

he knows all his children should reasonably aspire. And as the problem is a problem common to us all, so we should, as you have so wisely said, join in the effort to find a solution.

Co-operation has gone far to settle this question for many a family in the Old Land. In Glasgow, Birmingham and many other cities the co-operative store with all its various activities has been the means of keeping a balance between income and expenditure for many a workman and many a clerk. No man who is willing to acknowledge a fact when it strikes him in the face will deny that co-operation has been a magnificent success in Great Britain.

There are many people who know that co-operation could never be made a success for the whole civil service of Canada. But the same class of people, in their day, were equally sure that the common people of Great Britain had not the qualities to fit them for successes in a great national movement for co-operation. I have not the knowledge to enable me to show to what proportions the co-operative concerns in the Old Land have attained, but I know that their transactions cover every kind of merchandise that the ordinary consumer can call for and that the yearly dividends on purchases practically never fail; and also that in many lines, such as tea, flour, jam and other staples, the co-operators are producers as well as dealers and that those who are wise enough to deal at the co-operative store are assured of getting their goods at the very lowest cash price. I venture to suggest that if you would publish once more the facts and figures of the growth of co-operation in Great Britain, there are some of your readers to whom they would be not merely news but also the strongest of arguments in favor of the practicability of the plan you have suggested.

The story has been told a thousand times of how the "Rochdale pioneers," the little band of workmen who first applied successfully the principle of dividends based on

purchases, planted in faith, yet in fear, the seed which has since grown into such a tremendous and fruitful tree. In that story there is, I believe, a lesson. It is not necessary, and possibly it may not be advisable, to begin with a society covering the service for the whole Dominion. But in such places as Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver and many others there are enough civil servants to furnish custom for a co-operative store. A start has already been made here in Ottawa, and, thanks to the able and devoted services of our pioneers in this movement, much has already been accomplished and the way has been cleared for assured and complete success.

If, when the Ottawa store shall have attained a position in which it can link up with others, there are going co-operative concerns in other big cities with which it can link up, we shall have the basis for the Dominion-wide institution the coming of which you prophesy. And by that time confidence will be established, leaders chosen and trained, and our public prepared for the true democratic work of co-operation.

The main point, it seems to me, is for Ottawa civil servants to support their own co-operative store and for civil servants in other large places to establish similar concerns as soon as possible.

Co-operation may not be the final answer to the problem of the increased cost of living, but it looks like an effective answer at least for those who seek its benefits. With our advantages as members of the civil service, it seems like a practical and workable solution of the problem.

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