

**INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC
AFFAIRS, THE UNIVERSITY
OF VIRGINIA. THE COUNTRY
LIFE OF THE NATION**

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Institute of Public Affairs, The University of Virginia. The country life of the nation by Wilson
Gee

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WILSON GEE

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THE COUNTRY LIFE OF THE NATION

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PREFACE

The Institute of Public Affairs was organized for the purpose of advancing the popular understanding of current public questions, economic, social, and political, through a study and discussion of those problems which are of immediate concern and interest to the American people.

From the beginning, a part of the program each year has been a round table on some phases of our country life problem because it has seemed to the Director and Board of Advisers that no question is more timely or so greatly in need of a satisfactory solution. Recent developments in the agricultural situation have only emphasized the predominant importance of the subject and the necessity for clear thinking and intelligent guidance in the formulation of a policy which will lead to an improvement in the present status of the farmer and provide a basis for a permanently prosperous agriculture.

Those persons who discussed the subject at the Third Session of the Institute were chosen because of their recognized leadership in the phase of the subject under consideration.

These discussions were of value to those who attended the round table meetings and those who read accounts of the meetings in the public press or obtained copies of individual addresses, but it was wisely suggested that because of the general excellence of the prepared papers, the proceedings merited publication in a more

permanent form and, therefore, it was decided to publish this volume. This was made possible through the coöperation of the University of North Carolina Press.

The volume is sent forth in full confidence that it will make a real contribution toward the solution of one of the most urgent and difficult problems affecting our national welfare.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to those persons who contributed the papers which are included, to Dr. E. C. Branson, who assisted in preparing the program and directed the round table, and to Dr. Wilson Gee, who acted as secretary of the round table, and collected and edited the material herein presented.

CHAS. G. MAPHS
Director of the Institute

INTRODUCTION

BY WILSON GEE

The farm industry of the United States has been ailing for the past decade or more. The other business interests of the nation, now passing through the inevitable slump in the business cycle, rather quickly recovered from the depression in the aftermath of the World War. Not so with the farming situation. While the status of agriculture has been somewhat improved in the past few years, the condition for the industry as a whole has been decidedly subnormal, accentuatedly so in recent months.

Various economists, agricultural leaders, farmers, politicians and others have in their own terms diagnosed the illness and prescribed widely different remedies. These range from the simple statement that farm relief is a matter of self-help on the part of the farmers to such complicated arrangements as the McNary-Haugen measure and the export debenture plan. The creation of a Federal Farm Board, and the giving to it of extensive powers and financial backing have created the hope that an able group of men may find ways successfully to meet a difficult and complicated situation. But the way this result is to be achieved has not yet been made clear.

The country life of this nation has always been a vital element in the greatness of our people. If the predictions of some of our closest students of population