

Up to the present time, our road has been an easy one, and as long as the price of butter and cheese keeps up, everything will go on well "in this best of worlds"; but when our speculators have over-bought themselves—and many of them gamble in cheese as well as in stocks—when the English market is choked up with the millions of boxes which Canada, the States, and Europe, are preparing to send there, when the competition is at its height—and we are nearly arrived at that point—what man among us, in the province of Quebec, will be able to pronounce with certainty on the numerous problems which concern the dairy-industry, even if we take the manufacture of butter and of Cheddar-cheese alone? It will, decidedly, not be we! And yet we were the first in this province to bring this industry before the public view. (1)

During several years we were alone in studying and endeavouring to form those societies of which there is now such a number in existence. Many a long and painful journey have we undertaken for the purpose of investigating these questions, and now, after 19 years of labour, we are still at work upon them. But, in truth, this is not our business, we have other things to occupy us. Nevertheless, we can make both butter and cheese; in fact, some people are good enough to consider us an authority on these matters. Still, having never learned under a master—having only picked up the details here and there—we acknowledge our utter incompetence as an authority on these subjects.

Having made this confession, in all truth and frankness, we have, assuredly, the right to ask: Where are the competent authorities in this province? We do not hesitate to reply: There are none.

While we recognize the existence of much merit in those who are at the head of our dairy-school (??) at St. Hyacinthe, or of that (???) at N. D. de la Terrière (Chicoutimi), we believe that they would be the first to admit their *complete incompetence* as authorities on all, or even on the greater part of the matters which belong to these two combined industries. What they have learnt they teach in the best manner they can, and, for the payment they receive, we cannot ask more from them. Besides, where and how have they studied these subjects exhaustively. The same may be said of our inspectors. Observe, we do not by any means reproach the devoted men who direct these schools (??), or those who act as factory-inspectors. They do what they can. Granting their want of complete teaching, their success has been wonderful, but after all, are such men absolutely competent as authorities? And if they themselves admit the small advantages they have, up to the present, enjoyed, and their ardent desire to be put in a way to learn thoroughly all that concerns *their trade*—we are not speaking of those sciences which immediately belong to the dairy-industry, but simply *their trade* as makers of butter and cheese,—where, we ask, shall we find our authorities?

There is not much doubt but that certain pretended authorities will accuse us afresh of wishing to lay down the law on all matters connected with the dairy-industry! But if we are in the right, does it not become a subject of urgent public interest to know our weak side and to strengthen it? We will speak out: Our views have been, up to the present, time so ill interpreted by certain pretended authorities that we preferred to remain silent during the discussion at our annual meeting, in order to avoid renewing, for, probably, the tenth time, a question about an elementary subject connected with dairy matters; a question, the inquiry into which is fruitless, since its true solution, it seems to us, is hidden from our eyes, in spite of its staring us full in the face.

(1) *Préconiser*, to publish by public out-cry: from the latin *præco*, a herald. *Tas.*

To sum up, then, for the present, we affirm that, in this province we possess absolutely no authority competent to direct us in matters pertaining to this industry. The dairy-business has been, especially during the last two years, the chief means of forwarding the progress of agriculture. For our part, we are convinced that, if we do not take care, we shall soon be completely overwhelmed in the struggle that is imminent on every side to seize upon, to our loss, our only market, that of England.

We have been, for a number of years, asking for the establishment of a central school-factory, attached to a farm-school and directed by an expert perfectly competent, both in theory and in practice, to give every information required by those interested in the questions which arise in connection with the dairy-industry. Such a school should be in a condition to work both in summer and winter, that the makers of cheese and butter may come and perfect themselves in their trade, and, at the same time, study the different questions connected with the business, especially during the season when their factories are closed. No one can be in doubt as to the advantages to be derived from such an institution to agriculture as a whole. We call for the establishment of such an institution with all our heart.

In our next, we will examine the questions belonging to the fitness of the proprietor and the maker. To-day, we will only say, that, in our opinion, the proprietor should himself be a first-class operator.

(From the French.)

ED. A. BARNARD.

*Butter.*—Mr. Vallancey Fuller says that our Canadian butter ought to be as good as the Swedish, but it is not, and never will be until the cows are better fed; the atmosphere of the stables, &c., kept purer; the mixture of the creams of different ages and colours better looked after; until, to put his argument in few words, the butter-makers know something about their business. If they did, we should not see on our tables such mal-odorous, mottled rubbish. No wonder our butter, says Mr Fuller—and observe he is speaking of Ontario as well as of Quebec—is more and more falling into disrepute in the English market, while that of Sweden is fetching the highest possible prices. A. R. J. F.

#### DE OMNIBUS REBUS.

Box 109, Upper Lachine—March 19th, 1888.

*Harbingers of Spring.*—Crows have been seen arriving, people say, from the south; but I fancy they are some of the crowd that always winter in the bush on the Mountain. To-day, my eyes were gladdened with the sight of three black-ducks, flying from the West, and swooping down with wing-flapping delight into the lake, about five hundred yards above the Lachine station. I think these birds must be trustworthy heralds of the approach of our short but pleasant season of spring. Conceive a good old-fashioned early seed-time again! When I first came to the country, nearly thirty years ago, I found the Chambly people sowing pease on the side-hills in March! If an early spring does come, I advise all my readers to pitch into their work at once. Get your seed in—wheat, oats, barley, and pease—a good depth, and believe me no subsequent frosts will damage the braird. Of corn, I advise just the contrary: never plant corn until the ground is perceptibly warm and there is a fair prospect of fine weather. May 20th is a good time in this part of the province. I hope this number of the Journal will be in the hands of my readers at an early date, as I have written a good many notes for it, some of which may, if they will allow me to say so, prove worthy of attention.