

as nearly as possible under the same constitution and by-laws.

2.—That clubs so formed shall stand in competition with each other in the thoroughness and practical value of their discussions and conclusions.

3.—That minutes of each be prepared and submitted, in competition, to your committee; its choice be published each month in the ADVOCATE.

4.—That the club proving to be the most efficient during the year, shall receive, as first prize, the sum of \$— or its equivalent in standard agricultural books, as may be chosen, such books to form the nucleus of a circulating library of said club. The second in efficiency and practical value, to receive a prize under the same conditions as first, except the publication of the M.S., which should be left optional with the editor of ADVOCATE.

These are the general outlines which I have in mind, and I deem it superfluous to enter into minor details. Some may contend that this plan will give precedence to scholarly institutions. Not so, however, I think, for

"Great men are not always wise."

Another scheme I desire to present for your consideration and aid is the cultivation of forest trees. The urgency of this scheme presents itself in the ever decreasing supply of timber and the bleakness of many districts that have been denuded of trees, and exposing the country to the sweep of fierce winds. Many ingenious schemes have been devised to create public interest in this question, but as yet with very meagre results. As a primary step, statistics and facts should be collected and arranged at whatever cost, to show the relation existing between the forest and the operations of the farmer, in the protection of crops, in the humidity of the atmosphere, the cost of planting and cultivation, the age at which they might be expected to be of service as wind-breaks, and for economical purposes. It would be a great stimulus at the present time, if living examples of the possible success in forest cultivation could be pointed out in every neighborhood; and we think it would be in keeping with the importance of the case, for supplying these examples, to offer cash prizes for the best growth of forest trees, planted in blocks or belts as wind-breaks. This will be example as well as precept.

No agricultural country can be prosperous unless its farmers are so; hence the aim of all legislation should be to lighten the burdens of the agricultural classes.

Calm reflection after the bustle of many years, has brought American politicians to their senses. Millions of dollars have been squandered in the attempt to pamper agricultural pursuits by creating sinecure offices. Worthless seeds have been lavishly foisted upon farmers for the purpose of creating the impression in their minds that a vast amount of good was being accomplished in the cause of agriculture, and many other useless expenditures have been made. The appropriation for this year has been cut down \$108,000, being \$150,000 less than the amount asked for. This unexpected reduction will send many government employes on the tramp. The Bureau of Animal Industries also needs a trimming.

## The Dairy.

### Canadian Butter for Export.

BY L. B. ARNOLD.

At the recent dairymen's conventions in Eastern and Western Ontario, a good many earnest words were said in favor of improving the quality of Canadian butter and swelling its production to an extent that would enable the Dominion to export butter as largely as it does cheese. Every speaker who discussed, or referred to the matter, labored to impress the conviction upon his hearers, that the improvement in quality and the expansion of the butter product to the extent suggested, were not only desirable, but were easy ends to attain.

That an improvement in the quality of butter as at present made is desirable, no one will question, but there is a question about its being as easily accomplished as the speakers intimated, and as to laboring for an exportation of butter equal to that of cheese, I consider such an attainment not advisable if it were possible.

It is not such an easy matter as some may imagine, to successfully develop such a large and important interest that would be comparatively new. It has taken twenty years to develop the cheese interest to its present position, and it has involved a large amount of energy and capital in the work. Would it require any less time and effort to develop an export butter trade equal to that of cheese, from a starting point as low as that from which cheese started, and cause it to overtake the exportation of cheese? I do not see how there can consistently be more than one answer to this question. It strikes me very forcibly that instead of embarking in a work of such magnitude that must involve a sacrifice of time and labor, and of doubtful propriety, if accomplished, it would be better and more profitable, for the present generation at least, to turn the spare milk of the country into a channel already developed, and, as long as possible, reap the benefit of the labor and capital already expended in developing it to a paying condition, and if dairymen have still more energy to spare, they could very profitably expend it in improving it still more, for though it is fast becoming conceded that Canada is leading the world in the quality of her cheese, there is still room ahead for further improvement.

Butter is not as good a commodity to export as cheese. It necessarily depreciates with age, and a voyage across the ocean so affects it as to make it old butter when it gets there; while cheese, for a time at least, may grow better with age, and appreciate in value, while butter must depreciate, especially if it should chance to meet with the misfortune of having to lie in store awaiting sale.

The history of the exportation of butter from the ports of the United States for the last fifty years, goes to show that all the way through that period it has never paid to export first class butter. The price for such butter has run but little different in the cities of the United States and those of England and Europe. Sometimes it has been higher on one side of the ocean, and sometimes on the other. At this date it is about the same on both sides. It is generally a little higher on the other side, but the difference is so little that it is more

than balanced by cost of transportation and the certain depreciation from the journey in getting there, hence the rule has been that first class butter has not been exported, nor will it be in the future, unless ruinous competition or some other unforeseen cause should run the price down so much lower on this side than on the other, as to make a margin wide enough to afford a profit to shippers.

With lower grades of butter it has been different. There has often been such a preponderance of that class of butter that the price has fallen far enough below what it was worth in other countries to make its exportation profitable, and hence it is that exports have been confined to that kind of butter. While good butter has run up and down from 25c. to 40c., according to supply, butter for shipping has stopped short at about 22c., and from that down. Generally, prices have been considerably below, and very rarely a little above. According to current market reports shippers are now paying about 16c. to 18c. Nothing much above is touched, although good butter is selling freely in New York and Boston for domestic use at 32c. to 36c. What inducement is there in the lessons of the past and the prospects of the future for the dairymen of Canada, and of this country, as well, to labor for a large export trade in butter? Before it could be accomplished, prices must be brought down to a shipping basis, which always means the ruinous rates for low grade butter. Every now and then a lament goes out from would-be advisers, through the American press, that in butter we are doing so small an export business. A greater misfortune could hardly befall us than its expansion. The only good the exportation of butter from the United States has ever done, has been to relieve the country from a burdensome load of butter which, so far as dairymen are concerned, had better never been made. Our history is suggestive.

The milk required for a pound of butter, it is generally estimated, will make two and a half pounds of cheese. It costs the same to make a given quantity of milk into butter that it does to make the same into cheese. The by-products of butter are worth a little more than those of cheese. Aside from this difference, a pound of butter ought to sell for as much as two and a half pounds of cheese. It often does sell at such a rate and above, for home consumption, but since my remembrance it has never sold at that rate for shipping. The extreme price any grade of butter would now command for export would be 22c., while its equivalent in cheese would bring 30c., and this is about the way it has generally run. An enormous expansion of butter production would not be very likely to help the situation. The experience of a long time past ought to be of some significance to our dairymen, and to those who assume to advise them.

Granting that the exportation of butter would be as profitable as that of cheese, and that its production should be expanded to an extent that would give an amount to send abroad equal to that of cheese, where would the milk come from to make it? Certainly, nobody would advise turning into butter the milk now employed for cheese. There are now, probably, about one and a half million cows in the Dominion. This number would have to be en-