

the incentive to adulteration and all kinds of trade tricks. There has not yet been a rule established whereby the advanced and honest farmer can obtain justice according to the intrinsic value of his milk or cream as compared with that of his neighbors, and in the cream system there is an uncertainty about the cubic inch method under a varying temperature, and other conditions, which method, however, is giving way to the more satisfactory but laborious practice of periodically testing the actual butter-making value of each customer's cream.

From the nature of the circumstances there cannot be a keen and healthy competition amongst the different creameries, there being a tolerably uniform system of manufacture, and the patrons and herds in the neighborhood of every creamery are uniformly a mixture of good and bad; but when the creamery boom begins to subside, so that there will be healthful competition between the creameries and private dairies, the price of butter being again regulated by the merits of the article, then we may expect another incentive to improvement in the management of our herds, including our pastures, which is the only permanent forerunner to the improvement of our dairy products. It is only by means of private dairying under personal effort that uniformly good herds can be built up, and with the aid of science individual energy need fear no competitor—not even the rivalry of associated systems or of joint stock concerns.

It must not be understood that we object to the establishment of creameries, or any other mode of competition, so long as it is free to all, and no undue advantage is given to any of the parties thereto; the creamery system has its advantages as well as its disadvantages, and if the objectionable features could once be overcome, there is no reason why it should not be able to go on its way rejoicing.

An Agricultural Editor Lives on His Wits.

Some of the spheres shine by virtue of their own light; others borrow their light. So it is with men—especially John.

There are people who could not earn their bread and salt, even when the times are booming, if they had not their wits to fall back on. In journalistic circles there are two styles of living on one's wits—one being the scissoring style, whereby the reader is left in darkness as to the source of the article he reads; the other is a scissoring style too, but the reader is given specially to understand that the article is from the pen, not from the scissors, of the scissor-head. "John is facile in both styles.

There is a sheet in Ontario purporting to be a farmer's paper, published by "JOHN FERGUSON, M. P., SOLE PROPRIETOR." The mental strain caused by scissoring from the *ADVOCATE*, after style No. 1, was apparently so great that any change would be a relief; and, moreover, the thing was getting too monotonous. In his issue of July 16 he tells his readers that our June editorial on "Dairy Cows," copied by him, was "BY A CONTRIBUTOR." We are not your contributor, John. While you are defrauding your readers out of an issue till your scissors come back from the scissor-grinder, could you not profitably employ your time in

scraping the rust off your pen, and answering our respectful letters? Eh, John?

We do not tremble before you, John, as our rival, for very few farmers enjoy basking in borrowed light.

Does Wheat Turn to Chess?

This question has been debated in this and many other publications, and all scientific men, whose views have come under our notice, have held that wheat cannot turn to chess, and

many of our practical farmers have also been convinced of the correctness of this doctrine. On the other hand, there are many farmers who take the opposite side of the question; they declare with positiveness that they have sown clean wheat on perfectly clean land, and have reaped chess, but believe that they would have had wheat had the season been favorable.

These remarks have been suggested to us by the following letter, which we recently received, and which is offered for the purpose of elucidating or perhaps mystifying the question:—



SIR,—Being a subscriber to the *ADVOCATE*, I take the liberty of troubling you a little. A few days ago I picked from a sheaf of wheat grown on my farm, a head of wheat growing upon which is a spikelet of chess. The head is all perfect, with this spikelet growing on it. Now, in common with most naturalists, I have always been of the opinion that wheat can never produce chess, nor can chess produce wheat, that like always produces like, is an established law of nature; but this head of wheat has rather staggered me. I would feel obliged to you if you would investigate it, being a matter of public interest, as often asserted as it has been denied. I think Mr. Saunders, of your city, the eminent naturalist, might possibly assist in the matter. I write this in advance, not being allowed to enclose a letter in a parcel by post.

ROBERT DUNLOP, M.D.

Boston P. O., Ont.

In due time the parcel arrived and the head found to be as described, of which the accompanying cut is a true representation. We have shown it to several experts, including our eminent townsman, Mr. Saunders, and most have declared the spikelet to be chess. It will be seen that the spikelet occupies the space which should naturally have been filled by a grain of wheat, the chaff of such grain being perfect and in its proper position, and there is no sign of any fungoid growth.

We have not yet completed our investigation, and meanwhile we should be glad to hear from scientists and practical farmers on this important subject. Might not the chess have been produced by inoculation? We shall sow some of the chess seeds to ascertain if they will produce their like, and we should like to hand a few of the grains to some specialist in this branch of science.

Women Farmers: Where are They?

We read about women's rights, the higher education of women, women in the professions, business, etc.; but these questions appear to be getting exhausted in the hands of our advanced writers. The elevation of women to the profession of agriculture would mark the commencement of a very important epoch in the history of their rights, but this is not the phase of the question upon which we wish to dwell at present. We could mention the names of famous women in certain branches of scientific agriculture, such as botany, entomology, etc., but the limits of our space forbid. The class which concerns us practically is typified by those women farmers whose pleasing and instructive prize essays have appeared in the *ADVOCATE* from time to time.

It would be instructive to inquire into the origin and influence of our women farmers. There is no other sphere of life in which women's influence has been more powerfully felt, or in which they have stamped such impressive power. Our country's boast is that her sons of the greatest integrity and renown have sprung from the farm; but we are negligent in rendering honor to whom honor is due; we are apt to forget how much we owe to the soft but potent influence of our mothers. There springs in the breasts of our former "hardy sons of rustic toil," who are now engaged in building up Canadian history, a feeling of pride as their minds revert to the olden times of the old forest homestead, when perchance the family were cradled in a sap-trough, or pillowed on a sheaf in the harvest field,—not that vainglorious pride which too often swells the breasts of their compeers of more illustrious birth, but a pride in the recollection that their compatriots have intrusted them to aid in moulding the destinies of a country which their own hands have been instrumental in reclaiming from the primeval forest. This is the natural incentive which moves them to answer duty's call and brave duty's strife.

Those were the days when husband and wife were one indeed. There was scarcely an operation in field, barn or forest in which she was not identified. Household duties became affairs of after hours and rainy days. The coffee-mill performed the gristing for the more advanced farmers, and for the greater portion of the year all were strict vegetarians. The family hen and cow were more precious than the jewellery, and when they became superannuated the flesh was as savory as that of the most aristocratic breeds of to-day. Commerce, even between the farmer and the village store-keeper, was then in its very incipience. There was scarcely a family want, whether of victuals or covering, but was supplied by the busy hand and through the never-wearying care of our mothers. And yet they still tell us that those were the proudest and happiest days of their lives. Then were the pleasing days of the bright family circle.

Times have changed. The good father and husband, burdened by the weight of years and cares, sleeps, not with his fathers far away beyond the sea, but in the country churchyard. No marbled slab is required to mark his resting-place, his spot and memory being endeared to every passer-by. How gracefully his yoke sits upon his once beloved wife! Where is that family now? One member is the country