

The Commercial

WINNIPEG, OCTOBER 15, 1888.

DAIRYING IN MANITOBA.

In an other column of this issue of THE COMMERCIAL is published a list of cheese factories and creameries in operation this season in Manitoba. In regard to cheese factories, the showing is a good one, and will no doubt prove a surprise to many. It is but a very few years since the first cheese factory was started in Manitoba, and those who will remember this fact, and who have not followed up the progress of the industry since its establishment here, will be surprised to find a list of twenty-six factories now in operation. Even this list is not complete. It is given from memory and doubtless with some omissions. The real number of factories can therefore be placed at not less than thirty. In addition to the factories in the province, several have recently been established in the Territories to the west of Manitoba, thus increasing the list by probably half a dozen factories. Altogether the showing is one of which the country may well feel proud. The rapid strides made in the past two or three years, may be expected to continue in the future. The great advantages which this country possesses for the extension of the dairying industry have frequently been set forth in this journal. The progress already made would indicate that these great natural advantages are being made use of, and that in a short time the dairy interests of this prairie region will be extensive indeed. The field throughout which the dairying industry may be carried on under exceptionally favorable circumstances, is a very large one. Over a very large portion of the great territory of Alberta, where dairying is only now commencing to take root, the natural conditions are equally as favorable as in Manitoba. What may ultimately be accomplished is therefore beyond comprehension.

In the establishment of creameries it will be observed that very little has been accomplished. Only three creameries are given, and these are all in the Winnipeg district. Though many car lots of butter are now annually exported from Manitoba, yet creamery butter is practically an unknown commodity in the Winnipeg market. It can hardly be said to come into the market in wholesale or jobbing quantities.

The product of the creameries in the Winnipeg district is taken by the retail trade or private parties at good prices, and it is impossible to obtain the article for shipment or for general distribution. Inquiries are frequently received by wholesale dealers, from outside sources, for creamery butter, but the best that can be furnished is the pick from receipts of ordinary farmers' butter coming through country merchants. A much larger quantity of creamery butter than is now manufactured would find a ready market right at home, at good prices, to say nothing of the outside demand for the commodity.

The present promiscuous mode of manufacturing and handling butter is not at all satisfactory. It is the cause of endless trouble, and not infrequently of considerable loss to the merchants handling the article. First the country merchant buys it from the farmer, sometimes paying therefor a higher price than the value of the article would warrant. He is obliged to pay the same price for everything offered called butter or else lose some of his customers. After holding for a while, during which time the butter has invariably become considerably reduced in quality, it is sold or consigned to a city wholesale dealer. If sold, it is not infrequently at a loss to the first holder, whilst very frequently losses are netted also through consigning the article. But the loss does not end with the country merchant, as the city wholesale trade has learned to its sorrow, and thus the butter trade has grown to be looked upon as a very unsatisfactory business all around. The only way to remedy this is to do away with the present mode of making and handling butter, in favor of the creamery style of manufacture, and until the bulk of the butter is made in creameries, handling butter will always prove an unsatisfactory business.

So long, however, as the present mode is continued, those handling butter should learn that the one great point to be remembered is: Make haste in marketing. Every day that butter is kept, it is depreciating in quality, especially when subjected to the accommodation which the average country trader can give it. With care in handling, sorting and packing, and following a system of marketing promptly, the average quality of the butter marketed could be greatly improved, but there is really little hope of any decided improvement until creamery butter has largely replaced the ordinary

article made by the farmer's wife or daughters, which latter article only reaches market by a roundabout course after running the gauntlet of foul cellars and coming under many deteriorating influences. So long as this promiscuous system is continued, so long will a considerable quantity of butter, which originally cost from 15 to 18 cents, have to be annually cleared out for grease or re-manufacture into butterine, etc., at from 1 to 8 cents per pound.

To show the demand for creamery butter, it may be stated that a car lot of Ontario creamery is expected to arrive in this market shortly, though at the same time Manitoba has a large surplus of ordinary dairy butter which will have to be exported, whether it will pay to do so or not. This would go to show that the establishment of at least several additional creameries here would prove profitable investments.

The encouragement and development of our dairy interests is a matter which might well receive attention from the Provincial Government, especially with the object of placing the butter trade upon a more satisfactory basis.

REVISING THE U. S. TARIFF.

The United States Congress has for a long time had the tariff question under consideration, and so far with little practical work done. The tariff question is a very tender one in the United States at present. It is really the one great question at issue in the present presidential contest, and this accounts for the very tender manner in which both parties endeavor to handle the matter. Of course it is the object of both sides to make as much capital out of the question as possible, but as the real feeling of the country upon the tariff question can only be known through the result of the vote at the coming election, the matter must be approached with extreme caution. The Democrats would evidently like to bid for support by making a bold stroke in the direction of tariff reform, but they appear afraid to take the step. There is the feeling of uncertainty that the country may not be ripe for such a *coup d'etat*, and it would be a grave blunder from the political party standpoint, to attempt a reform in advance of public sentiment. A radical policy of tariff reform would also cause some disaffection in the Democratic ranks. No wonder then that to the Democrats the tariff question is a very awkward problem.