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EDITORIAL NOTES.

FOR some decades the policy of most countries has been to encourage the local production of staple commodities instead of relying on their importation. To-day, this policy is largely dictated by the international situation, which is restricting the free flow of trade from one country to another. In New Guinea, production for local consumption is small, most of the necessities of life being imported from Australia and overseas. The value of the foodstuffs imported into this Territory is about £300,000 per annum and the value of the foodstuffs of animal origin is approximately half this amount, made up as follows:—

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Meat	86,000
Dairy Produce	30,400
Fish	16,700
Bacon and Hams	9,900
Other Animal Foodstuffs	8,900

A diminution in the importation of any of these foodstuffs, particularly dairy produce, through increased local production is most desirable. In the case of dairy produce, local production is not only desirable economically, but necessary to maintain a high standard of health, for milk is the most valuable of all foods and it has been proved that in communities where there is not a good supply of cheap fresh milk, the health of the people is thereby impaired.

The production of milk in the tropics is a subject which has received much attention during recent years. The most fundamental of the many problems connected with it is that concerned with the establishment of breeds of dairy cattle which will live, thrive and produce payable quantities of milk under the severe climatic and environmental conditions existing in tropical countries. The introduction of European breeds into the tropics with a view to their final acclimatization is a practice which has met with little success. The first imported animals may be satisfactory, but successive generations bred in the tropics show progressive degeneration due to causes which have not been fully investigated. Repeated importations of new blood may retard this degeneration but are generally unsatisfactory. The development, by selection, of milking strains within some of the pure breeds of Indian cattle of the Zebu or Brahmin type has met with definite success and it has been stated, that in the proper handling of material available in Southern India, lies the solution to the problems of breeding dairy cattle for the tropics.

Nearly half a century ago, dairy cattle were first introduced into this Territory and although many died shortly after their importation, some survived and to-day their prodigy (over 20,000) are to be found in many coastal districts of the Territory. These cattle were mostly of the Jersey and Guernsey breed imported from Australia, although, it is on record, that occasional cows of the Bali, Zebu and Javanese breeds were also brought into the country. These cattle were imported for the joint purpose of milk production and to keep down grass on the plantations, thereby saving labour. As dairy cattle, they have degenerated pitifully, but they have adapted themselves to their environment and are in good health. Unfortunately, their milk yield is low but, as will be shown in the following article, this is partly the result of inadequate feeding. By proper feeding, selection and perhaps the introduction of new blood from sub-tropical countries, the milk yield could be increased and dairy herds of good grade built up.

The relation between dairying and the copra industry is most complex and before the present war the largest butter producing countries were also the largest margarine producers. This is partly because the by-product from the preparation of copra is an important supplementary fodder and this fodder can be utilized in increasing milk and hence butter production. For the same reason, a similar relation exists between the coco-nut and pig industries. Coco-nut meal or cake is an excellent pig food and in Guam fresh coco-nut meat has been successfully used for feeding growing pigs and brood sows on pasture. Both skim-milk and butter-milk would be excellent supplements to coco-nuts in swine feeding, for these dairy by-products are rich in calcium, phosphorus and proteins of the highest quality.

It is thus seen that there is a definite relation between the copra, dairy and pig industries and once one of these industries has been established, it is advantageous that the development of the other two should follow. Unfortunately, none of these industries has been fully developed in this Territory, although the time should not be far distant when we will be crushing our own copra and seeking the most economical means of disposing of the by-products.
