

favourably with the Swiss stored commodity. It must be admitted that the high colour of our produce called forth some comment; it was thought that colouring-matter had been added. After my return to London I received some figures from the Chief Government Grader, Dr. Stüssi, which indicated that the butters had been submitted to bacteriological tests and that in a number of these the results showed a count which gave some cause for concern. In view of what has recently come to light about a later shipment of unsalted butter forwarded to Belgium, one is inclined to wonder whether we are getting contamination of our butter from a source which has hitherto been unsuspected.

It is quite evident that in future some understanding will have to be arrived at by an International Standards Committee to say just what the total count of infection may be which shall make a product unfit for commercial trading. Unless the spores found can be proved to be of an infectious type and dangerous to the consuming public, surely the keeping-quality of the article should be its guarantee, coupled with its palatability, aroma, &c. This is a subject which could well be taken up by the International Dairy Federation. At the same time, it behoves New Zealand to take every precaution to safeguard its dairy-produce from contamination and from extraneous matter. Instances are not wanting to show that some factories could be more careful in preventing foreign matter being shipped in dairy-produce.

In June I attended a meeting of the Permanent Bureau of the International Dairy Congress which was held in Paris to discuss matters pertaining to the classification and standards to be accepted by the Congress for cheese of varying types; also to prepare for the discussion on the nomenclature of cheese which will come before the Conference to be held in Sweden in August, 1949.

In November a further meeting was called in Copenhagen to formulate plans for the Swedish meeting, and the various committees discussed proposed standards and methods of analysis, &c., of the different dairy products. This meeting was called to coincide with the Danish Royal Dairy Show, which was the first exhibition held since pre-war days. It was a most instructive show; large entries of butter and cheese were in competition, and every facility was afforded to those interested to sample the winning exhibits. New types of dairy machinery were displayed. My interest was attracted to the number of makes of metal churns for buttermaking.

*Fibre-board Butter-containers.*—These are arriving in increasing quantities and the trade now appears to have accepted them as a standard package. To safeguard the quality of the material used in the construction of fibre-board butter-containers, your office in London has forwarded to Princes Risborough during the past year some sixty-one samples of board. These have been arriving in increasing quantities of late from U.S.A. and Canada. This I regard as a necessary safeguard in order that our source of supply shall not be confined to Scandinavian countries. Recent indications are that the United Kingdom may before long enter the field of competition, for I have had one or two agents calling on me for information about specifications, &c. I am at a loss to know how they can hope to obtain pulp supplies to compete with such countries as Canada, Sweden, &c. However, they state they have every confidence of being able to do so. Incidentally, the testing of these box samples has involved your London office in an expenditure of £149 1s. for testing fees, &c. Personally, I consider the expenditure worth while, for samples of board submitted have shown that it would be easy to forward unsatisfactory material both in regard to wet bursting strength and also from the viewpoint of taint-imparting qualities. I visualize the day when New Zealand will manufacture her own fibre-board and establish a testing-station of her own.

*Experimental Cheese.*—During the past twelve months consignments of Cheshire-type cheese have been forwarded to Great Britain. A substantial shipment from the Cambridge Dairy Co. was examined within the past few days. From reports from the different merchants to whom these cheese were distributed it would appear that the Massey and Dalefield produce met with considerable approval. However, it must be admitted that some reports are anything but flattering. With the present methods of distribution it is most difficult to get anything very authentic or to be able to follow the distribution of this experimental cheese down to the actual consumer.

I feel that if we can get down to a type of New Zealand cheese similar to Cheshire, it will meet with a good reception in its proper locality. I can appreciate that to make these experiments in small quantities probably involves the dairy company in added labour problems; however, I consider it undesirable for a dairy factory to manufacture a large quantity of produce when the technique of manufacture is not fully acquired. Apart from the difficulty of sorting out all the different vat dates when labour is in such an unsatisfactory state as at present there is always the possibility that the produce will turn out in an unsuitable condition and involve some serious loss.

Returning to the quality of the experimental-type cheese, I appreciate that it will take a long time to evolve a cheese which will meet all our requirements. We have a natural obstacle in our shipping. Cheese must be sufficiently firm to enable them to carry two months on their sides. On the other hand, they must not make too much acid in transit. It may take exhaustive trials to arrive at the ideal cheese, but I think it worth while, and now is the most opportune time for finding this type. The shortage of meat places cheese in a favourable position and a new type would meet with less comment if not altogether satisfactory than at a later period when meat-supplies are more normal.