

deserved the charge that is laid against him. From the first and all the time, as many of us know, Mr. McNeill has been a constructive and lifting force in the interest of the Co-operative Association. It is not to be expected that everyone, even though enthusiastic for a cause, will see alike as to the best course to pursue, but when the time comes for action the recommendations of those of greatest experience are surely the safest to follow.

In view of Mr. McNeill's foresight and guidance in the apple growing industry alone, it ill becomes Co-op. to say nasty things about him. By applying the principles of co-operation, Mr. McNeill, along with others, saved this industry from ruin, and placed it in the front rank of rural pursuits. In having available the counsel and help of such a man, the Ottawa Co-operative Store is very fortunate.

So far as I am able to judge from the letter of Mr. McNeill, his anxiety is to increase the value of the co-operative store to the civil servant. It requires no argument to convince anyone of intelligence that increased business means increased profits. To have made a dividend is well but to increase this and thereby still further lower the cost of household necessities by doing a larger trade is much better. So far as I can see the only use the store is to the service is to help reduce the cost of living and it seems childish to fear a movement that means expansion.

The Civil Service Association did a useful thing in organizing the Co-operative Society but time has shown that for adequate expansion a wider field of co-operators than the service affords is required. This is an extremely practical age and level headed people will treat with little consideration a business that is hampered with sentiment. This is shown to be true in every progressive country and is strikingly exemplified in Denmark from which

every other country may take lessons on matters of co-operation.

A short time ago it was my privilege as the secretary of a commission, to investigate at first hand co-operation as applied to agriculture in Denmark. I might have expected to find a great national organization controlling the affairs of all the various branches of co-operative effort but no such thing exists.

At first the farmers wanted to develop the manufacture of and commerce in butter and they formed a co-operative association to aid them. A few years later the same men desired to foster the bacon industry but they were too wise to depend on the parent organization and they established a separate society. A little later these same people wanted to make the most of their eggs and built up a co-operative egg society. All this led up to more generous feeding of the cows, the hogs and the fowl and more feed was needed than the home farms produced. This led to the organizing of an entirely separate body with branches all over the country to buy feeding stuff from abroad and distribute them as cheaply as possible. No, the Danes have no use for sentiment in business and the success of their agriculture has proved their wisdom. To do business is their first consideration and the success to which they have attained through co-operation in making their people prosperous is a tribute to their wisdom.

By all means let us "boost" but let us be wise enough to boost in the direction where there is some hope of reducing the cost of living for the civil servant. The fear that appears to possess the mind of Co-op. is like that of the hen with one chick that is the busiest member of the barnyard and in the autumn has added only one bird to the flock. — J. B. SPENCER.

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*This department will be continued in the next number.*