

Another Slap at Oleo.

Oleo has received another black eye. A Washington dispatch says Commissioner Yerkes has ruled against the Moxley Company, of Chicago. The decision is an important one, the enforcement of which will result in the payment of a tax of 10 cents a pound on oleomargarine if it contains the slightest particle of coloring matter.

This action grew out of a payment of a tax of one-quarter of a cent a pound by the W. J. Moxley company, of Chicago, on some alleged uncolored oleomargarine in which an oil had been used giving some color to the article. This oil is a natural product and the Moxley company contended that its oleomargarine was not subject to a higher tax, as it was not artificially colored, as the law provides.

Under the law uncolored oleomargarine is subject to a tax of one-quarter of a cent per pound and the colored product is taxed at 10 cents. Commissioner Yerkes, after considering the question for some weeks, decided that the 10 cent tax must be paid, and the company will be required to pay \$30,000 to the government, which is the difference between the two rates.

The Moxley company will make a test case, and an appeal from the decision of the commissioner to the United States courts will be made.

Many other manufacturers have used oil in oleomargarine and in the future the 10 cent tax will be imposed on product of this character.

Several months ago revenue inspectors called the attention of the commissioner to the fact that the Moxley company was paying a lower rate on its product, and he immediately levied an assessment to make the tax 10 cents.

An appeal was taken from the decision and John M. Harlan, of Chicago, made an argument for the Chicago company. He asserted that the oleomargarine contained no coloring matter that would bring it within the provisions of the law relating to artificial coloring.

Many manufacturers of the country were congratulating themselves because they had discovered what they believed was a natural coloring, which gave the oleomargarine a good color, and they have been making attractive and marketable goods which have been taxed as the uncolored product.

Settlers, Beware!

The United States Land Office officially announces that on June 15th, 1903, one million acres of land in California were thrown open to entry. This may be taken up either under the desert land act or as homesteads in one-hundred-and-sixty-acre tracts. The strip stretches from Mojave to the Colorado River.

We wish to warn all intending settlers to let this land alone. There is a good deal of talk about "making the desert blossom as the rose." Some deserts blossom, but not this one. Nobody will ever do more for this desert than Mother Nature has done. The only blooming that nature has brought about there is that its freckled bosom blossoms with large alkali pustules or pimples, punctuated with sagebrush and cactus. This sums up the flora of the new promised land. The fauna includes jack-rabbits, horn-toads, lizards, Gila monsters, and ven-sweeps over this scorched and barren land like the dreaded sandstorms of the omous snakes. The soil is coarse sand and gravel, and on top of the coarse, gravel

there is a fine alkali powder which, when the wind blows—and the wind blows often Sahara, which, by the way, they much resemble. Even far to the southwest, across the lofty mountain ranges, these desert sandstorms sometimes sweep, reaching the favored dwellers in Southern California in the midst of their orange groves. Even this distant touch of the desert winds causes trees to wither, grass to scorch, and men and animals to suffer keenly. Over this dreadful desert the sun moves like a ball of fire across a sky of brass. Rarely does a cloud break the intensity of its pitiless rays.

Those credulous persons who may believe that this is the kind of desert which, by irrigation, may be turned into a garden, are doomed to disappointment. There is no water on this desert strip. The waters of the Colorado may be led on the lands of the Yuma Desert, but that is far lower in level than are these. Much of this Mojave strip is at an elevation of two or three thousand feet. As for artesian water, the writer personally knows of one well which was bored for nearly two thousand feet, ending in igneous rock, and producing nothing but profanity.

The last hope for the settler on this barren land would be the discovery of the precious metals. They may exist there. We do not say they can not be found. But we know that the land has been prospected by experienced miners for half a century. If a tenderfoot can find a gold mine where an old California miner fails, he is a smart tenderfoot. But we doubt his success.

We warn all Eastern people not to be deluded by false even if well-meaning representations concerning this strip of land between Mojave and the Colorado river. It is strewn with the skeletons of prospectors, the bones of animals. It is a Place of Skulls.

Let any fair-minded eastern farmer go into the states west of the Alleghenies and visit the agricultural colleges! He cannot fail to see their strength and the power for agricultural development which is centered at them. It is evident that in these states the controlling classes believe in agricultural education, and understand that the educated farmer is the best asset on the farm. Look for the cause of this and you will find that what we may call the true agricultural spirit is responsible. By "spirit" we mean the feeling which makes a farmer believe in his calling and claim for it an honorable place by the side of any business

or profession. It is this spirit which gives power and force to agriculture rather than the millions which have been dug out of the soil! One great reason why our eastern agricultural colleges are said to have fallen behind those of the West in influence and power is because this agricultural spirit is lower in the East, absorbed by other lines of business. If we are to have a great agricultural college in New York, we must revive this spirit of agriculture, and first of all believe in our calling. The college cannot create this spirit, but will be created by it. Let every farmer who believes in his business lend his aid in building up a true farmers' college.—Rural New Yorker.

Trade Register: The Ranch makes a long reply to the Trade Register on the condensed milk situation. As it argues on the line that the alleged trust is building a factory at Auburn for spite's sake; that there is no room in that section to increase stock and milk supply, and that the local factory had to go to Oregon to put up its second factory, instead of selecting some of the "other dairy districts" in this state "remote from the larger cities, where it would be possible to get several times the quantity of milk they can possibly obtain at Auburn," the Trade Register is given nothing to answer on logical lines. We have been looking at it as a business proposition, not prejudiced in favor of either party. Because the Trade Register asked "if the first factory selected the best locality, is it not equally good business judgment for a competitor to choose the same location?" The Ranch goes so far astray as to remark: "The Trade Register seems to think the judgment of the Borden company infallible." It can thus be seen to what conclusions the Ranch easily leads itself, and how it leaves no reasonable ground for argument.

Chehalis Creamery Sold.

President H. B. Brokaw, of the milk factory was at Chehalis last week and closed a deal for the purchase of O. N. John's Chehalis creamery. Mr. Johns retains his realty interests, machinery, etc., and will remove his plant to Cowlitz county, we are told. Mr. Brokaw says that the purchase of the creamery will enable the milk factory to have the entire milk supply if the farmers wish to sell it to the condenser. They will continue to pay the highest price possible. The machinery is now fully installed at the condenser and they can handle an almost unlimited supply of milk. This week orders for the first supply of "Primrose Cream" were solicited. The cream shows up as a fine article. Mr. Myenberg, Sr., was here Sunday, and complimented the gentlemen very highly on their Chehalis factory.—Nugget.

Milk Factory is Running.

The canning outfit for the Chehalis condensed milk plant has been slow about getting here. Notwithstanding this fact, the plant has been handling a large quantity of milk every day—more, in fact, than it is convenient to use just now. About a dozen people are working there. Within a short time, Mr. Meyenberg, says, they will have all their machinery in, and then they expect materially to increase the amount of milk they will use.—Nugget.

Every farmer in the Northwest should be a subscriber to The Ranch. Now fifty cents a year.

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