TRANSACTIONS,
WITH
ACCOMPANYING PAPERS AND DISCUSSIONS,
OF THE
WISCONSIN DAIRYMEMS'S ASSOCIATION,
AT THEIR
FOURTEENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION.

Held at Richland Center, Wisconsin, January 26th, 27th, 28th, 1886.

The fourteenth annual convention of the Wisconsin Dairymen's Association convened at Bailey's Hall, in Richland Center, Tuesday, January 26th, at 10:30 A. M., President Morrison in the chair.

Mr. Hiram Smith being called for, addressed the convention as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen—I think the members of the Dairymen's Association of Wisconsin may congratulate themselves upon the progress that has been made in the last fourteen years. I recollect the first annual meeting was held in the city of Watertown in this state, and there was less than a quarter of the number that are now present; but our views of dairying then were as small as our audience. Our main object was to learn how to make as good cheese as they made in the Western Reserve, for they were supplying the markets of Wisconsin, and we wanted to drive them out, and supply our home market. That was our highest object in organizing such an association.

After we had succeeded in that, another element came in; then our object was to make cheese as good as New York cheese, and we succeeded so well that it was a common thing for Chicago buyers to buy Wisconsin cheese and brand
it "Excelsior Factory, New York." We were pretty well satisfied with that. Still we had no great object in view. We never took into account that it was necessary to prepare our land properly, enrich the soil, so as to produce more milk, and keep more cows. The matter of breeds of cows had not come across our vision. We took what was driven up from Illinois, and did the best we could with them. The progress of the dairy interest in the state of Wisconsin came along by individual steps. Every year brought some obstacle to overcome, in order to increase our capacity to carry on dairying successfully.

The topics we discussed in our early assemblies would be smiled at now, but they were perhaps as elevated as we were prepared to meet. I recollect a topic that was discussed with some enthusiasm, namely, the best method of getting cows into the stable. It now looks like a pretty small topic, but I think it took an hour to discuss that question, and after we had all got through, and a good many plans recommended; amongst others, dogs, as the best method of getting them in; a few said a horse was better; one man volunteered the remark that a fish-pole with a prod in the end would accomplish the object; after the subject seemed somewhat exhausted, a little old man got up and stuttered out: "Gentlemen, it is easy enough to get cows in the stable, if you begin at the right end of the cow. If you will put two quarts of ground feed where you want the cow to go, you won't want dogs, horses nor prods." It was a whole sermon in a paragraph, and it opened my eyes a little about the way to treat a cow.

Now, we have to discuss finer points; in the first place we see the necessity of enriching the soil. That would seem to be a pretty plain proposition. We all know that rich land produces better crops than poor land, but we still need to learn how to make a cow cheaply enrich the soil. We find, upon investigation and a great many trials, that the soil can be enriched more cheaply by enriching the fertilizers we use; that is, we have found that by feeding bran, middlings, and oil meal and taking manure directly from the stable to where we wish to raise corn, the following year,
we are surprised at the growth of the corn, and we can trace it back directly to the ground feed which we feed our cows, and I believe it is pretty well established and indorsed by chemical agriculture that the manurial value of any ground feed is but very slightly diminished by passing through the cow; therefore, if this is correct we get two values out of the bran and oil meal and other feeds that we give to our cows. We get its feeding value first and direct, every week we feed it. Then we get its manurial value again, in enriching the fertilizers we have to place upon our land. We have two feeding values, either of which, experience is rapidly proving, is equal to the cost of the original feed. When we realize this, it will be a great starting point for progress in dairying; for without a rich soil, no branch of agriculture can flourish to the benefit of the man that owns it, and this is more necessary with the dairy farmer than with the grain farmer, because a diminished crop in the grain farm is the loss of only what is diminished, but with the dairyman, with his full stock of cattle, he not only loses the crop, but he must go and buy some other man's crop to carry him through. He has a larger investment also in proportion to his acres. On a well stocked dairy farm there is more capital invested, and therefore there is more necessity that everything shall contribute to pay a fair per cent. for the capital invested.

Having got this point settled in our minds, the necessity of enriching the soil and a knowledge of how most cheaply to do it, is a good start for any dairyman, young or old, and having reached this point, the question arises in regard to feeding the cattle. Now, a dairyman should make it a study to find out by what system he can carry on his farm so as to increase the supply of milk without increasing his capital or amount of land. He will find, if he investigates, that fine grass grows very slowly in a dry season, and if his cows are confined to the pasture, the short grass scarcely has an opportunity to gather sunlight, which makes all things grow; that it grows very slowly, and his cattle become pinched for want of feed, if he has not prepared other feed, such as early rye, winter rye, millet, or fodder corn. If he
has these in sufficient quantities he feels a sort of independ-
ence, and that a few weeks of drought are not going to
materially affect him, his cows are not going to fall off one
half in their milk, but will keep up right along. After he has
learned this, he has learned a most important lesson. He
will find out that the grass grows much more abundantly if
it can grow to maturity, and can be cut into hay and fed to
the cow in the barn, for when a cow goes out in the field,
she goes more for exercise and comfort than to hunt from
morning till evening for a scanty existence. After he has
learned this well he will come to the conclusion, as many
other dairymen have in this state, that his best grass is the
dearest feed his cow eats during the year, and he cannot
afford to furnish it at $60 or $70 an acre, and devote from
four or five acres to feeding a cow during the summer; but,
if he can keep it on one-quarter of that with a little addi-
tional labor, the cow will show greater profit to the dair-
man.

Again, it seems that we are as farmers a great while in
discovering what is so very plain—that to get the most
money from a cow, the cow should give the most milk when
prices are highest. Why not? Who can give any reason
why it is not just merely common sense that a cow should
give the most milk while the prices of butter and cheese
are the highest? It looks like a very plain proposition, but
it is true that a large proportion of the dairymen of the
state of Wisconsin get their largest flow of milk in June,
when nobody wants to buy the product. They cannot
ship to warm countries where they find good markets at
this season of the year, and when this season of the year
arrives and butter is worth thirty-eight and forty cents in-
stead of twelve, thirteen and fourteen cents, as it was in
the summer, they have no butter to sell. Why not reverse
it? The cow gives more milk in the year, she lives on just
as little feed and at the time she naturally goes dry when
coming in; in the spring she has green feed, and therefore
the flow of milk keeps up much longer than in December
and January.

Another point that has been urged, and with a good deal
of force, and there is money value in it, is to make the stables warm, by putting in either a double thickness of building paper or saw dust, or in some way to keep the frost out of the barn. No dairyman can afford the expense of frost; it is dearer than oyster suppers, and the theatre. Better attend the theatre and have some fun out of it than to pay the expense of having frost in the stable.

We may congratulate ourselves that these ideas are brought to us in this later day. It seems as if we ought to have thought about these plain matters of fact before, just as we wonder why somebody didn't think of the telephone years ago; but we had other objects in view and we run along as children do, and have got to a place at last where we can begin to learn something that is really useful.

I am glad of the able dairy authority that will be present with us during this occasion. Perhaps there has never been a dairy meeting held anywhere in the United States that had present more acknowledged talent than will be on this occasion to address us during the convention to be held here for three days; some that have spent the best years of their lives in this way. Our venerable friend, Professor Arnold, towards whom every dairyman should feel with the greatest gratitude, that he has spent the best years of his life without regard to profit to himself, and worked out these difficult propositions that will be a lasting benefit to the dairymen of this and every other country. Others will also follow in the discussions, and we shall receive substantial benefit during this convention.

The President—I can endorse everything that Mr. Smith has said with reference to the talent that the association has provided for this meeting at Richland Center. Certainly never before in the history of this association has there been present such an array of dairy talent as will be at this meeting. Mr. Arnold, with a life long record of exertions in the scientific branches of dairying, Mr. J. B. Harris, with his ripe experience, Major Alvord and Mr. T. D. Curtis, who is familiar with everything in Wisconsin; and with our vast array of talent from our own state, it appears to me that
we will be able to touch upon every subject that will be presented in reference to dairying.

We have received a great many compliments in reference to our reports, and I do not think there is another association that has been so thoroughly united, so harmonious in all the years of its existence, as the Wisconsin Dairymen's Association, and that is one reason why we have accomplished so much. Look at what was accomplished at New Orleans last winter. It was because Wisconsin had the best dairy exhibits and was united. We worked as one man. I believe we are going to have a great success in this convention, and our experience will be what it has been at the sixteen farmers' institutes that have been held this winter, that when we come to the third day we shall yet want one day more to complete our work.

I now take great pleasure in introducing to you for a few moments' talk, Professor Arnold, of New York, who has a world wide reputation as a scientific and practical dairymen.

Prof. L. B. Arnold — Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention: I thank you very much for the high compliments you have paid me this morning, and it may be partially true, but you must remember there are always two sides to a question. There are others who consider me nothing but a visionary old theorist, and do not accept what I say to them. I shall be very glad indeed if you can appreciate and will accord with me in what I may have to offer. It is always gratifying to have others see things as we do. If you had had the kicks and thumps and hard knocks that I have for the last eight or nine years, you would understand how well I can appreciate these kind remarks of yours.

I hardly know in what direction to talk to you, whether I shall give you something of the changes which occur in the process of cheese making, or whether I shall take up some other subject.

Mr. Hiram Smith — I think we shall be very glad to hear about cheese.