Coordination, correlation, cooperation—for half a century these three words have permeated the atmosphere of almost every conclave of workers in agricultural science. Forty-six years ago, at the first meeting of the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations, Dr. W. O. Atwater read a paper on “Coordination in Experimentation” in which he pointed to the desirability of ascertaining “in what ways the different stations may advantageously avoid repeating work which has been done, or is to be done, by other stations, or may cooperate in the study of problems of common interest.” A committee assigned to study the question in its report made several suggestions that are as pertinent today as they were in 1887. For example, freedom of action was considered one of the first conditions of such coordination, but ways should be developed for stations to unite in studying specific questions. Quoting directly, “Stations that are to work in dairying may well consult together and seek counsel of specialists in their selection of questions and the methods for their study. The same will apply to those who are interested in feeding, fertilizing and so on, through the list of the more general subjects of inquiry.” Very wisely the committee expressed the view, “the most effective and useful coordination and cooperation will come from mutual consultation.” High were the hopes of this pioneer group for the development of coordination in agricultural research.

Again and again in the years to come this same Association was to listen to two generations of college and station administrators extol the advantages of coordination. For several years a standing committee of the Association under the able leadership of Dean F. B. Mumford of Missouri has striven valiently to develop a “coordination consciousness” among agricultural research workers and has sponsored the activities of special committees created to coordinate research in specific fields.

Throughout his long and useful service in the Office of Experiment Stations, Dr. E. W. Allen was an ardent disciple of coordination and cooperation. Year after year in the annual reports of that Office, Dr. Allen emphasized and reemphasized the benefits of collective effort in research. Optimistically he recorded the increasing number of projects cooperative between the individual bureaus of the Department of Agriculture and state stations and the less impressive number of cooperative projects involving only the latter.

Nor has interest in this subject been limited to the administrators of our research institutions. Practically every one of the professional societies in which agricultural research workers are affiliated has

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1Contribution from the Department of Agronomy, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, Wooster, Ohio.

2Agronomist.