

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

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EDITORIAL.

The Dairy Outlook.

As evidenced by the three large Ontario Dairy Association conventions held during January and February, the manufacturers of dairy products feel that they are in a successful industry. Not only were the attendances encouraging, but the discussions that followed the various papers and addresses read and delivered indicated a general and strong determination to hold all the markets secured and gain a wider field in the face of all competition. These undertakings are to be accomplished by reducing the proportion of defective goods and extending the make of better produce. The discussions throughout were calculated to draw out ways and means of correcting faulty conditions, and a particularly hopeful sign was the frequent appeals to scientific experiments for technical information. The earnestness of the demands for information made by practical makers was particularly marked, and knotty problems were cleared up in very many cases, not only to the enquirers, but to every earnest maker who listened to the proceedings. There was an evident determination at each of the meetings, but more particularly in Western Ontario, to demand an improvement in factories and curing rooms, and also to get successfully at the careless patrons who give no end of trouble by furnishing germ-laden milk, to develop bad flavors in the whole mass into which their supply is turned. A forward step was taken in this regard in a recommendation on the part of the Cheese and Butter Makers' Association meeting at Ingersoll, to demand that the appointed factory inspectors conduct fermentation tests of milk of every patron at all factories visited, by which means the patron sending milk containing taint-producing germs will be located, so that he can be visited and helped to remove the cause of the trouble.

This increased interest may be taken partly as a result of the buoyant condition of the market for both cheese and butter throughout the season. So far as Ontario is concerned, the western portion sadly needed the good price to compensate for the extraordinary decrease in the output through the continued drought during the summer and fall of 1899. It is estimated by one of the most extensive buyers of dairy goods in Western Ontario that the make of cheese amounted to 25 per cent. less than that of 1898, and 40 per cent. less than the output of 1897; and of butter it is claimed that there was not more than 25 per cent. of that made the previous year. In Eastern Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritime Provinces, the pastures were good throughout the entire season, which of course resulted in a full make and a very profitable season. In many factories cheesemaking continued well into December, and now practically all of the make has gone forward because of the tempting figures offered, so that there is every prospect of the spring market opening firm and with bare supply. Such a state of affairs does not conduce to the best interests of the industry, as it is certain to be accompanied by an undue early make, and unless very great precaution is taken at that season our reputation will suffer as a result of defective quality. While there is always more or less uncertainty about future markets, it seems fairly safe to look for a decline in cheese prices from the present high figures as the season advances, so that it would seem wise, where a creamery plant has heretofore been patronized with satisfaction, not to desert it in favor of a cheese factory. Supply and demand at the great food-distributing centers of the world largely regulate prices, but the former is dependent to a great extent upon weather conditions affecting pasturage. At present, however, the tendency of prices for most food products is decidedly upward, as it ought to be to keep pace with the increase in

cost of what the farmer has to buy. Speaking generally, the dairy industry for 1900 opens under decidedly encouraging auspices. A noteworthy feature referred to elsewhere in this issue, in connection with the industry in Western Ontario, is the amalgamation of the recently-organized Cheese and Butter Makers' Association with the older organization, from which it is anticipated that greatly increased strength and practical advantage will accrue.

Does the War Affect Prices?

Time was when even a rumor of war had the effect of deciding the farmer to hold his wheat for a higher price, which was regarded as an almost inevitable accompaniment of international troubles. But the world's wheat field has grown so wide that a war fails to cause even a ripple on the surface of the market for that cereal, and has scarcely any appreciable effect on the prices of other grains. Occasionally a reader of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE complains that undue prominence is given in the paper to stock-raising and to stock feeding and the dairy. They claim that many farmers have not the training, the means, nor the business tact to buy, breed or feed cattle or other stock successfully, and that consequently they have to depend upon grain-growing, and mainly on wheat, for a living. Granting this for the sake of argument, a little reflection should convince these men that in advocating the feeding of stock, we are doing the best possible service to the farmer whose speciality is grain-growing. What is it that makes a profitable market, or otherwise, but the law of supply and demand. Suppose that all farmers were giving their principal attention to grain-growing, and, instead of studying to raise and feed as much stock upon their farms as they can profitably, were keeping as little stock as they could possibly get along with, and that stock of an inferior class and ill-fed, many millions of bushels of the grain now fed to stock, and finding a market in that form, would be thrown upon the market as grain, and the excessive supply would have the effect of depressing prices down to figures which would be simply frightful. The large amount of grain fed to beef and dairy cattle and other live stock relieves the grain market of just that much of competition, and gives the stock feeder an outlet for his own grain at a paying price, while thousands of these same stock breeders and feeders buy largely of grain from the farmers who make a speciality of grain-growing, or if not from them, then from dealers, and thus reduce the pressure of supply on the general market.

If the war is affecting prices in any line of farm produce, it is in the line of live stock and its products. The market for horses is being sensibly helped. The demand for canned meats is encouraging the business of feeding cattle. Cheese is in very active demand, and the supply is so short that prices are evidently bound to be high, while the rush to cheesemaking will react upon the market for butter, and its scarcity will materially raise the price for it. The price of other food supplies, such as pork and poultry and their products, will be enhanced by the advance in prices for beef and dairy produce, and farmers may well be thankful that they are no longer wholly depending on so uncertain a quantity as wheat as their only hope, but have a number of strings to their bow, by which, if skillfully handled, they may yet secure a comfortable competence and leave the farm to their children with its fertility unimpaired. We do not discourage the growing of wheat, but counsel its cultivation only in a rotation of crops, and on land suited to its growth and in such condition as to justify reasonable expectations of a profitable crop.

It is a mistaken idea to think that horses can be made tough by exposure to all kinds of weather in winter. There is such a thing as justifiable exposure of colts. Ascertain what it is.

Canada Leads in Bacon.

The place which Canadian bacon is taking in the British markets, and the means by which that position has been attained, is indicated by the following extracts from the *Scottish Farmer* of recent date: "The Canadians are moving heaven and earth almost to capture our markets. Some years ago it was brought home to the Canadians that if they were to compete successfully with Ireland and Denmark they would have to make a radical change in both breeding and feeding. They have done so, with the result that Canadian bacon takes precedence of all, saving, perhaps, the famous Wiltshire brand and one or two Irish brands and the famous Yorkshire hams. So far as natural surroundings are concerned, no country is more favorably situated than Scotland for pig-rearing, and yet we neglect to take the position we ought to. Of course, we do not forget the advantage which the Americans have by combining the feeding of cattle and pigs where Indian corn is used, so far as cheapness is concerned, the pigs getting all their food out of the droppings of the cattle, with the result that their pork is of a very inferior quality. How, then, have the Canadians captured our markets? By simply breeding a class of pigs to produce more lean flesh, and feeding on wholesome food, and also keeping them in the midst of clean surroundings. Let us get rid of the old idea that an animated bladder of lard is the thing to produce, and that other idea that it does not matter about keeping a pig clean. It matters very much, as dirty surroundings have distinctly injurious effects on the delicacy of the pork. Breed a lean type of pig; use food that tends to produce lean and not purely fat; study the best methods of slaughtering and curing, and Scotch bacon may yet range up alongside of Scotch beef and mutton."

A Pair of Coincidences.

As illustrating the tendency of the times among breeders in developing an ideal type of dairy cattle, it is interesting to note that concurrently with the production of the article in our issue of Feb. 1st, on constitution in dairy cattle, and the publication in the previous issue of an article on judging dairy cattle, there appeared in the *Holstein Register* a letter from Mr. G. W. Clemons, Secretary of the Canadian Holstein Association, which we reproduce in another column in this issue, advocating the breeding of cattle of similar conformation and quality while maintaining what is known as breed type or the distinctive characteristics of the breed to which the animals belong. Before our article on constitution was off the press we received from the well-known and efficient judge of dairy cattle, Mr. F. S. Peer, an article which will also be found in this number, which ably deals with some features of the same question, and refers to some very superior herds of Jerseys in England that have been bred upon the lines we have advocated, and with very great success. It is satisfactory to know that there is coming about a more general agreement between breeders of cattle of the various dairy breeds as to the most approved type, and we are encouraged to believe that before many years there will be a uniform standard of conformation and indications of utility in all the dairy breeds, so that the ideal type may be the same in each of the breeds of that class in so far as form and quality are concerned, just as is the case in respect to the different beef breeds. The more uniformity we can secure in our farm stock for the purpose for which it is designed, and the fewer distinct standards of excellence we have to keep in mind, the better. It is gratifying to realize that in this regard progress is being made.