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**EDITORIAL.****RURAL SOCIETY IN TRANSITION.**

The outstanding characteristic of agriculture in the more advanced countries of the world during recent decades has been the almost revolutionary change in technological and economic conditions of production which in turn have led to corresponding changes in rural social life.

Subsistence farming no longer dominates the rural economy. The modern farm is a commercial undertaking involving a specialized use of resources—land, machinery and men. These technological changes have made possible additional opportunities for secondary and tertiary development in areas previously regarded as exclusively rural and consequently the environment of country districts has taken on a more intricate aspect.

Life on the land has become more complicated. Complex institutions have developed and the character of rural life and the social attitudes of the farming folk themselves have changed accordingly. Rural people, more conscious of differences in their own standards of living and those enjoyed by urban dwellers, have aspired to social amenities previously unavailable to them. The change in the attitude of the individual is reflected in the more effective organization of the associations representing the farmer and presenting to society in general the industry's claims for more advantageous conditions of work and life.

In some cases, dissatisfaction with the conditions of rural life and opportunities has prompted men and their families to move to the apparently more congenial life of the city or country town. In a highly developed economy this "drift to the city" far from being detrimental to the nation, may in fact be an indication of the increased mechanization and efficiency of rural industry. Greater quantities of raw materials can be produced with less labour per unit of product. The growth of a country to full maturity in the economic and technological sense is, however, a gradual process and, in the period of transition, dire adjustments may be experienced.

The changes which have been observed in the farming community call for some modification in the customary approach to the problems of agricultural economics. Detailed study of the farm unit is still essential, but future field surveys should take greater cognizance of the farm as a social as well as an economic unit and also of the rural community which is developing around that nucleus.