

Primary Productions Advisory Committee

Inaugural Meeting at Dunedin

A VERY important meeting was held at the studio of 4YA, Dunedin, on Thursday afternoon, October 17, at which a Primary Productions Advisory Committee was successfully constituted. The chair was occupied by Mr. A. R. Harris, general manager of the Radio Broadcasting Company, and there were present: Professor A. G. Strong (Dean of Home Science Faculty), Mr. R. B. Tennent (representing Department of Agriculture), Mr. W. B. Steel (representing the Otago Expansion League), Mr. L. W. McCaskill (representing the Training College), Mr. G. J. Errington (president Otago Expansion League), Mr. George Howes (representing the Portobello Fish Hatcheries), Mr. H. Chapman (representing the University of Otago), Mr. W. K. Dallas (orchard instructor, Department of Agriculture), Dr. Charles Chilton (late Rector of Canterbury College and organiser of the Primary Productions Advisory Committees of the Radio Broadcasting Company), and Messrs. John Ball and C. S. Booth (executive officers of the Radio Broadcasting Company), and Mr. J. Mackenzie (station director, 4YA).

Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Mr. A. H. Allen (president Chamber of Commerce), the president and secretary of the A. and P. Association of Otago (Messrs. H. C. Campbell and E. F. Duthie), the president Southland Progress League, the president Southland A. and P. Association, Mr. D. Tannock (superintendent city reserves), Mr. James Begg (president Sheepowners' Association), Mrs. Jasper Clark (president Women's Division of New Zealand Farmers' Union), Mrs. S. P. Cameron (honorary secretary Women's Division of New Zealand Farmers' Union), Mr. E. S. Green (Education Board), Mr. O. O. Mackley (Department of Agriculture), Mr. W. D. Snowball (Live Stock Department).

In each instance the writer expressed his warm appreciation of the company's objective and his willingness to co-operate in the work of the Primary Productions Committee.

Mr. Harris welcomed the delegates on behalf of the directors of the Radio Broadcasting Company and briefly stated the purpose for which they had been called together. They believed, he said, that the broadcasting-service offered an effective and economic medium whereby it could materially assist in the development of the primary industries of the country. It was not every farmer who could attend lectures, but undoubtedly a good number of them would listen, particularly so now that the development of radio receivers had made it possible for them to hear easily the instruction and information that was put over the air.

With a standard of perfection reached by the modern receiving set it was now possible for all listeners to hear. The object of the company's public relations scheme was to increase the public utility of the broadcast service, and he would ask Mr. Ball to outline its purpose, operations and achievements, after which Dr. Chilton would give them more specific details as to what it was believed could be achieved with the co-operation of a committee composed of qualified experts, such as were the gentlemen present. The broadcasting service was not intended to compete with existing institutions, but to offer facilities for the wider dis-

semination of the information and instruction which those institutions existed to impart.

DR. CHILTON, after expressing his pleasure at finding himself back in Dunedin, and especially so in connection with radio, went on to say that he regarded this new and wonderful agency as affording unexampled means of education, and generally of promoting a wider interest in arts, science and culture. He said that when the directors of the company had asked him if he would help them to organise their scheme for the constitution of committees whose specific objective should be the promotion of the best interests of the Dominion's primary industry, he was very pleased to avail himself of the opportunity.

He said that by the term "Primary Production," they included not only all those engaged in primary productions on land, but also those who were developing the primary industries of the sea.

Dr. Chilton went on to explain what was done in this connection with the formation of a similar committee in Christchurch, for Station 3YA, and gave particulars of the strongly representative personnel of the excellent conference which was held in connection therewith. Continuing, he said that as the result of the deliberations of the committee then constituted, a very comprehensive programme of lectures had already been arranged. It was now desired to extend the benefit of this system to Otago and Southland, so that the lectures broadcast from 4YA might be adapted to the special farming characteristics of this part of the Dominion.

He was quite aware that this was not altogether a new thing in Otago, which in a sense was the home of wireless in New Zealand, owing to the investigations made years ago by Professor Jack. Taking advantage of this method, Professor Strong, Dean of the Faculty of Home Science, and Mr. Tennent, of the Department of Agriculture, had done valuable service in broadcasting to the farmers and to the farmers' wives lectures dealing specially with their work.

Dr. Chilton said that they looked with confidence to the co-operation of the Department of Agriculture, the University, the A. and P. Association, and other bodies connected with agricultural questions for assistance and advice, and he felt sure that with their assistance this scheme would be successfully launched to the benefit of the district.

MR. R. B. TENNENT said he had been greatly interested when the Primary Productions Committee was set up in Christchurch and had read with great interest the history of radio instruction that had been previously given in this Dominion.

Nobody realised more than he did how valuable that instruction could be. However, he had been somewhat disappointed on reading that history to

find that no mention had been made of what had been done at the Dunedin station in this connection as far back as three years ago. At that time Professor Strong and himself had given regular lectures to farmers and to farmers' wives, one night a week, for a period of six months. He knew that these lectures had been appreciated, but he mentioned the fact now, not for any personal reason, but in order to emphasise the fact that the Dunedin Station was the first station in New Zealand to give farmers the benefit of these lectures.

He expressed himself in full sympathy with the proposals of the Broadcasting Company, in the furtherance of which he would be pleased to do all he could to help.

MR. HARRIS said he could assure Mr. Tennent that there never had been the slightest doubt in the minds of the directors of the company that

the Dunedin lectures on farming matters had been widely appreciated. As in evidence of this, he mentioned that a gentleman resident in Wanganui had mentioned to him that he had never missed any of the lectures broadcast from Dunedin at that time.

Professor Strong, and Messrs. G. J. Errington, H. Chapman, W. K. Dallas and C. S. Booth indicated their sympathy with the movement; and after an interesting discussion of various matters incidental to the service it was proposed to render to the farming community, it was resolved:—

That this conference approves of the extensions of the Public Relations scheme of the general manager of the Radio Broadcasting Company to include Primary Productions Committees; further, that for the purpose of co-operation with the Radio Broadcasting Company in extending its services to primary producers a 4YA Primary Productions Committee be constituted consisting of representatives of those organisations invited to this conference.

On the motion of Dr. Charles Chilton, the following were appointed an executive: Professor A. G. Strong, and Messrs. R. B. Tennent, James Begg, S. P. Cameron, R. W. McCaskill, and a duly accredited representative of the Broadcasting Company.

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