

butter and cheese have to be forwarded long distances in railway-trucks, it would be of great advantage if these trucks were covered and specially ventilated, so as to protect the produce from the influence of the outside atmosphere. At present it occurs that after a long railway journey the produce arrives at the port of shipment in a more or less heated condition.

Regarding the classification of dairy-produce, it has been suggested that it might be branded according to quality at the port of shipment. There are, however, many insuperable difficulties, especially in connection with butter, in the way of doing so, for butter should never be opened after it is packed until it is opened for consumption. On several occasions, on behalf of the dairy industry, I have visited various ports of shipment when dairy-produce was being put on board, in order to learn what was being done, and whether classification at the port is advisable. The many objections in the way of classification at the port forced me to conclude that for the present it is impracticable. It is very desirable that products like cheese and butter, when of first-class quality, should, on being shipped to the Home-country, be marked with some authoritative brand, so as to give the product a standing and the sale a stimulus in that market. This would insure that the article be sold at its legitimate price. While this necessary branding is impracticable at the port, it is able to be accomplished at the various factories. And I would suggest that it might be one of the Dairy Instructor's duties, a certain standard of excellence being established, to affix an authoritative and distinctive brand. This would not only foster the factory system, but greatly facilitate the sale of the produce in the London market. As this branding can only be applied when an article of uniform excellence is produced in large quantities, so this excellence can be obtained in adequate quantities only by the establishment of the factory system. Hence it is desirable that the factory system should receive all possible encouragement. So long as we have the present individual system so extensively in use the want of uniformity will be apparent. It is this want of uniformity that has hitherto operated against New Zealand butter in the Home market. At present the surplus is largely exported by storekeepers and others, who, during the flush of the season here, pack it up and send it Home. Indeed, instances have come under my notice in which an inferior article, collected from all sources, has been branded as "the finest New Zealand creamery butter." This needs only to be mentioned for it to be apparent the injury done to the sale of New Zealand produce, and steps ought to be taken to make such a practice penal. By the employment of one or two persons instead of fifty or sixty, the factory effects a great saving in labour and expense: not only so, but by better skill and machinery used in manufacture a greater yield is derived from a given quantity of milk. I am of opinion that dairy factories, as they are established primarily in the interests of settlers, should be worked on the co-operative basis, all shareholders being milk-suppliers.

As the success of the dairy industry must to a very large extent depend on the skill of the men in charge of the factories, I would suggest to the consideration of the Government the desirableness of instituting some authoritative standard to guide proprietors of factories in the selection of makers. At present directors are often in a difficulty as to which man to choose, and an appointment is frequently made at hazard. The certificates of applicants testify that the applicant is of experience in the business; but too often the knowledge possessed is of an empirical kind. The whole season's make is thus placed in danger of being rendered unmarketable; while, if the district be a new dairying one, the industry may receive an injury from which it may take years to recover. For, if in a new district a man be appointed on untrustworthy recommendations, the settlers may come to the conclusion that the district, and not the maker, is to blame for the poor quality of the products of their factory. I have found in my intercourse with dairy-factory proprietors an urgent necessity expressed for some scheme being devised for their assistance in this matter. It might perhaps be made one of the functions of an agricultural college to investigate the nature of the certificates held by applicants to manage dairy factories. In time examinations might come to be held by the college, and certificates granted accordingly. The Government Dairy Instructor for the time being might be a useful auxiliary in this matter, by acting as inspector of the practical part of a candidate's examination.

In concluding this report, I may say that the dairy industry is not on such a satisfactory basis as might be expected, resulting chiefly from the want of knowledge of many of those engaged in the manufacture and from the want of co-operation in the interest of the factory on the part of the settlers and milk-suppliers. In this report I have in a general way treated of the present condition of the industry, so far as it has come under my notice. I have not gone into details as to the process of manufacture, it being my principal duty to enter fully into such at the different factories visited. I may also say that, as it is likewise part of my duty to criticize, in presence of the directors, the buildings, milk-supply, rennet, cleanliness, and methods pursued in the manufacture, it is hardly to be expected that on every occasion I should avoid giving offence to certain persons, though it is my constant desire to avoid doing so on all occasions. I am aware that I have been subjected to some criticism for making a free use in the course of my lectures of the writings of Mr. J. B. Harris, the instructor to the Dairymen's Association of Canada. As I was a pupil of Mr. Harris's, I think the criticisms are not deserving of much notice. Mr. Harris is the chief authority for the system of manufacture advocated by me, and it is largely due to him that the Canadian product takes such a high place in the London market. When I say that he was engaged by the Scottish Dairy Association to give instruction in practical dairying at a salary of £3 per day, it will be seen the high value placed on his instruction. As I have always fully acknowledged whatever use I have made of his writings, I do not think I need take any further notice of the matter.

I have, &c.,

JOHN SAWERS.

The Hon. the Minister of Lands, Wellington.

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