



Cross-bred Cows—First and second prize, London Dairy Show, 1906.

Our English Letter

Farming Prospects—The Dairy Show—Milking Trials and Butter Tests—Cheese or Butter?—Food Imports—Items.

London, Oct. 30, 1906. The splendid rains of the past fortnight have totally altered the aspect of affairs. Of course, we welcome the change, though with a pang of regret we bade adieu to the Indian Summer and rejoice to see at the springs filling up and a plentiful supply of water assured. The potato harvest is in full swing. Already crops have been entirely lifted in early localities and upon the whole reports are favorable. On dry soil crops will, there are good grounds for believing, be fairly free from disease. In keeping the malady at bay the drought of September was of real service. The autumn has been exceptionally favorable to tubers. When the weather is dry for lifting, sorting is more easy, and thus the risk of loss from disease in the pit is diminished. In one district I passed through this week a number of boys were observed digging up the tubers with their hands—a truly primitive method.

Cattle and sheep are doing remarkably well and the mildness of the atmosphere is prolonging the period when stock may be allowed to keep on the pastures prior to the winter housing. Grass lands have during the past fortnight assumed an aspect almost, one might say, of luxuriousness and in strong contrast to their midsummer appearance. In the stock markets there are not many good "beefy" cattle on offer yet and the prospect is not a good one for prices.

THE LONDON DAIRY SHOW

The annual show of the British Dairy Farmers' Association, which spread over practically the whole of last week, was one of the best ever held. It was larger and more successful than for several years past. Cattle were more numerous, but in this section principal interest lies in the milking trials and butter tests, to which I will come later on. To dairymen on this side the cheese section focussed attraction. At this show the annual battle between the English and Scotch makers of cheddar cheese is fought and this year it resulted in the overwhelming defeat of the former. As to the respective merits of cheese made in the southwest of Scotland and that made near Cheddar, as its name denotes, I will not enter, although my bias may be guessed when I say that I am a Somersetshire man, but the show authorities would be well advised in duplicating the present prizes and adding in addition a substantial thampion prize for which both makers might compete. Until some such solution is adopted a great deal of bitterness and ill-

feeling will continue to exist. The show of cheese was a good one and the judges, it may be interesting to know, were a London merchant and a Scotch maker. The butter classes were capably filled, while all sorts of other products, such as cream, honey, roots, etc., were well provided for.

THE MILKING TRIALS

The milking trials and butter tests practically contributed the most important of the competitions at the Dairy Show. The judges who were responsible for the making of these results have to be guided by a certain table of points, reckoned on the following system:

One point for every 10 days since calving, deducting the first 40 days, with a maximum of 14 points; one point for every pound of milk, taking the average daily yield; 30 points for every pound of butter fat produced; and four points for every pound of "solids other than fat." Deductions: Ten points each time the fat is below 3 per cent.; and 10 points each time the "solids other than fat" fall below 8.5. No prize will be given to cows in the milking trials which do not come up to the following standard: Pedigree Shorthorns, 85 points; non-pedigree Shorthorns, 110; Jerseys, 95; Guernseys, 85; Ayrshires, 90; Red Polls, 90; South Devons, 100; Kerries and Dexters, 75.

The premier animal in the class for pedigree Shorthorns was the winner of the class in the inspection section, namely, Barrington Duchess 31st, a roan that gained the award with 2.15 lbs. of fat and 5.63 lbs. of solids in two consecutive milkings. The big class of Shorthorns not eligible for the herd book furnished the winner of the Lord Mayor's champion cup for the best Shorthorn in the milking trials. The fortunate exhibitor was Mr. George B. Nelson, of Garstang Lanes, whose cow Red Rose scored 133 points. Her fat yield was 2.46 lbs. and 5.55 lbs. of solids other than fat. These figures are the best in the show. The cup for the best animal other than Shorthorns was won by a South Devon cow belonging to Mr. Cundy, who yielded 2.94 lbs. of fat and 5.40 of solids, scoring altogether 133 points.

BUTTER TESTS

Turning to the butter tests the first among Shorthorns was Mr. G. B. Nelson's Red Rose, and her record is as follows: Milk yield in 24 hours 64 lbs. 12 oz.; butter yield, 2 lbs. 7 3/4 oz.; rate of pounds of milk to pounds of butter, 26.06. The Jerseys naturally

produce a richer milk than the above and the figures of the first prize winner, belonging to Dr. H. Watney, will well bear inspection. Her milk yield was 38 lbs. 2 oz.; butter yield, 2 lbs. 5 3/4 oz., and the ratio 15.15 lbs. of milk to make a pound of butter. In the remaining section for cows of any other breed the first prize award went to that celebrated cow—illustrated a month or so ago—The Doctor, belonging to Mr. Smith-Neill. This cow is twenty-four years old and her record at the Dairy Show is as follows: 43 lbs. of milk; 2 lbs. 5 oz. of butter, with a ratio of 18.60 lbs. of milk to a pound of butter.

CHEESE OR BUTTER FROM NEW ZEALAND?

It has often been a matter of surprise that well as cheese has been selling for some time past dairy producers in New Zealand have not increased the output of that commodity at the expense of butter, as it must pay a great deal better. It now appears that this fact has become recognized by dairy authorities in the colony. They agree that cheese at 10 cents per lb. pays at least as well as butter at 12 cents, and the former at 22 cents pays much better. They reckon on 1 lb. of butter or 2 1-5 pounds of cheese from 2 1/2 gallons of milk, estimating the expenses of making as equal. Two gallons of separated milk are valued at a penny (2 cents), which added to 25 cents for the butter makes 24 cents. Two gallons of whey are put at a cent and this added to 2 1-5 pounds of cheese at 12 cents per lb. amounts to over 25 cents. In England, New Zealand cheese has been selling at more than 12 cents per lb. for a long time; but prices in New Zealand are taken into account in comparing the returns of cheese and butter.

OUR COLOSSAL FOOD IMPORTS

Some idea of our colossal imports of food may be obtained from the Board of Trade returns for the nine months ending Sept. 30th last. We imported nearly 74 million cwts. of wheat, of which 1734 million cwts. came from the Argentine Republic, the United States taking second place and Russia third. Most of our barley for feeding purposes exclusively comes from the empire of the Czar, while the Argentine is outdistancing the United States in the growth of maize for exportation. The total bill for grain and flour in the nine months was £32,355,195.

Cattle come almost exclusively from the States and Canada, and these numbered 428,016 head. Fresh beef mainly comes from the Argentine and fresh mutton from New Zealand. Preserved (tinned) meat has decreased in quantity by about one-half. The total for meat amounts to £39,550,000 and is three times as much more than last year. Finally we have paid £18,000,000 for butter, the quantity imported reaching 3,529,929 cwt.

ITEMS

Business prospects continue good, although there is a general scarcity of ready cash. Trade on the contrary is active, due to most of the textile industries being on full time. Barreled apples are beginning to reach us from your side, but many of them are poor in quality and damaged. Their arrival, however, has served to put down values for cooking and rougher apples. The latest arrivals show much better quality and condition and prices are correspondingly higher.

Bacon is in keen demand, due to a decrease in killings in Ireland and Denmark, while the light supplies of Canadian strengthens the market.