

LITERARY DEPARTMENT

COMPETITION vs. CO-OPERATION

(Concluded from December issue)

"8. By having the best citizens of the country as stock-holders they will remain permanent consumers unsolicited, and the business will thereby be placed on a solid mutualistic co-operative basis, which will yield continuous and sure remuneration to all stock-holders by way of a fixed interest on the capital invested, and the stock-holders shall receive in addition their just share of the surplus earnings, in proportion to the amount of their respective purchases and the stock owned, as herein-after provided.

"9. Every city, town or country where the company is doing business shall have a local committee appointed by the local shareholders, with the company's representatives to ascertain the needs of the shareholders in their respective town, city or district. The agent in charge shall send to the head office, or to the nearest branch office, orders for all the seasonable goods, etc., required from time to time; also settlements for the same.

"10. Drummers and travelling agents may be better employed, and may be discontinued in their present capacity, as speedily as the business is established on the new basis, as only a representative with necessary assistants will be required at each centre for showing samples, the delivery of goods, etc.

"11. All raw material, and all goods handled wholesale, shall be purchased for cash, and all goods shall be sold for cash at prices which shall be fixed at equitable and universal cash prices throughout the territory covered; that is, the same prices shall prevail, say from the extreme east to the extreme west, and from the northern to the southern boundaries of the federated colonies. But until a cash basis can be established and maintained in every line of trade, an exception may be made in some branches of trade, by taking a limited amount of customers' short date guaranteed paper, which (without exception) shall

bear interest at the regular banking rate, or its equivalent in additional price.

"12. The freight on all goods shipped to points in the territory covered shall be prepaid by the company, so that each customer shall pay (as part of the general expenses) an equitable proportion of the total freight and expenses, regardless of the accident of location; that is, the farmers in the Mallee or the interior shall be treated in the same way as the farmers in the Werribee or eastern districts.

"13. All goods sold in the home territory shall be listed and paid for by all customers of the company at regular cash prices, such as are charged non-shareholders, but stock-holders shall be repaid annually in cash (or new goods, if they so elect), a rebate on the volume of their respective purchases. As the company could under this system ascertain with comparative exactness the wants of its customers, and as it would retain in hand the long cash price of all goods till the close of that year, failure would be impossible under good organization and careful management.

"14. A bright family paper shall be issued weekly by the company, which shall be made a thoroughly educating medium, and shall be the principal exponent of the company in describing new goods and in setting forth the aims and objects of the company.

"15. In establishing mutualism, it is not proposed to give all the benefits of co-operation to outside stock-holding customers. The merchants, laborers, and all employees are entitled to consideration, and, with this in view, it is proposed to fix the hours of work per day at eight hours, and when circumstances shall warrant, at seven hours or less, for which fair living wages shall be paid. This will undoubtedly make better men, give more time for mental improvement, recreation, etc., and life will be recognized as worth living. The fact that the great masses of the people have to