

price. I find that the same factory that would get up to as high as £5 10s. a hundredweight for their butter in London would also get, for what they considered as good butter when it left here, as low as £3 or £3 10s., without being able to give any explanation for the difference in price; so that I have very little more light on the subject now than I had before I left home. There is one point that I think we may have been making a mistake in, which is, that we have been using tawa kegs from Wanganui for packing our butter in instead of totara. I find that tawa timber has a bad name for making butter-kegs, and that totara kegs are considered much better. Of course it is generally admitted that the manufacture of butter is a very delicate operation, and that the Danes are most proficient in that line of industry; and, with a view of overcoming the difficulty of putting our butter on the London market in good condition, my company have engaged a Danish expert to make our butter. I believe he has already arrived, and we are hoping that he will make such an alteration as will enable us to make butter exporting a success in the future. If his system turns out successful we will only be too glad to give every opportunity to the Government or to butter-makers to benefit by his practice. With reference to the shipment of butter, we found it very difficult to get the description of freight that we required last year in the steamers, and our butter has had sometimes to be kept for six and seven weeks in the factory before we could obtain the requisite cool space in the steamers. This, I believe, has been detrimental to the butter, and in future, as there is a prospect of abundance of freight being got in the steamers, it is our intention to ship every fortnight at least, or, failing to get it away, we mean to put it into freezing-chambers. Occasionally the butter has had to lie for a day or probably two days between the railway-station and wharves, which must also have had a detrimental effect on it. To obviate this, I think the Railway Department should pay special attention to the conveyance of butter, and give it a preference, as it were, over any other produce which they may be carrying, as it is so susceptible of damage—I mean preference as regards immediate despatch. The Railway Commissioners might also supply insulated or, at least, what is generally known as frozen-meat vans for the conveyance of butter without making any extra charge for them; and from such places as Taranaki, or places situated at a distance, if it were possible to run special night-trains in the summer, I think it would be a very great advantage to the butter-makers. Of course in the South we have a cooler climate, and there is not quite so much risk of butter getting melted during its transshipment as there is in the North Island. I believe that the steam shipping companies are well aware that it would be to their advantage to pay more attention to the carriage of butter and cheese than they have been doing in the past. Unless these products can be landed in the London market in a better condition than they have been, the trade, instead of increasing, will in all probability decrease, and it seems to be one that is capable of being highly developed in New Zealand if the difficulties of conveyance can only be overcome.

2. Do you think that exceptionally high rates have been charged for butter?—I think they have been charging more for butter than they should in proportion to frozen mutton.

3. *Major Steward.*] Do you know whether the butter should be carried in the freezing-chamber or simply in what is called the cool-chamber? Does it require to be frozen all the way Home?—I do not think that freezing will harm it.

4. But it would do at a moderately low temperature?—I would prefer it in a cool-chamber if they would only keep it at the one temperature. I am afraid of variation of temperature. They are not sufficiently watchful on the way Home with what is called the cool-chambers. Of course, whatever is in the freezing-chamber is always frozen, and consequently remains in the same condition all the time at sea. But I fear the cool-chamber is not kept at the same temperature; that it varies; and that may have an effect upon the butter.

5. From your experience, do you think the butter could go Home perfectly safe in the freezing-chamber?—Yes, I think so. It would be desirable not to have the butter in the same chamber with the mutton; it would be better to have a chamber to itself. With regard to the question of grading, I may state that factory-made butter, being considered superior to farmers' butter before shipment, should not be graded otherwise than first class; and yet our experience is that a very large proportion of it is only third class when it arrives in London. Now, from that I should be of opinion that grading here, at the present time anyhow, would be of no service whatever. Farmers' butter, which might be graded as second class, might arrive in a better condition than what was considered first-class factory butter, and might sell for more money in London; so that any grading that can be done here, I think, would be no guide as to the quality or value of the article when it arrived at its destination. With reference to giving instruction in dairying, when the Exhibition was opened in Dunedin the Commissioners there thought it would be very desirable to have a model dairy-factory in connection with the Exhibition, where farmers' sons, or other people who wished to become acquainted with the newest and best modes of making butter and cheese, could receive instruction; and, with that object in view, the Exhibition Commissioners asked the Government to allow Mr. Sawers, their Inspector, to give lessons and practical illustrations. No fewer than three model factories were in operation in the Exhibition for the first month or two, and Mr. Sawers gave demonstrations in dairying; but, so far as I am aware, the people who attended went there more from curiosity than with a view to gaining practical knowledge to be afterwards used in dairying. I did not hear of any people who attended regularly, or wanted to assist, or go through any particular course of learning all the time that these factories were in work; so that I am somewhat doubtful as to whether a school for teaching dairying, or a model factory, would be greatly taken advantage of. Our cheese- and butter-makers are rather conceited in their ideas, and it is very difficult to get them to alter. Of course, it is possible that men younger in the trade might take advantage of the knowledge of an expert and adopt his system. An expert working at a factory such as Edendale, I fancy, will do more good than one travelling through the country. At the same time, it might be useful; I should not like to say it would not. I have no doubt it would be an advantage to have an expert within call, so that any one wishing to have the benefit of his services could get him; but the butter-makers