

THE NEW DAIRY-PRODUCE REGULATIONS.

MANUFACTURE AND EXPORT.

W. M. SINGLETON, Director of the Dairy Division.

THE old regulations under which the dairy industry has hitherto been guided, so far as export is concerned, were gazetted in 1899. Dr. J. A. Ruddick was then Dairy Commissioner for New Zealand, and was ably assisted in the drafting of the regulations by Mr. R. Evatt, then Chief Clerk of the Agriculture Department; Mr. J. D. Ritchie, then Secretary for Agriculture, also took a close part in the matter generally. Those regulations referred almost entirely to the registration of dairy factories, and to the branding and storing of dairy-produce. The drafting was well done, and the regulations, so far as they went, have, in effect, been carried forward to a considerable extent into the new Dairy-produce General Regulations gazetted on 25th November last.

During the twenty-seven years which have elapsed since the issue of the regulations of 1899 the dairy industry has expanded enormously in New Zealand. The tonnage of butter and cheese exported has increased from 7,608 tons in 1899 to 131,237 tons in 1925. The advent of the farm separator and the milking-machine; the manufacture of milk-powder, casein, milk-sugar, and whey butter; the pasteurization of cream and milk for butter and cheese making; the extension of the grading of cream, and the necessity for ensuring more exact methods of testing for butterfat at some dairy factories; the extension of cold storage for butter, and of cool storage for cheese—these, and other developments, together with the recognized need for more improved methods respecting cleanliness and sanitation at a number of milking-sheds, made it essential that a more specific guide should be issued to assist those connected with the industry.

There is really little embodied in the new regulations immediately affecting dairy companies and suppliers which is not in practice at many of our well equipped and managed dairy factories and dairy farms. From this viewpoint the issue of the regulations is mainly an official endorsement of present good practice. The principal factor which made it wise to issue these regulations at the present juncture was the necessity for some additional definitions and authorities in connection with cream-grading and the testing of milk and cream at dairy factories. The dairying community pressed the Government for legislation respecting these matters, and, having obtained that legislation, regulations were required accordingly. This being the case, together with the fact that the then existing regulations were so old and circumscribed, it was deemed advisable to review the whole position, and include the cream grading and testing for butterfat regulations with such others as would bring the general position up to the present requirements.

Hitherto the Dairy Division has relied very largely on certain provisions of the Dairy Industry Act rather than on regulations under that Act. From that point of view the regulations cannot be stronger