



EDITORIAL COMMENT

Within the next few weeks—beginning September 28, to be specific—committees of the Chamber of Commerce will meet to resume their activities in the interests of Greater Camden's progress and development. A membership campaign with a 3000 totality as a goal has been determined upon by the Executive Council of the Chamber. As Camdens' interests are so entwined with those of her nearby neighboring boroughs the effort will be for Greater Camden. Cooperative effort of Greater Camden's public-spirited men and women will spell success to any worthy undertaking for civic betterment. Such success is measured only by the way each individual contributes of his thought and effort.

WILL YOU DO YOUR SHARE?

As this page is written, Saturday morning, September 5th, we are in the throes of moving the Chamber offices to the Mezzanine floor of the Hotel Walt Whitman. The old Chamber of Commerce Building, 531 Market Street, where the organization has been housed for the last five years is for sale or lease. It being a Chamber of Commerce Building, and owned by the Chamber of Commerce, and in good substantial repair and located in the heart of Camden's most valuable business section, if sold it will bring at least four times what it cost. Such is the ratio of increase in real estate in Camden's business section in these latter days.

It is our guess, though we are not talking officially, that the individual, or individuals, who through purchase of the property will demolish same and build a structure comparable with those handsome buildings now skyward on all sides and within two blocks of the Chamber Building—will find the latter on the bargain counter. Being for civic betterment and physical community improvement—these are cardinal principles of Chamber of Commerce practice.

On the other hand, if, by any unwelcome twist of fate, the building should fall into the hands of some individual or individuals who intend merely using it "as is" for profit—our horseback opinion is that they'll pay the full market value for it. And that's that.

We regret leaving the old quarters—they suited the purposes of a Chamber of Commerce admirably. They were

roomy, airy and unusually convenient and accessible. But the old order changeth and we are pitchforked into the magnificent Walt Whitman Hotel—on the mezzanine floor at that.

As we write these pars we are sensing the activities of the grand opening week.

And what a wonderful week it will be—something doing each night. By far the greatest event of the week will be the stockholders' banquet on Thursday evening, the 17th, when those Tarsighted citizens—there were 1941 of them who bought stock in the hotel and made it possible—will have the opportunity of viewing the magnificent structure which they have erected and furnished. Though as these lines are penned the finishing touches have to be added the furniture set and the little odds and ends to be arranged—yet everything will be in readiness for the opening.

There is a bridge tolls fight on and we should like to ignore it in these columns, but feel that we cannot. The Chamber recently issued a questionnaire to its membership on this question. The annoying tolls controversy was precipitated by the action of Pennsylvania through its legislature declaring for a free bridge last year. Everybody knows and Pennsylvania knows just as well as New Jersey knows that the Bridge proposition would never have carried when the question was put to the voters of New Jersey, had it not been distinctly understood that the bridge would pay for itself, liquidating its bonds from revenue derived through the use of the bridge. The membership of the Chamber, through the medium of the above mentioned questionnaire, declared itself emphatically against any interruption in the work of constructing the Bridge and having it opened on time, namely, July 4th, 1926. A slight majority in the chamber questionnaire favored a free bridge, but in almost every instance, this vote was qualified by a statement to the effect—"if this can legally and morally be done." A good many newspapers in the Northern end of the State took it for granted that Camden and this neighborhood, "was red hot for a free bridge" There is positively no warrant for this assertion. A straw vote taken by one of our newspapers indicates a huge majority of our people in favor of tolls. We would all like a free bridge but when one makes a bargain, either of a public or a private character, he should stick close by it. The Executive Council of the Chamber, in studying the tabulation of the Chamber's questionnaire, again emphatically reiterated its opposition to any delay being permitted in the finishing of the bridge and expressed the hope that the Federal Courts would take up the question of tolls and settle it.