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## THE ADMINISTRATION OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH<sup>1</sup>

### CONTENTS

<i>The Administration of Agricultural Research:</i> DR. E. W. ALLEN.....	499
<i>Resolutions adopted at the Australian Meeting of the Pacific Science Congress:</i> PROFESSOR HERBERT E. GREGORY .....	502
<i>The Friends of Medical Progress:</i> DR. THOMAS BARBOUR .....	507
<i>John Thomas Gulick:</i> DR. DAVID STARR JORDAN.....	509
<i>Scientific Events:</i>	
<i>International Patents; The Mortality from Tuberculosis and Cancer; Transportation Institute Lectures; Power Survey of Pennsylvania; The History of Science Section of the American Association; The Medical Sciences at Cincinnati.....</i>	510
<i>Scientific Notes and News.....</i>	512
<i>University and Educational Notes.....</i>	514
<i>Discussion and Correspondence:</i>	
<i>Haematoxylin:</i> PROFESSOR C. E. MCCLUNG. <i>Fishes fallen from the Sky:</i> DR. WALDEMAR JOCHELSON. <i>Einstein and Soldner:</i> PROFESSOR L. P. EISENHART	515
<i>Quotations:</i>	
<i>Confirmation of the Einstein Theory.....</i>	517
<i>Scientific Books:</i>	
<i>Nopsca's Die Familien der Reptilien:</i> PROFESSOR E. C. CASE .....	517
<i>Special Articles:</i>	
<i>The Effect of Formaldehyde upon the Vitamin Content of Milk:</i> DRS. A. M. BLEILE and R. J. SEYMOUR .....	518
<i>The American Mathematical Society:</i> PROFESSOR R. G. D. RICHARDSON .....	520
<i>Science News .....</i>	x

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THE question of the advantage of administration in connection with the prosecution of research has been much discussed in academic circles. It has often been looked upon askance in that quarter, and there has been apprehension lest the attempt to organize for research should infringe upon that freedom to investigate which is conceived to be the birthright of every pioneer research worker. President Angell referred to this in an address before this Association a few years ago when he said: "A fairly prevalent conception of research associates it with the somewhat mystical intellectual operations of the genius or 'near genius,' to tamper with which is a kind of profanation."

Such a view is based on the academic or university conception of research and relates, doubtless, to the more abstract field of inquiry in which the individual follows out his own course in the pursuit of that elusive thing, an idea. But much research at the present time is not of that personal or essentially individual type, carried out for the gratification and advancement of scholarship of the principal; it is institutional in that it is conducted by individuals associated in groups. They may work independently or in varying measure of cooperation, but they are members of an organized agency, designed to serve a particular field or purpose. Such agencies are developing rapidly. They deal quite largely with industrial or applied research, since their ultimate purpose is to solve problems or acquire information for the more immediate benefit of an industry or the public generally.

Agricultural research—using the term broadly—is the largest example of this type, and it is almost wholly supported or subsidized by public contributions. Practically all of it is organized, carried on by units constituted for the purpose by law; and, being organized, there must be administration by a responsible head. For organization and administration are twin brothers, in research as well as in industry. This condition does not interfere with the opportunity of the individual—it often contributes to it; but it does affect his relationships, and it imposes responsibility which the independent investigator does not accept.

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