

II. THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CORPORATION SCHOOLS

BY F. C. HENDERSCHOTT

The idea of a national association of corporations maintaining or desiring to establish educational courses for their employees grew out of the experience of The New York Edison Company's commercial school. This company has for some years conducted free technical courses out of working hours at which attendance was optional, but the business-getting end of the industry had received little attention. In organizing a school for its salesmen the company found an enormous task on its hands. Being desirous of having the best salesmen possible, it was willing to spend large sums to perfect educational courses. A thorough canvass of existing practise in training employees for effective service was made and many corporation schools were visited. On the basis of these studies an educational system involving lectures by experts and examinations based thereon was inaugurated, and proved successful from the start.

The difficulty experienced by the Edison Company in securing data on corporation schools suggested the possibilities of an association that would act as a clearing house for corporations which, seeing the advantages to be gained by educating their employees, wish to start schools. Such an association should be of great assistance in improving and enlarging courses already started and increasing the efficiency of administration of these courses. A few experts were consulted by the officer of the company having charge of the new school work and a temporary organization was effected. The industries were canvassed to determine how such an association would be received and the response from many was encouraging. On January 24, 1913; a

convention was held at New York University, at which a constitution was adopted, officers were elected and provision made for the appointment of working committees. There were present at this convention representatives of thirty-seven corporations, all keenly interested, all desirous of allying their companies with the new organization. In a report issued by the temporary organization this statement was made:

"The purposes of the association, in brief, are to render new corporation schools successful from the start by warning them against the pitfalls into which others have fallen, and to provide a forum where corporation school officers may interchange experiences and so improve the instruction in their respective schools. The control is to be vested entirely in the member corporations, thus admitting only so much of theory and extraneous activities as the corporations themselves feel will be beneficial and will return dividends on their investment in time and membership fees."

The report suggested the necessity for the appointment of committees on instructors, on allied institutions, and on education. It contained also the following recommendations:

"1. It would seem to be a serious error for the association to attempt to formulate courses.

"2. The association does not propose to institute correspondence courses, since such activity would be far removed from the purposes of the association.

"3. The association recognizes that each corporation has its special requirements. It will be its object to aid the individual corporation in perfecting courses which best fit its needs."

The following articles from the constitution are worthy of quotation, since they show the plan of membership and the emphasis placed on the corporation as the controlling factor.

"ARTICLE III—MEMBERSHIP"

"Section 1. Members shall be divided into three classes: Class A (Company Members), Class B (Members), Class C (Associate Members).

"Section 2. Class A members shall be commercial, industrial, transportation or governmental organizations, whether under corporation, firm or individual ownership, which now are or may be interested in the education of their employees. They shall be entitled, through their properly accredited representatives, to attend all meetings of the Association, to vote and to hold office.

“Section 3. Class B members shall be officers, managers or instructors of schools conducted by corporations who are Class A members. They shall be entitled to hold office and to attend all general meetings of the Association.

“Section 4. Class C members shall be those not eligible for membership in Class A or Class B who are in sympathy with the objects of the Association. They shall be entitled to attend all general meetings of the Association.”

“ARTICLE VII—DUES”

“Section 1. The annual dues of Class A members shall be \$50.

“Section 2. The annual dues of Class B members shall be \$5 and the annual dues of Class C members shall be \$10.”

The first meeting of the executive committee was held on April 4. From the reports presented it was apparent that the movement is bound to interest a large proportion of the 200 or more corporations now conducting educational work. The reports showed also that data on the educational courses of industrial concerns all over the country are being collected and classified by the educational committee.

Already the movement has corporations representing a capitalization in excess of three billion dollars, and employing over 500,000 employees.

The following is the list of Class A charter members:—American Locomotive Company, New York, N. Y.; Brighton Mills, Passaic, N. J.; Brooklyn Union Gas Company, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Burroughs Adding Machine Company, Detroit, Mich.; Cadillac Motor Car Company, Detroit, Mich.; Carnegie Steel Company, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Commonwealth Edison Company, Chicago, Ill.; Consolidated Gas Company of New York, N. Y.; Curtis Publishing Company, Philadelphia, Pa.; Dodge Manufacturing Company, Mishawaka, Ind.; Henry L. Doherty and Company, New York, N. Y.; R. R. Donnelley and Sons Company, Chicago, Ill.; Thomas A. Edison, Inc., Orange, N. J.; General Electric Company, Schenectady, N. Y.; Haines, Jones and Cadbury Company, Philadelphia, Pa.; Larkin Company, Buffalo, N. Y.; National Cash Register Company, Dayton, O.; New York Edison Company, New York, N. Y.; Norton Company, Worcester, Mass.; Packard Motor Car Company, Detroit, Mich.; Pennsylvania Railroad Company, Altoona, Pa.; Public Service Corporation of New Jersey, Newark, N. J.; M. Rumely Com-

pany, LaPorte, Ind.; Spencer Trask and Company, New York, N. Y.; Spirella Company, Meadville, Pa.; Trow Directory Printing and Bookbinding Company, New York, N. Y.; Travelers Insurance Company, Hartford, Conn.; Western Electric Company, Chicago, Ill.; Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, East Pittsburgh, Pa.; Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company, Stamford, Conn.

On September 16-19 the first national convention of the association will be held in Dayton, Ohio, under the auspices of the National Cash Register Company. Working plans for the coming year will be adopted.

The field of activity opening for this body is unlimited. Corporations are fast being converted to the theory of training their own men. They no longer expect to find satisfactory help ready-made, but are now applying themselves to the task of making men as well as commodities. The universities and colleges too, are seeing in this new movement a link, long sought, between our institutions of learning and the business world, and are anxious to affiliate and push forward this new educational system.
