

A Redeeming Feature in Private Dairying.

The freshest boom in dairying is the attempts made to wrest the business out of the hands of the farmer's wife and place it into the hands of corporations. We profess to be a firm friend of the farmer's wife, and anything pertaining to her interests shall assuredly receive our profoundest consideration. While we would be the first to revolt at the thought of her being enslaved by exhausting household duties, yet, if she is anxious to keep her family around her by providing profitable and respectable work for them, we shall always feel it our duty to give her the choicest counsel.

It is true that we have raised our voice against the existing condition of family butter-making, not because we believed it to be wrong in principle—for we are the especial friend of individuals, not of corporations—but because of the disgrace brought upon our butter trade as handled by our storekeepers. We have also pointed out the objectionable features of co-operation, by which system we cannot attain the highest standard in the quality of our butter, and then the injustice meted out to those patrons who desire to improve acts as an obstruction to self-encouragement. We have therefore shown how the private system could be advantageously enlarged, although we have not neglected to present the best plans for carrying out the co-operative system, for the benefit of those farmers who have taken a pronounced stand in its favor.

There is yet another phase of the home system, which we have not had space to consider until now. In most sections of the Province there are handlers who drive around amongst the farmers and purchase their butter and other products for cash. Many of these are honorable men, and have considerable experience in dairy matters. For the purpose of obtaining the most reliable facts, we interviewed a gentleman in this city who has had long experience in the business, and is quite an expert in judging butter. The following is his evidence:

"I purchase butter from farmers all over the county of Middlesex, and sometimes go into the surrounding counties. I was engaged in the butter trade in England before I came to Canada. I have a large number of special customers in this city to whom I sell only the very best butter. I have also a large number of transient and special customers who take medium quality. I never buy inferior stuff from the farmers under any circumstances, although I handle a good deal of it which the storekeepers beg me to relieve them of. This is not fit for lard, so the best I can do is to sell it to confectioners, who use it in the manufacture of candies. Here is a specimen tub of it which I will let you have for seven cents a pound. I can get any quantity of it from the storekeepers for one or two cents a pound less than they pay for it in goods. From the farmers I only buy medium to first class quality, for which I pay 14 to 18 cents at present. I always pay cash, and invariably regulate my price according to the quality of my butter. I have a large number of customers who are too dainty to use creamery butter, and I can supply them with a far better quality from certain farmers' wives whose names I can give you. I wish I could get more of such butter; I would buy it by the ton. I sometimes ship to England when our markets are glutted. I pay about two cents a pound for it more than I would pay for the best creamery butter. I handled a good deal of the creamery article last year, but have given it up. I don't judge

butter by the taste alone; I go to the fields of my best butter-makers, examine the herds, the herbage, the flavoring weeds, and the water, and I pay attention to how the cows are kept in winter. I badly snub those breeders who think that breed has anything to do with quality. Many districts are unsuited to butter-making. I don't go near them, for good butter can never be made under unfavorable conditions. Unfortunately, however, there is a large number of bad butter-makers in the best districts where all the conditions are favorable. Many parties don't know how and won't learn—that's all. I used to try to teach some people; but the worse the butter they made, the more they thought they knew how, so I gave up playing the pedagogue. But they got the inside track in spite of me. When they found that their neighbors got several cents a pound more for their butter, they soon learned; but how I can't say, and I don't believe they know themselves. It seemed to come to them somehow by talking with the neighbors—just as they learned to speak their mother tongue. There seems to be more unity amongst those neighbors now. The women are more strongly united than their husbands. High prices for good butter is the most contagious microbe you ever saw."

These are facts which every farmer should consult his wife about before he invests her butter earnings in a creamery. What we have been advocating with special emphasis is that such first-class butter-makers extend their operations. If they can sell their butter by the ton, why not make tons of it? Let them gradually seed down more land to permanent pastures, and go into winter dairying more extensively. In a few years let them increase their herd of five or six cows to fifty or sixty. A cream separator will pay with 20 or 30 cows. They need not go in search of markets; the markets will come to them. It stands to reason that a farmer's wife with good common-sense, aided by experience and good dairy literature, can make better butter than a creameryman. She can command uniformly good conditions, while he, like the storekeeper, is at the mercy of the most miserable wretch amongst his customers. This is nature's system of encouragement; it is improvement by natural selection, and requires neither booms nor Government interference to prevent it from getting on the lift.

It is a remarkable case that it is impossible to get a good cheese in the State of New York: at least this is said to be so by a noted expert in dairy matters, says the N. Y. Times. At the same time there are tons of the best cheese to be had in Canada. This is a serious affair for the New York dairymen. A dozen years ago the oleomargarine fraud was begun by a New York factoryman, and the fashion of adulteration became prevalent. A few years later the lard cheese business was introduced, and that, too, prevailed so much that the reputation of American cheese suffered very much in the foreign markets. Now what other road to ruin has been found by the dairy interest? The discredit of our cheese has become so general that the dealers find it to be irksome to bear, and they have appointed a committee to look into the affair and try to remove the bad impression and its effects upon the market. The report of the committee, recently published, appeared on its face to be something like a certificate of good character, but it seems the accused culprit is guilty nevertheless; for on inquiry for some really good cheese in a New York factory, the noted expert above referred to states it is not to be found.

The Apiary.

Our Honey Market.

BY G. B. JONES.

Next to its production, the sale of our honey is the important consideration. Our market must be established by our own efforts, and it rests with ourselves to make it good or poor. There is only one way to create a demand for our produce, and this consists in making it attractive to the eye, pleasant to the taste, wholesome, and undoubted as to its purity and genuine quality.

Just how our honey shall be made attractive to the eye must, of course, be decided individually by each of us in accordance with his own taste and ideas; but a few leading hints may be of service to some beginners. For instance: Honey packed in tins without labels or with very small ones, especially if the tins and labels are dirty or dull, will scarcely attract, when we consider their resemblance to paint, tar, fly poison, lye and axle-grease packages; nor would our "mouths water" with the thought of delicious sweetness at the sight of tins wrapped in flashy colored paper such as we see about stove-polish, baking powder, etc., or even lobster and salmon cans. On the contrary, we would at once be turned against it. Whether honey be packed in glass or tin, it should have a label peculiar to itself; one which, if possible, will bespeak at sight the richness and purity of the goods themselves. The labels for glass packages should be small, as no label can be made to look as nice as the honey itself; but those for tin vessels should be large enough to hide the tin from view, for after this tin has been exposed a while, it becomes dull or rusted, and spoils the appearance of the whole package.

For small quantities I consider glass by far the most suitable package. The smaller or sample sizes may consist of a variety of shapes and designs; but from one pint to two quarts the established "Gem" and "Crown" jars are the most convenient, mainly because they can be used for so many purposes after the honey is out of them. The best vessels for large quantities of honey are the square varnish cans holding 1½ gallons, or 15 pounds; 2½ gallons, or 30 pounds, and 5 gallons, or 60 pounds.

To make honey pleasant to the taste it must be well ripened (as directed in "Extracted Honey," July number). Each variety must be separate, and have its own distinctive flavor retained. It must be clear and clean. This will also make it wholesome.

As a mark of its purity, the producer's name should appear prominently upon the label. When the producer is sufficiently well known, this alone is a warrant for the reliability of the honey he sells, and much is already accomplished towards the establishing of his market; but when he is not well known he has much to contend with in these days of adulteration and unfounded suspicion. He should sell his honey only to those who know him, and to grocers who are considered thoroughly reliable, and whose word is sufficient to sell what they recommend. His chief effort should be to sell to those whom he knows are competent judges.

A very important point in working up and holding a market consists in the uniformity of