \$83,000,000 contract, not shown above, is to be filled directly in Canada by the Canadian Car and Foundry Company, with the assistance of other Canadian firms.