

## INFLUENCE OF THE PUREBRED DAIRY SIRE.

As previously stated, the true test of a sire's worth is the quality of his daughters. It is difficult to get herd-testing-association figures on this phase of the subject, as our records do not include any information with respect to pedigree. From our records, however, have been collected sixteen instances where both daughter and dam have association records, the daughters having been sired by a purebred butterfat-record bull. Their sixteen daughters have improved on the average production of their dams by no less than 124.24 lb. butterfat. With two exceptions, each daughter has exceeded the production of her dam. These two daughters were two-year-olds; one produced only 3 lb. of butterfat less than her dam, and the other 21 lb. less. Doubtless, at ages equal to that of the dam these two daughters would show a higher yield. The sixteen dams were sired by eleven different bulls, so that the examples are fair, and the improvement cannot be attributed to the influence of one or two outstanding dams. Moreover, only two sires are represented, so that it may safely be assumed that the improvement has come from the male side.

Another example is the case of five different dams each from a different sire, and mated with a butterfat-record bull. These five dams, at an average age of 8 years 87 days at commencement of test, yielded an average of 441.36 lb. butterfat. Their five daughters, each from the butterfat-record bull, yielded, at an average of 1 year 347 days, 624.77 lb. butterfat, an average increase of 183.41 lb. The fact that the average production of the five dams was already very creditable, and that the average age of the daughters was low, makes this example an outstanding one. These figures are quoted from our C.O.R. returns to show what is possible if the right sire is chosen. What is more, the success of this particular sire was a more or less natural expectation, owing to the information which his butterfat-record backing supplied. He was line-bred to an outstanding bull of the breed, and, apart from this, the other animals figuring in the pedigree were for several generations back of proved outstanding merit.

## LENGTH OF MILKING-PERIOD.

Statistics show that the average cow on association test in New Zealand milks about 230 days. It is safe to assume that the average lactation for all cows in the country is less. The writer has frequently expressed the opinion that the season of the average dairy cow in New Zealand is too short. Even on the basis of 230 days it means that there are more than four months in which our average dairy cow is doing nothing in butterfat-production. During that period she requires bodily maintenance, and general charges bearing on the cost of the cow's keep continue much as during the milking-period. Two months' rest from milk-production should be sufficient.

An endeavour should be made to obtain a type of dairy cow which will naturally milk a greater portion of the season than is the case at present. It may be possible by means of forced feeding and extreme care to extend the lactation of the average cow now in our dairy herds, but if the butterfat so added to the seasonal total does not compensate for the time and money expended, then the practice is