

upon the freedom of the service to engage in co-operation.

(4) The practical difficulties in the way of carrying out co-operation under all the circumstances.

In answer to these arguments, we might bring forward the following:

(1) If there are other means of securing cheaper distribution, involving a more efficient competitive system, they would probably require more extensive organization than the civil service is capable of.

(2) As to the injury which the adoption of co-operation by any body of men may cause another class, this is capable of only one answer, and that answer is dictated by the system of trade and industry under which we live. The profit of the salesman represents the reward which he receives for specific services rendered. No person is entitled to that reward when the services are not rendered. As Earnest Aves points out, "no class can complain of unfairness if it should find its services no longer requisitioned; in a free industrial community there is no such thing as a prescriptive right to a weak economic position." Of course if an individual has accepted personal as apart from business favours that is his own matter, and he should respect his situation. But a general argument like that to which we are replying carried to its logical conclusion would mean that one could not attend to one's own furnace or grow vegetables in one's own garden. The above is irrespective of whether we have any special right to complain, such as exorbitant prices, combinations of tradesmen, etc. One cannot, however, anticipate any violent debate on this point, seeing that the business world itself adopts co-operation whenever it has the opportunity. For example, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association has organized for its 2,000 members a co-operative insurance association. The Canadian Pacific Railway, the Grand Trunk and other large companies insure their belongings on what is virtually a co-opera-

tive plan. A step further, and on a different basis, we have the large departmental stores and the great trusts which are nothing but devices for the elimination of disorganization, and which are infinitely damaging to the ordinary distributor. The retailer will certainly not receive from the co-operator as hostile treatment as is already meted out to him by his trade competitors.

(3) As to the peculiar position of the civil service, if such exists, I myself feel that it lies in quite the opposite direction from that which is sometimes suggested. We are to our cost familiar with the popular delusion that the civil servant is an individual whose earnings are so considerable and are come by so easily that it would be a pity not to help him rid of them. As a matter of fact, and quite apart from this, the position of civil servants is in Great Britain argued as a positive justification of their adoption of co-operation. That is the view, not of civil servants, but of writers who are concerned only with the principle involved. For example, Mrs. Sidney Webb points to the isolation of the civil servant from politics and his position as the servant of the whole community as peculiarly suggesting that he should become a co-operator, inasmuch as it cuts him off from the temptation to repay personal injury under cover of popular policy. This statement simply means that it is a protection to the country that its servants should carry on their private business in such a way that they may incur no obligations which they might be tempted to try to repay at the public cost. On more general grounds, however, how has any employer the right to dictate to any one how he shall spend the money which he has honestly earned, provided in the spending he remains within the law? Surely that is fundamental. Moreover, what convention can interfere anywhere with the economic law that men buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market?

(4) As to the practical difficulties in