THE RESULT OF THE LAST TWENTY YEARS OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

I propose to follow the example of my predecessor of last year, in that the remarks I wish to make today have to do with the history of agriculture. Unlike Mr. Middleton, however, whose survey of the subject went back almost to prehistoric times, I propose to confine myself to the last quarter of a century—a period which covers what I may perhaps be permitted to call the revival of agricultural science.

Twenty-five years ago institutions concerned with the teaching of agriculture or the investigation of agricultural problems were few and far between. I do not propose to waste time in giving an exhaustive list, nor would such a list help me in developing the argument I wish to lay before the section. It will serve my purpose to mention that organized instruction in agriculture and the allied sciences was already at that date being given at the University of Edinburgh and at the Royal Agricultural College, whilst, in addition, one or more old endowments at other universities provided courses of lectures from time to time on subjects related to rural economy. Agricultural research had been in progress for fifty years at the Rothamsted Experimental Station, where the work of Lawes and Gilbert had settled for all time the fundamental principles of crop production. Investigations of a more practical nature had also been commenced by

1 Section M: Birmingham, 1913. Address of the president to the Agricultural Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.