

(4) *Survey of the Position regarding the Production of Liquid Milk.* Because the production of liquid milk for use in homes and schools is a matter of national importance about which the knowledge is incomplete in important respects, an investigation of the position has been undertaken in the territory between Wellington and Palmerston North and adjacent to these centres. The investigation is designed to cover thoroughly the economics of milk-production, and the objective is not only to give accurate information about the present cost of production, but also to indicate the major factors responsible for inter-farm variations in the cost of production and thereby possibly to point the way to betterment of the milk-producing industry. Specific matters which are being given attention relate to systems of feeding and provision of feed, herd-maintenance, pasture utilization and maintenance, distribution of calving-dates, types of soils, influence upon cost of size of herd, and of average annual herd-production of butterfat.

The greater part of the field-work necessary has already been carried out: it has involved obtaining data from approximately three hundred farmers, and in this it is gratifying to record that there has been extensive and useful collaboration of the farmers concerned with the officers carrying out the survey of the position.

Hill-country Sheep-farming. Probably the most momentous land-utilization problems of the Dominion are those that are associated with the efficient utilization of hill country devoted dominantly to sheep-farming. From time to time during the year as opportunity offered attention has been given to these problems with the ultimate object of drafting a programme of investigation designed to supply information about the economics of various types of farm practice and farm-management that are being or might be adopted on hill-country sheep-farms. It is considered that in this investigation close co-operation of the research workers with the farming and business interests, co-operation analogous to that obtaining in the Hawke's Bay farming survey, would be most valuable.

YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS.

Definite progress has been made during the past year. This is indicated by additional clubs and increased membership, and also by the type of work and the activities that have been successfully carried out by clubs, district committees, and the organization generally.

At the commencement of the period under review there were 122 clubs in the Dominion, with a total membership of approximately 3,000. Of the clubs, 60 were situated in the South Island and 62 in the North Island. To date there are 150 clubs in the Dominion, comprising 67 in the South Island and 83 in the North Island. The total membership is now approximately 4,000. The average membership per club is slightly below 27: the membership, of course, varies, a number of clubs having only from 12 to 20 members, while the greater majority have round about 30 members, and a few between 40 and 50.

With respect to future organization, it is not expected that many more clubs will be formed in the South Island. There is still a certain amount of scope in the western and eastern southland areas. Otago and Canterbury would appear to have almost reached saturation point, although it is possible that a few more clubs may be formed: the same applies to the Nelson and Marlborough districts. So far no start has been made in Westland, but it is possible, with the appointment of a fields officer at Greymouth, that one or two will be formed. In the North Island, Manawatu, Wairarapa, South Taranaki, Poverty Bay, Bay of Plenty, and Rotorua districts are well organized. Additional clubs have been formed in the Wanganui area, and before long the position there should be very satisfactory: it is anticipated that clubs will also be formed in the Hastings district. The position in the Te Kuiti district has steadily improved, and considering the disabilities in the North Auckland areas the work of organization is proceeding satisfactorily. New Clubs have been formed in the Waikato. The Auckland district appears to be stagnating, there being only one club in the whole area, while in North Taranaki organization is apparently at a standstill, there being only two clubs, which were formed nearly two years ago.

Club Work.—The type of work that has been undertaken and carried out in the clubs generally has shown a marked improvement during the year. While this is, in the main, more evident in the older clubs whose experience has taken them beyond the stage where their members are mere audiences at lectures, many of the younger clubs are competing with those longer established, and are in most cases holding their own. This is particularly noticeable in localities where strong district committees are functioning and assisting the clubs to carry out the aims and objects of the movement. The district committees form the key to the progress of the whole organization: they can act as the background to the work of the district secretaries among the clubs: they can help clubs by making suggestions for their programmes: and they can stimulate interest by arranging inter-club visits and district activities. New clubs formed in districts where a strong committee is functioning have the advantage of district organization and get into their stride far quicker than in districts where the committee is not very active or where no committee has been yet set up.

Agricultural and Educational Weeks.—Regarding district activities, the outstanding event has been the Agricultural Week held in Palmerston North last July, which was attended by approximately three hundred club members. This activity was carried out by the Manawatu District Committee, the local officers of the Fields Division being particularly prominent in the organization. The attendance was representative of forty-four clubs, all of them (with the exception of Kaitia) being within the Wellington Fields Superintendent's area. Agricultural weeks were also successfully held in Nelson (at the Nelson College, with an attendance of about fifty members), and in Canterbury (at Lincoln College, the attendance being about seventy): both of these were organized and carried out by the local Fields Division officer, with the assistance of the district committee concerned. An Education Week for Young Farmers was also held in Dunedin during August, 150 Y.F.C. members