

tensive trade the limit of prices was necessarily low. When cheese becomes higher-priced than meats and other available strong foods, the quantity consumed would at once decrease. This is because in England the bulk of cheese is eaten as a food, and the consumer buys it, not so much because of any particular preference for it as because it is a food and a cheap one. True, it is a convenient food, not requiring cooking, always ready and appetising; but these are qualities for which it does not care to pay luxury prices. In a word, he is not wedded to the consumption of cheese, and for economy's sake, will accept a substitute in other foods when the latter are cheap enough and palatable. The limit of the price of cheese, therefore, depends much upon the prices of foods available as substitutes. In the opinion of my informant the probable limit for cheese would be 50 shillings sterling landed in England.

As to butter, when it rises unduly in price, its substitute—margarine—will be used by many consumers. The limit to which prices of butter may rise before they will be so high as to cause consumption to decrease (giving place to margarine) was placed by my Liverpool authority at from 8 to 10 pence, or at about 16 to 25 cents per pound retail. This limit may be thought placed too low, but it is quite certain that there are consumers in England who will not buy butter at 8 to 10 pence when they may buy margarine at 5 or 8 pence.

If all this be true, it may be expected that where there are not other causes—such as stiff competition—to keep down the price, both of butter and cheese, the high price itself will cause consumption to decrease and give prices a downward tendency. On the other hand, low prices will have the effect, of course, of increasing consumption and stiffening the demand. In view of the whole situation, then, we may believe that the competition of the future will be along the line of

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as well as quality of product. I have already touched upon this phase of the subject, but surely it will not be thought vain repetition to speak of such important matters as often as they press themselves forward in our investigation of the that will be so imperative in its character, and so important subjects. That is not the only phase of the subject in its bearing, that on the principle of line, upon line and precept upon precept, will demand reiteration.

I have never been accused of being a pessimist, but I have written so much in this connection that is on the dark side that it may be thought that the picture might be painted brighter. I will quote what Prof. Sheldon said in 1886, but was not seen by myself till after having penned the matter in these letters, in striking confirmation of all I have written:

"What on earth is dairy farming coming to? is a query typical of what one hears on every side, most of all in districts where cheese and butter are leading products, and where the milk trade is little known. It is likely enough true that farmers have not for many years been quite so near their wits' end as they are now. In my own time I have known cheese and butter lower in price, no doubt, than they are now, but never with a slacker trade or a more languid demand at this time of the year. The month of March is not half gone as I write, and butter is down below what ought to be a summer's price, and almost always has been for twenty years or more. I may say, indeed, that if we throw the twenty years into bulk and take the mean of them, we shall surely find that I speak within the mark. And as for cheese—well, cheese commands no sale at all worth the name; it is disposed of, no doubt, in some sort of way, from time to time, and a transfer is made from farmer to dealer; but it is not often sold out-and-out, and once-for-all, as it used to be in days gone by."

He goes on to say that cattle, too, had not kept their value,

and even the milk trade was "limp and languid," and that farmers were in danger of being "clean beaten out by the times;" touches upon margarine, and claims that "dairying will have more to contend with as the years roll on." He despairs of the private dairy and looks to the factory system for relief. "Most of these things," he says, "are

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and they have a heavy bearing on the question of dairy farming. Competition is keener than ever, but not so keen as it will be, perhaps. In any case it is clear that our present systems of dairying have such a strain on them as no one expected, a strain which many of them cannot bear; and the question of factory *versus* farmhouse will soon have to be solved."

He then speaks hopefully of the strong pull being, and to be made "against the current of depression." Canadian farmers will learn from all this that while there is no royal road before them, there are others whose road is even less smooth, and if these others may be hopeful, surely they may be.

It is pleasant to turn from this phase of the subject to some of the many good things said touching the reputation of our cheese, which reputation is, indeed, veritably

#### A FEATHER IN OUR CAP.

Mr Price (Bristol) said he had entered Canadian Cheddar cheese in the Jubilee class of the Frome show, in the heart of the English cheddar district, in the Cheddar Valley, and out of about 100 entries, Canadian came out best in over 80 entries! The firm got a "highly commended" on Canadian cheese. This, too, was under unfavorable conditions, for the show coming off in September, they had to exhibit the first summer cheeses.

I may here correct an error which crept into a previous letter, where I referred to samples of cheese being officially examined and none found adulterated. The number of sample were not "about 390," but 112—itsself a large number, however. The following was the report cabled: "Agricultural journals admit that, seeing that 112 samples were analysed without a single example being found of cheese containing extraneous fat, the Canadian commissioner is justified in asserting that *filled* cheese, common in the States, is not made in Canada.

Touching the reputation of our butter in the English market, it will require a whole letter to do the subject justice.

Jan. 5th, 1889.

W. H. LYNCH.

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