

## 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. Clubs amalgamated with this Council are entitled to instruments for testing milk.]

The regular monthly meeting of this Council was held on the 19th ult., President Leitch in the chair.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

Amongst the communications read, one was received from the Secretary of the Salem Farmers' Club in response to questions sent to the secretaries of the amalgamated clubs asking for an account of their progress during the summer months. The summer meetings of this club were poorly attended, and little was accomplished, but there was a good attendance at the October meeting. The lactoscope sent to the club awakened little interest. The secretary tested the milk of several cows, the percentage of fat varying from 2½ to 4 percent. He also tested milk from the vats at the cheese-factory, which gave 2½ percent of fat, and he regarded this figure as indicating a good deal of adulteration. The inspector's report also indicated adulterations. One patron was brought before a magistrate for adulterating his milk, but the latter refused to accept the lactoscope test as evidence, as he was obliged to look at the results of the test through spectacles. The "tea-milk" plea was magnified and sworn to be a common practice. The secretary, in his list of tests, gave one cow which stood above the standard for registration in the Council's register book, but the test was not made officially. He stated that much fall wheat in his locality was sown upon stubble with only one plowing (gang plow), no manure being applied, and in one instance the wheat was put in merely with a spring tooth harrow. He complained of the judging at the local exhibitions, stating that the judges did not know some of the varieties exhibited, and in one instance a fraudulent first prize in peas was won by placing choice, hand-picked samples on the top, the bottom containing very inferior samples. Young cattle and cows were cheap in the neighborhood owing to the scarcity of winter feed.

In the discussion of the above report by the Council, the Secretary stated that the results given by the lactoscope should not be taken as evidence by the courts except in connection with the specific gravity, when the percentage of fat varied a good deal from the standard, or when there is more than one-fourth of one percent difference between the morning's and the evening's milk. A correct lactometer should always be used with the lactoscope for the double purpose of checking inaccuracies and ascertaining whether the milk is skimmed or watered.

Mr. J. B. LANE stated that a committee of cheese-makers had been appointed to suggest amendments to the adulteration act, and to look into the whole question of testing milk at the cheese factories.

In answer to a correspondent who inquired what advantages could be obtained by amalgamating with the Dominion Farmers' Council, Henry Anderson stated the advantages derived

by co-operation in the trades and professions might be taken as a guide. He thought that delegates from the amalgamated clubs might meet from time to time to discuss matters pertaining to agriculture; the clubs might also submit questions to the Council for discussion, and the Council would find it advantageous to submit questions to be voted on by the clubs. There might also be communication established between the secretaries of the various amalgamated clubs for mutual information, the making of purchases and sales of different varieties of seeds, etc. He found that the desire for organization and co-operation was quite strong, but the failures were caused by a lack of energy.

Moved by Henry Anderson, and seconded by J. K. Little, that the Grantham Farmers' Club be amalgamated with the Dominion Farmers' Council—Carried.

Moved by J. W. Bartlett, and seconded by John Kennedy, that the East Dawn Farmers' Club be amalgamated with the Dominion Farmers' Council—Carried.

## COMMERCIAL UNION.

This question was on the programme of the day, it being a continuation of the discussion postponed at the June meeting of the Council owing to the fact that Mr. Waters' paper on the subject did not arrive in time. The resolution was as follows: "Resolved, that a commercial union with the United States would be beneficial to the farmers of Canada." The President read Mr. Waters' paper as published in the July issue of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, a synopsis of which is as follows:

A commercial union would necessitate the adoption of a similar tariff against all other countries, Britain included, and it was probable that the present high tariff of the U. S. would be adopted. Of the total imports of Canada, viz., \$99,602,694, we imported from Britain \$40,601,199, and from the U. S. \$44,858,039. Of our total export trade last year amounting to \$74,975,506, Britain took \$36,694,263 and the U. S. \$31,463,342. Of our agricultural and animal products, Britain took 22½ millions and the U. S. nearly 15½ millions. It was evident that the English market was our best for heavy, well-fed cattle and sheep, as well as for our wheat, oats and peas, and almost our whole cheese and butter were exported to England. The rapid increase showed the certainty of the British market. The U. S. took the bulk of our barley, a small proportion of our peas and oats, all our surplus lambs, and small inferior cattle, as well as our surplus poultry and eggs. Of our total export of horses last year, viz., 16,525 head, the Americans took 16,113, valued at \$130 per head. So long as the U. S. and Canada had any surplus, the English market would determine the price. Commercial union would not benefit us in our products exported to Britain; but the trade in barley, horses, lambs, light cattle, poultry, eggs and potatoes would be increased, and the farmers benefited. Our parliament could at any time give us full benefit of American competition in our markets, if we desired it. We want from the Americans their corn, coal, raw cotton, sugars and syrups, and a free exchange of these would be beneficial to both countries, and would not to any extent interfere with our manufacturing industries, with the exception of sugar. He was in favor of a reciprocity in the natural products of both countries; but was against commercial union. This policy (restricted reciprocity) would leave us in full control of our own financial affairs without injury to our manufacturers. With regard to manufactured goods, if the ground taken in 1878 was correct, commercial union would not give the American market to our manufacturers, but would give the Canadian market to the Americans. "Commercial union would do more to foster the spirit of annexation amongst our people than any other policy that could be adopted."

## DISCUSSION.

J. B. LANE expressed his entire approval of Mr. Waters' paper, and Vice-President Anderson took the same view.

MR. LANE stated that agricultural implements could be purchased as cheaply in Canada as in the United States.

MR. O'BRIEN—We lose 20 percent on every horse we sell to the Americans.

MR. LITTLE—Who pays the duty?

MR. O'BRIEN—Two years ago we paid \$65 each for sewing machines which could be purchased in the States for \$18.

MR. LITTLE—We should confine the discussion strictly to agricultural questions.

MR. LANE—It is beneficial for our farmers that we should have manufacturers to employ large numbers of men who consume dutiable goods to help defray the expenses of government. Direct taxation relieves some classes at the expense of others. Commercial union would bring direct taxation. I am in favor of reciprocity. In some parts of Canada, where the soil is light, corn is principally grown, and a reciprocity in corn would injure the farmers in those localities. Canada should not be made a slaughter-house for American manufactures.

MR. LITTLE—We will resist every attempt to obtain direct taxation.

FRANK SHORE—I would let corn come in free, although farmers in southern Ontario would kick against it, this being their chief crop. A great deal of corn comes to this city from these parts.

MR. LANE—I would not object to having corn free in a reciprocity treaty with the States.

MR. ANDERSON—The farmers in Canada are just as well off as those in the States. The high protective tariffs have oppressed the American farmers dreadfully. Home competition reduces prices. Binders which a few years ago cost \$240, can now be purchased for \$120 in consequence of the keen competition. If a commercial union necessitated direct taxation, the farmers would have to bear almost the whole burden, because land can't be hidden. I am opposed to commercial union in all its aspects. So long as we competed in the same market with the Americans, we would not be benefited, but we might get some manufactured goods cheaper. The whole scheme is a boom originated by annexationists. Our farmers have it in their power to better their condition, but they may rest assured that they cannot do so by commercial union. It seems to be a party question which prevents us from getting at the truth of the matter. It is annexation that Wiman and Butterworth and their confederates want.

JOHN WELD—I have had opportunities for consulting a large number of manufacturers on commercial union, and I find that some are in its favor, but a large majority is against it.

MR. O'BRIEN—The American farmers are not so heavily taxed as those in Canada. I have an intimate friend in Huron county, Michigan, who has 160 acres of land, and his taxes (including school rates) are only \$24 a year, while I have to pay \$74.24 for 188 acres, there being very little difference in the prices of produce, or the market advantages. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, I am decidedly in favor of commercial union, but just as strongly opposed to annexation.

MR. BARTLETT—The opening up of American markets for our fruits would be of decided advantage to our farmers. New York and Boston are