

Are the butter sales made according to the qualities marked upon the cask?—Yes, in Liverpool.  
Where do you dispose of the Irish butter you purchase at Liverpool?—The local consumption is considerable; but by far the larger part goes into the interior, to the manufacturing districts.

Is by far the greater part of the Irish butter purchased by your house in Liverpool, consumed in England?—Yes.

Is it principally in the north of England, or does any part go to London?—In some cases it goes to London. When there is a redundancy of butter in Liverpool and a deficiency in London, it is shipped thither; but the principal market is the north of England and the midland counties.

Is any proportion of the butter you import from Ireland, sent to the West Indies, or the foreign markets? The Cork butter is principally sent to foreign markets. To the West Indies and South America chiefly.

Is it generally found that the butter corresponds with the quality marked upon it?—Yes, especially at the ports of Cork and Limerick.

Are there public inspectors at those two ports?—There are.

Are there any complaints made by the houses at Liverpool, who receive Irish butter, of any alteration of the brands and marks at any time having been made?—Such frauds have occasionally been committed, but they are very rare at the ports I have mentioned, Cork and Limerick.

Is there any complaint of alterations having been made at any of the other ports?—Occasionally there are fraudulent shipments from almost all the other ports.

Have representations been made by the Liverpool merchants receiving the butter, to their Irish correspondents, in consequence of those frauds?—No doubt of it, frequently.

Have you any information to give to the Committee that would tend to show the extent of the frauds?—The public inspectors at the ports of Cork and Limerick are the greatest check upon fraud in the butter trade. At Dundalk, and Dublin, are the places I think most complained of.

Do the merchants in Dublin, according to your information, inspect for themselves?—We understand so; they put their own mark upon the butter, and it is sent usually as the shipment of such a person.

Does it appear upon the casks coming from Dublin, that alterations are made in the brands of those casks?—I have no knowledge that it is so, but Dublin butter in our market is always purchased as a butter depending upon its quality, on the shipper of the butter, not on any public inspector.

Would it make any and what alteration in your butter trade, if it was understood in Liverpool that the Irish butter was freed from every degree of legislative regulation as to the inspection, branding or marking the qualities upon it?—I conceive that that would introduce great uncertainty, and be of most injurious consequence to the trade generally.

Both to the Irish seller of butter, and to the English importer?—I think to both, but clearly to the English importer.

Since the inspection has been established, has the butter trade with Liverpool increased?—Yes, very much.

Do you attribute that increase to the inspection, or to the greater demand for butter?—Partly to the greater demand, but chiefly to the improved inspection, inasmuch as we find the export trade of those places where the inspection is best has increased most.

Is it within your experience to know whether the butter which comes from places where inspection is rigidly carried on, is in more favour with the market than butter coming from places where the inspection is not rigid?—Decidedly so. I believe there is scarcely a wholesale house in the trade which would not give a preference in the purchase of butter to that imported

Do you know the name of the inspector at Limerick?—The name I now produce to the Committee.

Is the inspection of Limerick founded on any law? It is a local law.

Were you acquainted with the state of the butter trade before the agreement to which you have alluded was entered into?—Yes, I was, for many years before that.

In what state was the butter trade of Limerick, prior to that agreement?—The butter exported from Limerick was in as low estimation as almost any butter that came from Ireland.

What was the effect of the regulations to which you have alluded, on the butter trade of Limerick?—The effect was to render the article generally saleable in the English markets, and consequently greatly to increase the demand for it.

What advance do you suppose the butter trade of Limerick has made in proportion to the other markets of Ireland, since that?—I believe the exportation at Limerick has about tripled; that is not the case at most of the other ports.

Are you aware that those regulations are matters purely of voluntary agreement between the parties, and not in consequence of any legislative restriction whatever?—The inspection at Limerick, so far as we know is certainly by a voluntary agreement; the Chamber of Commerce, at Limerick, takes the business into its own hands, and makes the regulations which it conceives most for the benefit of the place.

Having stated, that prior to the introduction of those regulations the trade of Limerick was in the worst possible condition, and that subsequent to those regulations it has improved, are not you inclined to attribute that improvement to the voluntary agreement among the sellers, and not to the law, which continued invariably the same during the whole course of that period?

—I am of opinion that the agreement on the part of the honest principles of dealing, but I should have much more confidence in butter marked by an honest inspector than in butter marked by an honest merchant.

Is it more easy to find an honest inspector than an honest merchant in Ireland?—I consider that a person who was disinterested would be most likely to give satisfaction.

Supposing the law repealed with regard to branding and inspection at the ports, could not the business of dealing in butter in Ireland be equally well carried on as the business of dealing in beef or bacon, and with equal advantage to the Liverpool merchant?—I think not.

Are you aware, that at former periods there existed Acts of Parliament in Ireland for regulating the packing of beef?—I know very little on that subject.

Are you able to say how the butter business was carried on before the Act of Parliament in 1812?—I had had a long experience of it before that time.

Was the business carried on, on the credit of the marks of the inspector in Ireland?—The inspection was so lax in many cases that the butter was bought more on the credit of the shipper than the inspector.

Did you find any practical difficulty in carrying on your business as an importer of butter when the law required no public branding and inspecting?—The greatest difficulty; the trade has been comfortable indeed, comparatively, since the inspection became severe; and it is comfortable in proportion to the severity of the local regulations.

Then, in point of fact, the advantage you derive from the law is in point of convenience in saving you trouble?—Not altogether so; we conceive it protects our purpose, and that frauds are prevented by the intervention of a local inspector.

How can that be, when you have already described that the business of inspecting is only well conducted in three ports, namely Cork, Limerick, and Sligo?—I spoke of such things; I spoke of the most efficient.

Do you import upon the credit of the inspector, or credit of the merchant?—At Waterford, whatever inspection previously takes place, we know that ultimately the quality is fixed by the merchant himself, and consequently we purchase the butter upon the credit of the merchant, our opinion of his skill and his honour.

Are you aware that the butter trade has changed hands in some of the ports of Ireland, from being in the hands of very respectable merchants, to the hands of persons much less respectable?—I am aware that there is a greater competition in the butter trade of Ireland, and that there are consequently a greater number of small dealers than formerly.

If the inspection were repealed, supposing the consumption of Irish butter in England continued to the extent it now does, in what way would you conduct your business?—If we had not the protection of the law, we must depend upon the faith of the person with whom we dealt.

What course would you take, if you required a certain quantity of butter from Ireland?—If I wanted to purchase butter from any particular port, I should look to the person who, I thought, would ship it at the lowest price, and of the best quality.

You have no doubt, that you should find merchants in the ports of Ireland that would ship it properly?—I do not wish to reflect on the merchants of Ireland, but I should rather depend upon the skill of a sworn inspector.

If the law was repealed, and you wanted Irish butter, what course would you take to obtain it?—I conceive there would be no other course but to write to the merchant for it.

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