



T. W. BEACH & SONS, LTD. WINCHCOMBE, GLOS.

Whole Fruit Jam Manufacturers.

THE business owned and controlled by Messrs. Beach and Sons, Limited, as manufacturers of "BEACH'S JAMS, JELLIES, and BOTTLED FRUITS," has long been familiar to the public, having been established at Ealing Road Gardens, Brentford, Middlesex, for over 35 years, and this branch still continues to deal with the greater part of their London trade.

Twenty years ago, however, the business had grown to such an extent that much larger and more commodious premises became an absolute necessity, and to meet these requirements an additional factory (devoted principally to their provincial trade) was established by Messrs. Beach and Sons on the Toddington Estate, near Winchcombe, Glos., in the centre of the extensive and well known fruit plantations laid out by the Right Hon. Lord Sudeley in 1881.

It need hardly be added that large additions to these plantations have since been made, and of the fruit produced on upwards of 600 acres now in full bearing, Messrs. Beach and Sons take as much as their plant enables them to deal with and preserve, while freshly gathered and in perfect condition.

From time to time considerable additions have been made to the plant, and although its capacity has been greatly increased, it is foreseen that further extensions must soon be made. The factory premises at present comprise nearly four acres of ground, a large proportion of which is under roof. The premises being situate in a delightful and open country the fruit is preserved in the most healthful and sanitary surroundings.

In the construction and arrangement of the various buildings every valuable feature which forethought or long experience could suggest has been adopted. All the lower floors are paved with concrete or brick, and in those departments in which moisture is unavoidable the floor is slightly convex, with gutters at the sides, thus ensuring perfect drainage. The entire premises, by the way, are provided with an effective drainage system. Other noticeable features are the metals for trucks which connect all the lower floors, facilitating the handling of the fruits and preserves; the lifts running from top to bottom; the hot-air system of heating; the general excellent arrangements for lighting and ventilation; and the precautions against fire.

The several buildings are so placed as to minimise labour at every stage. The long sheds in which the fruit bottles and other necessities are received extend along the roadside; while the boiling room, the steam cooking room, the bottle washing room, and the packing and labelling rooms are so arranged as to facilitate despatch in the work of converting the ripe fruit into preserves.

The main building is a fine three story structure, covering a ground area of 450 square feet; the boiling room, containing thirty-four large copper steam boiling pans, and other departments are scarcely inferior in point of dimensions. The Company maintain on the premises their own smithy and repair shop, a case-making department, and their own stables. During the busy season upwards of 200 hands are required, exclusive of fruit pickers, and the works are the scene of the greatest activity.

In the foregoing slight reference to Messrs. Beach and Sons' works no mention was made of the subject of cleanliness—a question of the very first importance in the preparation of every kind of food product. The omission was intentional, as the scrupulous cleanliness everywhere apparent throughout the works requires more than a passing reference. To every

visitor who places a proper value on this point the evident care taken by the Company to keep every room clean and sweet must be highly gratifying. The walls in all the rooms are whitewashed, and are constantly kept white by frequent renewals of the coating; and the floors and tables are as conspicuously clean as those in a draper's shop. In the boiling room the interior walls are of glazed brick, which may be frequently washed, and thus be kept free from any atmospheric germs. It may safely be said that no similar concern has ever adopted greater precautions for ensuring to the consumer the absolute purity and wholesomeness of the product.

As might be inferred from the conditions under which Messrs. Beach and Sons preserve their fruit, its quality has long been recognised as of the highest character. Every jar that bears their label contains absolutely no substance other than fresh fruit and sugar.

While the Company preserve all kinds of fruit in season, they have become particularly noted for several specialities. Among these is their "scarlet strawberry" preserve, made from a variety of strawberry specially grown for them. Although this strawberry is small it has a delicious flavour, and preserves without losing its shape, being exceedingly attractive when put in glass. Another speciality is their "blackberry jelly," which possesses a particularly beautiful colour and consistency.

With the exception of some of the leading shipping companies and several other large consumers, to whom Messrs. Beach and Sons send large consignments, they supply the wholesale trade only, through their own travellers. Their connection includes many of the leading dealers in the country, a number of whom have been patrons for years, as they no doubt will continue to be. All the Company's preserves are attractively put up, principally in glass or stone jars.

While limited space has precluded anything like an adequate description of Messrs. Beach and Sons' interesting plant, enough has been said to indicate its importance in Gloucestershire's industrial life. The works have not only created employment for operatives who had previously had no access to any kind of industrial pursuit, but their high character have added not a little to the county's prestige abroad.



DANIEL PHELPS, TIBBERTON, NEAR GLOUCESTER.

Cider Merchant.

IN our description of Gloucestershire's principal enterprises it is a pleasure to refer briefly to the cider and perry producing industry carried on by Mr. Daniel Phelps, at Tibberton, four and one-half miles from Gloucester. Although Mr. Phelps is not the largest maker of cider and perry in the county, it may be said, without disparaging others, that he has long held the first place by reason of the invariable excellence of his product.

Over forty years ago Mr. Phelps began experiments in fruit culture, and particularly in apples, on the farm he still occupies. His efforts have been remarkably successful, and he has probably taken a greater number of prizes at various exhibitions for different varieties of fruits, and for farm produce generally, than has any other one man in the district. This is certainly true of his cider and perry, which have long since gained a national reputation for their absolute purity and fine flavour.

A large proportion of the fruit gathered in his own orchards, as well as a very large quantity selected from neighbouring orchards,

is reserved for the making of cider and perry. It should be stated, in passing, that the experiments of many years have conclusively proved that owing to some peculiarity of the soil apples and pears grown in the Tibberton district are specially adapted to cider and perry making, and that fruits of the same varieties, and apparently of the same quality, grown elsewhere do not produce the same results in this direction. Rudder, in his history of the county, says that Taynton, which is adjacent to Tibberton, was famous for its cider and perry.

Mr. Phelps has consistently resisted the temptation to increase the quantity of his product, and to correspondingly lessen its quality, by engaging in the ordinary indiscriminate factory methods. He has made no effort to provide for those who prefer cheapness to quality. Every case of his cider and perry is made in the old-fashioned way, and is of the old-fashioned kind, containing absolutely nothing but the pure juice of the best selected fruit. No fruits are used until they are fully ripe and in proper condition, and they are carefully blended in the proportions which have been proved to produce the best result. Both the cider and perry are sent out in cask and bottle, and we saw a large quantity of the latter ripening and maturing. This department embraces several blends to suit all tastes, and none of which is sent out until it is in prime condition, a case containing either three dozen quarts or five dozen pints being the smallest quantities supplied.

As we have stated, Mr. Phelps has the distinction of having gained a greater number of awards for his cider and perry than has any other one man in the county or district. His exhibits in London, Birmingham and other large cities, as well as at innumerable shows in Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford, Cheltenham, and elsewhere, have invariably attracted wide attention, and have done a great deal to promote an interest in the most wholesome and palatable of beverages. He has for a number of years not only supplied many families of the nobility and gentry throughout England, but has (particularly in recent years) received orders from abroad, including such remote places as Ceylon and Brazil.

He is now one of the oldest living members of the Gloucestershire Root, Fruit, and Grain Society, whose usefulness he has materially helped to advance. Associated with him in the industry to which we have briefly referred, and which it has been a pleasure to unreservedly commend, is his son, Mr. Harold J. Phelps, upon whom much of the actual management now devolves.



Gloucestershire Agriculture.

FROM time immemorial Gloucestershire's agricultural products have been held in the highest esteem throughout the kingdom. In Shakespeare's plays are several allusions to these products, and particularly to the fruits. Sir John Falstaff, the wittiest of the poet's characters, praises in unstinted terms Justice Shallow's Gloucestershire mansion, and is pressed to eat a pippin of the Justice's own grafting.

The orchards have always formed one of the county's most valuable assets, by reason of both the acreage and the quality of the fruit. In recent years the acreage in orchards has been greatly increased, especially in the north-eastern portion of the county. The apples and pears make the best possible cider, particularly those gathered from orchards in the Tibberton district.

The making of cider and perry, of butter, cheese, and other dairy products, and of fruit preserves, now gives employment to hundreds of hands throughout the county.