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THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION IN THE PRESENT AGRICULTURAL SITUATION¹

SITUATIONS—good, bad or indifferent—are the common lot of man and of all groups and associations of men. Your program committee was therefore perfectly safe in assuming that there is an agricultural situation.

It was probably equally safe in assuming that the agricultural experiment stations of our country have some responsibility in connection therewith.

Some critics have gone so far as to hold the experiment stations responsible for the present situation, stating that were it not for the experiment station and the agricultural extension service there would be no agricultural situation, of the present sort at least. This is very likely true. Our agriculture might, however, be in the "fire" instead of the "frying pan."

I take it that the province of this discussion is to consider rather the responsibility of the agricultural experiment station *in* the existing situation.

Before the experiment station can get very far in the exercise of its responsibilities it will have to know very definitely what the agricultural situation is. As a "fact-finding" institution perhaps this is its first work, to find the facts as to the actual situation.

Having found these facts, it will be in order to determine the several causes which have resulted in the present situation; and, finally, to suggest courses of action, based upon researches, which give promise of remedying the situation.

We have quite a variety of opinions and pronouncements as to the agricultural situation—a situation which naturally changes very considerably month by month and year by year, as witness the change in the list of "basic" products in successive editions of the McNary-Haugen Bill. The price of eggs for several months past has indicated that the next edition of this bill would include eggs as one of the basic products, along with rice and tobacco!

The present agricultural situation has been described by some as "the farmer's failure to get his

¹ Address delivered at the forty-first annual convention of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, Chicago, Illinois, November 15, 1927, by Director C. G. Williams, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station.

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