The matter of soil conservation should interest everyone, the farmer and the city man alike. However, the public at large, even if convinced that the matter were vital to the future well-being of the country, would have difficulty in making itself felt. It must be remembered that the soil is in the hands of millions of individual farmer owners and operators, and that if it is to be conserved the practices of this great body of people must be modified. Anyone who knows the American farmer realizes that such a change in practice cannot come quickly. It must be brought about through an educational process, assisted probably by some type of land adjustment enterprise, federal, state, or possibly cooperative in character. The farmer must be led to understand that the adoption of systems of soil conservation are to his best interest and that the matter is of great importance to him and to his family. However, even if he is convinced he may not be able to change his practices materially without financial assistance. The depression through which agriculture has been passing has made it almost impossible for the majority of farmers to practice conservation methods. They have been compelled to follow a hand-to-mouth system. They have been doing everything possible to avoid ruinous financial loss, or to make a bare living, so that the effect on the land could not be given much consideration. As a result we have experienced one of the worst periods of rapid soil deterioration in our history. It, of course, must be recognized that these times were largely the result of the World War when prices were abnormally high and when even poor pastures were often plowed up to grow grain. This high price era was the beginning of this period of soil deterioration and the soil losses were intensified by the depression that followed. As a matter of fact, soil conservation in a comparatively new country like this, is not associated with either extreme of the farm price level, but with something near normal. It is to be hoped that agriculture is on its way back to normal.

The effects of our failure to make soil conservation a first consideration may be seen everywhere about us. Such effects have been的伟大 by the economic upheaval resulting from the World War, yet they are immediate results of improper land use. In areas where soil deterioration has gone furthest, and particularly where the soils were originally of only mediocre fertility, conditions are in many cases deplorable. Not only have farmers in such areas been reduced to bare subsistence living conditions, but large numbers are on relief. In other areas, the tax rate must be budgeted because of low assessed values and tax delinquencies become common. Insufficient local revenues result in poorer schools, poorer teachers and shorter school terms than in areas where the soil is fertile. Such a condition introduces the grave problems connected with land abandonment, resettlement and drastic agricultural readjustments. Moreover, the effects are confined not only to the fields, but also to the cities. The depression through which agriculture has been passing has made it almost impossible for the majority of farmers to practice conservation methods. They have been compelled to follow a hand-to-mouth system. They have been doing everything possible to avoid ruinous financial loss, or to make a bare living, so that the effect on the land could not be given much consideration. As a result we have experienced one of the worst periods of rapid soil deterioration in our history. It, of course, must be recognized that these times were largely the result of the World War when prices were abnormally high and when even poor pastures were often plowed up to grow grain. This high price era was the beginning of this period of soil deterioration and the soil losses were intensified by the depression that followed. As a matter of fact, soil conservation in a comparatively new country like this, is not associated with either extreme of the farm price level, but with something near normal. It is to be hoped that agriculture is on its way back to normal.