

Dirty Dairies of Denmark.

The British dairy farmer is making considerable stir over the report that the dairies of Denmark are dirty and insanitary. The report seems to have good foundation, and emanates from no less an authority than Mr. John Spiers, a member of the Royal British Commission on Tuberculosis, who recently made a tour through Denmark. Speaking on this subject recently, Mr. Spiers stated that on probably fifty per cent. of the farms in Denmark the "dungstead" and the well were within a few yards of each other. In such cases the water which the cows drank could not help but be polluted. Besides, the sanitary conditions of many of the stables were anything but wholesome. In Great Britain, the sanitary authorities insist upon stables having something like 700 to 800 cubic feet of space for each cow. In Denmark not more than 350 cubic feet is demanded, and Mr. Spiers reports that in thousands of cases it is less than 200 cubic feet. Not only is this insanitary condition of things in existence at the present time in Denmark, but it has existed for generations.

That the British dairy farmer is justly indignant is to be expected. The Dane is his greatest competitor in supplying the butter markets of the large British centres, and while the British sanitary laws are stringent and are rigidly enforced, these laws in Denmark are comparatively lax in their methods of enforcement, or not sufficiently complete in themselves to be capable of being enforced. How the position of the British farmer in this regard is to be remedied is hard to say. It is not likely that the British Government will take any action in the matter that would in any way curtail the supply of butter required to meet the wants of the British consumer. The British farmers are seeking protection for themselves, inasmuch as they have to compete with countries where the sanitary laws are not as rigidly enforced as they are in Britain, and are endeavoring to bring influence to bear upon the Board of Agriculture to take some action in the matter. The English consumer, however, seems to be the chief one to be considered. If the country, from which he gets a large share of his butter supply, produces that supply under conditions which are certainly not conducive to good health in the person who consumes the product, something should be done to remedy the evil. This remedy seems to be in the hands of the Danes themselves. The British producer cannot do much but agitate in the matter. The agitation should have the effect, however, of inducing the Danish authorities to take immediate action in the matter. If reports are true, the people of Denmark have a big task before them, and it may take years to win back the reputation they have lost by this disclosure.

Heretofore Danish dairies have been held up as models for Canadians to copy. The Danish methods of making butter and their methods of handling and shipping it have been frequently commended by the highest authorities. But it would seem that former investigations as to their methods have not gone back far enough to the source of the milk supply. It matters very little how perfect the methods of manufacturing butter are, if the stables and conditions surrounding the cow which produces the milk are not wholesome and sanitary. Pasteurization is largely practised in Denmark in the making of butter, and a contemporary points out that it is necessary for them to pasteurize their milk so as to counteract the evil influence of their dirty dairies.

Though this agitation does not affect the Canadian dairyman directly, there is a lesson in it all which he should take home to himself. Dairy methods, whether connected with the production of milk or with converting the milk into butter or cheese, must be cleanly methods, and must have regard to perfect sanitary requirements. We have laws respecting sanitation, but we question very much if they are what they ought to be in order to insure perfect safety to the producer and consumer of our dairy products. In many sections where cows are kept and where dairying is carried on to a greater or less extent, we are afraid that the sani-

tary conditions are not always what they ought to be. Canadian dairymen should read the signs of the times in this particular, and leave no room for doubt in regard to the sanitary conditions affecting our extensive dairy trade.

Our Bacon Trade.

All through the summer our farmers have received a good price for their pork, but with the advent of the increased offerings the fall usually brings, the price has fallen to the extent of nearly two cents a pound. There is a reason for this, and a few words in explanation of our bacon trade may help our farmers to a right understanding of the situation and of what their position is in relation to it.

Our Canadian pork packers are making what is known as Wiltshire bacon. The Wiltshire bacon is cured very rapidly, and is intended for immediate consumption. It will not keep like the pork the farmer cures, and if held too long, soon becomes rancid. A few years ago our Canadian packers cured their bacon too hard. It would keep well, but did not command the highest prices. They have since learned to cure a softer bacon, and now the Canadian bacon is similar to that of English and Danish curing. The English trade in bacon is a week-to-week one, never a large supply at once, but a steady one week after week. It is subject to quick, sharp changes. A three or four days' rain, so that people cannot get out to buy, means the loss of that much trade, and the next week there is, of course, a corresponding increase of goods on the market, and, as a result, a fall in prices. Exactly this condition of things has happened during the present season, only on a very large scale. Denmark was somewhat short of hogs during the summer, because the Danish farmers had quit raising them at the low prices that prevailed a year or so ago. This caused a shortage in Denmark, and for very similar reasons there was a shortage in Canada.

During the summer one of our largest packing-houses received about three thousand hogs a week; in the fall the number ran up to eleven and twelve thousand a week. It was somewhat the same with other packers, and the result was that when this increased quantity came on the market prices declined rapidly. With the decline in price the receipts of hogs declined also, and the receipts at the packing-house mentioned above were only eight hundred last week. In fact it was shut down for the want of hogs enough to work with.

The greatest demand for bacon is during the warm summer weather. The Danes have learned this fact and taken advantage of it. During the past summer Denmark sent to the English market on an average about twenty-two thousand hogs a week, and during this last week she sent only twelve thousand. The Dane has adapted himself to the conditions of the trade, and breeds his pigs so that he can market them at the right time.

In Canada, on the contrary, the killings during the summer ranged from five to twelve thousand a week, and during the fall they ran up as high as twenty-two thousand a week. Is it any wonder that prices fell?

The lesson for Canadian farmers is obvious. They must breed their pigs so that the heavy sales of hogs can be made during the summer months, when the demand is greatest and the price is also the best. From the nature of the market to be supplied there should also be a continuous regular supply going forward every week.

The last few years have shown us another important fact in reference to our bacon trade. When the price of pork fell, a couple of years ago, to below four cents per pound, live weight, the Danes stopped raising so many hogs. The price, evidently, was not satisfactory to them. In view of this fact the manager of one of our Canadian packing-houses believes that if farmers could raise hogs with profit at four and one quarter cents a pound, live weight, Canadian bacon would drive the Danish article out of the English market in five years' time.

Poultry for the British Market.

A very timely and practical bulletin has just been issued by the Dominion Department of Agriculture on the dressing, packing, and shipping of poultry for British markets. As the bulletin points out, this trade is as yet scarcely past the experimental stage. Only occasionally has any effort been made to establish a regular business in this line. There is no doubt, however, but that a large trade in dressed poultry for the British markets can be developed if only proper methods are adopted in dressing and shipping. The quality of the poultry must also be good, and when the trade has developed somewhat, a regular supply must be kept up during the season. Spasmodic efforts will never amount to anything. When a customer is obtained, he should get his supply regularly. If this is done, he will learn to depend upon this one source for his supply, and if the quality is the best, he will have no excuse for seeking a supply from any other source.

The bulletin deals more particularly with the shipment of turkeys. Regarding the prospects for developing this particular line of trade, the bulletin says:

The exportation of turkeys from Canada to Great Britain is hardly yet past the experimental stage. Most of the shipments have been sent more as an occasional venture than as part of a regular business. One importer of poultry in Great Britain says: "Everybody thinks he is qualified to pack and ship poultry; whereas, as much as any other article of food, it requires the skilful handling which can be given only as the result of experience." It will be prudent for a beginner to send only small trial shipments early in the season, and thus open up a trade which can be enlarged as it is found profitable.

If turkeys be prepared, packed, and shipped according to the requirements of the British markets, they will, undoubtedly, meet a good demand, and secure prices equal to those of the turkeys imported from France and other continental countries. The price varies from year to year, and also at different times of the year. Wholesale, the range of prices may be from five pence per pound, up to nine pence and over per pound, for the finest quality of birds, in the best condition.

Further on it states:

The demand is usually good from about the 1st of December to the 1st of March. The reception of poultry in the British markets is affected by the condition of the weather much less now than formerly. Cold storage facilities in the several cities in Great Britain enable the handlers to guard against deterioration from mild or soft weather on the arrival of the birds.

For the Christmas trade, birds of large size command a relatively higher price per pound than small ones. Cuck turkeys of the largest size should be marketed before Christmas. The demand for hen turkeys continues until March.

It then goes on to give specific details as to the manner of killing the birds; how they should be treated immediately before killing; the methods of packing and preparing for shipment. Cleanliness must be observed in every particular, and special attention given to grading the birds and to having those put in a box as near one weight as possible. Instructions are also given as to shipping turkeys in feather.

In reference to the trade in geese and ducks, the bulletin says:

Geese are in demand in Great Britain for a longer time after Christmas than is usually the case in markets on this side of the Atlantic. It is not probable that a profitable trade of large volume can be developed in them in the near future. The supply of ducks, chickens, and fowls in Canada is hardly yet sufficient for the demand of the Canadian home trade.

The same methods of preparation are advised in regard to chickens and fowls as with dressed turkeys, and altogether the bulletin is a very valuable one indeed, and should be in the hands of every poultry breeder and dealer in the country. Write the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa for a copy.

Free Rural Postal Delivery.

Free rural mail delivery seems to have passed the experimental stage in the United States. According to the report of Perry S. Heath, first Assistant Postmaster-General, rural delivery has been tried in twenty-nine States and over forty-four different routes. The report points out that the satisfactory results from these tests suggest the feasibility of making free postal delivery a permanent feature of the postal administration. This could only be brought about gradu-