The co-operative movement to-day

Holyoake George Jacob
Title: The co-operative movement to-day

Author: Holyoake George Jacob

This is an exact replica of a book. The book reprint was manually improved by a team of professionals, as opposed to automatic/OCR processes used by some companies. However, the book may still have imperfections such as missing pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. that were a part of the original text. We appreciate your understanding of the imperfections which can not be improved, and hope you will enjoy reading this book.
SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY
Edited by H. de B. Gibbins, Litt.D., M.A.

THE
CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT
TO-DAY
SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF TO-DAY
Edited by H. de B. GIBBINS, Litt.D., M.A.

Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

A series of volumes upon those topics of social, economic, and industrial interest that are at the present moment foremost in the public mind. Each volume is written by an author who is an acknowledged authority upon the subject with which he or she deals, and who treats his or her question in a thoroughly sympathetic but impartial manner, with special reference to the historic aspect of the subject.

The following Volumes of the Series are now ready:—


MUTUAL THRIFT. REV. J. FROME WILKINSON, M.A., Author of The Friendly Society Movement.


THE ALIEN INVASION. W. H. WILKINS, B.A., Secretary to the Association for Preventing the Immigration of Destitute Aliens.

THE RURAL EXODUS: Problems of Village Life. P. ANDERSON GRAHAM.

LAND NATIONALISATION. HAROLD COX, B.A.

A SHORTER WORKING-DAY. H. DE B. GIBBINS, D.LITT., M.A.

BACK TO THE LAND. HAROLD E. MOORE, F.S.I.

TRUSTS, POOLS, AND CORNERS. J. STEPHEN JEANS.

THE FACTORY SYSTEM. R. W. COOKE-TAYLOR, Author of The Modern Factory System, etc.

WOMEN’S WORK. LADY DILKE, AMY BULLEY, and MARGARET WHITLEY.

THE STATE AND ITS CHILDREN. GERTRUDE TUCKWELL.

MUNICIPALITIES AT WORK. FREDERICK DOLMAN.

SOCIALISM AND MODERN THOUGHT. M. KAUFMANN, M.A.

MODERN CIVILISATION IN SOME OF ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS. W. CUNNINGHAM, D.D.

THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING-CLASSES. F. BOWMAKER.

THE PROBLEM OF THE UNEMPLOYED. J. A. HOBSON, M.A.

LIFE IN WEST LONDON. ARTHUR SHERWELL, M.A. Second Edition.

WORKHOUSES AND PAUPERISM. LOUISA TWNING.

UNIVERSITY AND SOCIAL SETTLEMENTS. Edited by W. REASON, M.A.

Other Volumes are in preparation.

METHUEN & CO., 36 ESSEX STREET, W.C.
THE
CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT
TO-DAY

BY
GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE
Author of "The History of Co-operation in England," "The Rochdale Pioneers," "Self-Help One Hundred Years Ago"

"Is it instinct? Is it nature?
Or some freak or fault of chance—
Which our liking or disliking
Limits to a single glance?"

CHARLES SWAIN

THIRD EDITION

METHUEN & CO.
36 ESSEX STREET, W.C.
LONDON
1903
"I have always wished, once at any rate, to be face to face with the citizens of that State within a State, which is called the Co-operative Movement." — LORD ROSEBERY, Inaugural Address 22nd Annual Co-operative Congress, Glasgow, 1890.
PREFACE

The object of this Book is to explain Co-operation to outsiders—the nature, growth and extent of the Movement; so that none may think too little of it, nor expect too much from it. Thinking too little is not to discern its usefulness; expecting too much is to bespeak disappointment at its actual success.

The outside public only understand Distributive Co-operation, and do not know that its original aim was to establish Co-operative Industry. Its aim is not alone to make superior grocers, but to make men—to raise a class capable of controlling their own means of support. The Store is a great device—the Co-operative Workshop is a greater. Until Labour is endowed with the right of profit, in some equitable form, the war of Industry against Capital will never cease. To vindicate Co-operative Equity as a means of concord between Labour and Wealth, is the main object of the following pages.

G. J. H.
CONTENTS

I. FAMOUS PRECURSORS OF CO-OPERATION ... 1
II. THE ENGLISH FOUNDER OF CO-OPERATION ... 6
III. CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY CO-OPERATORS ... 15
IV. FIRST STEPS IN CO-OPERATION ... 24
V. EXTENT OF THE MOVEMENT ... 35
VI. THE STORE AS AN INSTITUTION ... 53
VII. ECONOMY OF CO-OPERATION ... 66
VIII. HONESTY IN BUSINESS ... 73
IX. INTELLIGENCE A CO-OPERATIVE INVESTMENT 78
X. THE ROCHDALE SYSTEM ... 88
XI. THE CASE OF THE SHOPKEEPER ... 97
XII. THE WHOLESALE BUYING SOCIETIES ... 101
XIII. THE RIGHT OF LABOUR TO PROFIT ... 108
XIV. PARTICIPATION IN PROFIT ... 116
XV. PERSONAL CONDITIONS OF PROFIT-SHARING 125
XVI. THEORY OF THE CO-OPERATIVE WORKSHOP 129
XVII. CONcessions OF CAPITALISM ... 140
XVIII. THE MIDDLEMAN ... 145
CONTENTS.

CHAP.           PAGE
XIX. STATE HELP COMPARED WITH SELF-HELP ... 149
XX. TRADE UNIONISM AS A REMEDY ... ... 156
XXI. EMIGRATION AS A REMEDY ... ... 162
XXII. MODES OF CO-OPERATION ... ... 167
XXIII. SIGNS OF A CO-OPERATOR ... ... 171
XXIV. TWO CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF CO-OPERATION 179
APPENDIX ... ... ... ... ... 193
INDEX ... ... ... ... ... 195
THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT TO-DAY

CHAPTER I.

FAMOUS PRECURSORS OF CO-OPERATION.

English Co-operation is a system of commerce and industry consisting of societies of working-people in which the business profits of a store are given to the purchasers and the profits of the workshop to the workers. The division of profit in the store is made according to the amount of custom and in the workshop according to the amount of wages.

The original object of Co-operation was to establish self-supporting communities distinguished by common labour, common property, common means of intelligence and recreation. They were to be examples of Industrialism freed from competition. In the communal life an ethical character was to be formed in the young, and impressed upon adults, and all assured education, leisure, and ultimate competence as results of their industry.

The object of this brief book is to give a portable, easily-read account of the Co-operative movement of to-day. Its
origin goes far back—as the origin of most things does. But a few words will suffice as to its source in the past.

There is evolution in originality, could we but trace it. When a “new thing” is made clear, men find it is some development of ideas which had gone before, which had little meaning to any contemporaneous mind. Having been unobserved, and unregarded if seen, it is as a “new thing” to those who at length distinctly apprehend it. They at first deny that there is “anything in it.” After a time, when the reality and uses of the new thing become indisputable, those who denied it declare they always knew all about it. That is the way of excusing their ignorance, or pretending to knowledge they never had. As George Henry Lewes said, “The truths which required many generations to discover and establish, are declared to be innate.”

Ideas are like seeds. He who discovers a new germ has distinction, though he may not ascertain its nature or uses. When another causes it to germinate and proves it to be of value, he in his turn has reputation and honour. He is not the same as the discoverer, but he may be greater, as he who made the first steam-engine is greater than he who discovered steam.

In the myth-world before Homer there is Minos, who is reputed to have established equality among the Cretans, not suffering any, whatever their rank, to lead an indolent life. All classes sat at common tables, partook of the same diet. These laws are said to have been operant 1000 years—a long time for a scheme of society which many believe to be contrary to human nature. Thus the idée mère, the mother-idea, as the French (who have concrete insight) say, comes from afar.