THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF AGRONOMIC RESEARCH
AND RESIDENT AND EXTENSION TEACHING

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THE early history of our agricultural colleges is the story of the achievements of a few men. They were men of ability, usually well trained in science. While it may be true that their success was due in part to the contributions which science could make in its virgin applications to agriculture, it is worth while looking for other factors. The early leaders started with problems which were closely associated with agricultural practice. They knew them first hand; they often performed every operation in their own investigations; they were in frequent association with farmers and usually with classroom students as well. Only a little time was required for keeping abreast with the investigations being conducted by other workers. The problems which have arisen with expansion of organizations and higher specialization could not have existed. Each worker could develop his own work; he bore the responsibility for it; he was unencumbered with the impedimenta which now result from many regulations and the difficulties of correlating relationships between several closely related fields of knowledge.

The only discussions of these problems which have been found are those reported in the recent Proceedings of the annual meetings of the Land-Grant College Association. They have been confined almost exclusively to problems of administration and have ignored completely the one factor which seems to be reaching an end point in teaching an applied science; the continuation of a scholastic attitude and a comprehensive acquaintance with the rapidly developing information. The explanation may be that only administrators have been sufficiently interested to attempt making a contribution. However, they have been interested in functioning machinery. The problems incident to broadening knowledge and specialized duties need examination by those who are closest associated with them. They are in the best position to determine the real worth of their endeavors.

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