

1869 did not believe the establishment of a store would be successful. In this opinion lies an interesting historical parallel. Robert Owen, the pioneer of co-operation in Great Britain, never believed that running a grocery business would usher in a new economic era. Yet it did. And the more modern co-operators of Ottawa decided upon a store, patterned after the successful British models.

Present-day Co-operation.

There are three typical modes of co-operative buying and distribution practised in the public service to-day. These, I would term, spasmodic, intermittent, and orthodox co-operation.

1. Under spasmodic co-operation, the method most frequently used is for some individual to procure a certain food commodity from a producer or wholesaler, and distribute it principally among his immediate office-mates. The individual promoter may act throughout as a philanthropist, or may receive a commission for his trouble. I have even heard of a loss being borne by a philanthropist on one such transaction.

2. Intermittent co-operation I would define as that method by which a more or less regular system of buying and distribution is practised, either philanthropically or on a commission basis as above described. This method is the apostolic successor to the defunct pioneer Association, and requires infinitely less machinery to operate.

3. Orthodox, or constant, co-operation is the establishment and conduct of a store or warehouse on the principles recognized by the Co-operative Alliance. Articles are sold at standard prices, and dividends are paid out of profits according to the amounts purchased.

Of course there are variations of these methods. Some were described in the debate on the co-operative resolutions at the recent Convention. One interesting method was described to the writer there by Mr. T. deLamadeleine, who is a member of a savings and loan society in Maisonneuve Parish. The members of this society purchase some commodities in bulk lots, and distribute them at cost; they also, like the Ottawa Association in 1869, have made arrange-

ments with certain retail dealers for a special discount for cash or monthly payments.

Co-operation in Coal, Ice, etc.

Several Civil Service Associations in Canada, notably London, Toronto and Ottawa, have done something in the way of supplying their members with coal at cost price. One rather ingenious bargain was described by Mr. Mathison at the convention, who stated that the Public Works Association at Toronto secured coal at reduced prices from the dealer who had the Government contract. For some years prior to the formation of the Civil Service Store at Ottawa, coal was purchased by a volunteer committee in carloads and distributed direct from car to cellar; in fact, for one or more seasons local storage was arranged and coal was delivered as required. Ice was also a commodity supplied for a few seasons by co-operative effort. But owing probably to the lack of a permanent organization, both of these efforts were discontinued. Since 1911 the Store has taken orders for coal in carload lots, for delivery direct from the cars to customers; but no attempt has yet been made to revive the ice business.

Efforts Towards Permanent Co-operation.

In 1911, the Civil Service Co-operative Supply Association was formed at Ottawa, under the enthusiastic leadership of the late Alex. McNeill, and has done an increasing business each year. Last year the Winnipeg Customs Association organized a co-operative society, but has not yet opened a store. At Toronto a co-operative society is in process of organization. The visit of Mr. A. Paré and the writer to Montreal last winter resulted in the appointment of a Committee on Co-operation, but the committee, as far as the writer knows, has not yet reported.

The Federation's Project.

At the recent Convention of the Federation in Ottawa, the following resolution was adopted:—

“In accordance with the report of the Co-operative Committee, the Convention recommends the appointment of a Committee to take up practically the problem of co-operative buying and distribution on behalf