

until after the war, but all preparatory steps are being taken so as to avoid delay when peace has been restored. There is reason to hope that within a short period of years the institute may become self-supporting (except, of course, as regards the cost of purchasing for the nation selected works of outstanding merit). But it is necessary to provide for an adequate guarantee fund to ensure the stability of the scheme, at least during its initial stages, and thus to enable a high standard to be rigorously maintained without regard to immediate financial necessities. The Board of Trade confidently hope that such a guarantee fund will be forthcoming.

#### AGRICULTURE AND THE GOVERNMENT<sup>1</sup>

IN the field of agriculture we have agencies and instrumentalities, fortunately, such as no other government in the world can show. The Department of Agriculture is undoubtedly the greatest practical and scientific agricultural organization in the world. Its total annual budget of \$46,000,000 has been increased during the last four years more than 72 per cent. It has a staff of 18,000, including a large number of highly trained experts, and alongside of it stand the unique land grant colleges, which are without example elsewhere, and the 69 state and federal experiment stations. These colleges and experiment stations have a total endowment of plant and equipment of \$172,000,000 and an income of more than \$35,000,000 with 10,271 teachers, a resident student body of 125,000, and a vast additional number receiving instructions at their homes. Country agents, joint officers of the Department of Agriculture and of the college, are everywhere cooperating with the farmers and assisting them. The number of extension workers under the Smith-Lever Act under the recent emergency legislation has grown to 5,500 men and women working regularly in the various communities and taking to the farmer the latest scientific and practical information. Alongside these great public agencies stand the very effective voluntary organizations among the farmers themselves which are more

and more learning the best methods of co-operation and the best methods of putting to practical use the assistance derived from governmental sources. The banking legislation of the last two or three years has given the farmers access to the great lendable capital of the country, and it has become the duty of both of the men in charge of the Federal Reserve Banking System and of the Farm Loan Banking System to see to it that the farmers obtain the credit, both short term and long term, to which they are entitled not only, but which it is imperatively necessary should be extended to them if the present tasks of the country are to be adequately performed. Both by direct purchase of nitrates and by the establishment of plants to produce nitrates, the government is doing its utmost to assist in the problem of fertilization. The Department of Agriculture and other agencies are actively assisting the farmers to locate, safeguard and secure at cost an adequate supply of sound seed. The Department has \$2,500,000 available for this purpose now and has asked the Congress for \$6,000,000 more.

#### USE OF THE METRIC SYSTEM IN THE UNITED STATES<sup>2</sup>

MORE extensive use of the metric system in the trade and commerce of the United States is recommended in a resolution adopted by the United States section of the International High Commission, of which Secretary McAdoo is chairman.

The commission has regarded this subject as of particular importance in the United States. It is, of course, unnecessary for the United States section to recommend to the Latin-American sections of the commission anything in connection with the metric system, which is exclusively in use throughout Latin America. One of the main obstacles to documentary uniformity as between the United States and Latin America is to be found in the fact that the United States does not make the use of the metric system obligatory, and consequently its consular documents have to

<sup>1</sup> From President Wilson's Message to Farmers' Conference at Urbana, Ill., January 31, 1918.

<sup>2</sup> Publication authorized by the Treasury Department.