

REPORT OF SEABECK CONFERENCE

(July 9 to July 24)

By JAMES ELVIN

Seabeck is a quiet beautiful spot on Puget Sound about 60 miles west of Seattle. The 700 acres of land, wooded, comfortable cottages and the commodious hotel were given by the Colman brothers of Seattle and their mother, and the grounds are to be used for conference purposes. The Colmans have given to date approximately \$75,000 for this purpose.

As soon as we arrived the school was rapidly organized. Every delegate was obliged to register for not less than four subjects. My subjects were: Bible study, boys' work, and two subjects under the head of city administration.

Everett is aggressive. The studies in my department brought out some interesting facts. First of all we were impressed with the encouraging outlook. Everett, Washington, where the Y. M. C. A. was not one bit stronger than in Salem, burned out. A campaign for a new building was carefully planned and the people of Everett were asked to contribute \$150,000 towards a new Y. M. C. A. building. They contributed \$183,000 and a fine modern building is now in process of construction. Fred Witham, the brother-in-law of Louis Compton, is secretary.

Seattle asked the people of that city for \$150,000. In addition building space and the amount given was \$163,000, the only successful campaign of eight in that city.

The note throughout the northwest, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, everywhere, was the same—a renewed interest in the work of the Y. M. C. A. manifested in gifts since 1917 for clearing indebtedness and erecting new buildings—gifts amounting to \$860,000. A community auditorium to be used by the people of Everett will be a part of their new buildings.

Endowment Plan Spreads. Portland carries about \$160,000 indebtedness on a million dollar plant, but their endowment amounts to more than \$130,000 and nearly offsets the debt. Endowment of Y. M. C. A.'s is coming to be a big part of the work. Every possible prospect for endowment is carefully approached, sometimes with astonishing results. While money has been raised faster this year than ever before there never has been a year when the association has found itself so short of workers. All the large associations are working short handed.

General secretaries are wanted at Astoria, Eugene, Boise and Bellingham. Physical directors, capable and trained, and boys' secretaries can command most any price. Physical culture in schools, Boy Scouts, community welfare, and other movements have taken many splendid Y. men. Mr. Stone announced that on July 1 there were more than 3000 vacancies throughout America in Y. M. C. A. work.

Nearly every association in the northwest has a sustaining membership. This is the actual cost of membership to the association. In Salem at the present time the sustaining member is approximately \$25. Many associations have a mothers' auxiliary in connection with the boys' department. Such an association has been found to be exceptionally valuable in the social life of the boys at the Y and also in financial and membership campaigns.

Church Going Encouraged. Another new wrinkle carried on successfully by many associations

and presented to the conference by Mr. Adams, secretary of the Billings, Mont. Y. where it has been in successful operation for two years is called "service membership." All the privileges of the Y are open to all boys between the ages of 10 to 19, free of charge, but on the following conditions: No boy can have the privilege of membership unless he brings a note from his pastor and Sunday school superintendent that he is a faithful attendant at Sunday school. If he isn't already a member he must become one. His membership stops when he stops attending Sunday school. If a Catholic boy, a note from his priest that he is attending church is sufficient. If parents object to his attendance at Sunday school then the boy may pay for the privileges.

The next step is to appeal to the public for this help, and in Billings the appeal has been very successful. In two years the finances jumping from \$15,000 to \$30,000. The attendance of boys at Sunday school has been tripled and so many boys use the building that it is necessary to have a secretary who does nothing but direct the building activities.

The third step is the appeal to the boy. He is informed that although it does not cost him one cent to belong he is cordially invited to make contributions of so much per week or month to the support of the association, and some of the boys are giving \$1.50 a month. These subscriptions are given on condition that they must have been earned by the boy and that they are a free gift from the boy to the work of the association. The Billings association is well pleased with the result of its experiment and believes that a big problem in respect to boys' work in that city has been solved.

Investment Pays. Directors of association and generous subscribers are kept interested in the big program of the association by the liberal use of the association paper—Association Men. Some of the smaller city associations invest quite a good deal of money in this way and find that it pays.

At Seabeck we had a Y missionary from China who presented us with the situation of the Y in China. This great foreign work carried on in many countries is facing a marvelous opportunity. The native workers are supported by the local associations. The international work carried on in various European countries has also been very successful, especially work in Russia, Poland, Czech, Slovak, Greece, France and this work is growing rapidly. Local associations are liberally supporting this work also.

The state work is doing a greater service than ever before, reaching out into fields where at present there are no Y's. Last year Billings gave for state and international work \$1500 and for foreign work \$500. Salem gave for state work \$100.

Intensely interesting were all the sessions on boys' work. Everywhere the association is using a program compiled by the best boy experts of America, called "The Christian Citizenship Training Program." It covers a period from 10 to 19 years in the life of a boy. It develops the boy along the lines of his intellectual, physical, religious and service life.

The course is given to boys in groups, each group under the care of a responsible leader and all the leaders trained, directed and responsible to the trained boys' secretary. This work is arousing intense interest among boys all over America. In connection with boys' work is the summer camp. Portland's summer camp at Spirit Lake is one of the best in the country, and we hope some time to have a good summer camp for the boys of the Salem Y. M. C. A.

Physical Department Popular. The interest in physical work is growing everywhere, and especially in the larger cities men and young men are more and more realizing the worth of daily systematic exercise. Noon-day classes for business men are very popular.

The educational work of the Y is now one of its greatest departments. Hundreds of thousands of lessons are given in home correspondence courses and thousands of students are enrolled in the regular "Y" schools. Perhaps some day we can carry on a successful work in Salem.

Community work and county work are progressing finely—the former in the city. Community work in Seattle has aroused great interest. County work in Marion county has revealed the opportunity that we ought to find in every county in Oregon.

Religious work is carried on very extensively under the form of Bible classes. A Sunday evening supper for boys, followed by a religious service, has proven very popular. The old-time type of Sunday afternoon meeting does not seem to meet with much success. The distribu-

(Continued on page 8.)

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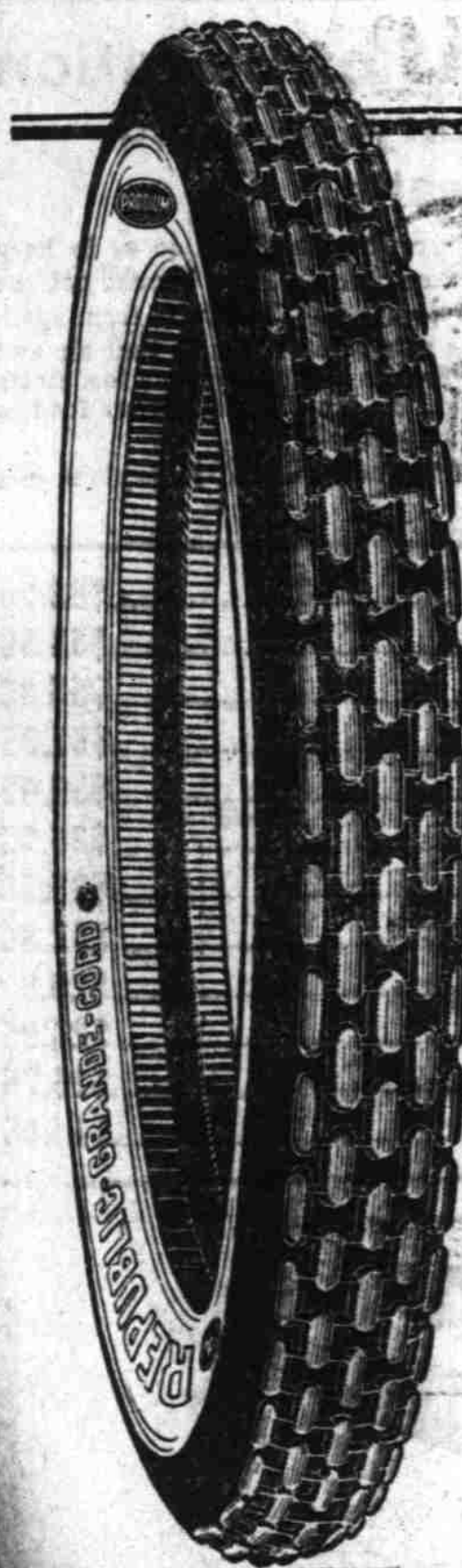
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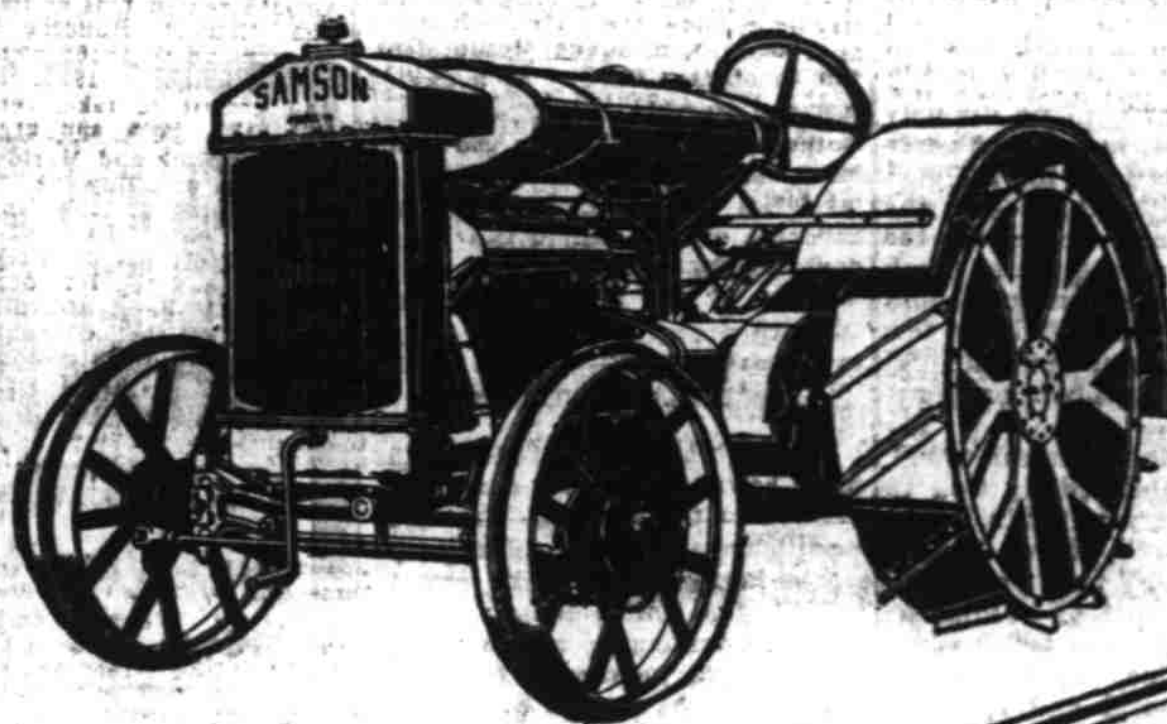
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