

sent to a farm-house where the "creaming-dish" was very vigorously used, and on being set down to a repast being composed of bread, butter, and cheese, he was observed to spread the butter pretty thickly over slices of cheese, muttering all the while, quite loud enough to be heard by the bystanders, "Deil be in their fingers that ever parted ye."

But it appears to be the case that for some unknown reason cheese cannot be successfully made in some parts of the country, and we have found some marked instances of this in Ireland, both on the sown grasses of a five shift course and on the old pastures of the Golden Vale, and that, too, where it had been tried by persons who had been all their lives well acquainted with the process of manufacture as practised in Cheshire and Ayrshire. At the same time, we found excellent cheese made on other farms at no great distance, but certainly where the soil and pasture were somewhat different, showing that there is nothing in the climate at least, as some allege, to prevent cheese making being carried on in Ireland. It has never gained a footing in Ireland, however.

When skimmed milk is set aside for cheese making it must be scalded, *but not boiled*, in order to prevent it from turning sour, which would spoil the cheese. In making sweet milk cheese—that is, when the milk is used without being deprived of the cream—the morning's milk is mixed with that of the preceding evening—supposing there is a sufficient quantity of milk to allow a whole cheese to be made every day—the cream which has gathered on the evening's milk being mixed through the entire quantity, the temperature of the whole being raised to a certain degree by heating a sufficient quantity of milk in a pan set in boiling water, and then pouring this warmed milk into the rest. The temperature to which the milk is raised ranges from 75° to 80°, and even 90°, a higher temperature being requisite in cold than in warm weather. The milk at this stage is all in one tub, and it is at this point that the "rennet" is added. This is prepared from calves' stomachs, which have been salted a year before they are used. These can generally be procured from shopkeepers in the dairy districts; and where cheese is the sole object of manufacture, two "ags," or "vells," as they are sometimes termed, are necessary for the milk of each cow during the season. In some cheese districts, stale rennet is used; in others, as in Cheshire, it is prepared on the day previous to being put into the milk. The Cheshire system is to cut two bits of two or three square inches of the vells or bagskins, and those bits are "put into half a pint of warm water the day before use, along with a teaspoonful of salt, and this infusion suffices for 50 or 60 gallons of milk" (Morton). In Gloucestershire, where stale rennet is used, 6 vells are put to every 2 gallons of brine, and in large dairies a 30 to 40 gallon cask is prepared at once. The infusion is considered to improve with age, that is, if it is not further di-

luted by the addition of more brine. Stale rennet is also used in Ayrshire in the manufacture of Dunlop cheese, and in that which is made according to the Cheddar system, a tablespoonful of the rennet being added to every 20 gallons of milk. It is at this stage also that annatto is added for the purpose of colouring the cheese—a practice which, we think, ought to be given up; for it is only a mere fancy, and does not improve the quality of the cheese in any degree.

The time requisite for coagulation varies according to the temperature of the milk when the rennet is put into it. Where the temperature ranges from 75 to 80 degrees, the curd will usually take an hour to form; but where the temperature is from 85 to 90 degrees, it may only require half the time, or even less. Too rapid coagulation is not desirable.

The subsequent steps in the manufacture of Cheshire cheese are described in the following manner in Morton's excellent little work, the *The Handbook of Dairy Husbandry*. After the curd is fully formed,

"It is then cut slowly with a wire curd-breaker, and the curd sinking, the whey is baled out; the curd is collected and squeezed, both by hand and the direct pressure of a weight above a board placed upon it; and the last of the whey being removed, it is lifted either into a basket or into one of the Cheshire cheese vats ('thrusting tubs') pierced with holes for the further escape of the fluid, the lower part being a wooden cylindrical vat, and the upper a tinned cylinder slipping into it, as the curd on pressure sinks. After a certain pressure in this form, the curd is removed and cut, and broken by hand or a curd mill, and from 1 to 2 lbs. of fine salt is scattered over it, according to the weight of the cheese; about 1 lb. to every 40 lbs. of cheese is a common quantity. The whole curd being then re-broken, is refilled into the vat, in which a cheese cloth has previously been placed. It is then put gradually under pressure [in a lever cheese press,] which after the second or third day amounts to nearly a ton weight upon each cheese.

"Every day the cheese is turned, and wrapped in fresh cloths, and on the seventh or eighth day of this treatment, or as soon as dry, it is removed to the loft, and there swathed around with strong girdling, and placed on a bench. By-and-by it is laid, still swathed as before, on a layer of straw on the floor of the room, and there it lies till from ten weeks to four months old, when it is ready for sale."

It is of the greatest importance that the curd be freed entirely from the whey; for if any whey is left, the cheese is apt to swell and burst. For this reason, in some dairies it is the practice, on the first day when the cheese is put under the press, to thrust skewers into it through the holes in the cheese-vats, in order that the whey may more readily drain off through the holes pierced with skewers. The whey is scalded and given to pigs.