

must be frequently renewed, as it would never do to allow them to eat their food out of dirty scratching material. When hatching by hen, if the hen has been confined for two days after the chicks have come out, they will be strong enough and spry enough to take care of themselves, when the hen gets to work with her scratching powers, as she is glad enough to do.

With the regular feeding, proper housing and management along the lines indicated, the results of your operations ought to be successful. All the care and attention you can give the chicks will be wisely expended. The more time you devote to them, the more satisfied you will be with the results. Early chicks mean increased returns financially, just as anything "early" in any other line does, and you should see that they are given proper care.

### Figure on the Cost of Your Milking Machine.

J. P. Robinson, Nipissing Co., Ont.

The Experimental Farm, agricultural press and other instructors of the farming community have done more real good by inducing farmers to keep milk records than by all their experimenting and theorizing, highly valuable as it is. Every other business laughs at the farmer, who, with the milk-making machine worth \$15 to \$20, fed upon \$40 or \$50 worth of material and labor a year, turns out \$20 or \$30 worth of finished product, plus the manure and a skin skin.

Farming has been classed as an occupation requiring the greatest possible amount of labor in return for the least possible remuneration. Of many things helping to make this true, the keeping of poor cows is surely the greatest. Of course, this applies to the farmer as distinguished from the fruit grower, market gardener, live stock specialist, city milk dealer, etc. These men can afford poor cows, though it is not strange that, usually, they have animals above the average. Many have wondered why each succeeding year found them as hard driven as ever before to make ends meet. "Cheese was a good price," they would say. "Butter will be high this winter." And yet it was the same old story. At one factory which I visited during the past summer, the cheese maker told me that only a few of the patrons would receive \$28 a cow for the full season. Hay sold around \$15 a ton in that locality.

When it was announced last fall that a shortage of fodder was imminent in Ontario, some of the alleged wise ones claimed that farmers were panic-stricken without cause. A great number availed themselves of this excuse to get rid of a bunch of dead-beat boarders. "Milk cows selling at \$8 to \$10 a piece" was a repeated newspaper heading. "Milk cows" it should have read.

The continued repetition that a cow must give at least 6,000 lbs. of milk a year to be profitable, has begun to take effect. Keeping cows, was, for many years, a pastime, while the land was new and favorable seasons produced good crops to feed them. I can recall instances where the strife between neighbors about the number of their cows led to bitter enmity. All would have had better bank accounts if they had kept fewer.

But the cry is "you must have the manure." Quite so; only don't have \$5 worth made by a cow from \$20 worth of fodder unless she will give you \$20 worth of milk as a by product. Don't guess at the quantity of milk. Weigh it. The time taken in doing so is of no consequence.

Put your money in the bank and you draw bank interest. Put it in "Cobalt" and you lose it. Many of the dairymen in the cow testing associations are deriving 30 per cent. interest on the money invested in good dairy cows.—C. F. Whitley, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

## RURAL FREE DELIVERY; IS IT POSSIBLE TO RESTRICT THE SERVICE?

The Sixth of a Series of Articles Written for The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World, by an Editorial Representative of this Paper, who Recently Visited the United States, with the Object of Studying the Free Rural Mail Delivery System.

An interview with a leading official of our Canadian post office department, was published in the second article in this series. The statement was made by this official that it had been found impossible, in the United States, to control the conditions upon which the rural free delivery service had been established. He contended that the United States Post Office Department had been unable to restrict the service to routes that are 20 to 25 miles in length and that serve at least 100 families. It had been found useless, he said, to try to limit rural delivery to sections where the roads were good, and where there were the required number of families. The people that were refused rural delivery raised such a row, the politicians forced the post office department to establish the routes. The great expense of the system was blamed to the fact that the government had been unable to control the service.

### WHAT WE WOULD EXPECT

The conditions upon which the service is established were described in the fourth article in this series. If these conditions have not been exacted and if the Post Office Department has had to give the service to the people practically wherever they have demanded it, then we must presume:

1st.—That the great majority of the applications received by the Department for the location of new routes have been granted;

2nd.—That a large proportion of the routes are less than 20 miles in length;

3rd.—That many routes, 24 miles in length serve considerably less than 100 families.

### DISPOSITION OF PETITIONS

The reports of the United States Post Office Department furnish the best answer to the contention that the Department has been forced to establish the system almost wherever the people have petitioned for it. While the service has been given to some sections not deserving it, such cases are the exception and not the rule.

On July 1, 1903, the number of petitions for rural delivery on file with the Department was 11,700. In addition there were 2307 cases that had been reported upon previously. During the following year 11,630 of the proposed routes were examined by inspectors sent out by the Department. Of these, 6780 were found to comply with the requirements of the Department and were reported upon favorably. Of the remainder, 4,850 were found not to comply with the requirements of the service and were reported upon adversely. The number of routes established was 9,447. During the fiscal year 1905-6, 3331 routes were reported upon unfavorably, 76 routes were discontinued because they fell below the requirements of the Department and 3,656 routes were established. There were 233 routes on which only a tri-weekly service was given.

For the fiscal year 1906-7, 1,679 routes were reported upon unfavorably, 357 routes were discontinued (Note—Some of the routes that were discontinued were merged in other routes) and 2,317 routes were established. There were 689 routes that had only a tri-weekly service.

If the department has been forced to give the service wherever the people have petitioned for it how is it that we find during the past two years alone over 5,000 petitions have been reported upon adversely?

We have been told that once the service has been established it has been found impossible

to discontinue it. And yet we find that last year alone 357 routes were discontinued or merged during the past two years.

We have been told that if we give rural delivery to one section we must give the same service to every section. And yet we find that while a daily service was given on thousands of routes there were 689 routes last year on which only a tri-weekly service was given.

If it is true that the people and the politicians of the United States force the government to establish the service in spite of the requirements of the Post Office Department, how is it that the Department has had the temerity, during the past two years, to report adversely upon over 5,000 petitions to discontinue or completely re-arrange 433 established routes and to refuse to give anything better than a tri-weekly service on 689 routes?

### THE LENGTH OF THE ROUTES

Were it true that the Post Office Department has been forced to give way to the public clamor and that in consequence a large proportion of the routes that have been established are less than 20 miles in length, it would be a serious objection to the service provided that the expense of operating the short routes was as great as the expense of operating the long routes. It is not.

For several years the pay of the carriers has been based upon the length of their routes. In some instances this is unjust. There are some short routes on which the carriers deliver three and four times as much mail as other carriers, on longer routes. It has, however, been found to be the fairest basis, and is followed by the Department.

### THE PAY OF THE CARRIERS

The pay of the carriers is as follows:

Routes, 22 to 24 miles, \$864 a year.  
Routes, 20 to 22 miles, \$870 a year.  
Routes, 18 to 20 miles, \$720 a year.  
Routes, 16 to 18 miles, \$630 a year.  
Routes, 14 to 16 miles, \$540 a year.  
Routes, 12 to 14 miles, \$504 a year.  
Routes, 10 to 12 miles, \$468 a year.  
Routes, 8 to 10 miles, \$432 a year.  
Routes, 6 to 8 miles, \$396 a year.

As short routes cost proportionately less than the long routes, what objection can be taken even if the United States Government has given way to public clamor, and established short routes? Is it possible that our Post Office Department was not aware that the rural carriers of the United States were paid on a mileage basis?

### THE ROUTES ARE OVER 20 MILES IN LENGTH

Aside from all this, however, it is not true that a large proportion of the routes are less than 20 miles in length. Fourth Assistant Post Master General De Grauw last November issued a special bulletin dealing with this matter. This bulletin showed that of the 38,216 routes then in existence, 24,704 were 24 miles or over in length, or 64.65 per cent. of the whole. There were 11,384 routes between 20 and 24 miles in length, or 29.52 per cent. of the whole. There were only 2,230 routes less than 20 miles in length. Thus we see that 94.17 per cent. of the routes were over 20 miles in length, and only 5.83 per cent. less than 20 miles long.

Space does not permit mention being made in this issue of the average number of families on the different routes, or of the number of the post