

his own views, is in a far better position to enlist the aid of such person, should occasion arise when this assistance is needed. Many times in my experience has this been of great help to me and of value to our employer. A purchasing agent or any other employee who will, when called into conference, show an unprejudiced and unbiased mind cannot help but be of more value to himself and to the organization for which he works.

When a purchasing agent confers with any department head he should at the start assume that that individual is interested chiefly in his own problems and himself, no matter what the topic of the discussion may be. If he will put himself in the other's place and see the facts from the other side, his own ideas will carry more weight, and a quicker and more advantageous decision will result. In but very few cases does this procedure fail to work.

Too often do different departments look only to their own expenses and costs, forgetting that it is the finished or ultimate cost that counts. Saving in one place which adds expense in another is no saving at all. Therefore, a purchasing agent who looks only at the amount of an invoice or attempts to shave a quarter of a cent off some item that it may cost a half cent additional to use in the plant is not only fooling himself but is costing his firm good money. In some cases this may result in loss of business, not to mention the lowering of profits.

The follow-up of orders is an important function of the purchasing department. In doing this great care should be exercised in wording inquiries as to shipping dates, etc. It is always easy to rush everything and hound a supplier for this or that; however, after a time the word "rush" from a customer who is always in a hurry loses its effect. Many years ago I had this brought to my attention with considerable force. I was in a certain steel mill talking to the superintendent of the rolling department when the office telephoned him, asking for a promise on an order for some customer. I haven't the exact phraseology of his reply, but it was to the effect that he would roll the item when he got "damned good and ready." He turned to me and said that this particular customer made it a practice to start pounding the mill for delivery about two weeks after the order was entered, and at regular intervals thereafter inquiries would come in regardless of what replies had been made.

I have found from experience that it pays to keep quiet once a satisfactory promise is obtained unless the material is actually needed, allowing of course ample time for transportation. In other words, let the word "rush" mean what it says and convey to the supplier that the stock is urgently needed.

Quite apropos right here would be a few words with regard to the attitude of management with respect to the latitude and responsibility which should be accorded a purchasing agent. In my participation in the activities of the Purchasing Agents' Association I have come in contact with buyers of large concerns who tell me that they do not have time for this or that, that they seldom travel or personally chase up some material that is lagging behind. They tell me that this work is delegated to some subordinate for the reason that they have such a multitude of matters that they must be at their desks to handle that their absence is prohibited. It is my belief, and in this I have ample substantiation, that this is a shortsighted policy. A purchasing agent should be as free from endless detail as a sales manager, and have the liberty to come and go as occasion arises. A man who cannot be trusted to this extent leaves only one road open; there is no guessing as to what that may be.

I have endeavored to show the necessity for knowledge on the part of the purchasing agent of practically all phases of the business. There is, however, a still further knowledge necessary, in some cases equally important; this is, with regard to the methods of manufacture of the principal materials and supplies purchased, the raw materials and the nature and limitations of the equipment and personnel producing them. Many times when visiting plants of suppliers I have found that they have facilities and methods which it would be to our advantage to use. On the other hand, I have learned that we were exacting certain specifications that were the cause of needless economic waste—for which we were paying. These erroneous and costly details were immediately changed when the matter was reported back to the proper department, through a cooperative spirit and a desire to help. Close contact with suppliers tends to promote and perpetuate an interchange of ideas which at times are invaluable. A purchasing agent through his contact with many other concerns is in the best position of any executive to detect advantages of this kind and to realize their value.

News of the Sections and Management Week

THE Central New York Section met October 10 at the Yates Hotel, Syracuse. Mr. Shartz of the Utica Mutual Insurance Company delivered an illustrated lecture on Safety Engineering.

The annual election of officers resulted in the reelection of Percy S. Brown, Chairman; E. F. Papworth, Vice Chairman; Robert J. Anderson, Secretary and Treasurer; Ralph M. Jones, L. B. Sawyer and Bruce Griffin, Members of Executive Committee, and the election of C. L. Nicholson of Pass and Seymour to the Executive Committee succeeding Andrew W. Seacord, who has been transferred to Chicago.

The local section of the Taylor Society joined the Technology Club and other organizations interested in management in a Management Week meeting Monday, October 21, addressed by Arthur Lazarus, cost consultant of New York, on "Budgeting for Better Management."

The next meeting is to be an unusual combination of business and pleasure—an all day meeting in Ithaca, Saturday, November 1, the day of the Columbia-Cornell game.

The program arranged through the courtesy of F. L. Morse, President of the Morse Chain Company, includes inspection of the Morse Chain Company plant at 9:30, a paper by H. S. Person at 11:00, and luncheon in the plant cafeteria. A block of seats has been reserved for the game.

The Cleveland Section substituted for its October meeting participation in the local management week meetings. The main event of the week was a meeting of the Cleveland Engineering Society and local sections of the cooperating national organizations October 22. Papers were presented as follows: "The Effect of Budget upon Sales, Production, Employment and Profit," by Keppele Hall; "Illustrations of Application of Budgets to Various Divisions of the Business" by H. I. Sheppard of the Guardian Savings and Trust Company, and "How Should the Budget be Administered from the Accountant's Point of View?" by H. C. Senour of Nau, Rush and Swearingen.

The program for the rest of the year is to include such subjects as: "Volume of Business with Relation to Profit," "Use of Special and Single Purpose Tools," "Distributive Tendencies," "Appraisal of Plant," "Production on a Day Work Basis," "Sales Training," and "Material Handling."

The New York City Section began its season's activities by cooperation in the joint management week program, held at the Engineering Societies Building, Tuesday, October 21. The following papers were presented: "Economics of Budgets" by Ernest F. Dubrul, General Manager, National Machine Tool Builders Association, and "Preparation of the Budget," illustrated by lantern slides by John H. Williams, Management Engineer, New York.

The New York Southern Tier Section of the Taylor Society was active in the plans for the first Management Week in Elmira, with E. G. Crooks of the Willys-Morrow Company, vice-chairman of the local section serving as chairman of the local committee.

C. E. Killinger, General Manager of the Willys-Morrow Company, spoke on "Business in Figures" at the regular luncheon meetings of the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. Percy S. Brown of the Corona Type-writer Company talked on "Budgeting" at the Exchange Club. A dinner meeting of the Business Men's Association, the Chambers of Commerce of Elmira and Corning, and the local sections of the management societies was addressed by J. W. Griest of the Retail Merchants Institute of Chicago on "The Need of Practical Training in Business" and Robert J. Anderson of Bowen Products Corporation on "Service at a Profit."

The Chicago section of the Taylor Society was represented by its chairman, Hugo Diemer, of LaSalle Extension University and Meredith R. May of the Bureau of Commercial Economics, Inc. in the local management week plans.

Sessions were held on the afternoon and evening of Wednesday, October 22. The following papers were presented: "The Problem of Administration" by George D. Babcock of The Holt Manufacturing Co., Peoria, Ill., "Coordination of Departmental Budgets" by J. O. McKinsey of Fraser & Torbet, "Relation of the Production Department to Budgetary Control" by Frederick J. Knoeppel of Scovell, Wellington & Co., "Coordinating Plant Lay-out with Production" by C. G. Stoll of Hawthorne Plant, Western Electric Company, "Collective Bargaining in the Clothing Industry" by Fred A. Kraft of Alfred Decker and Cohn, "What Management Does and How" by Willard E. Hotchkiss, Management Counsellor, and "Industrial Management in Preparedness" by E. A. Russell, Chief Chicago District Ordnance Office.