

ABOUT WORKING BUTTER.

THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND.

EDS. COUNTRY GENTLEMAN—I have just read an editorial in the Boston Cultivator, headed, "Salting and Washing Butter." For inconsistency it is entitled to the palm. If the writer has any practical knowledge of butter making, no evidence of it is given in this editorial. What he says about the amount of salt used is all right, but when he decries the washing of butter, and says the gilt-edge butter of the future will not be washed at all, and in another paragraph, referring to "some of the best makes of butter sold in Boston," says "great care is used in working them down hard, fine and waxy with the wooden butter worker," and "the buttermilk is thoroughly worked out" he is indeed inconsistent. There is scarcely a week but see something in the agricultural and dairy papers of the country about working out the buttermilk from butter. If there is any one thing that butter makers should learn above all others, it is this—that all buttermilk must (1) be removed from the butter before it comes to the process of working. As a rule, these remarks about working out the buttermilk are found in editorials, not from correspondents, who, as a rule, are apt to be more practical butter makers. The less butter is worked, the better, and if one can get along without working it at all, a great step in advance has been made. At any rate, butter should be worked but little, and the only office of that little is to liberate the brine. Churning should never go any further than to bring the butter and leave it in granular form. At that stage nearly all the buttermilk can be drained off, and the little remaining can be rinsed out with cold water or brine, the latter being preferable. In granular form it is an easy matter to salt the butter after it has been thoroughly drained. The salt can be sifted on while the butter is still in the churn, but the better way is to remove a portion of the butter into a bowl or tray, then sift on a sprinkling of salt, after which spread another layer of butter, and repeat the operation of sifting on the salt, and so on, until all the butter has been removed, and the required amount of salt added. The butter should then be covered with a cloth wet in brine, to exclude the air. Let it stand for a few hours for the salt to dissolve, when it may be worked lightly for the purpose before mentioned, viz., liberating the brine.

But when one writes about working butter down "hard, fine and waxy," the height of absurdity has been reached. The quality of butter can be in no way improved by working, its quality having been determined before it reaches that step in the process of making. Thorough working of butter has but one effect, viz., that of breaking its grain and making it salvy.

It is safe to say that no one discovery has been of greater benefit to butter makers than that of producing butter in granular form. (2) It is the only correct way, for if butter is allowed to gather in the churn, the buttermilk is locked in, and in attempting to work it out the butter is always more or less injured in grain.

That any harm can come from rinsing butter while in the granular form with pure water or with brine, is more than I can understand. The best butter makers have practised it for years, and with satisfactory results.

Clinton, Iowa.

F. W. MOSELEY.

CUT EARLY.

Nothing is more prejudicial on the farm than what we may term misguided greed. It shows itself early in the summer

(1) *Should* be removed, I presume, Mr. Moseley means.

(2) Undoubtedly but it is very hard to get an old butter maker who has "always made good butter," to try it. A. R. J. F.

in the hayfield, when grass is left till dead-ripe in order to increase its quantity; but, as the inferior grasses always ripen earliest, late mowing only makes sure of bad grasses getting propagated on the farm. (1) This, then, ensures that the crop will not be of first-rate quality, for the riper a bad grass the more woody it becomes, while the most nutritious part, the seed, is scattered in the harvesting. Next, the hay thus made is usually withered at the bottom, to the injury both of the quantity and quality, but should by chance the quantity be increased, the quality is so much injured as to make it bad economy to defer mowing too long. Again, grasses cut too ripe are apt to die out, so that the aftermath suffers, it suffers from want of time in which to grow. Between July and November at least three-eighths of the whole growth of the year will take place. If the period for the aftermath begins in August instead of with July, at least three-quarters of the year's growth is got in a rick of bad hay, and the aftermath quarter is inferior, both in quality and quantity. The yield of the aftermath in some circumstances is not more than half what it ought to be, whilst the shorter ends of old grasses sadly interfere with the growth of the new, and, at the same time, it is very much against the comfort and convenience of animals feeding upon it.

After haymaking comes harvest, and here the same principle of misguided greed is acted upon. As regards corn crops, there is no doubt that both the grain and the straw are injured by being left till over-ripe. Many farmers fancy that the bushel is more speedily filled up with over-ripe corn, but this is seldom so, and, if it should so prove, it would certainly suffer in weight. Over-ripe wheat, for example, will have a quantity of coarse bran, whilst less ripe will have a thinner and more delicate skin, and the flour will be of a better quality. The straw, again, gets more dry and fibrous, and is certainly not so useful for any feeding purposes. As regards oats, the one effect of letting them remain too long before cutting is that instead of getting more grain you get less, because the first ripened grains are apt to be shed, while the straw, as in wheat, by over ripening will lose a quantity of nutritive matter. Barley is usually left too long before being cut, under the impression that the stripes on the grain will make it of a bad colour, and so it is too often left till the stain is removed by dews and wet. We have seen many a fine crop of barley ruined by waiting for the removal of these stains, which at once disappear on drying. (2) With grain, then, as with hay, we have convinced that it is better to be satisfied with even less of a good quality than the chance of more where there is every probability of the quantity being injured to a still more serious extent. (3)

(1) Very sound reasoning.

(2) Barley, for malting, is the only exception to the rule of "cut early" If barley is not dead ripe it will not sprout equally in the couch. For grinding-barley the rule is to be followed. A. R. J. F.

(3) These things will not be new to the readers of the Journal; but "repetition is the mother of learning." A. R. J. F.

NON-OFFICIAL PART.

"Pulverize the land, whatever you do: Go on the principle of the woman making gooseberry pie—who sweetened it all she dared and then shut her eyes and put in a handful more. Work your land until it is fine enough and then go over it again. If you do not think this will pay, try it on a strip through the field, and then contrast it with the balance."

See advertisement of the "ACME" Pulverizing Harrow, Clod Crusher and Leveler, on page 4.