

The Civil Service Supply Association (whose balance sheet to June 30th, 1880, may be seen at the Company's office), sold goods to the amount of seven millions of dollars in 1880. Their shares, on which ten shillings is paid, sell at £55. I purpose forwarding you a brief history of the Rochdale Society, the Civil Service Supply Association and some others.

I am, sir,

Yours respectfully,

WILLIAM P. LOCKWOOD.

184 St. James street,

Montreal, 24th March, 1881.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE GAZETTE.

Sir,—The establishment of the "Society of Equitable Pioneers," at Rochdale, in 1844, may be considered as the commencement of the English co-operative movement. Co-operation had often been tried in various forms; it was, however, for Charles Howarth to put in practical form the method of raising, making, or creating capital on what is known as the Rochdale plan. After satisfying themselves of the soundness of Howarth's plan, twenty-eight workmen agreed with him to form a society and raise capital to commence business. They began by subscribing two-pence a week, and after a time managed to increase the amount to three-pence. In December, 1844, these resolute earnest men had raised £28, and commenced business. They opened their store at eight and closed at ten o'clock on two nights a week. Two of the members attended in turn to weigh out and deliver the goods. No one received payment for services, but did what was required for the general benefit. Their first stock consisted of four articles, butter, sugar, soap and flour. Their rule was that every member should have five pounds invested before he could withdraw his share of profit or his share capital.

The first 28 shareholders raised £28 to start with! The shares were £1 each; their idea was to save the rest of the money to entitle each of them to four more shares; the difference between the price paid for goods at wholesale and the price at which they sold them retail, after paying rent, cost of management, 5 per cent interest on capital, and

other expenses, was placed to the credit of each member in proportion to his purchases; new members joined slowly at first, their scheme was ridiculed and laughed at, their little store in five years had only managed to obtain 149 members; still they made a profit and members increased.

The savings were used to increase their purchases, and in time each member got his five shares, some paying £1 or more towards them in cash, others paying only a few shilling and securing their five shares when their actual savings made up the difference; when the five shares were paid up they could withdraw the amount, £5, or hold five shares; future dividends they could receive quarterly or leave with the society as loan capital bearing 5 per cent interest; not more than £200 could be held for any one member. The art of saving, once acquired, was encouraged by finding that amounts varying from £5 to the full amount, £200 were held by many of the members in addition to shares in their own corn and flour mill, and other manufacturing societies; others were living in model houses, of which there are large numbers in Rochdale and other towns, built and paid for by co-operative savings.

The following table shows the progress of the Society from 1844 to 1879:—

Year.	Members.	Capital. £	Sales. £	Profits. £
1844 . . . .	28	28	.....	.....
1845 . . . .	74	181	710	22
1846 . . . .	80	252	1,146	80
1847 . . . .	110	286	1,924	72
1848 . . . .	149	397	2,276	117
1849 . . . .	390	1,193	6,611	561
1850 . . . .	400	2,299	13,179	889
1851 . . . .	630	2,785	17,638	990
1852 . . . .	690	3,471	16,352	1,206
1853 . . . .	720	5,848	22,790	1,674
1854 . . . .	900	7,172	33,364	1,768
1855 . . . .	1,400	11,032	44,902	3,106
1856 . . . .	1,600	12,920	63,197	3,921
1857 . . . .	1,850	15,142	79,788	5,470
1858 . . . .	1,950	18,190	71,689	6,284
1859 . . . .	2,708	27,000	104,012	10,789
1860 . . . .	3,450	37,710	152,063	15,906
1861 . . . .	3,900	42,925	176,206	18,724
1862 . . . .	3,501	38,465	141,074	17,561
1863 . . . .	4,013	49,361	153,682	19,671
1864 . . . .	4,747	62,105	174,987	23,719
1865 . . . .	5,326	78,778	190,234	25,157
1866 . . . .	6,246	98,989	240,122	31,681
1867 . . . .	6,323	128,435	284,919	41,619
1868 . . . .	6,781	122,233	290,900	37,467
1869 . . . .	5,909	93,423	236,433	28,542
1870 . . . .	5,500	80,281	221,021	2,269
1871 . . . .	6,021	107,500	246,522	29,026
1872 . . . .	6,444	134,912	265,577	33,040
1873 . . . .	7,021	160,886	287,212	38,749
1874 . . . .	7,636	192,814	298,888	41,679
1875 . . . .	8,415	225,632	305,657	43,212
1876 . . . .	8,892	254,000	305,190	50,683
1877 . . . .	.....	.....	.....	51,000
1878 . . . .	10,187	293,344	298,679	52,694
1879 . . . .	10,437	288,035	270,072	49,753