

The conspicuous disability of mankind in its own economic affair is having enough domain with fertility and needed wants but do not produce the things essential to its existence — principally food. The Filipinos for this matter excel, for all it goes, we continue to import and continue to depend upon the produce of other nations to live and yet there is land aplenty around us which is here and there "rotting." Let us face the politics of life with a diversified procedure — go to the farm and make it produce.

There is a nation-wide clamor for food production and a nation-wide need for agricultural rehabilitation. It calls for the power-that-be, the government and the people to go together, sail smoothly and land on the safer beach. There should be self-sufficiency in agricultural products. Everybody says that the salvation of the country from the chaos and ravages of war lies in our ability to raise enough food. It is argued likewise, that we are still illfed and weak as a people resulting

the necessity for food among Filipinos. These lands are easily on the way from the Cagayan Valley down to Mindanao and offer brighter perspectives for an agricultural pioneering activity. They are on the inclined ridges of mountains and hills. They are found from the north to the south and from the west to the east. They are found immediately behind our homes.

But then let us limit our outlook on the small lot found in every home. One lot together with the million homelots existing here and there which are not used properly, if planted to food crops certainly will be a great source of food. And then take the Koronadal Valley and other land settlements in the Philippines which if developed to the fullest extent may feed a population three times that of ours.

Poor system of farming

After having gone thru generations of actual farming our common method is still poor and backward. The people have not progressed in the science of it. The farming now is still the vestige

farmers do farming now because their forefathers were farmers. Farmers plant rice today in a way similar to the method he happened to know when he was young. There is certainly little progress achieved today in the way of distancing, proper soil tillage, fertilization, proper irrigation, crop rotation and crop diversification.

When we do not use the right method to obtain the highest efficiency from the business of farming then our civilization is at a loss. A conscientious move toward the high spirit of farming comparable to any lien practice, if not better, should to the guiding principle of every farmer and the government. It is the concern of every one that we prosper in our farming ability because of the rapid increase in the number of our people. The work is meant to be difficult but something somewhere must be done.

More Irrigation systems Needed

What we lack in the country today with vital importance are more irriga-

THOSE IDEAL LANDS

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from the process of war. This in fact is stupendously lamentable.

The fragments of a loosed ambition in agriculture among Filipino farmers, our country being basically agricultural, is a clear cut road to a lower standard of living. The respect and estimate of society to a worker behind the plow is a disgrace conducive to less effort and to throwing out the best talents. Live and let live with the soil that we possess with the skill that we should improve so that our land will not be idle.

Our soil plentiful

The Philippines is endowed with vast tract of land from Aparri to Jolo — fertile, tillable. A part of it has been superficially used and it may always be used under similar practice with the perpetuity of civilization. By chance crops have been planted on these lands but with inferior touches.

Yet so many of our agricultural lands today are still untilled in spite of

of farming thousand years ago. It is still the inherited farming from the earliest ancestors. No, there is not much distance gone so far.

What is really lacking is the education of farmers today. The fundamental knowledge of the business should be known by them. Why don't the government establish adult schools for farmers? In the same way a very effective instrumentality to agricultural upliftment in our country will be traveling agricultural lecturers before community assemblies. Qualified agricultural teachers in our farm and vocational schools can contribute along this direction. Agricultural extension agents of the government may be made to handle the reorganization and supervision of this work. There should be a consciousness on the part of the farmers the idea of improving our agriculture through the scientific way.

Why don't the government move to educate the common farmers? Most

tion systems to irrigate every parcel of agricultural lands. We find a few irrigation systems today especially in some provinces in Central Luzon but they are not sufficient to water the lands of the country that may give the food enough for the people. Private and government irrigation systems are often neglected and when they are needed no effort has been directed to establish them so far. Pampanga and other few provinces for this matter be given attention as to funds. What they have today are small streams, creeks and rivers to irrigate the wide agricultural lands. These systems however dry up during some periods of the year so that agriculture in these places can not be expected to prosper satisfactorily. What if the needed irrigation systems be established through the country and increase the production of our crops thirty per cent or more hence stop depending on the produce of the neighboring countries?

Not so many men can view the benefit of adequate irrigation systems in an agricultural country like the Philippines without going deep into the science of it and the practicability of such an establishment. Only experts of this line can fully determine the good color of the enterprise. With enough irrigation systems available in the country farmers can plant their crops during the proper time, plants can be propagated and cared in the way they need it and in accordance with the desire of scientific agriculture, crop diversification and crop rotation can easily be performed and ultimately the best way of farming can be achieved any period and any place in our country.

Connoisseurs of Philippine agricultural improvement have long clamored for increased irrigation systems, for all they know, it will adjust the country's farming system. There is a perfect start out right by having established in Bulacan, Nueva Ecija and other few provinces but it all stopped there. The government should be tampered and develop additional vigor toward this—the necessity of it will justify.

Agricultural Laws with "Teeth"

The fundamental set up of agriculture in the country is meticulously unherded varieties of customs and men destined by ancestry and fate. There is propagated within this system diversified practices and knowledge which is totally lacking of intelligent foundation and leadership from the people themselves and from the government partly. There has been acts and laws that tended to interfere with the major objective to improve farming which are in existence even now. Their effects can only be gauged by the color of the changes in agriculture that we see, by the stride made and by the degree of satisfaction and sufficiency that the people enjoy from the fruits of the farming business.

Demonstrational system of guiding the farmers in the Philippines may pair well but not sufficiently idealistic. If any knowledge in agriculture in the country is proven thru the process of experimentation in field laboratories to be just proper in any specific place or province why don't the farmers as instructed by the government apply the principle in their respective farms? If elon-elon rice is the highest producing palay in Pampanga as experimented why don't the law provide that that variety be planted and no changes be made without first getting the approv-

al of the authority? Similar cases naturally require proportionate and corresponding treatment by the government.

And then the government should not content itself with the supposition that the present agricultural laws are by their own workings satisfactory. Provide each and every one of them a tooth.

Agricultural Extension Service Justified

The Philippine agricultural extension service is a well thought out procedure in giving impetus along agricultural work to interested farmers of the country. The little force under this service administered by the Director of the Bureau of Plant Industry forms the nucleus of the great work in agricultural promotional service. Something wonderful can be attained by these men in the field of agriculture if only the right guidance and the right proper spirit can be injected into them together with the necessary fund and facilities.

However, when the government reduced the agricultural fund from five to three percent from provincial and municipal fund or income under Commonwealth Act No. 85 something wrong was made and the present legislators should chin up and immediately correct the error. For the logical theory of uplifting the cause of the common farmers emanates from this tiny branch of the government service. Thru the instrumentality of agricultural extension service the farmers will certainly advance rapidly and efficiently and be modern in its toil.

The vital need so that the service will improve fast is the government and the people's moral support. Any enterprise of this nature if it were to succeed, certainly calls for strength and power of leadership and a master of technically planned procedure. The core principle of agricultural extension service in the Philippines is the improvement of the common farming through the correction of the old system with something modern comparable to any foreign system.

The dignitaries in the officialdom should realize that agriculture, if we are to prosper and advance as a nation proud of its place in the modern world, should be given its due attention and protection above any other project of the government.

Research Institution plus Agricultural Extension

The eyes of the Philippine farmers today are turned toward the research institutions of the country for scientific guidance and technical solution of vital agricultural problems. They are looking forward on the possibility of a new world of farming perfected and revolutionized with the principles of science. With scientific formulas to be adapted in the field even farmers are now convinced that important changes in the method of raising farm crops are forthcoming.

However, our research institutions even if prolific and efficient can not safeguard the interest of the farmers or their efforts absurd not until these institutions will have in their department an agricultural extension service that will bring their product immediately at the disposal of the farmers. In this way the agricultural extension workers under the Bureau of Plant Industry may be of used by the research institutions of the country. The farmers and the scientists in a way should bind themselves together as closed collaborators along the improvement of farming.

Plant to Live

For the logic of existence today as it were in the days of yore is plant to live. Now that the second world war has ended the government should work hard to rehabilitate the farm, the people should gather their strength to utilize every parcel of land to its highest efficiency and make every unit of farming come to the expectation of a prospective independent nationhood. Bring back the happy relation of the tenant and the landlord, destroy the evil influences brought about by war on the farm and ultimately make every farm an arsenal of food. The great and costly contribution of the Filipinos in the battle of Bataan toward the victory of democracy over facism may not be worth the credit it carries unless the Philippine farmers, the government agencies and the statesmen of the country work hard and proficiently equal to the method and system of other people of other countries. Let us not depend always on the produce of other nations to live. #

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