

CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH.

One of the most valuable results of the Conference should be the co-ordination of agricultural research throughout the Empire. This should eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort, and should release both personnel and money for direct attacks on many economic problems which await solution.

The proposed Imperial bureaux and information centres should play an important part in economizing effort and in co-ordinating agricultural research. It was definitely recommended by the Conference that the bureaux and information centres should collect data and information in specific branches of agricultural science not only from all parts of the Empire but also from other sources throughout the world. One of the important functions of the bureaux and information centres will be the dissemination of this knowledge to individual workers in different parts of the Empire. In order that the greatest benefit may be secured from the work of the more famous research stations in Great Britain, it was recommended that the bureaux and information centres should be attached to particular research stations. This should ensure reliability in the information disseminated and help to bring about personal contact between overseas investigators and officers conducting research in Great Britain. It will be possible for the bureaux to establish contact between workers in different parts of the Empire who are investigating similar problems. By this means they will be enabled to compare notes and interim results. In such cases one might expect the development of new lines of approach to a problem, greatly hastening thereby its solution.

Where problems of general importance to several parts of the Empire are encountered arrangements will, no doubt, be made through the bureaux and information centres for a concentration of effort by some particular research station on such problems. Workers in other parts of the Empire would then be able to co-operate by the prosecution of research on some aspect of the problem which was of particular importance to their own country.

Co-ordination of research in the Empire cannot be attained without the support of scientific workers. The opportunities afforded by the Conference for discussions between workers from many parts of the Empire were of great value in establishing a real understanding between workers engaged on similar activities. The personal contacts made by Dominion workers should prove invaluable in the prosecution of their work. It will render possible much greater freedom of inquiry and of discussion.

The Conference unanimously endorsed the suggestion of periodical conferences for agricultural workers. In certain parts of the Empire regional conferences of specialist officers should prove of the utmost value.

Delegates were impressed with the importance of securing study-leave for isolated workers, and of facilitating an interchange of visits between workers in different parts of the Empire.

The recommendations of the Conference envisage the establishment of Imperial bureaux in the following branches of agricultural research :—

- (a) Soil science. (Bureau to be attached to the Rothamsted Experimental Station.)
- (b) Animal nutrition. (Bureau to be attached to the Rowett Institute.)
- (c) Animal health. (Bureau to be established in London.)

In addition to these bureaux, the establishment of clearing-stations for information were recommended in the following subjects :—

- (a) Animal genetics. (Station to be attached to Animal Breeding Research Department, Edinburgh University.)
- (b) Agricultural parasitology. (Station to be attached to the Institute of Agricultural Parasitology, London.)
- (c) Plant genetics. (One station to be attached to the Plant Breeding Institute, Cambridge University, to deal with all crops of temperate and tropical regions except herbage plants.)
- (d) Another station to be attached to the Welsh Plant Breeding Station at Aberystwyth to deal with herbage plants.
- (e) Fruit-production. (Station to be attached to the East Malling Research Station, Kent.)

The subjects to which the proposed bureaux and correspondence centres have reference are equally important in their bearing on agriculture to all parts of the Empire. It is a matter of congratulation that in almost every case the bureaux and information centres will be attached to research stations where much active work on the particular subject to which the bureaux and centres have reference is being pursued.

The suggestion that facilities should be made available through these Imperial bureaux for the training of selected Dominion workers met with the hearty approval of the Conference, and will extend still further the valuable work which the proposed bureaux and information centres will undertake for the development of agriculture in the Empire.

WORK OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES.

Much valuable work was done by the technical committees which were established to consider the needs of research in different branches of agricultural science. Recommendations were made by these committees on the necessity or otherwise of creating clearing-houses for information in different subjects, on the functions of bureaux, and their organization to serve the special needs of different branches of science. Joint programmes of research between different parts of the Empire were considered, and the use of standard methods for experimental work was earnestly recommended.

Special problems requiring urgent consideration were brought to the notice of the Conference so that definite action could be taken by the responsible authorities.

C. J. REAKES.
T. RIGG.