

The Samoan Scientific Service.

46. The foregoing remarks hold with equal force in the case of the scientific work being done in Samoa under the Department of External Affairs. I have been unable to acquaint myself with this work at first hand, but I gather that it is a valuable service which has already established international relationships in meteorology. If only on this ground it is important to link it up with the meteorological service of the Dominion; but there can be no doubt that a well-found scientific service in Samoa is likely to have results of profound economic and practical importance. The present cost of this service is nearly £2,000 a year, less recoveries estimated at £800 a year. I recommend that the Board supervising this service be transferred to the new scientific organization.

VI. THE OTHER STATE SCIENTIFIC SERVICES, AND PARTICULARLY THOSE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

47. It will have been gathered from my remarks in paragraph 22 above that I do not recommend the transference to the new authority of the scientific services of the Department of Agriculture. There are good reasons why a Department of Agriculture should have on its staff scientific men ready and able to deal with problems bearing directly on matters for which the Department is administratively responsible. Moreover, the ancient art and craft of agriculture stands so greatly in need under modern conditions of a scientific spirit in those who control it on behalf of the State that it is most important for the administration to be kept constantly and intimately in contact with the scientific point of view, not only at headquarters but by its field officers. A scientifically minded Department of Agriculture will both gain from and give strength to the free activities of a University or an endowed institution for research. But it must perforce adapt its own scientific activities to the administrative necessities of its work. It cannot cover the whole field even if it would. It should therefore work out its programme of research and investigation with the active help of its scientific officers in such a way as to contribute its share to the complete national scheme, in the way and along the lines most conformable to its directive and regulative responsibilities. My strong impression is that the Department has among its scientific officers men of high capacity and great enthusiasm who would gain much by being brought into a well-considered plan of work in which all available institutions would take their part. But though the statement of the work being done in the Department, or proposed to be done, covers a very wide field, I find it difficult to trace the evidence of a considered plan; and though the workers in its laboratories have many of them put forth a great deal of scientific work, much of it has been the result of personal effort in their spare time. Their official programme is to do the things "sent down by the office," and for the rest the direction in which they work, the time in which it is done, and the means of publishing it seem largely a matter of hazard. It is difficult in these circumstances to develop the team spirit or to create a scientific policy. Much of this would disappear if the control of the scientific services were entrusted to men of science, leaving matters of administrative policy, of finance, and of discipline to the trained administrator who is best able to deal with these things, and if the initiative in proposing the programme of scientific as opposed to routine work were left to the scientific staff acting in committee. The programme would, of course, be subject to modification in the light of financial, administrative, or political necessity, of which the administrator is best able to judge, but the impact in scientific research needs to come from men of science.

48. In any case I feel convinced that the organization I have proposed, which will place the scientific supervision of systematized institutes for the study of the different branches of agriculture in the hands of men of science and practical farmers, working in close touch with a college or colleges of University rank, under arrangements which will bring scientific officers of the Department into active consultation with their unofficial brothers, will do much to bring about the co-ordinated national policy that is so necessary in a vast field of work. There is more than enough room for each type of organization—Department, University, and Research Institute.

Technical Officers for the Department of Industries and Commerce.

49. In paragraph 37 I have recommended the appointment of two qualified technical field officers by the Department of Industries and Commerce, and I need not add anything to the remarks made there beyond saying that these officers should not, in my opinion, be considered as life appointments. Competent men are likely to find remunerative posts outside the service when they have gained experience of the industries, and the Department will benefit as greatly as the men by the occasional bringing-in of a fresh mind to the work.

Repeal of Part of the Science and Art Act, 1913.

50. The recommendations contained in this report will necessitate legislation, and further reference is made to this matter in Section VII below; but the Bill to be submitted should repeal section 9 (1) (b) and section 9 (2) of the Science and Art Act, 1913. The duty imposed on the Board of Science and Art by section 9 (2) will be transferred to the new authority. Section 9 (1) (b) is not, so far as I have been able to gather, now operative, and I have considerable doubt of the scientific usefulness of a miscellaneous collection of scientific papers of very varied subject, origin, and purpose, especially in these days of high prices for printing and binding.

VII. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CENTRAL SCIENTIFIC AUTHORITY.

51. I recommended that the central scientific authority should be a special Department of the Government without any administrative authority, but with executive power in the conduct of scientific work for the State and for the benefit of industry. It should not be attached to any of the