

*The Honourable J. H. Turner,
Minister of Agriculture :*

DUNCAN, Sept. 4th, 1897.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit the first report of the Dairymen's Association of British Columbia :—

I have much pleasure in being able to report that the principle of co-operation is gaining ground among the farmers of British Columbia. In the form of Creamery Associations, to which I shall refer later, we have now at least four which are, I think, firmly established and which are doing good work in their separate districts. The advantages which they offer the farmer over the private dairy system are :

- 1st.—The better quality and greater uniformity of the butter consequent on (a) the shortening of the period between milking and churning ; (b) the use of better and more efficient machinery ; (c) the use of ice ; (d) the more accurate and efficient labour :
- 2nd.—The saving of time and labour both to his household and to himself :
- 3rd.—The better marketing of the butter.

These three points are fairly well known and acknowledged, but there are others which are not so often brought forward, though affecting the patron of a creamery indirectly, and perhaps, equally important.

In the first place his weekly and monthly statements from the factory placed him in possession of definite information which, in all probability he did not possess before, even approximately. He usually knows how many cows his neighbour has and what are his methods of houseing and feeding them ; by looking at the milk sheet at the factory he can compare results.

The creamery is a bond of union in a district when well managed, and the meetings of its patrons should be instructive to all.

The system at once introduces with it more intelligent methods of farming, and improves the herds by degrees through the importation of better stock and the weeding out of the cows that do not pay for their board.

Dairying in British Columbia must be put on a practical business-like footing. Other countries can make money in dairying, selling their products here at prices which our farmers say are too low for them to compete with. Why is this ? Is it because the climate of British Columbia is inferior, or her grasses less nutritious than those of California, the North-West Territories or Nova Scotia ? Many of our districts are, on the contrary, admirably suited to dairying. I believe our settlers are still thinking of the days when they could not supply the demand for butter at \$1 per pound, and they do not really know at what price they can profitably produce butter.

To begin with, the cows must be good ; should be fed for milk with cheap foods ; soiling with a succession of green crops (planted with a view to economy in labour) should be practised, and the winter feed of dry hay or hay and roots should be changed to one more succulent and better balanced.

In favoured parts of the Province corn is grown successfully for ensilage, and in all parts where dairying is carried on clover grows luxuriantly, and will make good ensilage. Clover is greatly to be preferred, as hay to timothy, it forms in fact an almost complete ration in itself.

When the cows are well fed they should be required to come up to a certain standard of production, and with the help of the Babcock tester this is easily determined. If these methods are followed, butter can be made here as cheaply as anywhere.