

SESS. II.—1884.
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DAIRY FACTORIES IN NEW ZEALAND

(REPORT ON).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

REPORT BY MR. G. BOWRON, INSPECTOR OF DAIRY FACTORIES.

THE Edendale Dairy Factory, Southland, is the property of the New Zealand and Australasian Land Company. This factory is conveniently situated close to the main trunk line from Dunedin to Invercargill, and placed in the centre of a fine vale in every respect well adapted for dairy purposes. Such is the capacity of this factory that 2,000 gallons of milk may be dealt with comfortably. One-third of the milk delivered at this factory is from farmers in the district, the other portion from cows which are the property of the company. The largest supplier was Mr. James Milne, who kept from eighty to ninety cows going, and sent all their milk to the factory. From 16th October, 1883, when the company began making cheese for the season, up to the 31st May last, Mr. Milne had drawn in cash from the factory the sum of £630, or an average of nearly £7 10s. per cow. Besides bringing him in this handsome return, his cows—by no means first-class dairy animals, but a mixed lot, many of which had to be broken in—reared calves, and kept the family supplied with milk. All the work of milking and sending the milk to the factory was done by the members of Mr. Milne's own family, so that he was at no expense for extra labour. A number of other settlers in the same neighbourhood have also been supplying the factory with milk, and their returns have averaged from £6 10s. to £8 per cow for the same period. The supply of milk during the last season amounted to 134,604 gallons, and was disposed of in the following manner: 125,408 gallons were manufactured into cheese, and produced 129,255lb. Here we have a clear gain of 3,847lb. of cheese over gallons of milk delivered. In the butter department 9,129 gallons of milk produced 3,203lb. of butter. The whole season's produce was sold to merchants in Dunedin at remunerative prices: the cheese realized 5½d. per lb., the butter 1s. 3d. per lb. This season's result is not a fair criterion by which to judge the capabilities of a factory, for many of the cows were of an inferior description. The average value of each farmer's dairy cows varied considerably (from £6 10s. to £8) and thirty calves were reared with milk. Many fine pigs were fattened near the factory, and sold to bacon manufacturers in Dunedin at 5d. per lb. There is not anything connected with farm produce which pays for attention like the pig. Over £100 was paid to the railway for the transit of its goods.

Waiareka Dairy Factory, Weston, Oamaru, opened this year, considering all things has done remarkably well. The factory stands in a fine open undulating district, and in an excellent position for the delivery of milk by railroad or otherwise. Their cheese operations were continued during the winter months. The manager favoured me with the results of one month's milk. From the 12th May to the 14th June 2,752 gallons of milk were delivered at this factory, and produced 3,210lb. of cheese—458lb. of curd more than gallons of milk. The quality of milk in this district is of a superior kind. Their percentage of cream is from 10 to 16 degrees, the average during the season is 13½ degrees. The standing order of this factory is to return all milk which yields below 10 degrees. A considerable quantity of this factory's cheese has been sold in London at prices from 62s. to 66s. per cwt., which was considered satisfactory, and a large consignment is now on its way.

Temuka Dairy Factory is strong and well built, conveniently situated in a rich dairy district, with excellent roads, and a short distance from Temuka Station on the trunk line from Christchurch to Dunedin. The size and convenience of this factory is equal to the milk from 800 cows, or 1,600 gallons. Here they have an excellent cold-water refrigerator, over which the evening's milk is run into the large vats; thus the temperature is reduced in hot weather, and all undue acidity is prevented. The price which the directors pay the farmer for his milk is 4d. per 11lb., and is satisfactory to all concerned. This factory, like others, demonstrates the fact that 11lb. of milk produces 1lb. of marketable cheese, and leaves a balance in favour of the factory. A considerable quantity of cheese had been sold at 5½d. per lb. The pigs have a fine run, and had done very well.