Remarks by U. S. Baer
Assistant Dairy and Food Commissioner, Madison, Wis.

Mr. President, Gentlemen of the Convention:

I am indeed glad to be with you at this meeting. I am also glad that your worthy secretary did not give me any particular subject to talk on. He evidently was aware of the fact that I could not make a speech and so he let me off easy by giving me the broadest possible range under the head of remarks.

I feel perfectly at home in these annual meetings of yours. I was one of the charter members of this organization. I have never missed but one of your annual gatherings. Another reason that I feel at home here is that all of you or nearly all, are members of the State Cheesemakers’ Association of which I have the honor of having been its secretary for the past thirteen years.

Yesterday and today I have listened to a great deal of criticism of you makers and your factories, also of your methods of carrying on your factory business. I suspect that most of this criticism is true of you as it is true of nearly every other cheese and butter making district of this state, but in criticising we should not forget to give credit and to show due appreciation of the good things accomplished. That the Swiss cheesemakers of Green and adjoining counties have made rapid and noteworthy progress in their profession, none will dispute. They have not only been progressive in their profession with reference to the adoption of new and up-to-date methods of manufacture, but they have wrought marked changes in their factories, factory equipments and factory surroundings. Better buildings, better and more modern machinery, concrete or cement floors and in many instances the doing away with the individual whey barrel system of distributing the by-products of the factory are among some of the more important changes for the betterment of the industry which has been brought about during the last year or two in this immediate vicinity. I have been in a position where I could observe closely the the conditions as they exist in the different cheesemaking districts of the state, and I can state truthfully and positive-
ly that nowhere in Wisconsin has the improvements in cheese factory buildings been as marked as in the Swiss cheesemaking districts in the state, particularly in Green and Lafayette counties. Hundreds of first class concrete floors have been put into your factories this last season, where has existed the old rotten wood floors that often were unclean and unsanitary in the extreme. Several new and neat factory buildings have taken the place of the old style shacks that for so many years has marred the beauty of your landscape. Hundreds of old filthy, dirty whey barrels sunk into the ground or partially sunk into the ground have given place to nice new clean whey tanks constructed on the surface of the ground or elevated in the factory buildings where they can be readily and easily cleaned.

Milk delivered to the factory in an unstrained condition with the barn yard and barn dust and dirt which may have fallen into it at the time of milking is rapidly disappearing, and many of your factories are now receiving nice clean milk strained free from all barn filth that was formerly left in the milk until it passed through the strainer over the cheese kettle at the factory. The mistaken idea of the cheesemakers of this district that if the milk was strained at the farm he would be unable to detect any diseased and gar- gety conditions that might perchance be in the milk is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Another great stride in the right direction is the advent of the centrifical cream separator introduced in a number of your factories, whereby practically all of the fat of the whey can be recovered and converted into a first class article of butter, almost, if not quite as good in quality as the fanciest creamery butter and selling for practically creamery butter prices instead of the usual ten or twelve cents per pound customarily realized for this very valuable by-product of the Swiss cheese factory. Nearly one per cent. of butter fat usually is left in the whey in Swiss cheese making, due to the necessary process employed in the manufacture of Swiss cheese. If this fat is recovered from the sweet whey direct from the cheese kettle by means of the cream separator and properly made up into a clean wholesome article of butter it will mean many thousands of dollars more to the Swiss cheese industry as at
whole than is now being realized by the careless, wasteful and unclean manner of making the so-called whey butter as practiced by too many Swiss cheesemakers of today.

With all these various improvements, splendid as they are, we have not yet reached anything like perfection. There are yet hundreds of cheese factories that are not yet as they should be; they need renovating throughout. There is yet very great room for improvement along all the lines which we have enumerated. There are yet thousands of dirty, filthy whey barrels and whey tanks that should be placed above ground or elevated in such a manner so as to admit of their being cleaned daily and kept in as cleanly a condition as is the cheese kettle or cheese vat within the factory building.

There is still another indication of your progressiveness and enterprise and that is in your loyal support to the State Cheese Makers’ Association. It may be of interest for you to know that out of nearly five hundred memberships of that organization something over one hundred and twenty-five are Swiss cheesemakers. Two of the officers of that organization are from Monroe. Some sixty cheese exhibits were made by your people from Green and adjoining counties last January at our last Milwaukee meeting. Your Swiss warblers, Messrs. Strueben, Alder and Baer were there to assist in entertaining the delegates from time to time during the three days’ session of that meeting, and the State Cheese Makers’ Association are looking forward from year to year to the entertainment, the exhibits and the presence of the Swiss cheesemakers of Southwestern Wisconsin at these meetings, as one of the leading features of the meeting. We want you to continue to come and we assure you a hearty welcome.

Still another indication of the progressiveness that is sweeping over this district is demonstrated in your hearty support accorded the Wisconsin Dairy School and College of Agriculture at Madison. Every winter many of your young makers and more of your older makers are attending the regular mid-winter Dairy School course, and just recently there was a goodly number of experienced Swiss, brick and Limburger cheesemakers from this district in at-
tendance at a special course given in laboratory and milk testing work. In this connection I wish to say right here that the work which Mr. Zumkehr has been doing namely the holding of meetings of a day or two in length giving instruction to the makers in the testing of milk by means of the Babcock Milk Test, the lactometer and the curd test in different localities throughout this district is a most commendable work. I believe that Mr. Marty formerly has done more or less of this work, and I want to say again that no better work could be accomplished or offered the cheesemakers in this district through the winter months than just the line of work as Mr. Zumkehr has mapped out to give to those that care to remain in the city here Friday and Saturday of this week.

Early last season before the cheese factory season had properly opened up, Mr. J. G. Moore, Secretary of the State Butter Makers’ Association and myself sent out a circular return postal card to most of the creameries and cheese factories of the state, requesting that the factory men or makers write us their opinion of instituting a monthly cheese and butter scoring contest. In reply to those postals some two hundred buttermakers and about one hundred cheesemakers signified their willingness to enter the contest for a series of eight or ten months, agreeing to pay all of the expenses incurred in carrying out such a contest for the benefit which they might receive from such a contest. We went ahead, and in the month of May our first call was issued for butter and cheese. The contest was a rousing success throughout the entire season, and great interest was manifested by the makers who were in the contest.

So far as I have been able to ascertain they were all well satisfied with the work and were unanimously of the opinion that it was well worth the money which it cost. The judging was done by three individual judges and together with the numerical and descriptive score as given by the individual judges, letters of criticism and suggestions was dictated back to the buttermaker and cheesemaker who exhibited in the contest. We were extremely fortunate in meeting with friends who contributed largely of their time and money to
assist in carrying out these contests. Professor W. A. Henry, Dean of the College of Agriculture, gave us the use of the cold storage room at the Dairy School building, also free transportation of the cheese and butter to and from the railway stations, and contributed one butter judge free of all charge to the contest association. Hon. J. Q. Emery, Dairy and Food Commissioner, contributed largely all of the time of several of the members of the Commission, especially Mr. Moore and myself to this work from month to month, and it was largely through his wise counsel and liberal assistance that the contest was the success which it has been. In fact if it had not been for Commissioner Emery’s valuable assistance it would hardly have been possible to have brought about the contests as are at present on record. We had a few of the makers of foreign types of cheese with us in this contest work. We hope another season to have a great many of the boys who make Swiss, brick and limburger cheese with us in the Monthly Scoring Contests.

I want to right here state that the President of the University of Wisconsin and Professor Henry, Dean of the College of Agriculture, are planning to take up this work as an educational feature in the University. They propose, I believe, to make a special bureau, as it were, of it, placing a competent man in charge of the same whose sole duty will be to look after the interests of the boys who are sending in their cheese and butter from month to month. Experienced clerical help is furnished this bureau, and competent and experienced judges will be secured. The only expenses this coming season that will be required of exhibitors or contestants will be simply that of prepaying the express charges on the cheese or butter as the case may be to Madison. Last year the boys were required to pay for the postage, the printing, the traveling expenses of a few of the judges and the salary of the stenographer who looked after the business of the Scoring Contest Association.

I want to urge upon the makers in this district to liberally patronize this coming season’s monthly scoring contests. I will prophesy that you will all say at the end of the year that it has been money and effort well spent.

I do not wish to take up any more of your time, but feel
that I ought to call attention to one thing that has been called to my attention or rather questions relating to it have been asked me, and that is this, "Is there any law whereby the Dairy and Food Commission or its inspectors can force a cheese factory to put in a concrete floor or to throw away its whey barrels and put in a whey tank"? In reply I will state that there is no such law on the statute books and that no inspector of the Dairy and Food Commission has any right whatever to do other than to insist that the whey barrels and the floors of cheese factories shall be kept in a clean and sanitary condition. The floor may be of wood, may be of steel, may be of concrete, may be of brick, but it must be kept clean. Whey barrels can be kept clean, but we know too often they are not. He may suggest that a whey tank would be a simpler and easier way to keep the whey clean than when distributed into a number of barrels that are often extremely difficult to keep clean. I want to read the law on this particular subject.

"Section 4, ch. 67, Laws of 1903. All premises and utensils employed for the manufacture or sale or offering for sale of food products from milk or cream from the same which shall not be kept in clean and good sanitary condition are hereby declared to be unclean and unsanitary. Any milk dealer or any person, firm or corporation, furnishing milk or cream to such dealer, or the employee of such milk dealer, and any person, firm or corporation or the employee of such person, firm or corporation, who operates a creamery or cheese factory or milk condensing factory, or manufactures, reworks or packs butter for sale as a food product, shall maintain his premises and utensils in a clean and sanitary condition."

That it the law and its application from the language of the statute is plain and clear to you.

I thank you.