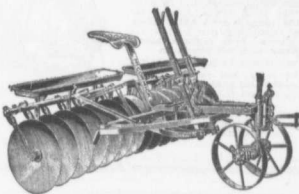


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Our British Columbia Letter

(By Farm and Dairy's Special Correspondent)

Somewhat surprising are the statistics of agricultural production given by Hon. Price Ellison, Minister of Agriculture, for 1913. Last year's budget speech, it will be remembered, reported a decrease in dairy products, and that the so-called "decline" continues would seem indicated by the minister's statement that as against butter and milk of a value of \$3,018,000 produced in 1912, in 1913 the total was \$2,593,404, of which \$542,260 was butter and \$2,051,144 milk. The importation of butter, milk and cheese from other provinces and abroad reached a total of \$3,731,672 for the first, \$308,160 for the second and \$445,310 for the third. Coincident with this decrease in dairy products, a decrease of approximately \$2,270,000 was recorded in the value of hay, grain and miscellaneous products. How soon British Columbia will supply its own markets is problematical—there are some who say it never will—but one thing is certain and that is that the dairying industry, not as a whole, but the most profitable branches of agriculture in the province, is bound to expand greatly in the next few years.

The total value of agricultural products was given at \$39,714,825, an increase over the preceding year of approximately \$1,700,000. In only one respect did importations fall off. The local egg production seems to be gaining on the demand slowly, but still it is about equalled by importations. British Columbia poultry ranchers are now making large profits.

SUCCESSFUL RENTERS

The establishment of a straight dairy farm in British Columbia requires either years of work building up a herd, during which every cent of profit is put back into the enterprise, or an almost prohibitive initial expenditure. Lands are generally high, dairy cows cost more than ever before—are hard to get at any price—and labor costs are heavy. We find, therefore, a large number of "renter" dairymen, especially on Vancouver Island and in the Fraser Valley, and some of these are very successful, in defiance of the opinion sometimes held that "renters," whether mixed farmers or dairymen, are to be shiftless and short-sighted. The very reverse, indeed, is generally the case.

Messrs. E. and T. Raper, proprietors of the Victoria Dairy, at Strawberry Hill, near Victoria, are successful renters. These men gained prominence when at the B. C. Dairymen's Chilliwaik Convention. They were awarded a cup for the best large-sized dairy in the province. For 12 years they have been renters, and from small beginnings their business has grown until now they have 125 head, of which 80 are milking cows. Their barn, a concrete structure of modern design, 310 feet by 40 feet, is the largest on Vancouver Island. They lease 1,000 acres, devoted entirely to dairying, the only crops grown being for feed. Most of the

cows are grade Holsteins, and all are tested regularly each month.

Like several dairies on the Mainland, this farm bottles its milk on the place by machine. The cows are washed before milking, and every precaution is taken to ensure cleanliness about the stable and milkhouses. The dairy employs 10 men at an average wage, besides board and lodging, of \$50 a month.

POULTRYMEN COOPERATE

The movement toward agricultural cooperation, which has resulted in rural cooperative enterprises all over Canada, many of which have been very profitable, has reached the poultry ranchers of the Chilliwaik Valley, affecting them in what is believed to be a unique manner. Chilliwaik is far famed for its dairy herds; in the future, if plans of Messrs. Paton, Orr, and others, "gang not agley," it will be famous for its poultry. These and other enterprising members of the Chilliwaik Poultry Association believe that the soil and climatic conditions of Chilliwaik are particularly suited to poultry farming, and through reader notices appearing in country weeklies of the province they are advertising the fact. They mention further the varieties and strains specialized in by different members, describe records made, and state that enquiries may be directed to the secretary of the association or the individual breeders.

The readers emphasize the fact that the Chilliwaik Valley secured top-notch honors in both light and heavy classes at last year's International Egg-Laying Contest.

Whether this advertising plan will work has yet to be determined, but, theoretically, it is sound. The quantity of setting eggs, day-old chicks, and breeding pens sold by mail would, if computed, astonish most people, and there is still room for intelligent advisers, especially in British Columbia, where the poultry industry has embarked on a period of great prosperity. The advertisements of the Chilliwaik Poultry Association do more than proclaim the merits of certain individuals' stock. They endorse each breeder, give him a hall mark better than a bank reference, assure the purchaser that he is honest and reliable.

Cooperative advertising, but of a commoner kind, has been resorted to this year by the Ashcroft District Potato Growers' Association. It has conducted an "educational" campaign in the newspapers, publishing the fact that all genuine Ashcroft spuds are now marketed in trademarked boxes.

The Cowichan and Surrey Poultry Associations report success in the cooperative marketing of eggs, and the Richmond Poultry Association now has the same plan under consideration.

FREE ALFALFA SEED

The Provincial Department of Agriculture this spring is supplying small quantities of alfalfa seed free to Farmers' Institute members. Alfalfa is not yet produced in large quantities in British Columbia. Settlers in the G. T. P. country re-