

### California Wheat Rings.

The wheat-ring system of California has been reduced to a science. Practically, the entire export and carrying trade in grain is monopolized by a select few who, already fat with the profits of their own investments, have recently invented a plan of operations by which their coffers are equally well replenished without the risk of a single dollar. They are now, in fact, operating on the capital of those they have already fleeced, the farmers. They are loading ships with wheat and dispatching them for the European markets without having a dollar of their own money invested in that wheat, and by this same operation are completely destroying all demand for wheat for export at any price. And the strangest part of this transaction is, that they have got the farmers to become parties to and promoters of the whole scheme, notwithstanding it is all done at their expense and to their great disadvantage. The operation is this: The grain buyers, through their agencies, which are located in all the wheat-growing sections of the State, ascertain as nearly as may be, the amount of wheat to be exported. They then get control of the necessary shipping to carry this wheat to market. They then fix upon a price for wheat alongside the vessels, which, of course, is low as compared to the European market price. This price they cause to be quoted in all the commercial papers of the Bay City, and the same is copied into all the local papers of the State. In connection with this quotation, however, they manage to have it stated in all cases that there is little or no demand. They then instruct their agents throughout the country to keep and represent wheat as dull and not wanted at any price—that is, they are not wanting to buy. For the accommodation of farmers, however, who have not the means of storing all their wheat, they will take all the wheat that may be offered—that is, they will borrow it of the farmers, and will agree that within a certain stipulated time they will, on demand, return an equal amount of wheat, or will pay for the same the then market price, at the option of the loaner, the farmer. Thus the wheat buyers, all of whom are combined and interested in the operation, are managing to get possession of large quantities of wheat without the investment of a dollar of their own money, and with it to fill their orders and supply the European demand, while the farmers in their ignorance and innocence work on and wait for wheat to rise so they may demand a return of their loaned wheat or its equivalent in gold. And so they may work and wait in vain, for what is there to produce a rise of wheat under the circumstances? The real demand for export has been supplied, and the ring of wheat buyers, with the money in their pockets, are masters of the situation. They don't want to buy wheat, and there are no other buyers. They already have the farmers' wheat, and the money for it, and of course wheat will remain dull and the prices rule low. The wheat ring will not be in any hurry to part with the money they have obtained in this way, nor will they be anxious to put up the price of wheat, but the time will come when the farmers will be under the necessity of realizing something for their crop to pay expenses and debts, and just about that time wheat will be mysteriously very dull and low, and then the ring will profess to have plenty of wheat, and will be anxious to return all they borrowed. As a compromise however, and to get out of the scrape they have got into, they will give the farmers the money at present rates, and just to accommodate them, though they do this at a sacrifice.

### Dairying in America.—An English Opinion.

A couple of weeks ago we had the pleasure of a call from Mr. John Oliver, the English dairyman, whose name is not unfamiliar to the readers of the CANADA FARMER. Mr. Oliver has now spent some four months in New York State, and Ontario, has visited some of the best factories and compared notes with the leading owners and manufacturers. His object in visiting this country was the introduction of the Cheddar system of cheese-making, which he has already described in a condensed form in articles contributed to the May and June issues of our paper. In the course of a conversation with him, we learnt that in his opinion the great majority of the buildings now in use for the manufacture of cheese and butter, are constructed on wrong principles, and in many cases without any re-

gard being paid to the convenience of the maker, and that until the evil is remedied by the erection of factories and creameries on practically scientific principles, perfection in the manufacture of dairy goods will not be reached. In the making rooms he found in some cases a great quantity of waste space; this was travelled over and cleaned daily, adding not only to the labor, but also to the cost of the building; in others the maker and his employees were awkwardly situated from want of working room. The floors were often badly laid, in many cases the boiler was in the making room and within a few feet of the vats. In some instances, however, the energetic owner had endeavored to arrange his building as perfectly and conveniently as possible, though such instances were few. The curing rooms, he said, were seldom fit to cure cheese in, the walls boarded on the outside only, were not sufficient protection against either the heat of July or the cold of November; the windows in most instances were needing outside shutters to cover them from the hot glare of the mid-day sun; and he found the temperature as indicated by their own thermometers during the warm weather to be about 90° Fah., when in spite of the severe heat of the past summer it need not have risen above 70°. It is not surprising, he thinks, that it is more difficult to turn out fine-flavored cheese in summer than in autumn. It would be unreasonable to expect any cheese to pass through such an ordeal as three weeks at 90°, and come out uninjured. He found a few factories where with double walls, venetian shutters to the windows, and the habit of opening the latter during the night, and closing them by day, a far lower, and more equable temperature was obtained than is generally the case. There is not a point more important than the control of the temperature in both manufacturing and curing rooms, and none more constantly neglected by owners and cheese-makers.

Through the energy of various furnishing firms, dairymen have been enabled to provide themselves with valuable implements and fittings, among which may be mentioned the Fraser press, which he (Mr. Oliver) found in use in many factories, and with them as an almost invariable consequence well-pressed, shapely cheese. The curd mill by Messrs. Jones & Falkner, of Utica, N. Y., the Blanchard churn, and the Cunningham butter worker, are in his opinion, the best yet in use in the classes to which they belong. The surroundings of some factories, he said, were most objectionable, the whey tanks located near the buildings, and open to the air, that every breeze might waft the noxious perfume into the factory, where, with open windows, the night's milk lay cooling. The drains by which the liquid refuse of the making room flowed away were also open, and rendered the whey tanks all possible aid in imparting to the milk that taint of which we have all heard so much. In almost every Dairymen's Convention, a discussion has been held for the purpose of discovering a system by which tainted milk may be made into good cheese. Yet the evil still exists, and "summer" cheese is the constant vexation of both maker and buyer. What is needed, Mr. Oliver thinks, is that factory men should remove stinking whey vats, and open drains, rendering the surroundings all that could be desired in point of cleanliness and freedom from all objectionable odours; and that the farmers should feed their cattle on wholesome food and spring water, instead of allowing them to graze in fields which are little better than swamps, where the grass is hard and reedy, and the water stagnant and poisonous. He suggests that in view of the old "floating curd" discussions, the Dairymen's Association should at its next meeting spend all the time it can spare in finding out the best and quickest way to get rid of the evil; and that next year the rarity of floating curds may show with what vigor the necessary changes have been effected. "Strange" Mr. Oliver continues, "that the truth of the old proverb 'prevention is better than cure' should never have occurred to those who are so intimately connected with the dairy interest, when the vexed question has been the subject of lengthy speeches by the authorities, followed by protracted debates, of the earnestness of which we may judge from the reports with which we are favored by the Association and the agricultural press." He says to the farmer, in place of swamp grass, and stagnant water, he would recommend that the land be cultivated and the soiling system adopted. The wisdom of such a course would soon be proved by the increased quantity of milk, with its pleasant accompaniment of an

addition to the farmer's income; while the dairymen could rejoice in the purity of the material now received without a dread of "floaters," which, up to the present, have been so common during the "hot spells" of the American summer. There are of course circumstances as yet beyond the control of both farmer and maker, but leaving this out of the question, great improvements may be effected by doing at once what may now be done."

But true to the system he advocates, and the object of his visit, Mr. Oliver assured us that, satisfied as he was, that by the American style of manufacture a keeping quality of cheese cannot be produced; that the Cheddar system will, taking the lead, soon prove its superiority, and its adoption be only a question of time; he is now, after having travelled among our factories with so good an opportunity of deciding upon the value of his opinions, more thoroughly convinced than ever of their correctness. Well aware that, in introducing his system, he will encounter the same prejudice and conservatism which have opposed the march of science in all ages; that every disadvantage, real or imaginary, which may seem to attach itself to that system, will be sought out and argued against its adoption; and that many untoward circumstances will for a time impede its movements and prevent its gaining the full confidence of the dairy interest; he does not intend to leave the field to opponents and doubters, but will continue to urge the introduction of the system which has achieved such great results in Britain. The objection which has, we understand, been generally raised, viz.: that the difference between the climate of England and America does and will prevent dairymen on this side of the Atlantic from producing as fine goods as the English makers, Mr. Oliver believes to be altogether unfounded. "Although they may not," he says, "enjoy the coolness of the English summer in the city or on the farm, I am perfectly satisfied that they may do so in the curing room, by constructing it upon principles which both common sense and science lay down as correct. But this change alone will not be sufficient, for the American makers in England have failed to make a keeping quality of goods, although they have the advantage of the much coveted cool summer weather." Consequently in answer to the question "How can we produce fine-flavored, keeping cheese?" he says "Adopt the Cheddar system."

Speaking of the desire evinced by the majority of makers to show as large a yield of curd in proportion to the quantity of milk as possible, Mr. Oliver said "I have come to the conclusion, from what I have seen and heard among English and American dairymen, that at the present time, with the appliances now in use, we cannot produce from the same quantity of milk a very large quantity of cheese, and that of a very fine quality. That we shall do so at some future period, I have no doubt. I have found that those makers who boasted of their large yield of curd had almost invariably goods lacking uniformity, and of a second rate quality."

On enquiring what he thought of the Canadian share of the Centennial dairy display, Mr. Oliver replied, "The honors won by the Canadian cheese at Philadelphia do not reflect as much credit on the makers as if the American dairymen had entered thoroughly into the competition. Neither the dairy commissioners nor the management of the exhibits were popular with the leading dairymen of the United States, consequently but few of them entered their goods for exhibition."

### The Policy of the Season.

It is pretty evident now that the wheat crop of the year will not realize a fortune for the farmer. His profits for this season must be looked for in some other directions, and mainly, we think, in that of feeding his coarser grains and converting them into marketable beef, pork, mutton, lard and tallow, all of which will be sure to command good prices if they are of the right stamp. The hay crop is very large, sufficiently so to supplement most other stock-feeding deficiencies, so that, upon the whole, the opportunities afforded in this special line are above average. The fall months, particularly September and October, are eminently feeding months, the time destined by nature for laying in a stock of fatty matter to keep up animal heat during winter. If only attended to in time, an increase of live weight may be more easily made now than at any other period. Let the cattle not roam about too much in bare pastures. A saving of food at a sacrifice of flesh is a dead loss. Let there be no falling off now, and the winter will have been half provided for by the end of November. A gallon of mull feed in October is worth a gallon and a half at Christmas. Fat stock can be much more easily carried to the first of April than lean stock to the beginning of January. This is a fact well known to all experienced feeders. Let everything that can be turned into pork, beef or mutton be carefully handled and made to go as far as possible, and, above all, secure the right class of stock—thoroughbred or high-crossed animals—which are by far the most profitable from every point of view.