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Australian Institute of Agricultural Science

LIKE its big sister association in America the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science serves the needs of a continent. Its members are therefore dispersed over thousands of miles of country. This membership embraces graduates in agricultural science and graduates and diplomates working in specialized fields associated with agriculture.

The institute is only 18 years old and in that period members have increased from 143 to over 1000. Indeed, the progress of the institute accurately reflects the progress of agricultural science in Australia. The institute is organized into seven branches, six being in the main states of the Commonwealth and the seventh being located at Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory.

This year our president is E. J. Underwood, professor of agriculture of the University of Western Australia. The Office of Management, which rotates round the states, is at present located in Adelaide, South Australia. Our current honorary general secretary is H. P. C. Trumble.

Being an institute specifically concerned with agriculture, our membership naturally covers a narrower field of interest than the AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE, but a surprising number of disciplines are represented in our membership because of the demands that scientific agriculture makes on the field of science generally. The institute endeavors to do its part in the fostering of scientific agriculture by encouraging a national policy of agricultural research, promoting interchange of ideas between scientists both within the Commonwealth and overseas, representing the views of the profession,

maintaining its integrity, and raising its status. In our efforts to achieve these aims we have engaged in a number of activities, including professional evidence on agricultural education, a survey of the agricultural resources of the Commonwealth, a review of plant quarantine, with recommendations and reviews of the roles of the agricultural engineer and agricultural extension services in Australian agriculture. The reports resulting from these projects have helped directly to guide governments in agricultural legislation and administration and have assisted members of the institute to crystallize their own ideas on topics with which they are concerned.

Regular meetings of state branches and combined annual general meetings have furthered the maintenance of communication between scientists of the Commonwealth. This has been greatly assisted by the quarterly publication of a *Journal* in which appear technical papers on research topics upon which members are engaged and authoritative review articles indicating the general trend of scientific agriculture within the Commonwealth.

Our appreciation of this opportunity of speaking directly, as it were, to fellow scientists in America is hard to express adequately. We hope that the future will bring many opportunities of closer collaboration between the scientists of the two countries whose aims are the same in so many ways and whose cooperation was appreciated by so many Australians during the recent war.

Greetings to the AAAS from the AIAS—and may there be many opportunities for our members to get together.

JOHN M. STEVENS

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