HOW THE GOVERNMENT SOIL SURVEY OF EACH COUNTY CAN BE
USED FOR PRACTICAL PURPOSES.

By Chas. A. Stanton, Agricultural Appraisal Company.

There is nothing more important than soil. It is the thin crust of our earth comprising all the material found in plant and animal life and upon its fertility depends the life and existence of the entire human race. There is nothing more interesting and farreaching than a study of the soil and we cannot spend too much capital and energy for its investigation, development and improvement.

The Government Soil Survey is a constructive and useful service and capable of big possibilities. It is of such practical value and importance to our basic industry that I cannot help but express the hope that the time will soon come when millions in place of thousands of dollars will be spent for the development and practical application of our Government Soil Survey.

The County Soil Map is, in my opinion, only a step to a greater and more elaborate soil survey that is going to be required in the future. As our population increases and modern intensified farming becomes more in evidence, new and additional surveys and more detailed soil investigations are going to be needed and since our Government Soil Survey is the only organized agency we have engaged in the business of studying soils in the fields, there is no doubt in my mind but what the Government Survey will eventually become a big factor in the distribution, settlement and operation of our farms.

Dependable information about soils has a great deal to do with the migration of farmers, which in turn has a big influence in the life of our farming communities. The new conditions constantly arising in soil formation and investigations offer opportunity for new ideas in farming operations and it is these new ideas in the development and improvement of the soil that increases production and encourages the farmer to stay on the job. The soil survey worker is the discoverer of these new soil conditions and ideas because it is he that walks over the land and digs up the information.

At the present time the Government Survey is used quite satisfactorily as a basis for general information. It should be and could be used for detail material. The existing survey may not be as complete and as efficient as it should be but that does not mean it will not be and eventually become a big factor in the agricultural development of our country. The progress made by the Government Soil Survey during the past twenty-five years under handicapped conditions speaks for itself. The man who criticizes the present survey must remember that good things are not developed over night and that it takes time and energy and capital to develop a permanent and useful public service like the Government Soil Survey.