

the business successful; but I was informed by my friend shortly before leaving Home that a loss has been the result in, I believe, every case. With reference to grading butter, in Cork, the Corporation appoint certain Inspectors, who examine the butter as it is brought to market and brand it first, second, third, or fourth, as in their opinion it deserves. These brands are generally recognised in England as a good criterion of the value of the stuff. It is bought and sold on these brands. The Corporation is much more strict now than they were formerly in respect of the brands, very much to the advantage of all who deal in the butter. That is the only market in Ireland where they brand butter; at other markets it is simply sold on the shipper's brand. Recently an Imperial Act of Parliament has been passed, giving them more extensive powers in regard to the dealing with butter in the Cork market. I think it is called "The Cork Butter-market Act, 1888." A Committee of the House of Commons sat on the whole question, and recommended Parliament to pass this Act. I do not agree with the statement that the London buyers do not recognise the brands on the Cork butter. It is bought and sold on the brands, generally without being opened. As a matter of fact, very little Cork butter goes to London: the bulk of it goes to Yorkshire, and some to Lancashire and South Wales. The London people do not care for the butter. The Londoners are extra strict about butter, and the Cork butter is a strong, heavy butter. I can well understand a buyer going into a store and trying the Cork butter, to ascertain whether or not it would suit his class of trade.

607. *Mr. Marchant.*] What do you mean by "a strong, heavy butter"?—I mean that the butter is of a tough and dense texture, to some extent like the New Zealand butter.

608. Unnecessarily heavily salted?—No, not necessarily. It used to be the custom in Ireland to put 10 per cent. of salt in what was then called salt butter. That class of butter has gone out of vogue completely, and now 3 or 4 per cent. is the utmost salt that is added to the butter.

609. Do you consider 5 per cent. too much?—No, I do not, for butter made in New Zealand. There is one popular delusion: Generally, dairy people have an idea that salt preserves the butter—keeps it from going rancid. That is an utter delusion. Butter will keep equally well without salt if it is of the right quality to start with. I give that as being absolutely the case. We made experiments at a dairy-factory in Ireland, and we found that the statement was correct. We kept one cask of butter for four or five months without any salt, and it was just as good as any cask of butter that had been salted.

610. What do you think, then, is the principal condition for butter to keep fresh in the way that you have described?—In the first place, butter, to keep, ought to be churned at as low a temperature as possible—say, 52° to 54° Fahr. If the milk is good, and all the ordinary attention paid to the butter in the making, it will keep well for two or three months in a cool temperature.

611. Would you not have allowed the cream to ripen at a higher temperature than that?—I certainly would. I do not think cream would ripen under about 70°. The factory I was connected with in Ireland had in it steam-pipes, which were turned on in cold weather to keep the temperature up to what we considered right.

612. Do you think, then, before churning the cream should be brought down to 52° to 54°, in order to produce a high class of butter that will keep long?—You do not quite follow me. I meant to convey this: that the temperature of the air in the factory in which the churning was done should not be more than 52° to 54°. The milk will get warm in the course of fermentation, and it will ripen at a temperature of, say, 65° to 70°. With respect to the New Zealand butter trade, I may state that I was called upon last December to examine some six hundred packages of New Zealand butter just landed in London. It arrived by the "Ionic" steamer. I valued some of the butter at £6 in London, and the lowest class at £3, but all of the butter averaged, I think, about £5. The character of New Zealand butter is such that it ought to travel fairly well under ordinary conditions. It ought to travel to London without receiving much damage if in a cool-chamber. The butter is of a tough nature, and, being almost exclusively made from grass, has more keeping-qualities in it than continental butter. In order to develop a large trade between New Zealand and England in butter, it will be necessary for dairy-factories to keep up a regular standard, and brand their butter so that the particular brands when they are approved of will become known and appreciated on the Home market. The packing of butter here is done, apparently to me, in a very slovenly way. The casks are too heavy altogether, and they look slovenly in their get-up in comparison with continental casks. I strongly recommend the use of 56lb. boxes, made of wood, about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick. They would entail less expenditure in transit, and would be approved of by English buyers. My firm have urged me to do all I can to persuade the dairy people here to adopt these boxes; and they have authorised me to get some made and present them to the dairy people who are disposed to use them. The butter should be put in the 56lb. boxes with "parchment paper," as it is called at Home—a vegetable paper—put inside the boxes. It keeps the dust and dirt out, and keeps the butter free from coming in contact with the wood. This parchment paper will take the place of any cloth or special preparation of the wood, or any enamelling. It costs 6d. or 8d. a cask or box, and saves scraping of the butter. A grocer will give a little more for a cask of butter put up in this way.

613. *Mr. Mackenzie.*] Have you had any experience of New Zealand timber for butter-kegs?—No, nothing more than what I have seen of the casks. I do not know whether it is suitable wood or not.

614. Do you know what sort of wood is used in Denmark?—Yes, beech; in Ireland, oak.

615. Are both these timbers free from flavouring?—Yes; the custom has always been to steep the cask in brine a few hours before it is required to be filled with butter.

616. Do you think that $\frac{1}{2}$ in. timber would be strong enough?—Quite strong enough. It has been suggested to me to import timbers from Home, and I probably will make the experiment. The wood and labour are so much cheaper now. I have arrived at that opinion by being told that the large casks here cost 5s. each. I believe the Danish casks cost 1s. 3d. The oak firkin, in Ireland, holding 70lb., costs about 1s., but I am not quite certain. A firm in Holland offered to