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THE FARM.

WHY CREAM TESTS VARY.

Patrons register kicks occasionally at the creameries that the test of their cream is not holding up. Some people, and very good people, think that they should receive exactly the same test each time they deliver. Variations are bound to occur. Often a change in a test is looked upon as dishonesty on the part of the buyer.

There are several factors that cause variation in the richness of hand-separator cream—variations over which the buyer has no direct control and for which he is sometimes put at fault. The chief factors are:—

- (1) Speed of turning.
- (2) Levelness of the machine.
- (3) Position of the cream screw.
- (4) Rate of inflow.
- (5) Temperature of the milk.
- (6) Cleanliness of the machine.

Different persons may do the turning. One individual often speeds along a little faster than the one who did it the previous skimming. It is a fact that the faster the machine is turned, the less the cream and the thicker it will be. Even the same individual will vary in his turning. The chance for "human error" certainly applies in turning a separator and the test of richness of the cream will vary accordingly.

A machine that is not properly leveled cannot do the consistent work of one that is set level and solidly. The bowl will not turn evenly; in some bad cases it will wobble, a thing that will vary not only the richness of the cream, but wear out the machine and cause it to skim inefficiently.

Naturally, if the position of the cream screw is changed, the richness of the cream will vary. The other day a patron informed the writer that his son had tightened up the screw while playing about the milk-house. Scarcely any cream would come out, and what did appear was very rich. Ordinary running has been known to loosen up the screw. These little things that the patron does not take into consideration oftentimes when he sees his test go down a per cent. or two.

Regulation of the inflow is a factor that causes variation in the test. If the milk is not turned on full, the test will vary because the same pressure is not placed upon the bowl and the same volume is not passing through. This factor is not a very important one, as most machines are provided with a float that is virtually self-regulating.

Some investigators have shown that cold milk is not skimmed as efficiently as warm milk. Most dairymen are agreed that the temperature of the milk should be between 70 and 90 deg. Fahr. to insure best skimming.

A clean separator will always do a better and more consistent job of skimming than one that is dirty and begrimed. At this time of the season no machine ought to be left unwashed over night and cleaned up but once daily. Parts will become gummy. This causes the fat to vary in the cream, and some may escape into the buttermilk. Economy of the simplest sort teaches that feeding fat valued at 1s 6d per pound to calves and pigs is not a paying proposition. It, therefore, behoves a man to get all of the fat out of the milk. To do this requires a clean separator on the start.

From the foregoing it can be seen that several factors should be taken into consideration in the determination of causes of variation in cream tests. The laws of each State make the buyers give an honest test. Many times if the patrons would study their separators, run them according to the manufacturer's directions, and, above all, keep them clean, the little variations could be accounted for and in most instances overlooked.

SOME POTASH FERTILISERS.

The supply of artificial potash fertilisers is so limited, and natural sources of this indispensable plant food so abundant, that one is surprised that farmers and gardeners do not more extensively make use of the latter. At this season there is always a quantity of vegetable material, such as hedge-brusings, potato, bean and pea haulms, weeds, bramble, and scrub from rocky knolls or otherwise waste areas, ditch cleanings, and other rubbish heaped up in a spare corner (literally thrown away), or it is burned with the sole object of getting rid of it. Now it has often been pointed out that such material, if converted into ash by fire, becomes a most valuable potash fertiliser. The argument that a farmer has no time for such work will not do these days. That plea may be justified in a few instances, but in so far as my observation goes it is the man who "makes" time for such details who is the most successful cultivator.



HORTICULTURE.

Towards the end of winter we quite naturally begin to think of the coming spring and seed sowing, which must inevitably lead to the question, "What seeds do we require." Those who have glass houses, and especially those with some artificial heat, always look forward to some early sowings and must soon begin their preparations, as the weeks pass very swiftly by. Sweet peas are one of the first things to be thought of, as the seeds germinate rather slowly. Those who have autumn sown plants and those who rely wholly on outside sowing have plenty of time yet, but others can sow in pots at any time from now on if they desire good spring plants. For those who do not require great numbers two or three seeds may be sown in three or four inch pots in which they may remain until a fair size, but when large numbers are required the small pots, which can be got from the nurserymen, are more suitable as they take less space and give very little labour. Use soil made rich with well rotted manure, but avoid fresh artificial manures as they frequently rot the seeds and disappointment follows. With a little artificial warmth some early tomatoes may also be sown, as they are as important as flowers, but with them it must be remembered that there is a very great difference in early and late varieties, so don't forget to ask your seedsman for early sorts.

Generally speaking early sowing is for early blooming, but it is also desirable for some autumn-flowering annuals which are naturally late flowering in this district and can be hurried on with advantage, such as cosmos, which sometimes are just getting to their best when frost comes. It will be found that such be accelerated by early sowing. Experience only however, will teach us what and when to sow as some things sown too early bloom prematurely.

Anemones may be sown early, and if transplanted and attended to will start to bloom in the autumn giving some blooms all through the winter if fairly treated, and blooming profusely in early spring.

Freesias which here must be grown under glass, give excellent results from seed. The writer's practice has been to sow the seed at the end of July or beginning of August in boxes, about four inches deep, two feet long, and 15 inches wide, kept in an unheated glass-house, and from each of such boxes has been able to cut up to about 150 stems, commencing in May and continuing up to September, as the seeds germinate irregularly. The hardy yellow coreopsis grandiflora, which is so useful for cuttings, may also be started soon unless you have self-sown plants as we are always ready for it as soon as we can get it. Also gallardias which with their large crimson and yellow flowers are equally prized. And a little lobelia if you can keep it from the frost, as we all like it early.

HUMOUR ON THE CLYDE.

The old joke which avers that a surgical operation is required to get a joke into the head of a Scotsman is less true to-day than ever it was. Humour exhales from Captain R. W. Campbell as spontaneously and almost as regularly as breathing. His latest book, "Snooker Tam of the Cathcart Railway" may be read by both English and Scots for the dialect is not at all overdone. The creator of Private Spud Tamson has a happy knack of hitting off richly the lighter side of life on the Clyde. Snooker Tam worked as under-porter on the Glasgow circular railway, which "was specially built for high held yuns in insurance offices, public-houses, and drapers' shops." Everyone knows what "fitba" means to the Scots worker. Tam and a pal are discussing the game after dinner:—

"Ye're jealous."
"I'm no."
"Ye are so."
"I'm no so."
"Ye canna blaw aboot yer fitba, ony-
wey, Ye've never had yer name in the
Times or News."
"That wis to keep ye frae greetin."
"It's a hit in the lug ye want."
"Cheese it! I'm nane o' yer 'Kamer-
ad' kind."
"You'll no pit it on to me, even if I
am a wee follah."
"Who's pittin' it on ye?"
"You!"
"Me?"
"Ay, you."
And so on to fisticuffs.

STORIES FOR ALL MOODS.

TALES OF KINGS AND COURTS.

THE KAISER'S ESCAPE FROM
DROWNING.

How the history of the world might have been changed by an incident which occurred at Potsdam in 1880 is told vividly in a book just published by Hodder and Stoughton, called "The Vanished Poms of Yesterday: Being Some Reminiscences of a British Diplomat." William of Hohenzollern, then Prince William, in spite of his withered arm, desired to learn to scull, so he asked Lady Ampthill, wife of the Ambassador at the Prussian Court, to instruct him, for Lady Ampthill was expert in the use of a boat.

WILLIAM'S UNEXPECTED DIP.

One morning a light skiff was brought to the landing-stage of the Potsdam lake and William stood ready for his lesson. Lady Ampthill "explained to Prince William that this was not a heavy boat, such as he had been accustomed to, that he must exercise extreme care, and in getting in must tread exactly in the centre of the boat. William of Hohenzollern, who had never taken advice from anyone in his life, and was always convinced that he himself knew best, responded by jumping into the boat from the landing-stage, capsizing it immediately, and throwing himself and Lady Ampthill into sixteen feet of water. Prince William, owing to his malformation, was unable to swim one stroke but Lady Ampthill, a very strong swimmer managed, in spite of the weight of her clothing to support him in the water for five minutes until help came and they were both rescued."

WAGNER AND THE WAITRESS.

A sidelight on another and greater German is also given us. Twice a week Wagner, the master-musician, used to play at the house of Baroness von Schleinitz, wife of the Minister of the Royal Household. "Two grand pianos were placed side by side, a point Wagner insisted upon, and here the master played us his gigantic works. . . . His playing finished, a small very plainly-appointed supper-table was placed in the middle of the Fest-Saal, at which Wagner seated himself alone in state." Then all the great ladies of Berlin would bustle about, waiting upon the musician. Plates of sauerkraut, liver sausage, black puddings, herring salad, cheeses of various kinds, raw ham, and raw smoked goose-breast would be piled upon the table amid much fussing amongst the fair amateur waitresses. They would jostle and reprove one another for ignorance of the Master's gastronomic tastes. "Meanwhile Wagner, dressed in a frock-coat and trousers of shiny black cloth, his head covered with an invariable black velvet skull-cap, would munch steadily away, taking no notice whatever of those around him."

BILL BISMARCK'S BEER.

Bismarck, we are told, was fond of enlarging on his favourite theory of the male and female of European nations. Germans, Scandinavians, Dutch, English, Scotch, and Turks, "he declared to be essentially male races. The Russians, the Poles, the Bohemians, and indeed every Slavonic people, and all Celts, he maintained, just as emphatically, to be female races. A female race he ungallantly defined as one given to immense verbosity, to fickleness, and to lack of tenacity." But he conceded that these "female nations" had great powers of attraction and charm. Bismarck's two sons, Herbert and William, did not, says, "A British Diplomat," inherit one spark of their father's genius. Herbert was arrogant and unpopular; "William, universally known as 'Bill,' was a genial, fair-headed giant of a man. . . . Bill Bismarck drank so much beer that his hands were always wet and clammy. He told me himself that he always had three bottles of beer placed by his bedside lest he should be thirsty in the night. He did not live long."

ROUGH JUSTICE.

The railway was at one time seriously troubled by a number of window-straps going a-missing. The motive was thought to be cheap razor-strops for the depredators. So a careful preparation of paste was spread upon every strap of a selected train. Next morning Tam saw Pimples to right of 'im,
Pimples to left of 'im,
Pimples in front of 'im,
Pimples and pimples
All round about 'im.
No more straps were missed.

ABRAHAM WACHNER

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FURS!**

END OF SEASON.

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