3. THE RELATION OF THE SOIL SURVEY TO THE SETTLEMENT OF UNUSED LANDS

THOS. D. RICE

The problems arising in the settlement of the unused lands may not seem of any great importance at the present time, when improved farms are being abandoned and when there is little movement anywhere towards lands of doubtful value. Economists, however, agree that the agricultural depression now prevailing is only temporary. One need not possess prophetic vision to predict that, within a very few years, the tide of population now flowing towards the cities will turn and there will be another rush of settlers to the marginal lands. The settlers of this next invasion will probably stand in more need of assistance in selecting land and be more willing to receive such assistance than those of any which has preceded, for it will be composed not so largely of experienced farmers moving a short distance on to good land but of men of all sorts, many of them from the cities, who seek to take up land in sections where they know little of the soils and agricultural conditions. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that a greater number of these will require assistance in selecting their land and that the soil survey and other branches of the agricultural departments will be called on for advice.

The soil surveys, state and national, have accumulated a vast amount of information concerning a large part of the unused land.

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Inspector (Northern Division), Soil Survey Investigations, Bureau of Soils, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.