

grow older and produce more he can manufacture rubber in Mindanao at a low cost as any planter on earth. He says that if the rubber game should ever come to proportion of the survival of the fittest, Mindanao planters will hold high rank among the fittest.

Ten years ago Latuan consisted of a little shack in a clearing in the heart of a wilderness inhabited only by jungle beasts and birds. Today it is a thriving town, the center of a population of homesteaders who have cleared, planted and brought to production more than 2,600 hectares of land adjoining the property of the American Rubber Company. The great majority of these homesteaders are Filipino employes of the company who were brought down as contract laborers from the northern islands, and who later set for

their families or married Basilan girls. The older employes are leaving the company one by one as their homesteads prosper and demand their entire attention. Their places are being filled by younger men who also stake homesteads and follow the example of their elders. In a very short time it will be impossible to find a piece of unoccupied farming land on the whole island of Basilan because of the thousands of employes and laborers who have gone there to work on the several large plantations and have remained to possess the land and make it fruitful. Large plantations are nothing more than practical vocational and agricultural schools and will train hundreds of thousands of individuals in the art of modern farming and pay them well while they are doing it.—*Mindanao Herald*.

acreage is seen to have increased (though it is still notoriously inadequate, being only 81.5 acres in 1918, 62.1 acres in 1903), during a period when the population was also rapidly increasing and quite overcrowding the province. Does this mark the inception of the economic decay of the peasantry?

The figures above are all for cultivated lands, but uncultivated portions of farms indicate that the conclusions are fair. Turning to the recorded number of farms, for example, it is found that in Abra the number in 1903 was 13,655, and in 1918 it was 42,414. In Ilocos Sur corresponding figures are 21,479 and 113,077 respectively; in Ilocos Norte, 64,812 and 137,457; in La Union, 38,219 and 88,086. The number of farms worked by the owners in these four thickly populated provinces in 1903 was 101,944, and in 1918 they numbered 273,435.

That the peasantry of this region does steadily grow poorer in the property it holds dearest, farm lands,—notwithstanding the remarkable increase in the number of actual owners, shown to be mere heirs to patches of diminutive estates,—is likewise demonstrated, and surely clearly enough, in the figures on tenantry. In 1903, in these four provinces, tenants working farms numbered 36,644, and in 1918 they numbered 89,161.

The increase in population, it may be mentioned specifically, was not commensurate with any of these tell-tale figures showing all too clearly the economic failure of public administration over an extensive and industrious region of Luzon. The population of Abra, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and La Union in 1903 was 556,105,

Farming Inherited Path- Lands: Subdivided Fields

When the Filipino peasant acquires a piece of farm land, something he ordinarily very anxious to do, he seldom lets it go. When he dies and the land has to be divided among his children, they take these smaller parcels and hold onto them as tenaciously as he held onto the original homestead. It would perhaps be surprising to many employers of Filipinos in Manila to ascertain how many of these young men either now own some little land in the provinces or have the prospect of inheriting some, and the provinces are, of course, predominantly the owners of private-title land in the Philippines; the Census of 1918 giving them about 95 per cent of it.

But with all their love for the land and their natural desire to possess it in fee simple, they migrate none too rapidly into the regions of free lands where they may acquire homesteads from the United States public domain. They are, many of them, indentured as peons and therefore not free to migrate; they are so poor in the chateaus of this world that physically it is an impossibility for them to remove to fallow lands and forego a single crop, often as crops come in these islands; the lands inviting them have in frequent cases not been surveyed, and the title of the government determined in the courts, so that should they actually move onto these lands and put them under improvements, it might fall out in the end, as it so often has fallen out in the past, that in the final judgment of the case they would be deprived of their holdings.

How far behind the times the work of the bureau of lands is, has been recently treated in the *Journal* and will not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that only a small fraction of the work the bureau should have performed has actually been performed, and that the mere list of land applications pending demonstrates this. In many localities the bureau does not yet know what is private and what is public land, and can in no wise direct the homesteader securely as to where he should drive his picket stake.

The logical consequence of the several inhibitive influences upon migration is that in the last four years the bureau of labor reports but 3,646 farmers seeking places to settle on new lands. This is only 900, or thereabouts, each year, which cannot be deemed satisfactory.

The census indicates, on the other hand, how the old holdings are breaking up under the hammer of time. Reference may be had to some of the Ilocano provinces, which is best, since Ilocanos are going in search of new lands more than other peoples in the islands. It is observed of Abra, then, that in 1903 the average size of farms was 89.4 acres, and in 1918 only 45.1 acres. In fifteen years the originally very small farms were practically cut in two by the mere process, chiefly, of inheritance. The process was even more drastic in Ilocos Sur, slicing the farms down in that province from 185.0 acres in 1903 to 46.9 acres in 1918. In Ilocos Norte the reduction was



Modern Mindanao Farm: Young Rubber Foreground, Forest Background

from 62.1 acres to 32.6, and in La Union from 80.7 to 51.9.

This may be judged in one sense as an increase in peasant poverty: while there are more individual owners, each man owns less than was owned by his father; and these young men have families, too, growing up about them, to one day divide little the father leaves.

This situation only requires the passage of a few years to make it no longer endurable, however patient the peasantry may be. The drift away from the land may already be noted in certain provinces, as in Cebu, where the average

and in 1918 it was 669,856.

There is, too, in this region, a steady drain-off of young men to Hawaii and the Pacific coast. They are adventurous and will strike out for themselves with half a chance to succeed. The percentage of increase in the population during the period covered was slightly above 20, while the number of farm owners (on always smaller acreages, merely their inherited portion of the *old homestead*) increased 168 per cent, and tenantry increased nearly 144 per cent.

This seems to tell the story, not a pretty one to hear.

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