

CITY GOVERNMENT UNDER CITY MANAGER CONTROL—(Continued from page 75).

tigated how the City Manager plan has worked out in Dayton. I cannot see how any working man can oppose the plan after investigating it."

The Manager's Duties

The City Manager, as chief executive, appoints, directs, and removes the administrative staff. In this connection the Council usually acts in an advisory capacity. At a meeting of the Council he is in a position to supply them with full details concerning the administration, and his experience, training and recommendations should be of great assistance to the Commission in deciding their general policies. In fact, there should be a mutual confidence and understanding between the Council and the Manager, so that both may function closely together in the interests of the city.

The Manager's Qualifications

Like the manager of any private business he must be absolutely trustworthy and reliable. He is not usually a local man. In fact, it is much better to get an outside man who will therefore be independent and who is making the work a life's profession. He should have a good business training, should be a good organizer, with experience and training along the particular lines he is to administer.

Arguments Used Against Plan

The first argument usually advanced is that the plan is not democratic. This argument we have already dealt with in the paragraph "Democracy of the Plan." In fact the boast is made by the supporters of the Council-Manager system that it is really more democratic than any other system. Democracy does not consist of the number of representatives but should consist in the amount of control for efficient results. The second argument is, that if the Manager is responsible to the Council, that such a manager will be appointed who will obey the commands as to detail, and therefore you have no improvement over other forms of control. There is always the isolated chance that such will be the case, but the responsibilities in this system are so directly indicated, that there is not the opportunity of deception as afforded in many other systems. Then, too, the great majority of city managers realize that this is their life's work; are usually members of the City Managers' Association, and of the National Municipal League, which organizations tend to foster honest and efficient government. Another argument is that men of the proper type, with the proper training, cannot be obtained. Over two hundred cities and towns have obtained satisfactory managers, when there was but little opportunity for experience being obtained in this particular line, while now there are men who have made good as assistant managers in large centres, and as managers of smaller towns, etc., so that the ranks to be drawn upon are continually increasing. Great care, however, should be exercised in the choice of this man, especially when the system is being newly organized and before the rate-payers have been shown how feasible the plan is. Another argument is that politics must be played in the executive end of munic-

ipal administration. A proper demonstration of the working of the city management plan will show that when all parties realize that there is no political patronage but a fair treatment to all, then it is that they find that equal treatment at all times is preferable to special consideration only when friends are in command. Another statement put forward is that given good men you will always get good government. This is true so far as honesty is concerned, but just as a good workman can only with difficulty obtain results with poor tools, so is it difficult for good men to obtain good results under a clumsy administrative system. Under the manager plan too, it is much easier to obtain strong men to act on the board.

The Council's Control

All details under the control of the Manager are open to the inspection of the Council or their representatives. The auditor should therefore be directly employed by the Council, and render his report to that body.

Effect on Civic Employees

When the plan is first advocated in a community it is usual for civic employees to oppose any change. This opposition is generally made because they feel that their particular position may be in danger, that they will lose their present standing, and become subject to the whims of the new manager. What the manager will be after will be results, and no present employee, who can give such results, should be afraid of his position. The record of manager cities in dealing with labour and service has been particularly good in this respect. True there may at times be need of a complete reorganization, incompetent officials dropped, and others placed so that their efforts will repay the city for money expended. The general idea, however, is not to ruthlessly slaughter old and competent officials, but to use these men along such lines as will give increased service to the city and therefore increased opportunity of promotion. Promotion has been by merit and not by political or private influence. In this way employees and officials have been led to take an added pride in results, and in belonging to an efficient, but square and above board organization.

Summary

The statements which I have made, founded as they are upon actual facts and upon the experience of towns and cities where the city manager system has been in vogue, demonstrates pretty clearly that it is based upon common sense business principles; that it has passed wholly beyond the experimental stage; that for the most part, wherever it has been used, it has impressed its business value and effectiveness; that its operation is not confined to the small city or town, but is even more capable of application in the larger communities; that men of the proper type of city managers should be easily obtainable; that the system is capable of wonderful possibilities where the community stands loyally behind the manager and that in these days when economic results are the chief consideration, and when economy and efficiency are necessary both in commercial and municipal management, it offers a medium for successful administration that is not possible of attainment by any other system.