

THE ANNUAL ADDRESS.

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HON. PRESIDENT THOMAS LUCHSINGER.

*Gentlemen of the Convention:*

Nearly another year has come and gone since we last met in this hall to discuss the matters near to our heart today. Much was said on that occasion, which was of great importance and value, had we taken the advice of the speakers and followed their instructions. But these conventions remind me always of the parable of the sower who went out to sow his seed: Some fell on the byways and was devoured by the birds of the air; some fell among the weeds and the weeds choked it out of its growth; some fell on the stones and rocks, and for lack of moisture withered in the sun, and some fell on good ground and brought forth fruit in abundance. And it further says at the end of the parable: "Let those that have ears to hear listen to what is said," and it might further be added, "preserve the words in their hearts." This is what we hold these conventions for, mutual profit and instruction. Now a great number, without doubt, did derive some profit, and we can see the evidence around us that some of the words uttered then did fall upon good ground and has led to some improvements among our people, so that all the seed sown was not lost. I do not wish to praise, nor much less do I wish to condemn, but truth must and will prevail, and if at times it is not as

sweet to the hearing and taste, still it is much more wholesome than undeserved compliments. We have since that time at least attempted some reforms and improvements in our dairy industry, and foremost among them is the fact that the farmers are awakening and find that the source of their wealth, which is proverbial in Wisconsin, and the spring of their prosperity is worth looking after. They are getting to be ashamed of the shabby buildings heretofore used as cheese factories, mere apologies and makeshifts, of their dirt cellars, in which to cure and tend their cheese, and they have found out that if they furnish their cheesemakers decent living rooms, a clean well-appointed factory, and a well-ventilated cellar with cement floor where the temperature can be regulated, a pure, healthy, clean milk delivered at the factory at the right hour of the day, they deprive their cheesemaker of his excuse that the farmers are themselves to blame if the cheese is not what it should be. And the farmers are getting to see that it is necessary that no blame should be attached to them, but there are still a number of them who think it is impertinence and an unwarranted interference, when the factory inspector arrives, and calls their attention to some much needed improvement, or abatement of a nuisance, and resent his suggestions with forcible language, not liable to be misunderstood, but this is getting to be more rare, and the common sense of the former himself will eradicate that entirely in the future, for they can see for themselves that others profit by such suggestions, and they do not care to stay behind. Also the cheesemakers have taken a step in the right direction, and have shown their willingness to do their part in improving the conditions. They have founded a Union among themselves, with over 170 members, for the purpose of weeding out the poor, incapable element among themselves, or urge or compel them to become more proficient in their profession, by an examination as to their capacity

and competency and to have issued a certificate to them according to their deserts. Of course this union has been abused, somewhat, by the inherent selfishness which dwells in every human heart, to a greater or lesser degree, and they have shown that they are also not deficient therein, by a so-called raising of their wages or compensation, which was not at all the purpose for which the Union was founded. The only paragraph which alludes to the compensation in their Constitution is "The committee chosen for that purpose may at the annual meeting fix the minimum compensation of a No. 1 Cheesemaker." Now this might be construed as being a step in that line, but it was never intended as such, and the best evidence of it, that such is not the case, is, the fact, that immediately after the meeting, which fixed the minimum price for 1908, a large number hired out for less and at the old wages. The matter was entirely out of order, and untimely and not in conformity with the constitution and by-laws adopted and has been condemned by a number of the cheesemakers themselves.

It is, however, true that wages of all kinds of labor and also all materials for cheesemaking have advanced, and milk has also advanced from 60 and 65 cents to \$1.00 and over, being over thirty per cent, while cheesemakers' wages have remained virtually the same. At the same time the wages of farm laborers have advanced fully 30 per cent in the last ten years and that in the face of the fact that, to my knowledge, no union of farm laborers has ever existed in this country; hence it shows that it would be very foolish to apprehend any danger for the farmers and milk producers, that they would have to pay exorbitant wages to the cheesemakers because and on account of their union. They have already accomplished things more important to them than the mere raising of their wages. It is the fact that those receive the best wages who most deserve them, and that they will advance the art of cheesemaking to the dignity of a profession when only those who have the needful

knowledge may practice it, and those that are competent and capable; and how that can injure the farmers and co-operative factories I am unable to see. On the contrary, it will enable them to have a good, efficient and competent cheesemaker instead of a make-believe ignoramus, who will spoil more milk and cheese for them than the value of his wages thrice over.

The third effort to improve our condition was made in the line of building cold storage to prevent the shipping of unripe and unfit cheese to the market and depressing the market price of cheese for the season. That we did not succeed is a fact, but one for which I am unable to account, the dealers in cheese were all a unity, all confessed that there was a necessity for building. A meeting or two were held for that purpose at which a resolution was passed to build, a committee elected to examine other plants which reported favorably, a large sum of money subscribed, but there it remained and has ever since; and what the real cause of the failure was or is I am at a loss to tell, but one of the principal promoters has taken the matter into his own hands and is now erecting a large plant on his own individual act, and probably when the rest see the success which must come and which he certainly richly deserves for his enterprise in taking the initiative, others will follow; and what they failed to accomplish together, may succeed severally and the ends would be the same. So, in a degree, we have reason to be satisfied with the year, having at least done something and attempted to do more. But we must not rest here. We must progress and go forward. The earth revolves and unless we move with it, it will move away from under us and we will be in the rear. There is no such thing as standing still for that reason. We need a strong association composed of all classes interested in the dairy business. The farmers who are the parties most interested therein, deriving the greatest benefit therefrom; the cheesemakers, whose profession, and the cheese dealers, whose

business, is dependent thereon, all should unite with each other into one great association of at least 2,000 members for the purpose of unity and harmony.

It is the height of folly for the farmer to imagine that the cheesemaker and the cheese dealer are his enemies, or vice versa, all these classes need each other and should be as one. Let all jealousy, envy and suspicion fly to the winds and let us unite together to make it a great power for good. We need state aid and assistance, we need an appropriation of at least \$2,000, payable direct to our association to pay for more and better inspection and instruction in our particular branch. In order that this may be accomplished and all parties who are interested in the dairy business may join this Association, it may perhaps be necessary to change the name of our Association to the Southern Wisconsin Dairy Association, a resolution for which lies on the table as unfinished business. Our interests are growing larger from year to year, but so much more they need our fostering care as the years roll by, for if we do not well look to our laurels they will be wrested from us by our competitors who are springing up all over the western states as well as in our own state.

Therefore, let us all together use our best efforts and endeavor, spare no time, trouble or work, look well to all details and keep on the high road of prosperity by building up, fostering and aiding all in our power to keep up the dairy industry in this section of the state to the highwater mark.