

Rural Economy.

BUTTER AND CHEESE DISCUSSION.

At the New York State Fair, held at Saratoga Springs on the last week in September, Tuesday evening was devoted to a free discussion of matters pertaining to the dairy.

Mr. S. S. Whitman, of Little Falls, opened the subject with a prepared address, treating mainly the uncleanly practices, and the evil results flowing therefrom, which might be observed in many dairies of the country.

Mr. W. observed that some dairymen do not deem it necessary that cheese shall be clean, in order to sell, but they seem to have adopted the motto, "the more there is in it, the more there is of it."

The speaker thought all dairymen would concede that others might be filthy, though they would not call their own practices in question.

Milk, in all its relations, requires more care than any other food product of the farm. Cleanliness in every stage of its management is necessary to success; the construction of barns—the appliances for milking—should insure cleanliness.

We would not wonder that people are sometimes poisoned with cheese, if we considered all the uncleanliness attending the making. Factories do not obviate this evil, but rather encourage it.

President Gould said the facts mentioned by Mr. Whitman had long been known to the N. Y. State Agricultural Society, and it had been deemed an absolute necessity to present them to the public.

Mr. McGraw, Tompkins Co., contended that a good article of cheese or butter cannot be produced from the best grass and water in the country, unless the milk is rightly taken care of.

Geo. Geddes, of Onondaga, thought the idea of carrying a towel and water into the barn-yard, among the cows, was certainly a new one.

Mr. Faxton, Oneida, believed that good butter and cheese could be made in the limestone regions. Had a favorable experience of twenty years in using butter made on limestone land.

Mr. McGraw, Tompkins, thought the last speaker's taste for butter was educated to a false standard. The test for good butter is the market.

Geo. Geddes, Onondaga, said that the question relative to the merits of the hard and soft water regions for dairy products, had been agitated a long time and never settled; nor would it be now.

Mr. Thomas, Herkimer, said that one cause of bad butter and cheese was the allowing of too long intervals between milking, and using impure or diseased milk.

Mr. Hawley, Onondaga, thought that the qualities of butter depended a great deal on the packages. These should be soaked with salt water to prevent the wool from drawing salt from the butter.

Mr. Burgess, Vt., stated that the water is hard in his section, yet good butter and cheese are made. The grass is mainly timothy.

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Mr. Hawley thought that in sending butter to a distant market, it would be well to surround the packages with larger ones containing sawdust or salt.

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PRIMITIVE MODES OF PREPARING IRON.

It is probable that the first iron ever made was in the form of malleable iron, highly carbonized in consequence of the manner of its production.

The methods of smelting iron ore to this day practised by the natives of Central Africa, are probably in most respects the same as those adopted by the ancient iron workers.

Mungo Park thus describes the process employed at Kamalia on the Niger:—A circular hollow tower of clay, about 10 feet high and 3 in diameter, was erected to serve as a furnace, being bound round with withes to prevent the clay cracking and falling to pieces through the heat.

Numerous tubes of clay were placed near the hollow bottom of this tower, through which air was admitted into the lower part of the furnace.

A bundle of dry sticks was first put in, then a quantity of charcoal, over that a stratum of iron-stone, then more charcoal, and so on until the furnace was full.

Fire was then applied through one of the tubes at the bottom, and kept up by blowing with bellows made of goats' skins, until the flame appeared above the furnace.

The people who attended kept filling in more charcoal. This went on for three days, when the fire was allowed to go down; and some days after, when the whole was cool, part of the furnace was taken down, and the iron appeared in the form of a large irregular mass at the bottom, with pieces of charcoal adhering to it.

The mass was sonorous, and when any portion was broken off the fracture exhibited a granulated appearance, like broken steel.

This iron, or rather steel, says Park, "is formed into various instruments by being repeatedly heated in a forge, the heat of which is urged by a pair of double bellows of a very simple construction, being made of two goat skins, the tubes from which unite before they enter the forge, and supply a constant and very regular blast."

Dr. Livingstone also found the African tribes on the Zambesi well acquainted with the use of iron, and making it after a like simple process.

Speaking of the neighborhood of Kilimane, he says:—"The only other metal, beside gold, we have in abundance in this region, is iron, and that is of excellent quality."

In some places it is obtained from what is called the spicular iron ore, and also from black oxide. The latter has been well roasted in the operations of nature, and contains a large proportion of the metal.

It occurs generally in tears or rounded lumps, and is but slightly magnetic. When found in the beds of rivers, the natives know of its existence by the quantity of oxide on the surface, and they find no difficulty in digging it with pointed sticks.

They consider English iron "rotten," and I have seen, when a javelin of their own iron lighted on the oranium of a hippopotamus, it curled up like the proboscis of a butterfly, and the owner would prepare it for future use by straightening it cold with two stones.

I brought home some of the hoes which Skelett gave me to purchase a canoe, also some others obtained in Kilimane, and they have been found of such good quality that a friend of mine in Birmingham has made an Enfield rifle of them."

Dr. Livingstone adds, that on sending specimens of this iron to a practical Birmingham blacksmith, he pronounced it to be highly carbonized, strongly resembling Swedish or Russian, and added, that when chilled, it had the properties of steel.

On Ohailla gives a similar account of the native methods of producing iron among the Fans, who are said to be among the cleverest blacksmiths in Africa.

They will not use European or American iron in making their knives or arrowheads, but prefer their own, which has great tenacity, and in many respects possesses the properties of steel.

The Fans have plenty of iron-stone and wood fuel; and when they want iron, their process is very simple. They build a pile of wood over a hearth in the open air, heap on a quantity of the ore broken into bits, then more wood, and when the pile is complete, it is set on fire.

Wood continues to be thrown on for several days, until there are signs that the iron has been smelted, when the whole is allowed to cool, after which they find the iron in a lump on the hearth at the bottom.

This is subjected to a tedious process of repeated heatings and hammerings, until at last, by patience and labor, a very excellent piece of metal is obtained.

The process adopted by the natives of Hindostan, of Madagascar, and Borneo, is of like simplicity and rudeness.

They all obtain the malleable iron direct from the ore, instead of by the indirect modern process in which cast iron is first produced.

Miscellaneous.

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