

just as the initial step towards securing a better system of agricultural education was found to be the preliminary training of the teachers, so in the case of the work of the Department of Agriculture the prime necessity is to provide a system of training for the men to whom the work of the Department might be subsequently entrusted. So far as I can see, there is only one way to bring this about, and that is to limit strictly the administrative and routine duties of the few officers now in the Department's service who are specialists in some particular branch of the Department's work, and to bring them together at one of the experimental stations for the purpose of engaging more definitely in experimental and research work appropriate to the needs of the Dominion as a whole, and at the same time to undertake the training of the men whose subsequent services as officers of the Department would enable an adequate expansion of the work to be undertaken at the experimental stations themselves, and throughout the various districts of the Dominion.

The original subject suggested to me for this Conference was "Methods of Experimentation as pursued in other Countries, and their Application to New Zealand." The methods adopted in other countries, such as Great Britain, France, Canada, and the United States, almost without exception depend upon an organization which has as its basis either an agricultural college or an experimental station, staffed by experts, and associated with that station certain substations in the provinces or counties, smaller experimental areas, and a system of farmers' co-operative experiments, all directed and supervised by the headquarters staff and immediately managed by officers trained at the central institution. Under that system there is the least possible waste of effort, and that is without doubt a type of organization which, considering our present limited supply of trained men, it would be most expedient for New Zealand to follow. Probably you will not agree with me when I assert that before any movement is made to establish more experimental farms steps should be taken to properly equip one of the existing farms for this purpose, and to set the scientific men to work there; but if you will consider the matter seriously and try to divest your minds of local bias you cannot fail to agree that that is the only sensible course to pursue.

In insisting upon the need for an adequately equipped and staffed base station I do not overlook the fact that district work correlated with, but to some extent independent of, the main station is very necessary; indeed, one of the functions of the main station would be the training of men for district work; but in the meantime the experimental work that has hitherto been carried