

# COW TESTING

WITH SOME NOTES ON

## THE SAMPLING AND TESTING OF MILK

By J. A. RUDDICK AND C. F. WHITLEY.

### INTRODUCTION.

#### GREAT POSSIBILITIES FROM SELECTING COWS.

The dairy farmers of Canada are beginning to realize the importance of the question of the improvement of dairy herds, and the possibilities there are in this line of work for increasing the profits of milk production. According to the results which have followed intelligent breeding and selection, combined with good care and feeding, in other lands, as well as the experiences of progressive farmers in this country, it would seem to be possible to increase the average production of Canadian herds by at least 2,000 pounds of milk per cow per year, by applying the same rational methods. Such an increase in production would mean an additional revenue from dairying to the farmers of Canada of at least \$30,000,000 a year, without increasing the number of cows kept.

The plans for the improvement of a dairy herd need not be elaborate or expensive, and should take cognizance of the fact that there are good cows and poor cows, judged by their milk production, in all breeds, and that it does not follow because a cow may have a lengthy pedigree that her performance at the milk pail is up to the mark; that there are 'scrub' pure bred as well as common 'scrubs.' It will require some moral courage to discard the expensive pure bred scrub after she has been shown up in her true colours, but that is what should be done. There is only one true standard, and the test must be production. This is not an argument against the pure bred animals as such, but rather an attempt to place performance ahead of pedigree. Ancestry is a most important consideration, but unless the record carries with it some account of production, it lacks the only really important feature, and the man looking for superior animals gets no information from it that is of real value to him. He may have personal knowledge of the strain in question, but that is another matter.

Any scheme which has for its object the improvement of our dairy stock must provide for a study, and record, of the performance of the individual cow, as well as deal with the management of the herd, including its care and feeding, and the breeding of animals to replace those which are discarded in the 'weeding' process. Individuality can only be determined by the weighing and testing of each cow's milk.

It is quite practicable for individual farmers to test their own herds, and many are doing so, but some form of co-operation makes the work easier and cheaper and at the same time more useful, inasmuch as each member of an association has the information relating to other herds as well as his own.