10. METHODS OF RESEARCH IN PASTURE INVESTIGATIONS

GEORGE L. SCHUSTER

During the last decade the pastures of the United States have been receiving considerable attention from agronomists. Pasture investigations reported upon prior to this date were very meager or nil. This may be attributed to three factors, viz., (a) the presence of abundant range and woodland pasture, (b) the soil was sufficiently fertile to produce a good rotation pasture, and (c) the expense of instituting a pasture project seemed prohibitive. The agronomist and the farmer have been giving most of their attention to the economic production of cash crops.

Pasture investigations are difficult to conduct because of the many variable factors that are difficult or impossible to control that may enter into any system of measurement of the results. Only permanent pasture of the eastern United States will be considered here in discussing these factors and methods of research.

The question arises as to how the results of any pasture investigation can best be measured and recorded. The results in general should point toward one general conclusion, i.e., longevity and carrying capacity of the meadow. A survey of the literature and of the pasture projects under way indicates that there are 13 methods

1Paper read as part of the symposium on "Pasture Management Research" at the joint session of the New England Section of the Society and Section O of the A. A. A. S. held in New York City, December 28, 1928.
2Agronomist, Delaware Agricultural Experiment Station, Newark, Del.
3The author is indebted to Dr. A. J. Pieters of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture for valuable assistance in securing these data.