

which improvement in one or two dairies has upon a market is extremely slight compared with what would be the case if the measure of improvement had reached the whole district. I fear our people have not yet realised the absolute necessity which exists for extended improvement in all farm practice, so that the largest benefit might accrue to the individual. It may be regarded as an axiom that where the produce is excellent there will the buyers go, and that purchasers always select the market where the supplies are of best quality and largest in quantity. The necessity, then, for an extension of dairy education is apparent, and how this extension should take place is a matter for serious consideration. The schools of Glasnevin and Cork are doing good work. In addition to these something is required which will bring closer to the people facilities for acquiring information as to the most improved methods of dairying. The recognition by the Commissioners of schools where facilities exist for the teaching of dairying, and the payment of results fees for such teaching, is a movement in this direction. During the past year two schools have been recognised where dairying may be taught as an "extra branch;" and at one of them, the Navan Convent School, forty-three children were presented for examination in dairying. Of these, forty-two passed the examination, being 97·7 per cent. At the other, the Ballaghaderreen Convent School, the children have not yet been examined. The managers of this school have taken up the subject very warmly, and provided efficient means for instruction. I have no doubt that much good will result to this poor locality, in which a very large quantity of inferior butter is now made. I desire earnestly to see a large extension of means for instruction in this important industry, and I trust that the country will duly appreciate and utilise the provisions of our national system of education in promoting and extending this most useful branch of technical instruction.

At the present time there is a great change in the requirements of the meat-markets as compared with former years. An entirely different class of animal is now required. Whilst formerly large animals of all kinds, carrying an enormous quantity of fat, were found to be the most profitable, the demand of recent years is for animals having a larger proportion of lean meat. In years past butchers could sell the offal fat at a high price; now, in consequence of the discovery and extensive use of mineral oil for lighting purposes and the general use of vegetable fats for many manufactures, the price of animal offal fat is very materially reduced. The price of large fat animals of all kinds is thereby much depreciated, so that it would appear the time has come when it is advisable to develop a race of animals suited to the exigencies of the meat-market. Again, there is great room for improvement in the breeds of our dairy cattle. Of all European countries Ireland has paid least attention to cultivating native breeds, so that we have a very mixed lot of cattle in Ireland. Ireland will always take a prominent part in dairy produce. Improvement in her dairy herds is peculiarly desirable. The farms of the Commissioners might be made very useful in maintaining the best breed of animals. (This matter will form the subject of a recommendation by me in the coming year.)

In conclusion, I may be permitted to express a hope that in the coming year we may find a fuller development of our system of agricultural education. The prospect is undoubtedly brightening, and there are elements in operation that should insure success. These may be shortly stated to be: (1.) The apparent desire on the part of the agricultural population to take advantage of what they consider will be serviceable to them in the theory and practice of agriculture. (2.) The co-operation afforded by national and local agricultural societies. The system of primary education, embracing as it now does in all rural schools for boys instruction in the principles of agriculture, will certainly animate in the young generation a growing desire for progress in the great national industry.

I have, &c.,

THOS. CARROLL.

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