

The Commercial

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CREAMERY VS. DAIRY BUTTER.

THE COMMERCIAL has stated that the Manitoba butter trade will never be satisfactory until creameries are established to take the place largely of the present system of making butter. Good butter can no doubt be made in private dairies, when proper care is taken, but the fact remains that a large portion of dairy butter reaching market is not of choice or even good quality. Farmers as a rule in this country have not the facilities for making butter at home to advantage. Besides, when one price is paid all round by country merchants for anything called butter, regardless of quality, there is little encouragement to the farmers to take pains to turn out a choice article. This is one of the difficulties of the situation. It is practically an impossibility to establish a system of buying butter from first hands, according to quality, that is, to make a distinction in the value of butter, and pay for it in accordance with its quality. The country dealer who would attempt such a thing would soon bring no end of trouble upon himself. No matter how poor the quality of Mrs. Smith's butter may be, she is quite decided in her own estimation that it is just as good as the product marketed by Mrs. Jones, or anybody else for that matter, and she would indignantly resent the thought that her butter was not worth the top price. The dealer who would be rash enough to make a distinction as to quality in buying butter, would soon lose a part of his custom. It therefore seems that the only way out of the difficulty would be to have the present mode of making butter replaced by the creamery system, and thereby relieve the country merchant of the business entirely. This he would be very glad to have done. Instead of trading off his goods for butter, upon which he is likely to suffer a loss in handling, he would sell his goods for cash; for the farmer would sell his milk or cream to the factory, and have cash instead of butter to exchange with the dealer for goods. In the factory the butter would be put up in clean, uniform packages, and under good conditions for storing, handling and marketing. Under the present system, even when the butter is good when it leaves the farm house, it is certain to be reduced in quality before it reaches the consumer. After it has run the gauntlet of country stores, musty cellars, contact with kerosene, decaying vegetables, etc., it is likely to come out of poor quality, for it must be remembered that there is no commodity which becomes tainted or absorbs foreign odors and flavors more readily than butter. In the average general store it is almost impossible to keep butter even for a short time entirely from contact with commodities which are likely to impart a foreign flavor to the article.

Farmers sometimes do not support the cheese and butter factories, because they think they can make more money by keeping their milk at home, and making the butter themselves. Thus the high prices paid by country mer-

chants for poor butter encourages the farmers to withdraw their support from the factories, and in this way the best butter trade of the country is injured. At the meeting of the Manitoba Dairy Association held at Winnipeg some time ago, it was shown that it paid the farmers better to sell their milk to the factories, rather than make butter themselves. For instance, the average price paid for butter last season was 13 cents per pound, and on an average four pounds of butter would be made from 100 pounds of milk, thus bringing the farmer 52 cents per 100 pounds of milk. On the other hand the average price paid by the factories for milk was 65 cents per 100 pounds. From this it is seen that the farmers gained 13 cents per 100 pounds of milk by sending their milk to the factories, instead of making butter themselves. Many farmers, without proving the matter in this way, will simply conclude that it pays best to make butter rather than sell milk and they act accordingly. In discussing the recent meeting of the Ontario Creamery Association, the *Toronto Mail* has the following article upon factory made butter, which is worthy of perusal:—

"With regard to the creamery method of deriving profit from cows it may be said that its principle seems pretty generally to be conceded as a correct one by those who best understand the matter. Better results are obtained by the farmer who sends the product of his cows to a central factory having the advantage of all modern appliances for butter-making and the experience gained by persons who do nothing else, than by the one who conducts his dairying operations as an adjunct of his farm life, churns at home with primitive appliances, and wonders sometimes that he has so little success. Prof. Robertson, a gentleman who has made this subject his own in a peculiar sense, says that while our cheese has won for Canada the reputation of being one of the finest cheese-producing countries of the world, our butter has earned for us the unenviable notoriety of sending to England the strongest-tasted article received there from any part of the world. He further says that while England buys from us about one-third of her total supply of cheese, we send her only about one and a half per cent. of the butter she imports. In connection with these facts may be taken the very instructive one that of all the cheese made in this Province 99.45 per cent. is made in factories, and only one-fifth of one per cent. in home dairies. The lesson to be derived appears to be that where proper methods, such as are possible in dealing with wholesale quantities, are employed, an article is produced which commands a ready sale, while home-made goods have to fall in the rear and become a drug upon the market. As a matter of fact the creamery butter commands a price which is 30 per cent. more than the inferior home-made article. Added to this must be taken into consideration that it is the tendency of good butter to win for itself an ever increasing market. Put bad butter on the tables of a nation and but little of it will be required; substitute good for it, and the consumption will be enormously increased. Even if we do not entirely agree with Prof. Robertson's dictum that "butter is the brain food of the world," most people will be inclined

to grant that good butter possesses the faculty of making itself a market in a remarkable degree. Statistics corroborate this. There is a constant foreign demand for the better kinds of butter, while the inferior sorts will scarcely fetch any price at all."

WHY IS IT SO?

Why should dead beats be protected by law? Why should those who can pay but will not, be exempt from any penalty for their shortcomings of this nature? A leading Winnipeg merchant was heard to remark the other day that it was simply a useless expenditure to attempt to enforce payment of small accounts, such as store bills. If a person refused to pay a bill, it was only throwing good money after bad to endeavor to compel payment. This dealer had recently been experimenting with law as a means of collecting accounts, and he declared he had gained all the experience he cared about. His effort had cost him a considerable sum of money in legal expenses and practically nothing was gained thereby. He declared that in the future he would never attempt to collect debts by legal process. Any bad accounts which he might be unfortunate enough to make in the course of business, would simply be allowed to slide.

This seems to be a bad state of affairs, but it is the usual experience when it comes to a matter of law. The legal process which is intended as a protection and source of redress to the citizen, frequently turns out to be an utter farce. Instead of a protection, it often results in a dead loss, and adds insult to injury. High toned dead beats and low toned dead beats can smile in the face of the man they have defrauded, and sarcastically tell him to go ahead with his law. Why should such characters be beyond the reach of law, nay, actually protected by law? They will tell you that the law cannot be made too strict, as the poor man who is unable to pay must be protected. But the honest poor man as a matter of fact requires very little protection. He generally finds some way of paying his debts, even if he is poor. Anyway, it is not this class of people who are usually beyond the reach of law. It is the dishonest beat, whose ways are dark and tricky, and who is sufficiently posted to shield himself behind the innumerable quibbles and technicalities of the law. It is the high toned rascal and beat, if any beat can be considered high toned, who contracts debts with the intention of shirking payment, who usually is beyond the reach of law. The low toned dead beat is usually known, and his manners at once characterize him as an improper person to be allowed credit. He is therefore not as dangerous a character as his smooth, slick brother beat, who puts on airs and has nice ways of ingratiating himself into the favor of others, in order to defraud them. There are far too many of this class of dead beats. They are innumerable everywhere. Why should they be protected to the least extent from punishment or from every indignity which can be shown against them? What is the difference between the man who can but will not pay his honest debts, or who contracts debts with the intention of defrauding, and the thief who breaks through and steals? In the