

foreign countries, was thus quoted for the close of the year. "Throughout the month of November the demand was very limited, quotations nearly nominal, at the same prices as in October, 13½ to 14 pence per pound. In October, holders of the best brands advanced their asking prices ½d, from 13½ to 15 pence." There are four qualities of Irish butter, the best makes forming but one third of the whole. Hence the absence of higher uniform character in the bulk has very much injured its reputation in English markets. A comparison of the range of values over a period of five years will show how much Canadians have got to do, and what a strong position old world rivals have obtained in the markets of England. From 1875 to 1879 prices stood thus.

IRISH.

Finest Carlow ... 14½d. to 15½d per pound.

FOREIGN.

Friesland 14½d. to 14½d per pound.

Jersey 10½d. " 14½d " "

Kiel (Holstein & Denmark 14½d. " 17½d " "

Norm'dy(French) 10½d. " 16½d " "

Of the £9,940,412 which Great Britain spent on her butter imports in 1878, the quantities and values were as under. The Irish contribution is not included.

	Cwt.	Value
Denmark	224,427	£1,517,467
United States.....	219,794	998,766
Belgium	80,073	499,889
France.....	555,272	3,179,326
Holland	460,601	2,494,903

Thus, for the year 1878, the quantity was no less than 76,000 tons of 2240 lbs., and aggregating a value of eight and three quarters millions sterling. From 1865 the Danish import was steadily increased from 65,555 cwt. to 224,427. Belgium has fluctuated, France has changed but little, and Dutch was not much disturbed. The United States fell off till 1876, when a great increase took place, owing chiefly to the superiority of its new brands. Compared with these figures the consignments from Canadian shores look very meagre, being only 6 000 tons of 2,000 lbs., at an average price of only seven pence farthing per pound.

There is no reason to suppose that the position of Canadian butter will be much changed unless some change takes place in the method of treatment pursued by farmers and dealers. At the present time the practice is to churn about once a week, and to pack each churning from week to week in the same tub, until the accumulation is large enough to make a market parcel. Not only is this done, but the creaming is performed in the least economical manner. When churning has been gone through, salting next receives attention, and in this operation one of the greatest errors is committed.

The conventional idea seems to be that the butter should carry all the salt that can be got into it. The result is a most repulsive heap of grease, and the maker wonders why his butter brings such low prices. All the pickling in the world will never improve low butters, but an average quality of butter is frequently spoilt by the addition of too much salt. If the butter of this country is still to be churned on the farm rather than at the creamery, it seems certain that a modification of the French practice may be necessary. A description of this may be of interest:

A prominent feature of the trade of France is the middle man who brings the producer and consumer together, and makes the collection of small parcels of butter in a regular and systematic manner. French dairy farms, where the butter is not good enough to go direct to Parisian or Provincial private customers, are generally small in size, and the quantity of butter made weekly on each is very large. The butter is generally made twice a week in summer, and often not more than once a week in winter; but however many times a week it may be made on these farms, one making always takes place on the day preceding the holding of the local weekly market. Each make of butter is wrapped in a clean linen cloth, and on a market day in Normandy and Brittany one may see scores, and even hundreds, of women in the market place of the town, standing in double rows facing each other, and each with a basket before her containing one, two, or more lumps of butter (larger or smaller according to circumstances), separately enveloped in clean linen. This basket or other baskets, may also contain a certain number of eggs, a few chickens and other produce of the farm. The butter buyer appears, buys for sale to his customers in the district, taking only the best made butter for immediate consumption and suited to the local taste. Then comes the large buyers, or wholesale men, who taste and buy numbers of little parcels, varying in size from ten pounds and upwards. The butter thus bought is not salted at all, but placed on the market in twenty-four hours after churning. The parcels are all mixed and taken in baskets, weighing about 200 lbs. each, to the "fabriques of the buyers either by express or cars," washed, salted, mixed into perfectly uniform parcels and packed for the English market. On arrival at the factories the butters are unpacked, sorted and classified according to their smell and taste. There are usually three qualities, and each in turn is kneaded, washed, and salted according to the requirements of the market for which it is intended. A long trough, having a hole fitted with a plug in the centre of its lowest part, is used in such cases, and strong men knead the butter with their fists, while the water dribbles upon it, and helps to wash out the butter-milk. The salt is afterwards incorporated by the same method. The best butter destined for exportation to England is not salted, but for the final washing a strong solution of salt is used in place of pure water. Ordinary butter is salted by the admixture of 3 to 5 per cent. of its weight of salt if for consumption in England, and as much as from 8 to 10 per cent. if intended for the Brazilian market. The butter thus made is good for immediate use, but not for prolonged keeping.

It will readily be seen from the method of French butter making that the extreme care and cleanliness which are so characteristic of the trade is fully paid for by the liberal prices obtained in England. If our farmers

cannot send their butter to market twice a week in summer, they might, as the Danes have done, make the winter butter the best season's product of the year. To do this, they will need to grow richer forage crops, and to feed more liberally and carefully than they do now. Butter factors might go round and collect the products of each farm at the homesteads, and thus overcome the objection of the farmer to attend market as often as is required in France. The salting, packing and branding would then be entirely under the control of the merchants. A much better way would be the creamery system, but there will always be some very decided objections to it, from people who live at a distance. Carried out on a large scale by farmers living within easy distance of each other, however, it would be much cheaper than making at home. Great reforms cannot be accomplished hurriedly, but have to be undertaken with care. The time will come when Canada will occupy as high a position in the butter trade as she now does in cheese. But before that period can be reached she must learn the lesson from continental rivals, of how to make butter for the English market. The demand for it is ever on the increase, and prices, instead of receding, are likely to improve.

The practice of packing in smaller and more tastefully prepared cases deserves attention. Much of the butter shipped from Denmark is packed in small cases for use in the consumer's house. Two pound packages are common sizes, and the style recommends itself from the fact that butters made on the French method could be sold to the consumer under the protection and recommendation of a maker's brand. This is the method employed for South American export trade.

The experience of other countries, and especially of the creamery system in the United States, is extremely encouraging, and should be sufficient to induce us to enter the market in future with a firm determination not to be outrivalled by our competitors.

MONTREAL HARBOR.

A somewhat bold proposal respecting the harbor was made by letter from a citizen of Montreal a few weeks ago to the Chairman of the Board of Trade. He proposed nothing less than to obviate for the future the annual "shove" of ice in front of the city, flooding of the lower part of the city which takes place frequently in spring, and further, to do away with the inconvenience of the rapid current—from five to six miles per hour—with which vessels are confronted when they reach the eastern end of the har-