

PART III.—PREPARATION FOR SALE.

The various preparatory processes to which eggs are sometimes subjected before they pass into consumption include testing for interior quality, grading or sorting, packing and stamping. They fall to be considered at this stage because preparation of produce for market is logically a producer's function, though, in point of fact, these preparatory processes are now more generally to be numbered among the services rendered by distributors both in this country and abroad.

CHAPTER VII.—TESTING.

The testing of eggs before a pencil of strong light has long been accepted as the only satisfactory commercial method of determining quality without breaking the shell. This process, though known usually as candling, can be carried out with electric, gas or oil lamps, or with sunlight as well as with a candle; when efficiently done, it shows the condition of the air-space,* yolk, and white of the egg examined, and reveals at once any extraneous substances such as blood clots. It is not proposed to discuss in this report the physiological significance of variations and faults in the candled appearance of eggs; they are considerable, but can be readily noted and understood by an experienced operator. An extensive and detailed knowledge of candling is, in any event, not generally required by producers, though they should be able to distinguish the appearance of a fresh egg when candled and to recognise undesirable features. For all ordinary purposes, the standard appearance of a fresh egg as defined by the Government of Northern Ireland in 1924, is a sufficient guide. This is as follows :—

Air-space not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in depth. Yolk, faintly visible to visible. White, clear and firm.

Fig. 4, facing page 29, which has been issued as a poster by the Government of Northern Ireland, illustrates this definition.

The specifications adopted by the Canadian Government in 1924 are more stringent, as follows :—

CLASS (1) FRESH† EGGS.

* The air space is usually to be found at the broader end of the egg. It is negligible in size in an egg newly laid but increases daily thereafter.

† Eggs classified as "fresh" are those which have not been held under refrigeration at a temperature of 35° Fahrenheit or less except when in transit, or subjected to artificial preservation.