

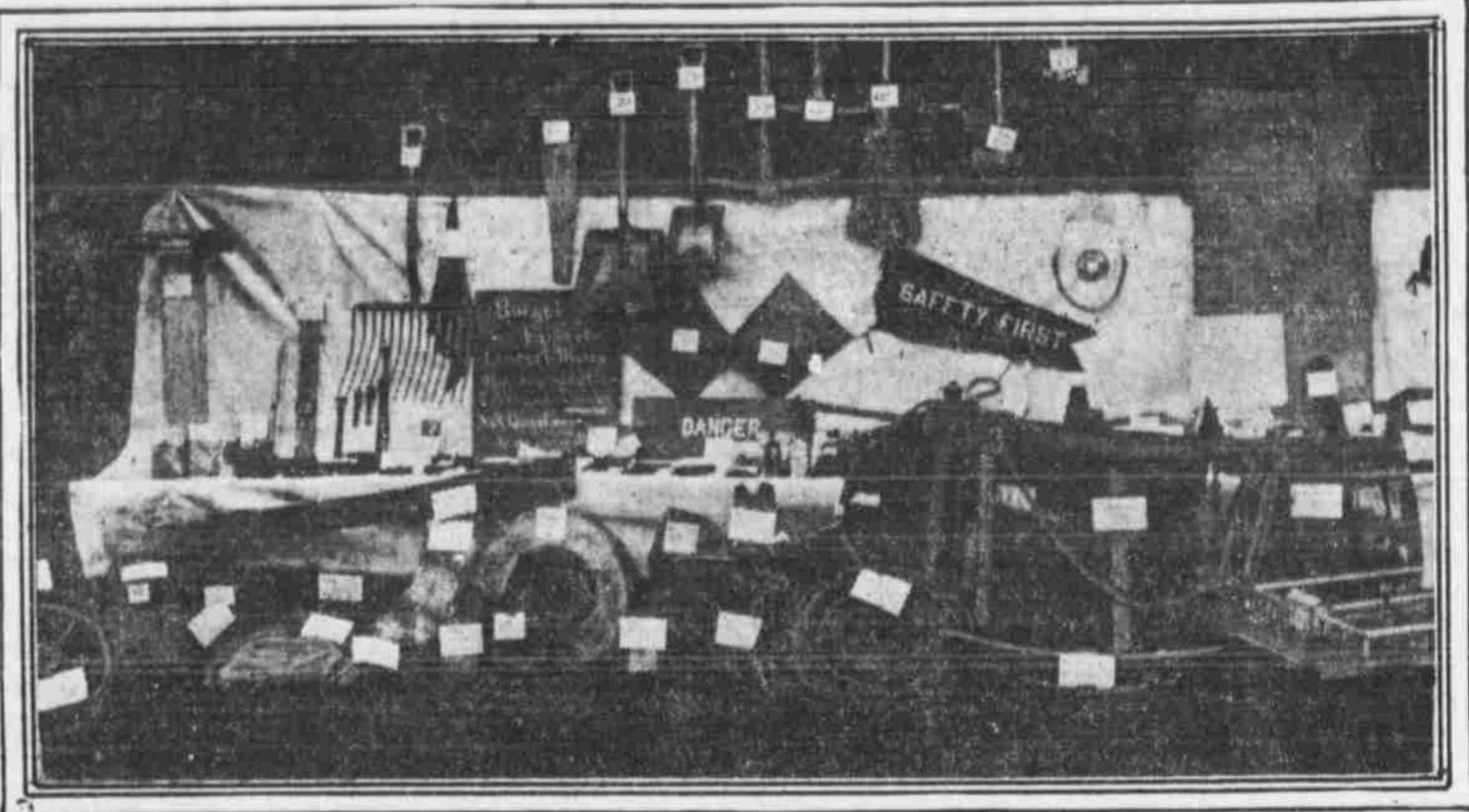
System to Make City Employees Interested in Their Work

New York City Chamberlain Bruere's Promising Plan to Stimulate Municipal Progress by Developing "The Untapped Resources" That Lie Within Even the Humblest Workmen

City Chamberlain Bruere Whose Interesting Efficiency Plan Is About to Be Tried Out by Mayor Mitchell of New York.



From Photo by Davis & Sanford, N. Y.



A Budget Exhibit of the Frick Company by Which Employees Are Taught to Consider the Value of the Tools They Use.

THE citizens and executives of every municipality in the United States will be interested in the far-reaching plans proposed by City Chamberlain Henry Bruere and accepted by Mayor Mitchell to increase the efficiency of the working force of New York City employees. This interest will extend to the employees of all city governments, for the reason that under Mr. Bruere's plan the benefits will accrue not only to the city, but to the employees, down to the humblest.

As Mr. Bruere wrote in his recommendation to the Mayor:

"The greatest undeveloped resource for city progress lies in the great body of city employees themselves."

Accordingly Mayor Mitchell has invited the 108,000 employees of the different departments of the New York City municipal government to get together in conference and decide upon more efficient methods of doing the city's work.

The idea is to encourage every city employee to feel that he or she is an actual part of the city government, with a responsible, controlling hand upon the vast mechanism that keeps the city going.

Instead of merely doing their day's work for the day's pay in the department where they are employed, they will have an opportunity to interest themselves in improving the general result. It is a movement toward greater general efficiency, which can be brought about only through cordial co-operation between the individual human elements—as important private industrial concerns long since discovered.

New York will thus become the first municipality in this country to be placed on the efficient working basis which mines and big factories and railroads find necessary to their very existence.

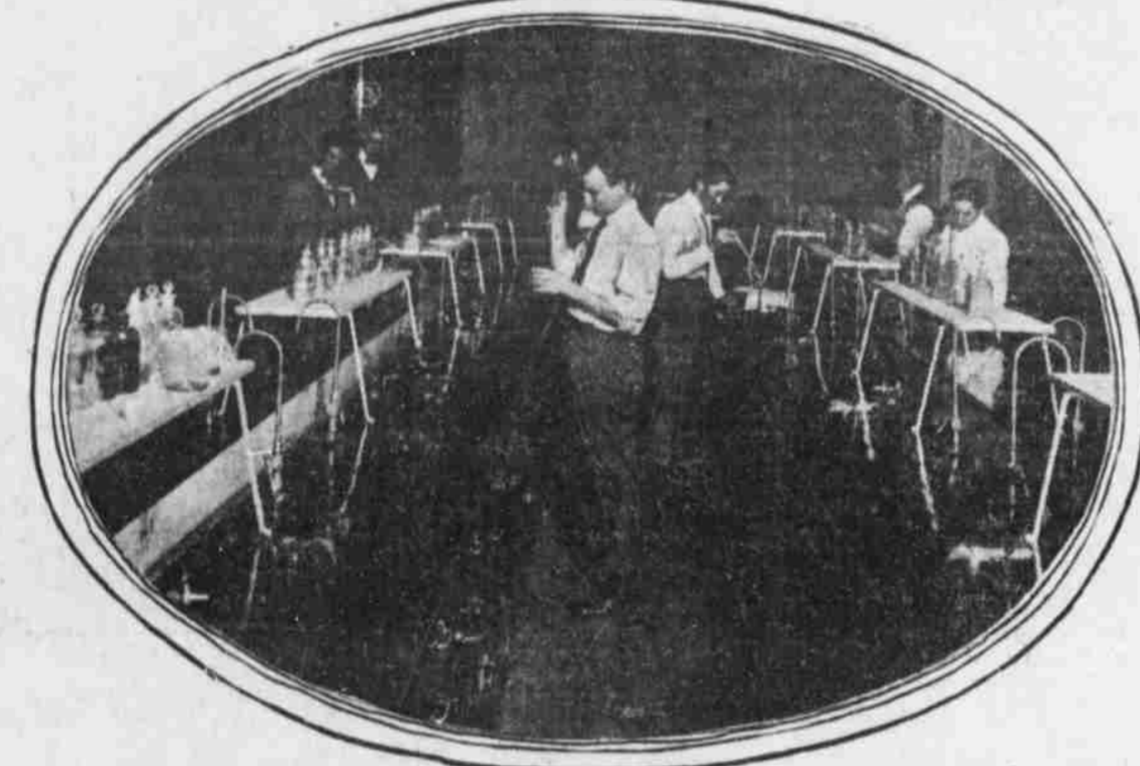
It is assumed that even in the ranks of humble street cleaners there are men with very definite ideas about their work and the relation it bears to the city's general well-being and progress. These are the men whom their comrades will select to go into the conferences, where all such ideas will be welcomed and have a chance of being utilized.

Throughout all the departments the mass of the workers will be represented by comrades of their own selection, and thus the whole body of employees will actually figure in the city government along the important lines of efficiency.

In laying his detailed plan before the Mayor, the City Chamberlain writes:

"This, in my judgment, is a very great need in city departments. In many departments, of course, such co-operation exists. As a means, however, of establishing a general interest in the efficiency of city business, and breaking down unnecessary departmental isolation, I believe that a general employees' committee would be of great value. It would be particularly useful to the Civil Service Commission in working out many of its problems, and it will be a great aid, I am confident, in carrying out the Mayor's programme of efficiency and economy."

"In the past a very serious obstacle to the efficiency of the city government has been the separation of the executive forces and the working forces. This has been due to the frequent change in executives and to a conventional formality in the relationship between the employees and those in charge of departments and bureaus. There is in all this a survival of the old feudal spirit, kept alive by the use of titles and by official glorification.



A Night School of a Big Corporation in Which Employees Are Given the Opportunity to Improve Themselves—a Plan for Its Own Employees Under Contemplation by N. Y. City

"When the formality of the relation of officials to subordinates is overcome, and employees come to recognize that the efficiency of the government depends upon their interest and initiative as much as the routine work of the government depends on their effort, there will be brought into play a vast amount of interest and intelligence regarding city problems, which are now only spasmodically engaged upon their solution or not at all.

"President Churchill, of the Board of Education, tells me that suggestions now made by various teachers' organizations are invaluable aids to better school work.

"It is commonplace that subordinate employees in the city government may have year after year performed faithful service without recognition. It is a singular fact that comparatively few of the permanent employees of the city achieve important executive positions. The planning and directing forces of the government are continually being recruited from outside the ranks of employees. The result of this practice is that there is a lack of continuity in management and failure to capitalize the enormous benefit of accumulated experience.

"This condition can be remedied, it seems to me, in two ways. First, by giving employees a distinct part in the management of the city's affairs directly and openly, and, second, by training employees for promotion to positions of administrative and executive importance. The time should come very soon when practically all of the important executive positions of the city will be filled by the advancement of men and women who enter the service in subordinate positions. This is the secret of efficiency and progress in German city government."

Upon Mayor Mitchell's acceptance of Mr. Bruere's suggestion the Bureau of Municipal Accounts set to work energetically to gather all sorts of data. Details of the results of similar methods since established in a score or more important German cities have been tabulated. The periodic conference of employees in all departments is the foundation of the whole system.

It is seen that in these German cities the object sought by Mr. Bruere is very fully accomplished. In the ranks of municipal employees real experts on practically all city questions are developed, and the public reaps the benefit of their services.

The benefits work both ways, for the welfare of the employees is constantly looked after in the most practical way. Lately, the high cost of living has brought about a new scale of wages. Several municipalities have gone so far as to build houses for the exclusive occupancy of city employees at low rentals. Thus these employees become virtually their own landlords.

In general, German municipal employees organize boards of control within their special department. Whenever desirable these boards form a joint board, meeting with the executives and exercising their influence and special knowledge in the solution of whatever city problem is uppermost. The duties of these boards are defined under two heads only:

- (1) To present demands and grievances which concern all the employees or certain categories of employees.
- (2) To give information upon request of the municipal administration.

The axiom is accepted that whatever benefits the city employees receive in the way of hygiene, recreation, special instruction and permanence of employment will benefit the public which they serve.

The immediate problem in carrying out Mr. Bruere's suggestion is that of a practical means of effecting an organization of city employees. The Mayor has taken steps to call a preliminary conference of departmental representatives designated by department heads, at which will be organized a permanent committee to decide upon periodic conferences, to which the employees of each department will send representatives of their own selection.

Ultimately it is hoped to establish various institutions designed to promote the interests of the city through the benefits they bestow upon the employees. The city pays enormous sums annually for tools and materials. It is

felt that there should be a permanent budget exhibit of samples, labeled with their cost and how they may be used economically.

At present it is probable that very few employees know anything about these matters. If every employee of the department of streets and water supply, for example, knew the cost of every implement and bit of material that enter into his day's work it is considered that such knowledge would inspire him with a sense of economy in their use that would result in a considerable saving to the city.

The experience of many private industrial concerns shows the importance of providing for the health and a certain amount of recreation of all wage earners. Recreation quarters fitted with shower baths, perhaps a swimming pool, with gymnastic apparatus, bowling alleys, possibly billiard tables, and so on, are among the suggestions. A library and reading rooms for the use of employees of each department is another suggestion.

But of special interest to ambitious young city employees will be the quite definite intention to offer opportunities for special training—draughtsmanship, electrical and mechanical engineering, chemistry, and so forth. It is recognized that a great many employees are capable of greatly increasing the value of their services to the city if enabled in this way to develop their natural technical bent.

A hospital and ambulance service exclusively for city employees is another idea under consideration.

The periodic conferences will discuss every feature of municipal management and service. Systems of promotion, the increase of wages through efficiency, progressive methods of remuneration—all these matters, of vital interest to every employee personally, they will have a voice in, as well as in questions affecting the value of their services to the city.

Mr. Bruere remarks that there is now a pressing need for a general revision of practically every retirement system. The pension commission is now at work upon this problem, and its successful solution will be greatly helped by the intelligent aid of employees themselves.

Mr. Bruere's recommendations concerning training for promotion and special positions point out that under present conditions such training as is provided for city employees is chiefly furnished by special civil service schools where candidates are coached for admission to the civil service. After admission, except in the police and fire departments where recruit schools are conducted for probationers, there is no means provided for training city employees.

He finds an equal need for training employees for advancement in other branches of the service. This training may be provided by special courses in the night high schools, in the universities, in City College, or, as has been suggested from time to time, by special courses conducted for city employees. A considerable number of city employees have attended the courses on city business given by the Training School for Public Service of the Bureau of Municipal Research.

A great many bright young men Mr. Bruere remarks, are coming into the service as junior clerks. They have been well educated in the public schools of the city along general lines. To advance in the civil service they should have special training. He cannot over-emphasize the importance of this training. It is recognized now by every progressive corporation manager. "The city," he says, "is literally wasting a vast amount of ability in the hundreds of young employees which should be developed and utilized through training. Here is one of the greatest opportunities for economy available to us."

"I recommend that the Employees Conference Committee work out the details of a training plan for submission to you and the board of estimate and apportionment. Representatives of the public schools, the local colleges and universities, and of the technical forces of the city will, I know, be glad to cooperate."

A great many conditions exist in the city departments, as in every large institution, which operate disadvantageously to particular employees. These conditions may frequently be remedied by conference and adjustment. Grievances which are not aired or settled lead to discontent and consequently inefficiency. Many employees are wrongly located. Through one means or another, they have found themselves in a particular kind of work which is not especially interesting to them or for which they are not particularly suited.

These facts may be effectively brought out by the conference committee and submitted to the proper authorities for consideration and action. Nothing, of course, that this committee would do should tend to interfere with departmental discipline, but it should serve to focus conditions which may easily be remedied by administrative action.

In several departments thrift societies and sick funds have been established. There is, however, no general savings plan nor any system for health provision. By cooperation among city employees, says Mr. Bruere, a great deal of good should be accomplished through provision for loan fund, sick relief, attention to the physical condition under which work is performed, the health of employees and like matters.

In the department of health all employees now receive physical examination and medical advice, thus making it possible for the department to correct unfavorable working conditions, and for the employees to take steps to prevent development of serious physical difficulties. Matters of this kind will be dealt with through the Employees' Conference Committee.

The problems of office management, record keeping, filing, treatment of correspondence, purchasing and book-keeping, are problems in which every department is interested, and in which improvement can be obtained through the exchange of ideas, experience and suggestions.

At present various technical societies exist among city employees, as, for example, the Municipal Engineers, Medical Inspectors' Association, etc. These will be continued and strengthened. It is to extend the benefits of organizations of this kind that it is proposed to establish systematic conferences on other common administrative subjects.

Mr. Bruere concludes his statement to the Mayor with this strong appeal for co-operation between executives and employees:

"The whole purpose of the foregoing suggestions is to give the employees a vital part in the management of the city government, and to place upon them at the same time responsibility for developing improved methods and effecting economies. In short, the object is to bring actively to bear upon the problems of the city the minds and interest of the thousands of the city employees, as well as those of the hundreds of executives and officials."

"In this way the working forces of the city government will feel responsibility as a whole for the successful management of municipal business, and the artificial barriers now existing between department and department on the one hand, and employees and officials on the other hand, taken down to the advantage of employees and taxpayers, and the city generally."

How Society Women Neglect Husbands---By the Late Mr. Townsend Martin

IT is only too true that there is more unhappiness in the wealthy and fashionable classes than in the humbler ones. Carroll D. Wright proved by statistics that there are more divorces among the well-to-do than among the very poor, more in periods of business prosperity than in times of depression. This is not because divorces are expensive, but because the possession of great wealth makes possible the indulgence of petty vices.

How many cases have we all observed, when a family advances from poverty to affluence, either the husband or wife changes from a model of probity to an object of criticism! This is not to be wondered at when we consider the lives led by the wealthy and fashionable who are absorbed wholly in the pursuit of pleasure. They dissipate time and indulge in frivolities. To alleviate the monotony of useless lives they succumb to their cravings for luxury and self-indulgence, and this inspires marital despondency.

There is scarcely a fashionable family in New York society that has not been torn apart by divorce. This unhappy state of affairs may also be traced largely to the fact that the very rich woman, intentionally or unintentionally, too often neglects her husband. The demands made upon the time of the present day fashionable woman are simply amaz-

ing. During the season she is busy for almost the whole of the twenty-four hours, and hardly any of that time is devoted to her husband. If she is in town she runs about looking at the shops and doing various errands during the morning. She gives or attends women's luncheons in the middle of the day. She goes to matinees, musicales, card parties and other entertainments in the afternoons. Even if the husband is a man who does very little business, this does not bring them together, for they have separate amusements.

Toward dinner the wife spends a great deal of time in making a very elaborate toilette. They give a dinner party or go out to one, and when they go out convention requires them to sit apart and not to talk with one another. Some fashionable husbands and wives even go to separate dinner parties, which is a most deplorable practice. Probably they go to a dance after the dinner, where they remain apart and do not dance with one another. The husband only sees his wife when he hurries her into a carriage. His relations with her are more like those of a car conductor and passenger than of husband and wife. They may go home at daybreak, each having had any real companionship with one another. And so it goes on until the husband too often finds some companionship

free from the burdens of fashionable duties.

In the middle classes husband and wife spend most of their evenings quietly together and so become necessary to one another. In the ideal family the husband exists for the wife and the wife for the husband. It is only as husband and wife approach this ideal relation that they make for the true end of family life, the mutual happiness, welfare and harmonious growth of each. This at times may require both the husband and wife to make some personal sacrifice for each other, but this every true husband and wife gladly makes. Here let me say that every man and woman making such a personal sacrifice is enlarging and exalting his or her own individuality. The compensation received is infinitely greater than the pleasure surrendered. To each of them the permanence and stability of their marital relations should be in itself an end.

They should vie with one another in the performance of their several domestic duties, and then each will have good reason to rejoice over the result. They should make their pleasures simple, and mainly home pleasures. The custom which tends to separate husband and wife by forms of entertainment should not only be condemned but abrogated. In fact, any custom which interferes with the happiness of family

life should be uncompromisingly ignored, for such customs are an injury to humanity. Those who foster them and observe them are the enemies of family life. Battle against these customs, ignore them, fly in the face of them, regardless of what may be said, for the welfare of the whole community depends upon the welfare of the family.

Let married couples seek only such pleasures as they can enjoy together, and pleasures that are spiritual and pure, that make it possible for them to discard the unhealthy propensities of their nature and bring into play their better selves. Such pleasures will promote mutual happiness.

Let them exalt themselves by absorbing knowledge. Let them develop and employ their best talents. The best talents of men and women are best employed in serious work in some sort of work which is helpful and useful to humanity. Let us not suffer our precious lamp of life to burn in vain! Let not the weeks and days and years slip away unemployed and useless! Let us remember that those who spend all their lives in seeking frivolous pleasures have lived in vain.

There is no greater folly than to go deliberately searching for pleasures that do not come to us naturally in the normal course of

our lives. Such pleasures kindle fires in our bones that burn the very substance of our lives for fuel. Oh! how few there are who know how to enjoy life without relishing pleasures that are criminal! Every diversion they take is at the expense of some one virtue or another. The very first step they take out of the regular business of life is usually into some vice or folly.

Every woman should make her husband and her home the dominant sphere of her pleasures. It is only thus that she can retire into idleness with safety. And remember! The simplest pleasures are the greatest. Pleasures which are complex are seldom sincere and never satisfying. The home-spun are the most agreeable to nature.

This is beautifully expressed by Colton when he says that recreation or pleasure is to a woman what the sun is to the flower; if moderately enjoyed it beautifies, it refreshes and improves; if immoderately, it withers, deteriorates and destroys. But the duties of domestic life, exercised, as they might be, in retirement, and calling forth all the sensibilities of the female, are perhaps as necessary to the full development of her charms as the shades and shadows are to the rose, confirming its beauty and increasing its fragrance.