

gress rendered easier by the fact that if Canadian wholesale houses refuse to sell to co-operators, there is always the Co-operative Wholesale Society of Manchester who will be only too pleased to sell goods to co-operative retail stores. In the case, however, of co-operators, who are also trade-unionists (and every trade-unionist will find it to his advantage to be a co-operator) there is another way in which the opposition of middlemen can be overcome; or at least, another direction which the struggle can take. The trade-unions should aim at ultimately becoming both EMPLOYEES and CUSTOMERS of the manufacturers; and to this end, can ask, that when signing agreements with their employers, that a clause be inserted providing that the latter shall not refuse to sell goods to any co-operative society of consumers. Should manufacturers refuse to accept such a clause, there is still another card to play. Associations of producers could be formed to sell to associations of consumers; or better still the federation of consumers throughout Canada could follow the example of the British Co-Operative Union, and undertake production for its own members. As already stated the Co-operative Wholesale have their own farms, factories, and means of transportation; and eventually, Canadian co-operators may have these things too.

All this is in the future, and is merely mentioned in order to give some perception of the ultimate goal, and the difficulties which may have to be met in attaining it. For the present, the thing desirable is to get stores started in as many cities and towns of Canada as possible. We are barely past the Toad Lane stage of co-operation in Canada, and it will be years before co-operators comprise one-third of the population, as the British Union does. But if the trade-unionists in every city and town of Canada would start a co-operative store, a tremendous stride forward would have been taken, and it would be possible for these stores to federate at once into a co-operative wholesale society which could deal with the employees of trade-unionists, thus eliminating the middleman at once as far as organized labor is concerned.

This letter ought not to be concluded without a word on the subject of *Crises*. Crises, with their attendant, unemployment are the result of so-

called "overproduction", which means simply the production of more goods than the consuming public can afford to buy. Co-operation with the elimination of the profits of both wholesaler and retailer and the refunding of such profits to the consumer increases the latter's purchasing power, and consequently decreases the danger of crises. Moreover, when the workers are both employees and customers of the manufacturers production can be to a great extent regulated by the demand.

If you want to make an increase in pay a real and permanent gain that cannot be snatched from you to-morrow, if you want a semi-annual wind-fall that will enable you to stretch your income and to have some comforts you could not otherwise afford,

if you want to lessen the danger of crisis and unemployment, if you want to be sure of quality in the goods you buy, if you want to increase the power and independence of workers, then you want a co-operative society. It will incidentally pay higher interest than the bank on the money you invest, but that is a minor consideration in comparison with the other advantages named. Nor is there anything utopian about the plan which has already proved so successful across the sea. Let us who are consumers, do our part toward making it as successful here, so that the "divies" may gladden the hearts of our own wives, as they are gladdening the hearts of four million housewives of the Mother country.

