

FARMING

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Agricultural News and Comments

Prof. H. H. Dean, of the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, delivered an address last week, at the New York State Dairymen's Convention, on "Curing Rooms and Curing Cheese."

Sixty three students wrote on the Christmas examinations at the Ontario Agricultural College. Forty three of these wrote on the examinations of the first year and twenty on those of the second year. The attendance at the college this year is larger than it has ever been.

The cultivation of mushrooms in disused railway tunnels is carried on profitably in Edinburgh. In the old tunnel of the North British Railway Company 1,000 tons of manure and 1,000 baskets of spawn are used annually, and the crop has been as large as 5,000 lbs. of mushrooms a month.

The Maritime Dairy School at Sussex, N.B., will be opened on February 21st in the new building erected by the New Brunswick Government. The new building and equipment will make the work of this school more effective than in the past, in educating the makers of the Maritime Provinces in the best methods of making cheese and butter.

The ration fed to cows in full milk at the Nappan Experiment Station is composed of the following: Ensilage, 40 lbs., bran, 3 lbs.; chop (mixed grains, oats and barley), 3 lbs. and pea meal, 2 lbs. At the Nova Scotia Provincial Farm the following is the ration: Ensilage, 20 lbs.; clover hay, 10 lbs.; oat straw, 2 lbs.; wheat bran, 5 lbs.; and middlings, 2 lbs. per day per 1000 lbs., live weight.

A peculiar disease resembling hog cholera has broken out among the swine in the vicinity of Merrickville, Ont. Many farmers are reported to have lost whole herds of swine by the malady. Dr. James, Dominion Government Inspector, who has investigated the disease, states that he does not know what it is, and has submitted several specimens of diseased meat to Professor Adams, of McGill College, Montreal, for bacteriological examination.

Sheep raisers in Washington State are troubled very much with a wild animal known as the coyote destroying their flocks. The remedy adopted is to place the poisoned carcass of the cayuse or Indian pony in the field, using about a half ounce of strychnine and about an ounce of arsenic to each horse. Why would not some similar plan do for the dog nuisance in this country? A great many sheep are destroyed every year by dog worrying. The dogs that do this worrying are not worth keeping.

A plan has been adopted in France of selling potatoes peeled, sliced, and dried like certain fruits. This method obviates decay and germination of the tuber, and, occupying less space, transport will be cheaper and less difficult. The potatoes are peeled by machinery, next carefully washed, sliced in rounds, and left for twenty minutes in a strong solution of kitchen salt. Later the cuttings are left to drain, placed in the drying apparatus on hurdle shelves, and submitted to a temperature of about 194° F. Before using, the slices have to be steeped from twelve to fifteen hours in water, when they will become as fresh and as flavory as new potatoes.

Is Canadian Cheese Losing Its Hold Upon the British Market?

At the dairy conventions held recently at Kingston and Guelph it was clearly demonstrated by more than one speaker that our cheese trade has reached a very critical stage in its history, and that a marked improvement in quality must be made if Canada wishes to hold even her present position in the cheese markets of Great Britain. The Hon. Mr. Fisher, Dominion Minister of Agriculture, stated that when in England last summer he found, for the first time, criticism of Canadian cheese. A great deal of the English cheese is better than Canadian, which Canadian makers must reach up to if they expected to hold the market they now have. Prof. Robertson, Agricultural and Dairy Commissioner, makes a similar statement. English buyers complain of Canadian cheese not being as good as it used to be. He thought, however, that the quality was as good as formerly but that the English consumer had been getting better cheese from other quarters, and therefore the standard of Canadian cheese was not as high as it used to be. The British consumer wants a milder cheese.

These statements coming from such authoritative sources indicate that our cheese trade has really reached a crisis. We have heard similar statements made by others, chiefly by those engaged in the export trade, who complain of the quality of a great deal of Canadian cheese being unsatisfactory to their customers in Great Britain, and especially the quality of the product made during the past season. The two chief faults found with it are: Not mild enough in the flavor and too hard and dry in texture. What the British consumer wants is a mild, "cool" flavored cheese, meaty and not so harsh as many of our Canadian cheeses are, and our dairymen must be prepared to supply this quality if they wish to retain their present hold on the British markets.

This matter is all the more serious when we reflect that our competitors are watching every move we make, and an opportunity, such as a deterioration in the quality of Canadian cheese would give them, would be quickly taken advantage of. It is generally believed that we have not much to fear from American competition in this trade. But we would remind our dairymen that the Americans have made great advancement in recent years in what is our weakest point, viz: proper curing facilities. From what we can learn the average curing room in New York and Wisconsin, the principal cheese States of the Union, is much better equipped with facilities for controlling the temperature than the average Ontario curing-room is. New Zealand has lately secured one of Canada's best dairy teachers, in the person of Mr. J. A. Ruddick, as her Dairy Commissioner. In an issue of the *New Zealand Dairyman*, just to hand, Mr. Ruddick, who has made a trip over the Island, gives his impressions of what can be done in that country in the way of producing cheese. He states that New Zealand ought to produce as fine, if not finer, cheese than any other country now engaged in the industry, and gives as his reasons for this, that the factories are very well built and furnished, that there is a good class of men in charge and that the climate is such that the temperature seldom goes higher than 75° and rarely to that point. This low temperature means a slow curing cheese, which is productive of that "cool" flavor so much wanted in Great Britain. Further on Mr. Ruddick states that Canadian