

## Farmers' Clubs.

### Dominion Farmers' Council.

[The Dominion Farmers' Council meets in the city of London, Ont., on the third Thursday of every month, at 2 o'clock p. m. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, W. A. MACDONALD, LONDON, ONT. This Council has now on hand pamphlets containing its Constitution and By-laws, with an account of its origin, objects, etc., also a form of Constitution and By-laws suitable for Farmers' Clubs, which will, on application to the Secretary, be distributed free to all parties having in contemplation the organization of clubs.]

The regular monthly meeting of the DOMINION FARMERS' COUNCIL was held on the 15th ult., Vice-President Anderson in the chair. The absence of President Leitch, who was detained on account of having met with a severe accident, was deeply lamented by the members present.

#### COMMUNICATIONS.

Communications were read from the secretaries of several amalgamated clubs in response to questions sent them by the Council. Most of the clubs adjourned during the busy summer months, but started up again with renewed vigor, and many interesting subjects have been discussed. The reports of the secretaries relating to the interest taken in the milk-testing instruments were rather discouraging, but some of them stated that it was their intention to make further tests and send in reports. In answer to the question asking the opinions of the clubs as to the disposal of the funds in the hands of the Council, the chief advices given were: (1) The sending of a lecturer to aid in the organization of clubs; and (2) the supplying of amalgamated clubs with agricultural books. At the Selman Farmers' Club, "Commercial Union" was discussed and the following resolution was passed: "That we are in favor of commercial union with the United States, provided it shall not interfere with the legislative independence of the Dominion Parliament, or discriminate against Great Britain." The same club also discussed "Wintering Colts," and the question of feeding wheat bran with oats in relation to other relative profits was inquired into, bran being \$12 per ton and oats 28c. per bushel. The question could not be determined, but many members favored the mixture, and it was stated that roller bran was sifted, the farmers only getting the hulls, which they had to put up with. The North Dawn Farmers' Club discussed the following questions: 1. "Does farming pay as well as other occupations?" Decision given in the negative. 2. "Are horses or cattle the more profitable?" Decision in favor of horses. 3. "Commercial Union." Decision held over for next meeting. The chief subject discussed at the Stockdale Farmers' Club was "Small Fruit Culture." The Secretary of this club (Mr. W. H. Phillips) stated that the reason why the lactoscope awakened so little interest amongst the members of this club was that theirs was a cheese district, and it was therefore the quantity of milk that the farmers were after, and not quality. The Granton Farmers' Club discussed the following questions: 1. "Dairying." 2. "Mixed Husbandry." 3. "The best crops for green manuring." Decision in favor of clover. 4. "Commercial Union." Decision in favor of the scheme, providing fair and honorable terms could be obtained. 5. "Wintering Stock." This club only tested one cow, by Chas. Avery, the result being 5½ percent of butter fat, and the quantity of milk was 1½ gals. at each milking. This club recommended agricultural books instead of lactoscopes.

Moved by John Kennedy, and seconded by J. K. Little, that the Maple Leaf Farmers' Club (Morris Tp., Co. Huron) be amalgamated with the Dominion Farmers' Council. Carried.

Mr. M. Black is the Secretary of this new club, and the number of members is 26.

The correspondence gave rise to a lively and lengthy discussion. Comments on the subjects discussed were first invited. It was decided that bran had a high feeding value, generally higher than oats, pound for pound, and that roller bran had a higher nutritive value than that from wheat ground by the stone process, but nothing was known about sifting out the hulls. A member stated that such subjects as "Does farming pay as well as other occupations?" were not suitable for farmers' clubs, for farmers had no facts or figures which could be relied on to arrive at correct conclusions. The members of the Council were not unanimous as to the meaning of the "Commercial Union" resolution passed by the Selman Farmers' Club, some regarding it as favorable, some as unfavorable, and others thought that the resolution was put in that shape in order to evade the issue.

VICE-PRESIDENT ANDERSON.—It is plain to be seen that we must devote our funds to other purposes than the testing of milk and the establishment of a herd-book. The experiment we made was a grand one, as we now see plainly that our farmers are not yet prepared for herd-books founded on the only sound basis, and it is questionable if public funds should be squandered for advancing any schemes of this kind. Nor is this apathy on the part of our farmers unnatural, for so long as milk is valued only by its quantity, no attention being paid to the quality, there will be no demand for milk-testers or herd-books.

J. K. LITTLE.—Is the milk at our cheese factories not to be tested for adulterations, if not for quality? This Council has abundant proof of the fact that farmers are adulterating their milk on an increasing scale, and the practice should be stopped. There are now three propositions which present themselves: (1) To let things go on as they have been. (2) To appoint inspectors to prevent adulteration; and (3) to institute a system of testing at the cheese factories and dividing the profits according to the quality of the milk. The latter plan would compel farmers to pay as much attention to the quality as to the quantity of their milk; but much depended upon the cost of making the tests.

W. A. MACDONALD.—The cost can easily be figured, and it is just as easy to test for quality as for adulterations. I have tested almost every known method, and I can now make three distinct and accurate tests of a sample of milk in less than ten minutes, viz., finding the specific gravity, the fat, and the total solids. My system of testing is not known in Canada. I only use the lactoscope for making rough tests in cases of suspected adulteration, as it is not accurate enough when milk is to be paid for according to quality. It has been objected that the percentage of fat is not the right standard for testing milk in the cheese factory. There is not much force in this objection, although I prefer taking the total solids as the standard for cheese, especially since there are such easy methods for ascertaining the total solids in the milk. Milk-testing in the hands of a novice would be a fraud upon our farmers. It is almost impossible to get an experienced inspector.

HENRY ANDERSON.—Whatever system is adopted, the testing should be done by a competent inspector, as the cheese-makers are not independent or skillful enough. The system of testing should be thoroughly reliable, so that no patrons could raise objections to it. I am not in favor of sending out a lecturer from this Council to organize farmers' clubs, for the scheme would be very expensive, and, besides, we are getting along already beyond my previous expectations. We have amalgamated at least an average of one club at every meeting since we started organizing clubs. A good lecturer might create some enthusiasm wherever he goes, but the stimulus would be unnatural. Farmers already see the necessity for organizing, and if they do not take steps of their own accord when the opportunities are presented to them, the effects of preaching to them would not be lasting.

JOHN O'BRIEN.—I rather like the proposed scheme for presenting agricultural books to amalgamated clubs; but if they are given free the farmers will not appreciate them so much as when they pay for them. The question is, would we be fulfilling our duty in spending our funds in the best interests of agriculture, if we distributed agricultural books? The clubs should feel it their duty to help as well as be helped, and I think the scheme would work by requiring each club to prepare a paper, say once a year, to be sent to us for discussion and approval. The books would help them to prepare their papers and discussions, and more accurate knowledge would then be disseminated, thus benefiting the whole agricultural community by our funds.

W. A. MACDONALD.—We can accomplish no tangible results without a policy or platform, and it is time for us to adopt one—some grand principles which will thrill our farmers. With the aid of our amalgamated clubs, we should now make a bold strike in this direction, and show that we are not lacking in independence, ability, or courage. Our funds should be devoted to the carrying out of our principles.

Further discussion was postponed until the next meeting of the Council.

#### WINTERING STOCK.

The following paper by Jos. Martin, sent by the Secretary of the Granton Farmers' Club, was next read and discussed. It was discussed before that club, and the members pronounced decision in favor of statements made. The Secretary of the Council remarked that the paper was published in a local paper in Clinton, and thought that all the clubs should be encouraged to get their meetings reported in the local press:—

There are several things which require close attention during the winter months, such as food, regularity, cleanliness, warmth, ventilation and gentle treatment. Now, if you want cattle to thrive, you must see to these things, for if not properly seen to, you may expect that it will cost considerably more than if they were properly seen to. First, I will take the wintering of calves; it is the growth of bone and muscle that is wanted and not the laying on of fat. Clover hay, chaff, ground oats, bran and roots must be fed in sufficient quantities to maintain a healthy growth. Now, if fed with these things they will grow rapidly and will be in good order to turn them out to pasture in the spring. Now I will take the wintering of fattened cattle. The food most suitable during the growing period is not equally as good for fattening; the object then was to procure bone and muscle principally, now fat is mainly wanted, therefore, peas, corn, flax seed or oil cake is good for fattening purposes.