

with the need for the assistance on the farms indicated above. In the opinion of the writer, the transfer of the expenditure as suggested would prove to be a most profitable investment both for the Government and the dairy-farmers.

In the past our efforts have been mainly directed to the instruction of the factory-managers. This has been successful, but it is now being nullified to some extent by the absence of instruction on the farm. The means of supplying it are at hand, and should be used to save the industry from loss before it be too late. In no other way can it be expected to overcome the weakness of impurities in the supply of much of the milk and cream delivered to the dairy factories throughout the Dominion.

MILK AND CREAM TESTING.

The testing of milk and cream samples has received a great deal of attention from officers of the Division during the past season in the factories and also in the testing-room connected with the Dairy-produce Grader's office in Wellington.

Many applications from dairy companies have been received for the assistance of the Instructors in connection with the testing of the factory samples, in order to alleviate discontent which has arisen on the part of some of the suppliers, who have expressed dissatisfaction with the tests allowed to them by the factory-manager, the dairy-farmers concerned having stated a desire for an official and independent test. On receipt of such applications immediate attention was given to this work, the officer attending at the factory on the usual testing-day, when all those who wished were invited to attend. On such occasions the whole process of the Babcock method was thoroughly explained to those present, and when desired they were also given the opportunity of reading the percentages of butter-fat in the samples.

In other cases the Division was asked by the directors of dairy companies to make a report on the efficiency or otherwise of the testing as carried out by their managers. The procedure then was for the officer to carefully note how the samples of milk or cream were dealt with, and to check the reading after the manager had given his decision. A report was then submitted to the board on the work done, and included a criticism of any weakness which may have been detected. With a few exceptions, however, it was found that the factory-managers were thoroughly conversant with the testing system, and that they carried out this duty with care and exactness. A great deal of misunderstanding was thus cleared up between the dairy-factory directors, milk and cream suppliers, and the men in charge of the factories.

At the Wellington testing-station many samples were put through the Babcock machine, and the results reported to the senders. The majority of the samples were, of course, sent in for the purpose of checking the factory tests, and in this way the work of the Division appeared to give general satisfaction.

On several occasions the men engaged in dairy-factory work came to Wellington for the purpose of receiving some lessons on the testing of milk and cream, and all evidenced a keen interest in the tuition afforded by our officers.

HERD-TESTING.

It is evident that the dairy-farmers of New Zealand have not yet in large numbers realized the immense benefits to be derived from the systematic testing of the individual cows in their herds. At the same time it is true that a good many have taken advantage of the co-operative associations which have been organized for this purpose. Why many more have not accepted the opportunity of following their example is somewhat difficult to understand. The reason would seem to be that the economic principle underlying this field of progress has not been fully appreciated by those who hold aloof from the movement. The number of active herd-testing associations for the year, however, shows an increase, and the extended effort has been most noticeable in the Province of Taranaki. Associations were formed at Okaiawa, Lowgarth, Tikorangi, Bell Block, Flankley Road, and Warea, and were continued throughout the season with fair support from the members.

One of the most successful organizations for herd-testing is that established by the Kaupokonui Dairy Company, in Taranaki. It has now been in operation for four years, and is still being carried on with much vigour amongst the farmers in that district, where some of the best-producing herds in the Dominion may now be seen as the result of the methodical system in vogue. The Kaupokonui Company was the first to engage an official herd-testing officer, and entered into an agreement with the Department of Agriculture in making the appointment. The company agreed to pay into the Public Account an amount equal to the officer's salary, the man employed being a member of the Dairy Division. In addition to meeting this expenditure the company has paid out of its general fund the total cost of running the herd-testing work, thus making the scheme free to all milk-suppliers who desired to have their cows tested for production.

At the beginning of last season the Joll Co-operative Dairy Company, of Okaiawa, a neighbouring concern, followed the example of the Kaupokonui Company, and agreed to pay for the services of an official herd-tester. Another officer of the Dairy Division was accordingly appointed to this position on similar terms. At the commencement many of the milk-suppliers agreed to enter their herds for testing, and the work gave promise of much interest amongst the farmers. While a fair number of cows have been dealt with under this organization, and the work carried on without intermission through the season, a number of the farmers found it impossible to continue owing to the scarcity of labour on the farms. The work done, however, has been successful, and it is believed that more support will be forthcoming next year.