

educate them in the very best methods of keeping this whey as sweet as possible. The farm separator feature of the cream gathering system of butter-making should be treated somewhat similarly. It has in it, besides the commendable features we have named, many others, and is a system which if properly managed lends itself to the production of first-class butter on a more economical basis for the farmer than the regular cream separator creamery. We may be wrong, but, nevertheless, our view is that the best course to pursue is not to en-

deavor to shut off the growth of this system but to try and educate the patron to manage his separator properly and to handle the cream so as to make the finest quality of butter. If this is done we believe that under the farm separator system as good butter can be made as by the separator creamery.

In our special dairy number, which will appear next week, Mr. J. A. Ruddick, Chief of the Dairy Division, Ottawa, contributes a valuable article dealing with the farm separator system which should be read by every one interested in this important question.

John Caldwell, Nurseryman, Virde, Manitoba; and E. Stewart, Dominion Supt., of Forestry, on the lines of work of the Forestry Department. Mr. Stewart's paper on "Utility of forests in relation to water supply" was pronounced a masterly effort by those present. He showed the importance of forests in preventing drouths by attracting rainfall, in preventing freshets by acting as reservoirs for the rainfall and melting snow, and otherwise in their tendency to temper extremes of temperature and moisture. A paper on birds in relation to forestry by A. E. Atkinson, completed the programme.

Those farmers who still have grain on the farm for sale or stored in elevators along the lines of railway are rejoicing over the prospect of early opening of navigation. There is every indication that the lakes will be open at least a month earlier than the usual date. Sanguine prophets are abundant who believe that April 1st will see the Fort William and Port Arthur elevators at least partially emptied of the grain that has been lying there all winter.

The Canadian Northern announce further additions to their storage capacity at Port Arthur, as they intend during the coming season to place their line in a position to handle its full share of the grain trade of the West. As was fully expected the amalgamated Beatty and Collingwood lines of steamers will run in conjunction with the Canadian Northern. In consequence of this arrangement much freight that heretofore has been handled in Duluth will henceforth go via Port Arthur and the C.N.R.

Manitoba Farmers' Institutes seem foreordained to misfortune. The series of meetings arranged for the two weeks commencing on the 10th inst. was sadly interrupted by the storm of the 14th, 15th and 16th, which knocked railway timetables into the proverbial "cocked hat" and made travelling an impossibility for three or four days. As a result all meetings of the past week were cancelled, and an attempt will be made to send lecturers to the disappointed institutes during the month of June. Meetings so far as held are reported to have been well attended and great interest manifested in the proceedings. The winter is, generally speaking, the time for successful Institute work in Manitoba and but for the unforeseen, and unavoidable occurrence of that untimely snow storm the winter's work of the Institute would have had a fitting termination in this series of meetings. The lecturers, all local men, speak in enthusiastic terms of the meetings held by them, and general regret is felt at their unfortunate interruption.

**An extra large edition of our Special Dairy Number will be issued, and it will be nearly three times the size of our regular issue. No Dairyman can afford to miss this number. Send in your name at once.**

## Our Western Letter

The Storm. Early Seeding. Forestry Convention. Wheat Shipments. Institute Meetings Cut Short.

Winnipeg, March 24th, 1902.

Public attention was for a few days diverted from the prohibition question by the remarkable storm of wind and snow which swept over the Province and most of the Territories last week. At least one and one-half feet of snow fell during the 14th, 15th and 16th of the month, which, with the wind blowing a gale from the north-east, was for the most part deposited in miniature mountains in each sheltered spot, while the open fields and roads were left bare. It was reminiscent of those great and curiously wrought banks of white that were the wonder and admiration of the writer, when a schoolboy in East Middlesex, as they reared their snowy heights along the sinuosities of the old zig-zag rail fences, then so common in that part of the country. The recent storm bore further resemblance to the Ontario nor'easter, in that it has been succeeded by thaw and rain, which have already removed the greater part of the heavy snowfall. The warm rain which fell yesterday will greatly advance the season, and there seems to be every probability of an early spring.

Another week of weather like the past week will enable the farmer to get at the spring plowing. Owing to the unusual proportion of "stook threshing" last fall, the fall plowing fell considerably below the previous year and, unless the spring should be early and prolonged, the crop area will show the effect of this failure to get the desired amount prepared for crop during the fall. There are other indications pointing to a slight decrease, especially in wheat, as compared with 1901, among these may be mentioned the fact that last year's increase over 1900 was abnormal and due largely to the partial failure of the wheat crop of 1900. The foregoing remarks apply solely to the province of Manitoba. The crop area of the Territories will, owing to the heavy immigration of the past two years, in all probability show an increase. I am unaware of any statistics as to the amount of land broken last

year, upon which to a large extent the increase will depend, but am led to believe the amount is considerable. The increase from that source in Manitoba has been taken into consideration in this forecast.

A stationary or even a declining area in wheat could not be considered otherwise than a gain to the community, if thereby the energies of our farmers were diverted into other branches of agriculture. A consideration of the comparative value of our grain crops and other products of the farm, cheese, butter and beef, shows that the fertility of our soil is being sold by the bushel as fast as it can be got into marketable shape. The farmers of older lands can tell us what must be the inevitable result of that system of farming, doubtless here as elsewhere no heed will be given to any warning except that of the decreasing yields, which are bound, sooner or later to result from this unwise policy of overdraining our account at nature's bank.

The annual convention of the Forestry Association was held on Thursday, the 20th inst. This association is organized chiefly for the purpose of keeping before the public the importance of the afforestation movement in the West, and of maintaining the present forest reserves undiminished. The present reserves amount in the aggregate to about a million and a half acres. The work of the Forestry Commissioner, Mr. Stewart, and his lieutenants, Messrs. A. P. Stevenson and Norman Ross, have been several times referred to in your columns. Much has been accomplished in the past and much remains to be done. The interest shown in the movement by the farmers of the Province and the Territories indicates that the efforts made on their behalf by this department of the government are fully appreciated. In the coming season some 500,000 trees will be planted under the supervision of the Forestry Department, by the farmers of Manitoba, and a further large number by the farmers of the Territories. After the election of officers papers were read by A. P. Stevenson, Inspector for Manitoba;