

fairly to bring out all the information along most, but not all, of the points which have been suggested. During the course of that discussion several points came up in my mind very strongly. The main points that impressed me—or amongst the main points—were these: Throughout the evidence, throughout the statements made by the leading bankers of this country who were there to testify it became so evident as not possibly to be gainsaid that the present banking system, as carried out under the present Bank Act, did not wholly meet all the financial requirements of the various industries in this country. It became apparent, in fact it was admitted, that, in regard to the principal industry of this country, that of agriculture, the Bank Act was not functioning satisfactorily. Statements were made and evidence was adduced which covered that point, and I think it was established to the satisfaction of the majority of the committee that one industry at least, that of farming, was not able to take full advantage of the provisions of this act, and was not able to secure the credit requisite to the carrying on of their business under the present banking system. It was shown that the system which was embodied in the act, and carried on under the provisions of this act, was adapted very admirably for the purposes of commercial banking, for the carrying on of the ordinary classes of industry; but, by reason of the fact that advances could only be made under the provisions of this act by our present banks as at present constituted for a short term, it became absolutely ineffective for the needs of agriculture. That, I think, was admitted. It was admitted by many of the bankers, though contradicted by others, and I think it was the consensus of opinion, not only in the committee among the experts, the financial men themselves who gave evidence before that committee, that, under the way in which the banks were carried on, under the methods by which they secured the funds with which they carried on their work, they could not make provision for the industry of agriculture on any general scale. It was shown that, whereas in ordinary commercial life, a loan for three or six months might be amply adequate by reason of the fact that the turnover occurs three or four times a year, the case with the farmer was absolutely different. It was shown, and had to be admitted by everyone cognizant of the conditions under which farming was carried on, that a loan, in order to have any effect, to enable farmers to carry on under any system of credit, should be at least for

one year; and in the case of a farmer engaged in the cattle business, should be extended for three years. I am not speaking of long loans for capital outlay, but for current loans to carry on the yearly operations of the farm. I think that was distinctly proved.

The point of controversy then came up, could this be carried out, or could these loans be made by the banks at all, and could it possibly be comprehended within the Bank Act? And there is where the difference of opinion occurred. I think I am correct in my first statement that the general need was admitted, and the general inadequacy of the banks to fulfil that need was admitted, and the difference of opinion arose as to whether, under any act or any circumstances, the banks could supply that need. I may say that it was on that point that I personally was not at all satisfied with the attitude of some of the witnesses who appeared before the committee, men who were fully familiar with the details of the banking profession, who had, for many years past, the handling of the savings of the people of this country and the use of those savings as applied to the various industries of the country. They acknowledged in many cases that the banks as at present carried on were inadequate. They acknowledged that in many cases the banks did not and could not meet the requirements of agriculture in particular; and yet at the same time, although those men were supposed at least to have full knowledge of their subject, and to have given a full and complete study of banking, the business of their lives, they were not prepared to accept any responsibility for this failure or to bring forward any suggestion of value in order to meet the needs. In that respect I was dissatisfied, and I may say I was disappointed in their attitude.

We do not come here speaking for farmers simply, we do not come asking for anything which would be to the public detriment, and we do not come advocating, at the present time at least, any violent departure from any stable system of banking or economics. Those ideas were brought forward and discussed, though not given the consideration that I think was due them. But at the present time we are not advocating, and I am not advocating, the establishment of any system of banking which would not be for the public good and which would not be founded on sound and sane business principles. But we do look to these men who have taken the place in the commercial life of this country, as being the men most