

We have grass here nearly all the year round. There cows have to be housed six months out of the year and hand-fed. All the other colonies of Australasia are now obtaining the best information they can procure on this question of dairying. In Victoria they have several travelling dairies and experts. In Queensland they have three travelling dairies and three experts. In South Australia they are advertising for competent persons to take charge of working-dairies. I maintain that, until we have something of the same kind in New Zealand, our butter will remain as it is—of inferior quality—with few exceptions. With regard to the butter industry, I may state that in Canterbury we have, since last autumn, been importing from Wanganui to Christchurch butter for which we pay 1s. 4d. per pound, while we are selling butter manufactured in Canterbury at 4d. and 8d. per pound. I have seen butter made in the vicinity of Christchurch packed in Pond's boxes which had to be sold to the soap-boilers, simply because it was not properly made. Large quantities of butter is sold at 4d. and 6d. per pound. This butter goes to the biscuit-makers and confectioners.

257. You have a factory in Canterbury?—Yes, two; one at Tai Tapu, and one at Sefton. They produce butter for which they get 1s. 4d. per pound, the same as the best Wanganui butter; indeed, they cannot make sufficient, but what they do produce is of the best quality.

258. *Mr. Walker.*] Is the Wanganui butter factory-butter?—Yes.

259. You do not consider the pasturage in Canterbury in any way inferior?—Not in the agricultural districts. I do not think that the finest Canterbury pasturage can be exceeded in any part of the world.

260. Do you consider that it is the want of knowledge or mismanagement which is the cause of this bad butter being produced?—Yes, I do.

261. It results from ignorance, does it?—From the want of knowledge. The same kind of ignorance prevailed in Victoria for a time, but they are now beginning to see the importance of this matter. Victoria is now making a name for herself in the English market, while much of the butter we send there is designated "New Zealand grease."

262. Have you gone into the various systems of working the butter industry? If New Zealand were to bring experts to the colony, from what country would you take them?—I would suggest that you should get a man who is thoroughly trained to the work from Denmark or Sweden, provided he could speak the English language fluently. Sweden is now the best country in the world for dairying. But the dairy system, as it now exists in England, ought to turn out some first-class men. It is quite possible to get a thoroughly-competent man from Denmark or Sweden, who would be satisfied with less pay than you would get a man from England. However, the best men procurable should be had, regardless of any difference of remuneration. In Denmark and Sweden the Government have several dairy-schools. The country is dotted with factories, and a regular grant is made for the encouragement of the dairy industry. Students have to pass an examination and obtain certificates of knowledge and competency in the practice of butter-making.

263. From your own knowledge of Canterbury, do you think the farmers there would receive information kindly upon this subject?—I think so. I do not think there would be any difficulty; I think they would only be too pleased to receive such instruction. In Victoria any district guaranteeing to supply a certain quantity of milk for, say, a week has an expert sent to it. He goes to work at once, explains the whole theory, shows the practice, and gives the benefit of his experience.

264. And he takes a travelling dairy with him?—Yes; I consider that it is a disgrace to be in the condition we are in with regard to this butter industry, more especially when we consider the advantages which we possess here.

265. It is the fact of possessing these advantages probably which makes us indifferent?—The Government of Victoria pay 1d. royalty for every pound of butter produced that is sold for 7d. a pound, 2d. for every pound that is sold for 9d., and 3d. for every pound that is sold at 1s.

266. How is that calculated—on account sales?—Yes, I believe so; but I do not think the industry here would require any such bolstering-up as that.

267. In Australia do the cows milk fairly during the dry season?—No, they do not, except where green fodder is provided for them, in the way of sorghum, lucerne, maize, &c. In New Zealand the grass grows nine months of the year. We can keep our cows with giving them exceedingly little artificial food.

268. *The Chairman.*] What is the case in Sweden?—Cattle are housed there for seven months of the year. They have to grow roots, &c., to feed them. This food is kept in cellars, in order to be protected from the frost.

269. And the butter there is good, although derived from artificial food?—Yes, the butter is the finest butter in the world, because the Government have spared no expense in training the people.

270. Do you think that it would be a good system to encourage creameries for the purpose of concentrating butter-making as much as possible?—Mr. Stead, of Christchurch, and myself went into the whole subject a couple of years ago, and we came to the conclusion that a large central factory could be placed so as to manipulate nearly the whole of the milk produced within a radius of twenty miles of Christchurch. Our idea was to place the central factory at Addington, and to feed it with cream supplied from creameries situated in the dairying districts within a reasonable distance of railway-stations. If we had succeeded in carrying out this idea of a central factory we could have afforded to employ the best experts that could be got. We should have established a training-school. We would have provided a refrigerating-chamber at the factory, so that the whole thing should have been done properly. We could have kept the butter until the ship was ready to sail, and the butter could have been run on board without any additional expense, and, above all, we should have produced butter of one uniform quality, known as Canterbury butter. But the farmers did not seem to fall in with the scheme. Some opposed it. But it is not too late even now. The Tai Tapu and the Sefton Factories are a success. At first they made a few mistakes; but they