

the aim of the association had been to induce simplicity. In our own country it was not only improvements and discoveries in methods which had helped to develop bee-keeping; its progress was largely due to the co-operation which had existed between bee-keepers. When the British Bee-keepers' Association first started in 1874 it had but few members; now, however, it numbered 10,000, and it was their co-operation which had entirely revolutionized the system of bee-keeping in this country. Bee-keeping was capable of becoming, as part of agriculture, a great national industry. We were greatly in need of schools where the science could be taught, and where the young could receive certificates. Our agricultural colleges should take the subject up, and classes should be formed, as well as a working apiary instituted for the instruction of tyros. Profitable bee-keeping was not yet as common as it would be in the future. Success depended largely upon the queen-bees, as good and prolific queens were alone profitable. The introduction of Italian and other foreign strains had done good, bringing to us, as it did, fresh blood; but a great hindrance to improvement had been the introduction of cheap queens. The demand for Italian queens had been so great that it was not surprising that the supply had deteriorated in quality. He would point out that good breeding stock could only be obtained by the careful selections of both queens and drones. With regard to the constant complaints made as to the lowness of the price of honey, grumblers should bear in mind that it was increased supply which caused the downward tendency in prices. Their show, the largest of the kind ever held, was a testimony to the progress made in the industry, for in the worst year they had had for a long time there were 340 entries and 250 exhibitors, nearly double the number of but a few years before.

The Rev. G. Raynor, M.A., read a paper upon "Queen Introduction." He said that practical apiarists would allow that upon the condition of a colony which was to receive an alien queen very much depended. When the bees were in the midst of gathering in a plentiful harvest all feeling of irascibility was laid aside and the sting remained in the sheath. In the summer months, therefore, when the honey was briskly coming in, was the best time for changing and introducing queens. All queens, and especially virgin queens, could be more safely introduced when the bees were storing honey than at any other time. It was, however, often more convenient to the apiarist to introduce his queens in the spring or autumn, *i. e.*, in time of dearth. Taking then a leaf from the book of nature, at such times we should feed our bees continuously for a day or two before removing their queen, during the time of the introduction, and after liberating the alien. The food should be presented from the top of the hive, since that plan was least conducive to robbing and produced least excitement or confusion in the hive, a state against which it was most important to guard. Mr. Raynor then described in detail the various methods of direct introduction and introduction by cage. As the conditions which had to be dealt with were so numerous and diverse, the method which succeeded in one case might fail in another.

CHEDDAR CHEESE.

BY ARCHDEACON DENISON. (1)

The Venerable the Archdeacon Denison has forwarded the subjoined letter to Mr. Robert H. Symes, provision merchant, of Bristol:—

(1) Archdeacon Denison is a very positive kind of person. I knew him well some forty years ago, and very amusing it used to be to hear him abuse—in the most agreeably facetious manner—every one who did not agree with every one of his views upon every sort of

"East Brent, Highbridge, October 19, 1885.

"Dear Mr. Symes, — . . . No country in the world can make Cheddar cheese real and true except Somerset. People may talk as they please, but the fact is so. Somerset therefore had a natural monopoly of what is, I think, the best article of food producible in England. Somerset has lost it. How? By the action of Free Trade, and by very unwise measures taken at home by way of meeting the difficulty. Somerset is a county with this great remunerative monopoly, comparatively, of rich land, small holdings, and high rents. What enabled farmers to pay the high rents and still to do well? Cheddar cheese. (1) The real article is going fast. Nobody in their senses asks now for Cheddar cheese in any place of public refreshment, because it is a thousand to one that they do not get it, but some very nasty and unsound substitute. What has brought this to pass and, or all but, ruined the Somerset farmer? Free Trade in respect of American cheese eating out of the Somerset market. Real Cheddar is as good at two years old as at two months—ay, better by a good deal. American cheese is a caution. You cannot go near it after a few weeks. Why? Because it is made (and but quarter dried) in a hurry, and very probably has all sorts of nastiness put into it. At four months at most it begins to smell very nasty indeed. When you make cheese in a hurry, and dry it in a hurry that you may sell it at once, you get rid of a large proportion and true substance of the article. But still it goes down with the British public a people very easily taken in, and the reason is this. You see, if a thousand people go into a cheese shop, there is probably not one of them that buys a whole cheese; he buys a 'cut,' and he carries it home to his unhappy wife, and says, 'My dear, I have bought you, very cheap, a nice piece of American Cheddar' Poor, silly man! He has tasted it, and found it good; he doesn't know that a good cheese-taster is as rare a man to find as a wine-taster, or even a tea-taster. Now, if the wife knows what she is about, she says, 'Give me a knife, and I'll cut off a bit and put it by;' and then they set to work and eat up all the rest before they find out how beastly a thing it is. The bit in the cupboard escapes, and lives to stink in six weeks. Meantime the family have been eating food unsound, unwholesome—half-rotten from the first. This, then, is now our position in Somerset—it could not well be worse. How is it to be mended? Only by landowner, occupier, and consumer playing a wiser game than they are playing now, and have been for some time past. There will always be plenty of people in England to give best price for the real article, but they won't buy shams, or things that stink when they ought to be in first rate order for eating.

"(a) The landowner must lower the rent. Without this the occupier will either sell a prime article at a ruinous price, or will make a bad article, and keep making matters even worse than they are now.

"(b) The occupier must go back to the old and only true way of making Cheddar cheese.

"(c) The consumer must give up the utter foolishness of buying promiscuously 'nice bits' of a wretched article even at its best, and take care to know something about where his cheese comes from and how it has been made.

"There is and has been a good deal of general ill-health

matter. Was it he, or the Rev. J. W. Bennett, who excommunicated Dr. Philpotts, the Bishop of Exeter? I think it must have been the Archdeacon; it is just the kind of thing he would do. The Cheddar I used to eat at Charlton in Somerset, was a very different thing to what we now find. It was very like a cheese of Mr. Macfarlane's I tasted in 1880: *v. Journal p. 143, vol. II.*

(1) And infinitesimally small wages: eight shillings a week in 1840.

A. R. J. F.

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