

VISIT TO UNITED KINGDOM.

Inasmuch as the greater proportion of New Zealand butter and cheese is consumed in the United Kingdom, it was deemed advisable that I should visit the United Kingdom and also some of those countries with which New Zealand was competing. I left New Zealand in April, 1929, returning to New Zealand in October last after an absence of some five and one-half months, during which visits were made to the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Holland, Canada, and the United States of America. Since my return a report has been forwarded to the Department, and after publication has been distributed to dairy companies. Shortly after my return a series of meetings were arranged throughout most of the dairying districts, and at these I discussed impressions received during my trip abroad. Some of the more immediate results have been indicated in draft regulations which have been recommended. Other matters of greater import are still under discussion, and it is expected that further developments will follow.

CERTIFICATE-OF-RECORD TESTING.

The support accorded this system of testing appears to be slightly on the increase, after having shown a steady falling-off each year since 1924. Some 491 cows qualified under the C.O.R. test during the calendar year 1929, as compared with 465 in 1928. That this increase is being sustained will be apparent from the fact that the figures for the peak month of the current season show 864 cows on test on the farms of 272 breeders, as compared with 660 cows and 226 breeders for the highest month of last season.

OFFICIAL HERD-TESTING.

The official herd-test, although evidencing slightly decreased support in 1929, still continues to meet with favour. At the height of the season under review official herd-testing was being carried out for 1,365 cows in the hands of 129 of our C.O.R. breeders, as compared with 1,666 cows and 128 breeders for 1928.

HERD-TESTING.

Herd-testing in New Zealand is extending in a most satisfactory manner. The extension is due to the increasing popularity of the group system, although the Dairy Division's original association method still finds considerable favour in the districts to which it is more particularly adapted. Figures pertaining to the current season (1929-30) are not yet available, but a still higher total for cows tested is anticipated. During 1928-29 some 259,594 cows were tested, 212,480 of these being tested under the group method. The 1927-28 figure was 224,130, of which 164,610 were group tested. The 1928-29 total of 259,594 represents 18.9 per cent. of the total of the Dominion's dairy cows in milk and dry. The Government subsidy to herd-testing has been continued, and a sum not exceeding £10,500 made available for distribution to testing dairy-herd owners.

STAFF.

All members of the divisional staff have rendered willing and efficient service during an exceptionally busy year, and their cordial co-operation is highly appreciated.

APPRECIATION.

During the year the Department's Chief Chemist, and also the Bacteriologist have given the Division valuable assistance, which has been much appreciated. The State Forest Service, the various cattle-breeders' associations, and the freezing companies have also willingly co-operated with and assisted the Division, and to all of these our thanks are extended.