

### Improvements at Cave Hill

It is well-known that during the winter the milk factory at Cave Hill has been closed, but now that spring is approaching and milk becoming more plentiful, a representative of this journal, during the week, visited Cave Hill for the purpose of ascertaining the truth or otherwise, and also to inspect the new curing factory erected by Mr David Mitchell. On our representative arriving at Cave Hill, he was met by Mr C. Mitchell, the general manager, and on the scribe representing his mission, Mr Mitchell at once expressed his willingness to give every information that he possibly could on the subject.

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After a few commonplace remarks, our representative, accompanied by Mr Mitchell, proceeded to the latterly erected

#### BACON CURING FACTORY

Which has been erected at the north end of the Milk Factory. On entering, the newly-appointed manager of this new venture is called forth, and we are introduced to Mr Jeffreys, who is most attentive, and readily accedes to the request for information. We have entered what is known as the curing-down room.

But a slight digression is here necessary. Mr D. Mitchell, the energetic proprietor, has decided to go into the bacon-curing export trade, and for this means the factory was erected. The pigs are all bred on the estate and dairy-fed. The cutting-down room is where the pigs are first deposited after being brought from the slaughter-house. Here the carcasses are cut in two and prepared for curing. Mr Jeffreys and his juvenile assistant were busy at work on some carcasses.

The room is 25 x 40, and will also be used for boiling down lard. It is provided with a patent floor of cement and granite chips, and will be very cool, even in summers. In the left-hand corner is a room which, on being opened, is found to be the smoking-room and is a double storey structure rising to a height of 40ft. Throughout the tower are a number of bars, from which 500 sides of bacon may be suspended at one time.

The cooling-room is next inspected. There we find over 100 sides of the finest quality of bacon being cured. This room may be down as low as 30 degrees in the summers. There are 864ft of 1/12in galvanised iron piping run throughout the room for cooling purposes, and which are supplied from the refrigerated machine of the Butter Factory.

Proceeding upstairs, we find ourselves in a larger room than the cutting-down room. This is the drying-room. Provision has been made for hanging 300 sides to dry. The hooks for this purpose are suspended from five principals, which run the whole length of the building. In this room we can also have a look into the smoking-room, and find that the outlet for the smoke is by a patent louver in the top of the tower. Sausages will also be made here, consisting of three different kinds. The manufacture of German sausages will also be carried on. The work for this branch will be carried out by a rotary sausage machine, and it is expected that, with the aid of an American sausage filler, 150lbs will be turned out in an hour.

As regards the building of the factory, we learn that these walls are double, so as to have abundance of ventilation, while the doors are double, and the windows will be covered with very fine wire netting. There are also tanks for curing heads and feet.

The factory has been erected by employees of Mr Mitchell, the materials is of the very best, while the design and fitting are of the very latest pattern.

In a conversation with Mr Jeffreys we learn that he has been 15 years in the bacon-curing business in Cork, of which city he is native. For smoking purposes he says that sawdust is what will be required. In speaking of export trade he says he can see no reason why it should not be a profitable venture. He also expresses an opinion that an effort should be made to get the ocean-going vessels to take their supplies of pork at Melbourne instead of London as he considers the Australian swine are equal to those of England and Ireland. He also speaks in hopeful terms of a large trade being done with the Canadian Dominion now that a direct line of trade has been opened up by Messrs Huddarts, Parker and Co.

The next place visited was the slaughter-house where the pig-killing is carried on. The animals are driven into the killing pen, when one of them is seized and a chain affixed to its legs. It is quickly hoisted up and killed. It is then put on to an American patent hook attached to a sliding bar. Without the least apparent effort the carcass slides along the two large tanks, which are filled with water and heated to 140 degrees. By touching the hook with a stick it becomes unloosed, and the carcass falls into the hot water, where it remains for several minutes, and is then withdrawn and prepared for the factory. The water is heated by means of a small engine situated a short distance from the slaughter-yards.

Everything in connection with the work is carried out in a scrupulously clean manner, and we predict a successful future for Cave Hill bacon, etc.

In looking round the paddocks it can be noticed that a quantity of new land has been turned over by the plough this season, so that a bountiful harvest may be expected at Cave Hill.

By advertisement in another column it will be seen that Mr Mitchell has appointed Mr T. Williams, butcher, Lilydale as agent for Cave Hill bacon, sausages, etc. and from whom all supplies may be obtained.

*(Lilydale Express August 18, 1893).*