

the best means of encouraging and developing the Agricultural Industries of Canada, and to report thereon to the House."¹ The testimony collected under this authority subsequently led to the appointment of Mr. Wm. Saunders, of London, as Special Commissioner to inquire into and report upon the system of experiment stations in operation in the United States. This duty he discharged in a very full and conscientious manner, the results being embodied in a report to the Minister of Agriculture. Acting upon the information thus obtained, and having in mind the most immediate needs of the country at large, a system of experimental farms was established, having the central farm at Ottawa, and Mr. Saunders as the Director.

In any attempt to pass in review the work of such an establishment as the one now under consideration, it should be clearly borne in mind that there are several points of view from which it may be regarded: first, as an institution which shall promote strictly scientific inquiry, leaving the practical application to others; second, as an institution designed to adapt the results of scientific inquiry to practical ends, to test and verify the work of others, and serve as a bureau of information. And again, viewing each of these objectives with reference to the particular conditions of agricultural progress, and therefore the special needs of the country at large. It would, therefore, be manifestly improper to lay down special limits within which such work must proceed according to the highest standard of value, regardless of surrounding conditions.

Experiment stations may be regarded as having attained to their best development in Germany—practically the land of their origin. There their work is specialized. All of it is based upon the fundamental idea that a fact once established may serve as a permanent basis for the exposition of natural laws. Their work is, therefore, scientific, and the results are of great value as scientific data. With few exceptions, they do not recognize the practical appli-

¹ Report of the Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons to obtain information as to the Agricultural Interests of Canada. 1884.