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EDITORIAL

Cream Separator Logic.

Farmers in all parts of Canada are comparatively well acquainted with arguments urged by representatives of the various firms that manufacture cream separators. That all argument is not logic, is illustrated by a large display advertisement used by one company in placing its machine before the American public. Small glass tubes are pictured, purporting to show that its machine is capable of extracting some twenty-five per cent. more cream than one competitor, and fifty per cent. more than another.

To one who knows anything at all about cream separation, the spurious nature of this claim is apparent at a glance. Almost any centrifugal cream separator on the market to-day will remove all but a trace of the butter-fat, if properly set and properly handled. While closeness of skimming is a legitimate talking-point used by almost every separator agent, and while there probably is a difference in this regard, yet, as between any of the recognized standard makes, this difference is so small as to be unobservable to the naked eye, so long as cream of equal richness is taken in each case. The best separators now on the market will, with good care, in an intelligent farmer's hands, leave not over one-twentieth to one-tenth of one per cent. of fat in the skim milk. When, therefore, an enthusiastic salesman, in a skimming test, undertakes to "extract" appreciably more cream from a given quantity of milk than is taken by a competing machine, what it really amounts to is that he is taking more milk serum (skim milk) than is necessary along with the butter-fat. This, so far from being an advantage, is a distinct disadvantage.

One of the serious objections to cream supplied to creameries from farm separators is that it is too thin. Dairy experts and buttermakers persistently urge that cream should contain at least thirty per cent. of butter-fat. When it contains in the neighborhood of twenty per cent. fat, it is not in the best condition for buttermaking. Such cream has to be churned at a higher temperature, and even then it takes longer to churn, and there is a greater loss of fat in the buttermilk. Besides this, thin cream is more likely to arrive at the creamery in a sour or off-flavored condition. So the result of sending thin cream is that the buttermaker is inconvenienced, makes a slightly smaller quantity of butter, and often of poorer quality, while the patron gets no more, generally a trifle less, for the fat in his milk, and loses a considerable quantity of skim milk that he would otherwise have for feeding. Remember that creameries and most purchasers of cream pay for it according to the amount of butter-fat it contains, as determined by Babcock test. The patron cannot fool them by including an extra quantity of skim milk with the fat; he only fools himself. It pays to consult the creameryman in the matter, and if one finds that he is sending a thin cream, adjust the cream screw or skim-milk screw (according to the make of separator) to skim a richer cream. As for the separator company's claim that its machine will extract an extra 25 or 50 per cent. of cream, this is sheer humbug. The only reliable means of ascertaining closeness of skimming of various separators is to have a Babcock test made of the skim milk.

Some makes of separators will not take a thirty-per-cent. cream and do clean skimming. Such a separator should never be allowed to remain in the dairy.

A Premium Upon Misrepresentation.

A trenchant arraignment of protective tariffs as possible, and not only as possible, but as commonly-employed levers used by combines to throttle industry, and realize extravagant profits by extorting inordinate prices from home consumers, appears this week in "The Farmer's Advocate," as the third of a very instructive series contributed by E. C. Drury, Master of the Dominion Grange. Mr. Drury buttresses his cogent reasoning with examples calculated to dissociate sentiment from logic in the handling of the tariff question. He states, for instance, that the Canadian cotton manufacturers, while pleading inadequate protection as a reason why they could not employ more hands or pay more wages, were yet able to pay dividends amounting to fifty per cent. of the cost of the common stock, seven per cent. on preferred stock, and six per cent. on bonds, besides a large amount for repairs and betterments.

As to the alleged necessity for protection in various lines, Mr. Drury touches a very important point where he says, "Excessive profits are hid from the public eye under the mask of over-capitalization." Thus, a capitalist, reaping an annual dividend of, say, four per cent. on stock held, may be actually realizing eight or ten dollars for every hundred dollars he ever put into his business.

When the farmer's business does not pay, he has to find means to make it pay, or quit. When a manufacturer in a protected country is not making as fat a dividend as he would like, he puts on a poor mouth, and runs to the Finance Minister for help—that is, for protection—and if his complaint is loud enough, if he can secure the support of a section of the newspaper press, if he can maintain a sufficiently effective Parliamentary lobby, and if the Government is sufficiently complacent, he stands a good chance of getting what he asks, which, in its working out, has the effect of enabling him to assess still higher prices on farmers and other purchasers.

It is not the least of the numerous evils of protection that it relieves industrial imprudence and mismanagement of its normal penalties, detracts from the protected parties' independence, and places a premium upon misrepresentation, deceit, corruption and casuistry.

Fair Prices for Potatoes.

The recent advance in potato prices, following the reasonably good figures that have prevailed since the digging season of last year, no doubt will tend to increase the acreage sown to that crop for 1909. For those who have the land in fit condition, and the facilities for giving the necessary attention, an increase in area devoted to potato-growing may be profitable. An increased supply naturally has a tendency to lower prices, but, on good soil, the yield generally is sufficient to leave a handsome profit, even at prices lower than have been obtained during the past few months. In addition, proper cultivation leaves the soil in ideal condition for other crops in 1910.

It would be folly, however, to allow the prevailing good prices to induce the planting of potatoes extensively on land that has not been prepared for the crop, or that is not in condition to give good returns under ordinary conditions. With judicious planting of good seed, and proper cultivation and spraying during the season, the returns will not likely be disappointing, but it is easy to exceed the reasonable limit when prices are encouraging.

Farm Separator Cream.

For the manufacture of butter from cream taken from the milk by the farm separator, it is essential that the machine be kept scrupulously clean, that a rich cream be drawn, and that the cream be cooled as quickly as possible before being mixed with cream from a previous milking. These three points have been urged by almost every contributor on the farm-separator question in the discussion carried on in "The Farmer's Advocate" during the past three weeks. Those who have followed the articles cannot but be convinced that there is great room for improvement.

In the manufacture of butter in creameries, the interests of the producer of the cream, as well as those of the buttermaker, must receive due consideration. Scarcity of farm help has led the farmer to adopt whatever method would dispose of the raw product from his herd, with minimum loss of time, as long as he obtained fair returns. Studying, also, the value of skim milk in feeding young stock, he has learned that it pays to feed it fresh and sweet. The advent of the cream separator met his requirements in these two particulars. Encouraged by the unfair claims of unscrupulous separator agents, he has, however, in some cases, overstepped the mark in regard to saving labor, and machines are washed too infrequently. Coupled with this cardinal neglect has gone the absence of cooling facilities, and the tendency to skim a thin cream. Both of these can readily be overcome.

Several of our correspondents justly place the onus of improving conditions on the makers. As Superintendent Wilson, of Saskatchewan, points out, however, it is necessary that they arrive at a uniformity of opinion as to what constitutes an ideal cream. Then they can work together, and advise patrons as to what is wanted. If need be, they can do as the manager of Locust Hill Creamery does, and absolutely refuse to accept cream that does not come up to the standard. Experience has demonstrated that it pays.

As has been wisely stated, a great deal depends on the man in charge of the creamery. Dairymen have adopted the cream separator as an essential farm implement. They must be educated to meet the increased responsibilities that attend the use of this machine. Since it is agreed that a cream testing thirty, thirty-five or even forty per cent. is more desirable than one testing twenty-five per cent. or lower, the richer cream should consistently be demanded. By way of assisting in the battle for cooling the cream to fifty degrees Fahrenheit, or lower, the suggestion that the maker provide standard thermometers for his patrons at cost price merits consideration. The gospel of cleanliness requires frequent repetition. Despite the advice of some separator agents, all who have the interests of butter manufacture at heart agree that every cream separator should be washed thoroughly after each operation.

Too great anxiety to curtail expenses connected with gathering cream seems to be responsible for much of the trouble. It is false economy to save money on hauling expenses of the raw product, and lose by being obliged to sell inferior butter. Other things being normal, it pays to maintain the quality.

Conditions that are applicable to the manufacture of butter in the creamery, also apply to the home dairy. In every case, the butter made from a rich cream properly cooled is more satisfactory as to time taken to churn, and as to quality of product.

The various points mentioned by our correspondents demand careful study. With a definite ideal on the part of the manufacturers, and