Principle FIVE



January 2023

What is co-operation?

This is the question asked in Co-operative News. It was the headline of the first article of the first edition of the newspaper in September 1871

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WHAT IS CO-OPERATION ?

The question which heads this article is to appearance so simple that many persons will be almost inclined to call it foolish, and yet a very little thought will show that it is much more easy to put the question than to find a proper reply to it.

Thousands of men who are members of Friendly Societies or of Trades Unions, and who are used to march in procession to the annual dinner under the silken banner inscribed in golden letters "Each for all, and all for each," and to listen to the after dinner eloquence which sets forth the amount of good which their particular society is accomplishing; and how much more could be done if all the workers at the trade would join the union and cooperate for, its ends; or if all men were prudent enough to be members of Friendly Benefit Societies will think that they need no instruction on this subject, for that they are already practical Cooperators.

And certainly the tens of thousands of men whose purchases constitute the millions sterling which pass through the various retail stores every year, and who, when listening at the annual tea parties, know practically the truth of the advocacy merit in all the efforts now being made by working men throughout the country beyond the mere money profit realised by the men.

Verily, there is much difference in principle, but the reply to the second part of this question depends very much upon the ultimate object at which men aim in their efforts at Co-operation.

We can easily conceive the existence of society in any one of three conditions, viz.,—Competition, Communism, and Co-operation.

The first or competitive state now exists, and except as controlled by municipal law, may be aptly described as, "Every one for himself, and the devil take the hindmost!" And, really, the devil's share is very large in society, as is proved by our prisons and workhouses, and by the hosts of casuals who throng our streets by day, and fester in our attics and cellars at night in every direction. One of our sweetest poets says,

"Man's real wants are few, Health and a quiet mind include them all;"

but how difficult it is for a considerable proportion of our fellows to secure these simple elements. A quiet mind without health is next to impossible; and health without a sufficiency of food, clothing, and shelter, is also impossible; and yet the arrange-

a good harvest is generally good for all; but when material comes to be worked up, then labour invested in buildings, machinery, and wages are all more or less on speculation; the employer invests in the hope and belief that he will secure a profit; but his capital may never come back again; he may lose all which he has invested, and the workpeople whom he has employed may have to grope for other employers just as employers grope about for markets for their goods. This speculation for, and blindness with regard to, the future, is the peculiar charateristic of competitive society. It developes immense powers of production, produces intense excitement, makes brilliant successes and disastrous failures. It gives us motive power equal to the strength of a hundred millions of men, and leaves us with a million of paupers amongst twentyone millions of population. It produces clothing for the world, whilst our streets are thronged with beggars in rags. Under it we see common workmen become merchant princes, and men who have been lapped in luxury become slouching beggars. It is a lottery with a few splendid prizes, a large number of which barely pay for the tickets, and a considerable proportion of blanks.

The second condition of society to which w

Are we any more clear about the answer to this question in 2023?

Readers are invited to submit answers which can be included in future newsletters.

<u>Co-operative News</u> has been in continuous publication from 1871 to the present day. It covers everything of interest to co-operators. Published by a readers co-operative – Co-op Press. Membership is open to all. Paper copies are sent to members, or can read on line. The web page is accessible to the public.

For membership see:

https://www.thenews.coop/be-a-member/

You can read the January 2023 edition **HERE**

And the review of the year 2022 HERE

Paper copies of Co-operative News are available for research in the Resource Centre going all the way back to September 1871, see our catalogue, **Reference, Co-op News**

https://www.principle5.coop/archives

Have you ever considered being part of an alternative to TWITTER?

<u>Mastodon</u> is worth consideration. Has anyone any

experience of using this kind of social media?

Principle 5 is a member of:

Co-operative Press, publishers of Co-operative News

The Co-operative College

Sheffield Co-operative Development Group

<u>Co-operatives UK</u>

UK Society for Co-operative Studies

Webarchitects Co-op

Wortley Hall

If you would like to know more about the work of any of these organisations, contact us at: <u>steve@sheffield.coop</u>

Principle 5 Study Group

This year will see the setting up of a Study Group,

please let us know if you would like to be involved.



Registration Open

2022/23 - UKSCS Conference at Lincoln, Double Tree by Hilton, 24-25 February

For information and to book a place:

https://mailchi.mp/82270bf24dab/co-operative-studiesconferenceseminar-registration-6113244?e=31f7b88d6a

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A Commune in the North

Communal living starting with study circles, Cath Muller writing in <u>Peace News</u>:

https://peacenews.info/node/9336/diary-i-proposestarting-study-circles

For information about 'A Commune in the North'

https://www.acommuneinthenorth.org.uk/

OBITUARY

It is with sadness that we report the passing of long time member of Principle 5, Anne Murphy who died on Friday 23rd December 2022.

Anne was a committed councillor, deeply rooted in the communities which she served, first in Crookes & Crosspool and later in the Manor Castle Ward. She will be missed by all who knew her.

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Members are always welcome to visit the resource centre.

For appointment contact steve@sheffield.coop

Tel: 0114 282 3132

www.principle5.coop

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