

consideration to the opinions of Earl Granville. The news of the decision only reached Canada after the adjournment of the Board of Trade.

THE CREAMERY SYSTEM.

The increased attention given to the creamery system during the last few months is an indication that the people have begun to learn by experience the importance of what shippers and the commercial papers have long been endeavoring to impress upon them. The high prices invariably commanded for creamery butter, in comparison with those of other makes, have begun the reform, and it is to be hoped it may spread with due rapidity throughout the land. There are few things more remarkable than the gradation of values for this product given weekly in our "Prices Current," when we remember that the different qualities are all made from cream of little or no variation as to quality. The article which sells wholesale at 20 to 25 cents per pound and retail at 30 to 35 cents is made from no better cream than that which is known as "cooking butter," at half the price. But to treat the subject more moderately,—it is but fair to say that, compared with dairy butter, creamery in the long run nets from \$2 to \$3 a keg more to the makers; and when we consider the large amount of this product shipped annually from Canada, and the quantity consumed in the country, the loss is disheartening to contemplate. We do not speak now of the evils of "holding back"—which have repeatedly been referred to in these columns—by which an article of fair value is held over from one season to another till its original sweetness has fled, and quality and profit have gone with the interest on the original value.

The superiority of the creamery method has long been fully demonstrated, and simply because creamery butter fetches a higher price. The time was when Canadian butter compared favorably with that of the United States in our common market across the ocean, but the general preference for the creamery system has wrought a change which is not over creditable to our generally sweeter pastures. The competition thus established is more likely to increase, and it behooves our people to prepare themselves to meet it. The creameries already established have done well; but we want more of them. We do not hear of any failures among them, and some of the merchants in towns and villages over-supplied with stores, general or special, might do worse than give the creamery business some attention.

The general establishment of creameries throughout the country would impart a uniform quality to our butter, of a grade that would eventually enable us to recover lost ground and secure to the Canadian products in England a reputation worth something more in the pound. The improved manufacture of butterine in the United States is calculated to drive cheap "cooking butter" out of the market by lowering the price beyond all possibility of profit; and although there is none made in Canada, the placing of such an article in any quantity on the market cannot fail to influence the prices of low grades butter.

The more general employment of the creamery system would probably have some effect upon country stores accustomed to take butter from farmers on account, but the effect would eventually be for good; the emissary or buyer of the shipping house would make purchases direct, and the farmer would receive cash for his milk, while his wife and daughters would be saved the labor of churning and have more time to devote to other useful occupations; values would increase all round not only in the superiority of the article produced but in a uniformity which is impossible when three or four makes—as frequently happens—are thrown into one cask, whereby the general flavor is determined by one inferior or ill-washed roll. It is much better evidently to mix the milk of various farms than to mix the butter product.

The dairy system is a great improvement on what we may call the "miscellaneous method," but it stops short enough of the large creamery to influence general values to the important extent indicated. There is no time more opportune for the establishment of creameries than the present; the cheese market is in that condition when supply and demand very nearly balance, and makers are beginning to consider whether it were not better to divert some of the unskimmed material elsewhere. There is no more danger of any possible increase in the butter production of Canada having much influence in prices than there is in the matter of wheat; the market is too large,—and there is little likelihood of over-production so long as the article is of a high grade quality. It is not many years since the rapid increase in cheese manufacture had some alarm for shippers, and we see how groundless it has proved, owing, however, in a large degree to the superiority of the product. It is to be hoped that Canadian butter may shortly attain a position similar to that reached long ago by Canadian cheese, but we fear this is impossible until the creamery system comes into general use.

LIFE INSURANCE LEGISLATION.

It is not surprising that so much time should be spent by the Committee on Banking and Commerce in discussing the proposed amendments to the Insurance Act of 1877 as affecting the relations of the regular old line insurance companies and the assessment associations, to the insuring public respectively. Life insurance is of itself a business so much apart that there are few persons outside of the fraternity who understand it in all its bearings, and are prepared to discuss the merits of competing systems; and on this account there is the more need of protecting the public against the possible abuse of so important a business and of hedging time-tested companies with the safeguards necessary to maintain confidence in the system, at the same time that the new system shall be so provided for that the public may be protected from evil possibilities under its working. The amending Bill of last session has been before the Committee at Ottawa now for some weeks, the efforts of the companies to procure the adoption of a separate Bill for assessment societies having fallen through. Each clause of the Bill has been discussed, and the views of both sides listened to. The question of the deposit of \$50,000, as offered by the Reserve Fund Association of New York has been adopted. Many persons appear to be of opinion that this constitutes ample security, although it would prove but a drop in the bucket of the probable business of such a concern, or of any of the larger regular companies. The old line companies are obliged to maintain large reserves over and above their Government deposits in Ottawa, reserves which must increase according to the business done. But the new Bill, as amended in committee, is well calculated to remove many of the most flagrant abuses of the assessment business, and will probably have a cooling effect upon the ardor of many new competitors entering the field. Not the least is that providing against the "freezing out" process. In ordinary life assurance, the policyholder knows the date, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly, when his premium becomes due, and in all cases receives due notice, which is repeated and re-repeated for a considerable time—a year in many companies—before the policy is allowed to lapse; in many of the co-operative concerns of the United States, notices of assessment are often misdirected and for other reasons do not always reach the assessed, who, in default of payment, loses his membership. Such a practice might be made to pay in the