

working out it will be found that the best outside support will come from the Trades and Labour Council. And why? Simply because the Council will bring to the Co-operative movement the backing of a class and of previously existing organization machinery. Why not realize that the same sort of chance exists in the service? Letters to *The Civilian*, editorials in *The Civilian*, circulars, and "appeals" generally, are not *organization*; they are *advertising*,—all excellent, but not in themselves the thing needful.

But it may be asked: Why take all this trouble to arouse class interest? Simply because, though it seems a hard way, it is really the easiest way to work up a co-operative business. There is no royal road to this end. You can, of course, start a co-operative store as a lawyer hangs out his shingle, but experience has proved, even in England where the public is thoroughly educated on co-operation, that the quickest results are achieved where the store has its root in some class consciousness which may be worked for what it may be worth. Here in Canada where the public is essentially individualistic, where not one in ten has even the crudest notion of co-operation, it is folly to throw yourself on the public to the neglecting of a "fraternal" opportunity. Every co-operative success proves it. Can you show me one that does not? This is not "narrowness" or "exclusiveness"; it is practical business sense, and those co-operators who do not realize it and work upon it are the sentimentalists. For the truth is that co-operative success depends first and last on the quality of your membership, and quality can only be attained by effort, and effort is easiest within a more or less definite area. I would not for one instant say that co-operation is not universal in its applicability, but I do believe that it is shortsighted to think that the civil service store can gain the needful trade only by losing its present identity.

There is another point. We are talking a lot at the moment of branch stores and expansion in general. Now, if there is one thing that stands out prominently in the history of co-operation it is that expansion without efficiency in the organization is disastrous. I believe our directors appreciate this, and that the present is the time par excellence when the machinery of our store should be brought into the smoothest running order, when nothing "sloppy" either in thinking on the part of the directorate or in practice in the details of the store management as a co-operative concern should be left. To accomplish this, nothing would be so effective as some such vigorous campaign of education among the members and the service as that above outlined.

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The way that has been chosen by the Co-operative Association as a result of the recent meetings, is the way of good generalship. As I understand our position now, we do not admit that the throwing open of our membership is our only or even our best weapon for the up-building of our business. We are not banking on "the public." To the labour organizations we are saying that though we admit their ability to help us materially, we think it reasonable they should show that their support is real before asking us to deviate from the path we originally elected to follow, and to weaken even slightly our power to rally our own body,—a view in which they have cordially acquiesced. As a member of the Committee which discussed the matter with the Council's representatives, I would like to testify to the all-round alertness with regard to things co-operative that the Trades and Labour committee possess.

This is an inordinately long letter, but it is allowed to go on the ground that we cannot at this stage have too much discussion of these basic conditions.

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