

sumption. Look at the figures now. In ten years our imports have risen from £6,000,000 to £12,000,000 sterling. What do these figures shew? Take last year's return of 2,326,305 cwt., or £12,141,034—equal to £3,325 per day. To produce this quantity of butter, nearly 1,200,000 cows would be needed. Certainly the countries in which these cows are kept have no special advantage, either in climate or soil, over ours—no great advantage over us in the value of the animals, or of labour, and the cost of transport *against* them; and yet there is the fact, that a product of daily consumption, the fresher the better, and that could be produced in this country certainly as well, if not better than in any other country in the world, comes here in these enormous quantities, to feed our people, not only putting money into the pockets of the foreign farmer, but paying a handsome commission to two or three large mercantile houses, who have a finger in every cwt. imported. What is the answer to this question? It is this, and this only: foreign butter—whether it be fresh, from Normandy or Brittany, or salt, from Denmark or other countries—comes in a more *marketable form*. The process by which this is arrived at is simple, and could be easily carried out by us. Will we do it? That is the question.

Agents of the large houses in Normandy, such as Messrs. Bretel and others, attend the local markets, buy the butter from the farmers who, in their own interest, attend to rules laid down by the buyers. It is then carted to the stores or factories, and there put through a machine; so that, instead of having 1,000 different lots, varying from 20 lbs. to 50 lbs. each, they turn out many tons per day of precisely the same sample. This, instead of being packed in baskets, rough cloths, and perhaps newspapers, as you see before you, is put into boxes, each holding 24 lbs. in 2-lb. rolls, neatly made and natively papered; and if you look at 1,000 boxes, you cannot tell "t'other from which." As you see that box, so hundreds of thousands come over annually.

The result of this is, that if this butter is not any better than that sent to market by English farmers, it commands a higher price and more ready sale, because it is in a more *marketable condition*. That is to say, instead of the retailer in London having to go to market at five or six o'clock in the morning, select his butter, and be back in time to attend to his business, he can write to an importing house and order ten, twenty, or fifty boxes of butter to be delivered to him just when he requires it, and in any quantity; and he is perfectly certain that so long as he is supplied with the same brand, he will receive every box in every consignment of the same colour and quality, varying, of course, slightly with the season. The same remark applies to salt butter. In buying "Dorset," one firkin differs from its next-door neighbour; one is made at one farm, and another is made at another. Whereas, from Denmark and the north of Europe, and wherever there are large associated dairies, the retailer can send to the merchant, and order a certain number of firkins of this brand or that, and knows that he will get what he requires, thus saving himself immense trouble and loss of time in marketing, and enabling him to give his customer, the private consumer, day by day, butter, salt or fresh, of the same appearance and quality.

It may now be considered how this may be done in England. I suggest that, instead of each farmer, as in Buckinghamshire and other counties, making once or twice a week his two to ten dozen of butter, they should work together and make amongst them from twenty to fifty dozen *per day*, which would be of the same quality and appearance throughout, and enable the retailer to purchase direct their produce with as little trouble as he now buys foreign butter.

Mr. Jenkins points all this out in the concluding sentences of his little pamphlet, "Hints on Butter-making." He says:

"A member of the Society recently sent me two pats of butter of his own make. The quality was excellent, and I sent one pat to a factor in Tooley Street. He replied, 'If your friend can send me half a ton or upwards of such butter per week all the year round, I shall be happy to correspond with him.' Herein lies the difficulty of getting at the London market, and it can only be overcome by associations of farmers, or by the creation of new middlemen, whether companies or individuals."

A move has already been made in this direction. Mr. Carriock, stimulated by what he saw at Carlisle, has started a butter dairy, on a large scale, near that city. He buys milk to a very large extent, and has already, I believe, a most prosperous business. His customers' demands already exceed his supply, and I know that he lately had to refuse an offer of 1s. 9d. per lb. for 500 lbs. a week.

In Devonshire, a dealer is buying butter in the local market, reworking it, and sending out large quantities of an equal sample. Machines for this purpose are now to be obtained, and it is a business well worth the attention of energetic men. But what I should prefer is that farmers should associate and carry the business out themselves, thus saving the intervention of one out of the two middlemen.

I have been told hundreds of times that farmers will not associate. I say they will, if they are so fortunate as to meet with a man they know, and in whom they have confidence, to organize the association. I refer with the greatest pleasure to a most successful association, that has been working for the last four years—"The Gillingham Dairy Farmers' Association"—organized by my friend, Mr. J. Williams Bell. Mr. Bell, most kindly, lately sent me the figures of this society for 1880. Eleven farmers contributed 151,281 gallons of milk. This was partly sold as milk and cream, the rest made into cheese and butter; and, although chiefly summer milk (that is to say, 22,342 gallons were sent in in June, and only 3,832 in January), the sum received for the milk and its products, not counting the whey, was £5,120 3 11—equal to 8-18d. per gallon; and the total working expenses, including rent and rates, interest on capital, manager's salary, commission, fuel, repairs and renewals—in fact, all charges—came to just 3d. per gallon.

Mr. Bell writes to me: "I have no doubt that such an association as ours is a right and proper thing, but the farmers will not take a rope when it is thrown to them, and, so far as I know, it is the only one of the kind in this country."

"I shall at all times be most pleased to see you and any friends of yours, and to tell you *gladly* everything I know. I have no secrets about dairy matters, and I always tell my people firmly to tell inquirers frankly and fully all that they wish to know, and then to do their utmost to beat them afterwards."

"I send you a copy of our last year's account, with a form of members' account, and a monthly statement of milk delivered, and I willingly submit myself to any further examination and cross-examination at your hands."

"I may add, that we never have a discordant word, and if any member ventured to be disagreeable, we should turn him out by an overwhelming majority; but no one ever is disagreeable. None have left us, and we make joining a favour."

This is a model, of which I would that there were many copies.—(To be continued.)

Hampshire Downs.

A pen of this year's (1881) lambs, exhibited at the Smithfield Club show, weighed 6 cwt. 10 lbs., or 227, live weight, per head. No other pen of lambs in the yard could touch this result, excepting lambs of the same breed. Age, 40