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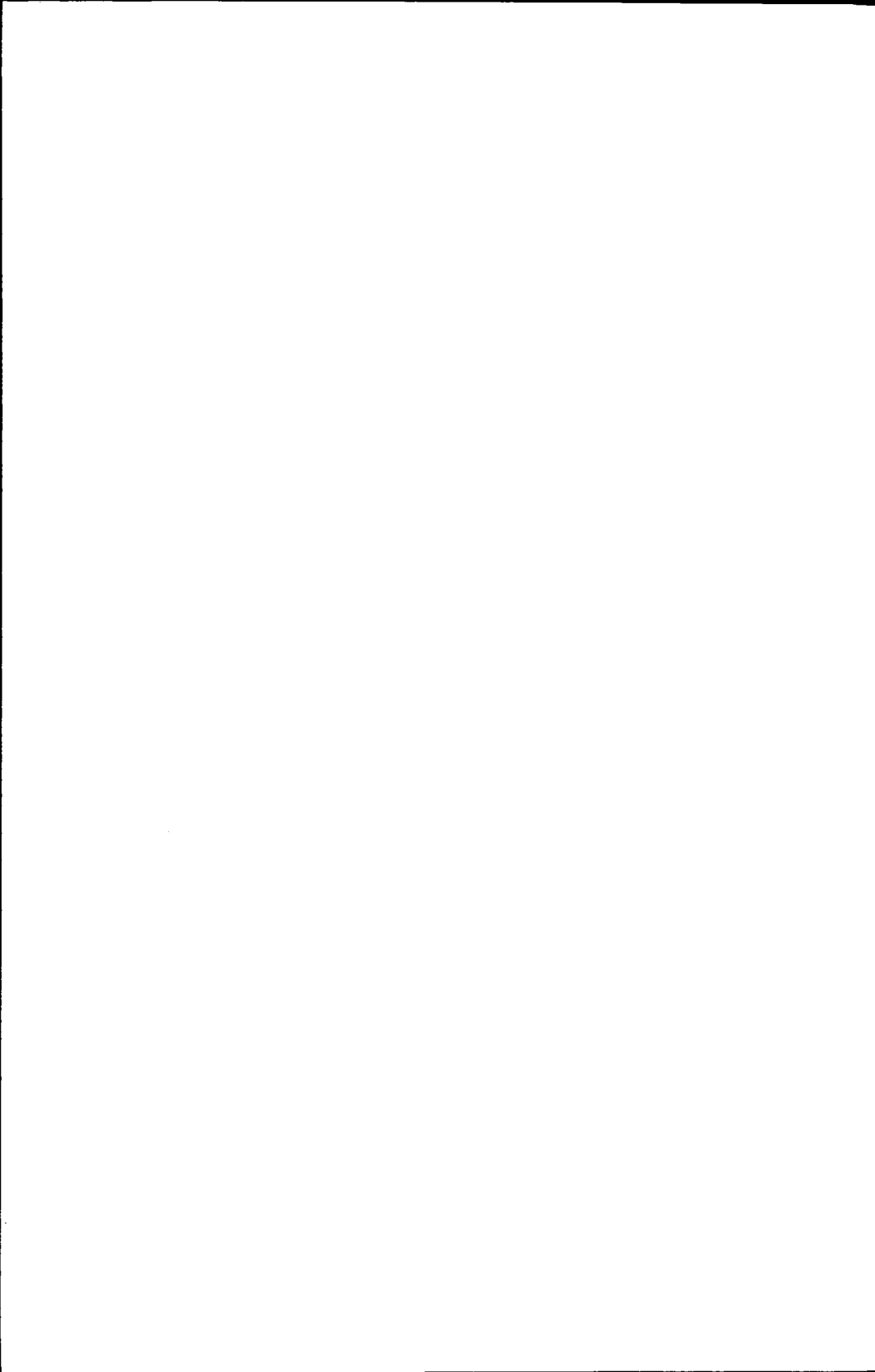
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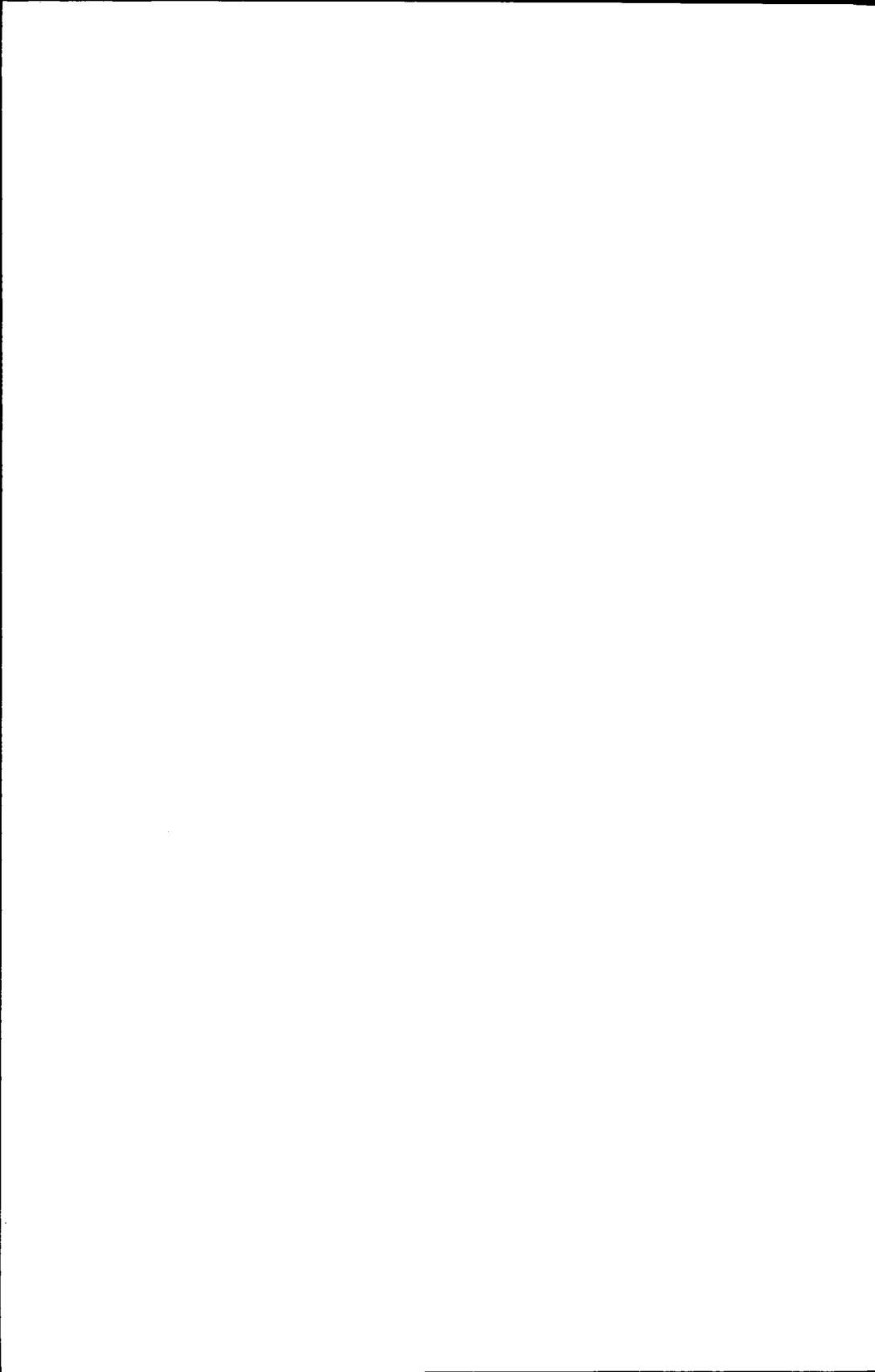
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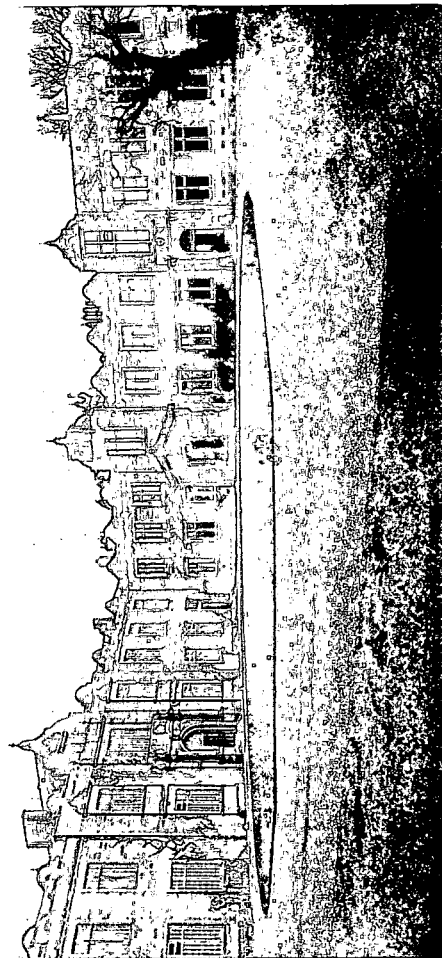
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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS







UNITED COLLEGE QUADRANGLE, ST. ANDREWS

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMISTS

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PREFACE

THIS volume of the *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference of Agricultural Economists* records fully the papers and speeches delivered during the week of the Conference at St. Andrews. It is, however, left to the Preface to try to recapture some of the atmosphere in which the discussions took place and to acknowledge our indebtedness in many directions for the success of the meetings.

St. Andrews University, with its ancient buildings, its commodious halls of residence, its background of an historic city, and, no less important, the Royal and Ancient Golf Course, the sea-side air, and the surrounding farming country, made an ideal place for the Conference. The Conference is deeply indebted to the University authorities for the ample accommodation provided for residence and for meetings, and for their help and co-operation in every possible way. Acknowledgement is also due to the civic authorities for their ready assistance at all times.

The interest of H.M. Government in the meeting of the Conference in Great Britain was expressed by an official reception to members in the Younger Hall. This was attended by Mr. Walter Elliot, Minister of Agriculture, and Mrs. Elliot.

At a period in the world's history when governments and nations were busying themselves over preparations for war and rumours of wars it was refreshing to find with what objective sincerity and enthusiasm scientists, economists, and government experts of twenty-three countries could sit down together and discuss some of the root problems of humanity, international trade, land tenure, credit, co-operation, and the relations of agricultural production at home with foreign trade and with standards of nutrition, of living, and of rural life.

The wide support for the work of the Conference is shown in many ways. Over half the members of the first Conference at Dartington Hall in 1929 were present at St. Andrews. Nearly half of the 219 members present had attended at least one of the previous Conferences, an exceptional proportion when it is remembered that the previous Conferences had been held as far apart geographically as the U.S.A., Germany, and Great Britain. Another gratifying feature was that 127 of the members at the Conference had travelled from abroad. Although members from U.S.S.R. and Italy found it impossible to attend, contributions to the programme were made

for the first time by members from Argentina, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Spain.

Once again the characteristic feature of the Conference was the informality with which all the proceedings were conducted. The afternoon excursions to neighbouring farms, the variety concert provided wholly by the members themselves, the ample time allowed for personal contacts and discussions, and the international encounters on the golf courses, all helped to create the most fruitful kind of atmosphere. In a climate such as this friendships spring up of a kind that helps to erase national boundaries and to promote the free exchange of ideas and information between specialists and administrators of one country and another.

The conference sessions were conducted with refreshing absence of formality and with as much spontaneous discussion as possible. Two languages, English and German, were used simultaneously by means of a relay apparatus to ear-phones. This greatly facilitated the discussion. The overcoming of the language difficulty would have been impossible, even with the relay apparatus, but for the work of our colleague Dr. Max Rolfes, who bore the whole burden of translating from German to English and English to German. The record of many of the speeches printed in this volume was obtained by means of sound records taken by microphone on the Telecord system.

In the week preceding the Conference a tour of the scenery and farming of Scotland was arranged for the delegates and conducted by Mr. J. F. Duncan and the Scottish agricultural economics advisers, Dr. A. D. Imper, Mr. J. A. Gilchrist, and Mr. D. Witney. After the Conference another party of members spent a week on a tour of England and Wales arranged and conducted by the advisory economists of the provinces through which the tour travelled, Mr. D. H. Dinsdale, Mr. John Orr, Professor A. W. Ashby, Dr. C. V. Dawe, Mr. R. R. Henderson, and Mr. Edgar Thomas.

The work of the Secretary, Mr. J. R. Currie, and his colleague Mr. J. P. Maxton, and their respective staffs, eased the path of the members at every step. The task of preparing and editing the *Proceedings* for publication was undertaken by Mr. Maxton and his assistants, Messrs. Grant and MacGregor.

In many countries something little short of a revolution in agriculture is in progress. Technical and scientific progress moves on rapidly. Government policy is everywhere concerned with the status of its agriculture. Swift steps have been taken which com-

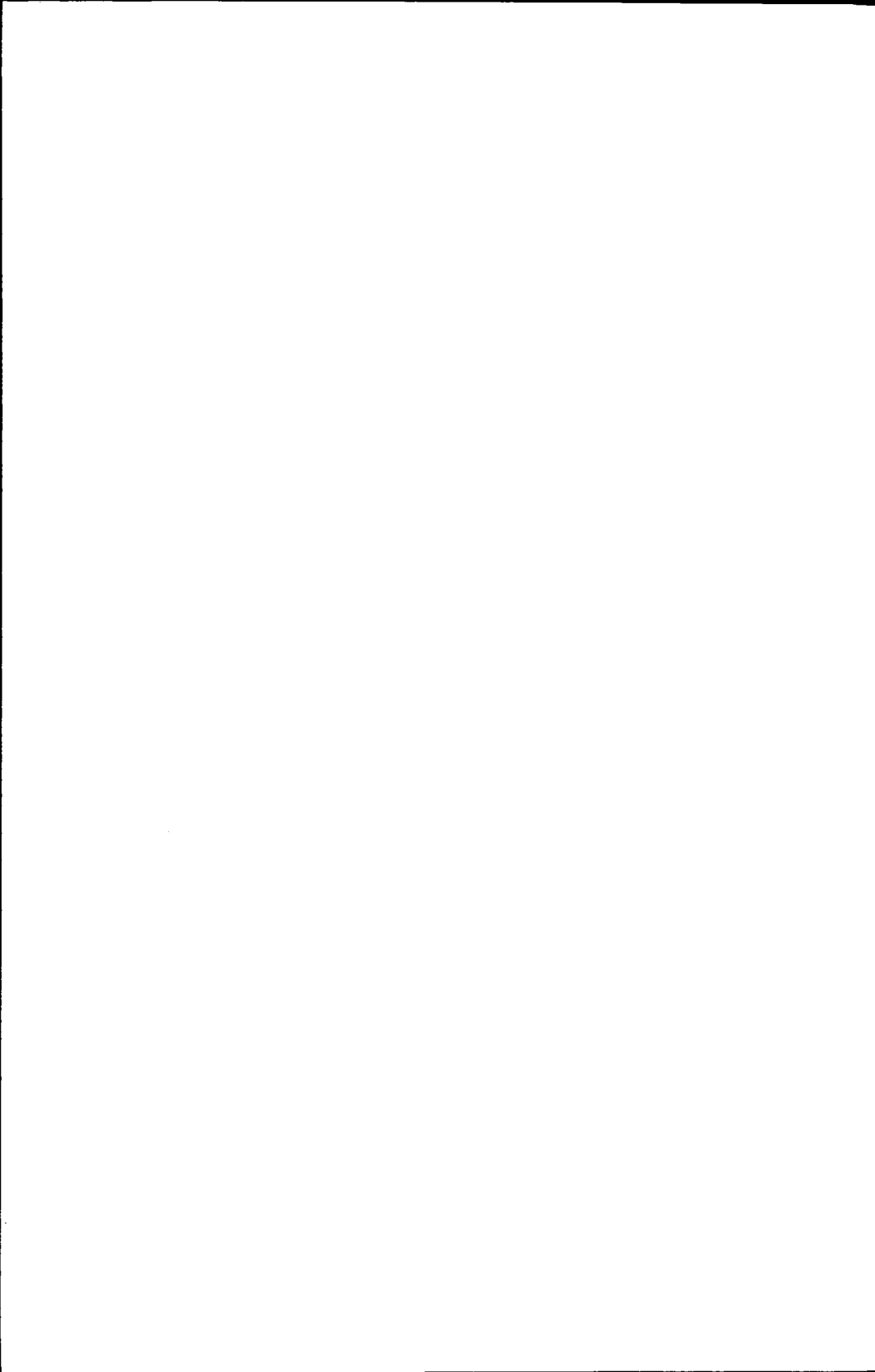
pletely change the old outlook and procedures governing the production and sale of farm products, and national and international planning shifts the channels of trade between countries.

Behind all this movement there must be a fundamental striving towards economic security and a betterment of standards of living, in which agriculture cannot take an exclusive place, but in which it must play no small part. In fact the agricultural economist is faced with an immense task and an immense responsibility. The problems of to-day demand the most objective recording, scrutiny, and comparison, not only in the economic sphere but in the relation of their economic aspects to the other aspects of human welfare, social, psychological, humanistic, and aesthetic as well. From one country to another, problems which appear totally dissimilar may have many basic factors in common. Problems which appear local or national in their significance may have repercussions in the most unforeseen parts in the world's economy.

It is for these reasons and for the promotion of international understanding that periodic meetings of agricultural economists from all parts of the world and from all forms of activity, research, teaching, administration, and industry, have an importance not easily estimated.

The next Conference will be held at the end of August 1938 at MacDonald College, Quebec, Canada.

L. K. ELMHIRST
President.



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