

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE & HOME MAGAZINE

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The Big Cheese Analyzed.

A representative sample of the Canadian mammoth cheese taken from the block of 70 pounds, as returned from England, was found on careful analysis to have the following composition:—

	Percentage.
Water	32.06
Butterfat	34.43
Curd (casein and albumen)	28.06
Ash, salt, milk, sugar, etc.	5.51
	100.00

Prof. Shutt, of Ottawa, who made this analysis, reports that the cheese was perfectly sound, and that the relative proportions of fat and curd, upon which palatability and digestibility depend, was eminently satisfactory.

Swiss Agriculture.

The article on Brown Swiss cattle and the extent of dairying in Switzerland, which recently appeared in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, has occasioned further enquiry into the status of agriculture in that wonderful little republic. At a convention held in connection with the visit of the British Dairy Farmers' Association to Switzerland, Herr Mettler, medical officer of health at Zurich, imparted some interesting information which our readers will appreciate. He said the Swiss farmers were not troubled very much with the rent question, most of the land being in the hands of the owners; in fact, not more than five per cent. of the cultivated land in Switzerland is rented. The average value of agricultural land in rural districts is £60 per English acre. The value increases, of course, according to proximity to a town, rising in the immediate neighborhood of large towns to £500 or £600 per acre. What little land is in the hands of tenant farmers bears an average rent of 35s per English acre. Judging from the extensive practice of house-feeding in the valleys, we expected to hear that labor is cheap, but this is hardly the case so far as continuous work is concerned. The Swiss farmers recognise the fact that if they are to keep the laborers on the land they must pay wages equivalent to those which the laborers could earn in the towns. There seems no difficulty about the extra labor required in hay-making, though the Swiss farmers very rarely co-operate. At such times there is less difficulty in getting occasional laborers than permanent ones.

Agricultural laborers are of two classes—(1) Those receiving board and lodging and from 8s to 2s per week in addition, according to the quality of the men. (2) Those which are not boarded or lodged. These receive more near towns than they would in the country, the minimum daily wage being 2s in the country and the maximum 4s around Zurich. Farm rates are altogether unknown in Switzerland. All the taxes are massed together and take the form of an income tax, every man being taxed according to his ability to pay.

This Utopian state of agricultural bliss caused much discussion, and some surprise was exhibited when Mr. Jesse Collings, M. P., asked if a laborer getting 15s a week would be required to pay income tax. To this Herr Mettler replied that every man had to pay. A reduction of £20 is allowed to every one, and every Swiss who has a yearly income exceeding this amount has to pay tax on that excess. In some cantons (Zurich, for example) the tax is a progressive one, the rate of taxation increasing with the income. The announcement of this fact was received by the British dairy farmers with prolonged cheers.

At dinner in the evening Mr. Jesse Collings, in a humorous speech, proposed "Success to Swiss Agriculture." He pointed out that the Swiss, although being without navigable rivers, mineral wealth, or coast line, were yet blessed with plenty of water and fresh air, and had managed, by patient industry, to make themselves into a prosperous people by agricultural pursuits. He believed the great secret of their success to be in the fact that the people were tied to the soil, the small holders being proprietors of the land. How can you expect patriotism from men who can sling all they possess upon their backs and march wherever they please? Mr. Collings complimented the Swiss upon their endeavors to promote dairy education. "There is a common saying," he said, "that you cannot teach an old dog new tricks." And so with farmers. They are very slow to change their habits. You must catch them young, and this the directors of the Zurich Dairy Farm School were endeavoring to do.

Abortion in Cattle.

At a recent meeting of the English Royal Agricultural Society a report from the Special Committee on Abortion was submitted. So far as the inquiry had extended, the Committee believed that they were justified in making the following recommendations:—

"(1) For practical purposes, and with a view to the adoption of the necessary precautions, the disease should be deemed to be contagious; (2) for the purposes of prevention, strict sanitary precautions, including habitual cleansing and disinfection of places where breeding cows are kept, should be insisted on, and particular attention should be paid to the character of the food and the water with which the animals are supplied; (3) the treatment by the aid of antiseptics is certainly to be recommended, and the evidence which has been already furnished in favor of the use of a solution of bichloride of mercury appears to the Committee to justify the advocacy of its general employment in every case where the disease presents itself in a herd. It may be advisable to state that in view of its poisonous nature, it is necessary to guard against any injurious consequences arising to pigs or poultry from the careless disposal of the sweepings from the sheds in which this disinfectant has been used; (4) on the question of experiments for the purpose of proving whether or not the disease is of a contagious character, the Committee do not feel justified in advising the Society to expend a large sum of money in this direction. At the same time, it is impossible not to realize that a decision on this point is a matter of very considerable importance, and the Committee recommend that an additional sum of £200 be placed at the disposal of the Veterinary Committee for the purpose of further scientific investigations into the causes of abortion in cattle."

Bath and West of England Show.

The Annual Show of this excellent Society, which was held in Guildford from May 30 to June 4, was a decided success. All branches of live stock, except hogs, were out in good form and numbers.

In the Agricultural horse classes Shires made the greatest showing, although the few Clydesdales were of superb quality. In Hunters and Hacks there was a fair representation. Hackneys and ponies also filled a conspicuous place in the stables.

CATTLE.

The Bath and West of England Show is always looked forward to with an anticipation of seeing a splendid show of the rosy reds in the form of Devons, and this year was no exception, as these juicy red plumbs were out in strong numbers and excellent quality: the best that has been seen for many years.

Shorthorns. These were well represented in nearly every direction. Herefords were also out in good force. Many deserving animals were compelled to go away with barren honors, so keen was the competition. The Sussex classes were well filled, being near their native home. Aberdeen-Angus heretofore have not been given a place at the Bath show, but this year the Society allotted them a place, which brought a fairly good showing of the bonnie blacks out for competition. Kerries and Dexters were not very numerous, the latter exceeding their black sisters in point of numbers. There was a very large turnout of Jerseys at Guildford, and on the whole the quality was good. The Guernseys, too, were a good lot, much improved from what they were a few years ago, both in form and shape of udder.

SHEEP.

The Leicester and Cotswolds were very meagre in point of numbers, but of admirable quality. Southdowns and Shropshires made a magnificent display, the latter excelling the former both in numbers and preparation. The Oxford-Downs prizes were all captured by one breeder, which shows that they are not so general as some others. Summer set and Dorset-Horned sheep were well shown. Hampshire-Downs were not very numerous, but superior specimens could be seen among them. A few pretty little Exmores and other mountain sheep were also exhibited.

PIGS.

Unfortunately, the prevalence of swine fever necessitated the council—upon the advice of the Society's veterinary inspector—to cancel all the entries that had been made in the pig classes.

It was with sore regret that it had to be done, owing to the fact that it was the largest entry of pigs that the Society had ever had; but it was felt that no other course could be safely pursued.

POULTRY.

Poultry, as usual, formed an attractive feature of the show. Although the entries fell a little below those of last year, the quality was good, and some of the classes were particularly strong.

IMPLEMENTS.

The implement department was of a very representative character, and formed both to the general and practical visitor a most attractive feature of the show. Every class of agricultural machinery was well represented.

WORKING DAIRY AND DAIRY PRODUCTS.

The dairy always appears to have formed an especial feature in the labors of the Bath and West of England Society. We may safely say that no other English exhibition at the present day can at all compare with it in the excellent uniform display of cheese, butter, or cream. A vast improvement has taken place within the last nine or ten years, which, there can be no doubt, is owing to lessons that have been learned in the working dairy, many dairies of cheese that in former years were only saleable at a very low price being now nearly double in value, owing to the greater skill used in manipulation. Many dairies in butter are also very much increased in value. In going through the various classes of dairy produce, it can be noticed how, from year to year, in many instances the same names and farms continue to hold their position, showing their method of manufacture has become a certainty, and that guess or chance work is a thing of the past. The working dairy was a scene of great activity within and of interest without, churning the whole of its working hours. The chief business, however, going on were the lectures and illustrations in the improved methods of butter-making.

The English Jersey Cattle Societies' butter test at the Royal Jersey Society's Show, held at St. Helens, proved the best cow's capacity to be able to produce 2 pounds 3½ ounces in one day, another 2 pounds 1½ ounces. Twelve animals yielded an average of 1 pound 15 ounces of butter each for the day.

Cows should be milked in the stable the year round. In summer it saves much annoyance from the flies, and then the cows always stand better, too. It is neither pleasant nor profitable to be kicked over in the barnyard with a pail of milk, and all trouble of hooking and fighting will be avoided by putting the cows in the stable. And should spraying for hornflies be necessary, it can be done very easily in the stable.