A. WHAT IS THE MOST EFFICIENT ORGANIZATION OF AGRONOMY EXTENSION WORK IN THE COLLEGE

M. S. McDowell

The viewpoint from which a problem is considered has a great deal to do with the method to be followed in its solution. It is probably true that there is no "best method" to be applied in all circumstances and under all conditions.

Therefore, we do not wish to be understood as presenting an argument for any particular scheme or form of organization, but as presenting a viewpoint on the subject and giving some of the reasons why the general method followed in at least one state has given satisfactory results.

Let me say here that in all extension work the character of the subject-matter to be taught should be that which the corresponding research division approves. This should apply regardless of the way in which the extension work is organized.

It is desirable that extension specialists be officed with the corresponding teaching and research departments and that there be a friendly working relationship.

The foundation premises which represent the starting point in the development of any scheme of operations may have much to do with the conclusions at which we arrive. What applies to extension specialists in agronomy will apply to specialists in all lines of activity.

It may be well, therefore, to consider some of the functions which a specialist should perform.

If an extension specialist in agronomy, or in any other subject, is one whose time is largely given to meeting requests from farmers or from county agents, to address meetings upon subjects within his realm, and if an itinerary is arranged for him accordingly, it probably matters very little how or where he is fitted into the organization. Of course, in any event, some of his time will be given to such work, but in our opinion the real function of a specialist lies in other directions.

He must furnish the technical information upon which a real extension program must be based; he should have a definite part in the planning of programs involving his subject-matter; he should give supervision to the demonstrations, which means that he should have something to suggest about the form of the demonstrations as

1Paper read as a part of the symposium on "Methods and Relations in Extension Work in Agronomy" at the meeting of the Society held in Chicago, Ill., November 16, 1925.

2Director of Extension Work, Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa.