

### THE RICE INDUSTRY

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As previously pointed out the prices of both palay at the shipping points and rice on the market remain practically pegged, the former selling at from P4.15 to P4.20 per cavan of 44 kilos and the latter at from P9.40 to P9.60 per sack of 57½ kilos. Stocks from

Sagon and Siam have however continued to arrive at the same prices, proportionately, and there is small chance, as before pointed out, of the cereal going higher than 8 to 10 per cent.

In one way the overseas import serves to regulate the market price, which is based on world demand and supply, thus giving the consumer his "daily bread" at a reasonable price with but little fluctuation. If, supposing that the islands were self-supporting in this vital cereal, with the tariff removed, we could see that inter-provincially the prices would soar in ratio with supply and produce a "domestic problem" peculiarly its own. However owing to lack of expansion due to natural causes and an adverse climatic condition, there would appear no speedy hope of the Philippines becoming self-supporting in rice, which, taken with the factor of increasing population, is itself a problem of the future.

It would appear obvious then that the islands should concentrate on the production of export crops, such as hemp, sugar and copra, all of which crops produced by units of some magnitude have ways and means of bettering their peculiar industrial problems, the first of which is of course agricultural—that of production at lower costs. That the rice industry is susceptible to this factor, goes without saying, but as a matter of fact little or practically nothing has been done on those lines to benefit the industry as a whole. For example, a study of reducing the 1012 varieties of commercial palay to some score of standard kinds would be an immense gain to all concerned. The breeding of these kinds so as to produce them with a thinner hull, would mean also a gain of many millions to the producer, and a relative lowering of prices to both millers and consumers. It is noticeable however that many growers of the bearded varieties are discarding them for the un-bearded, as being better yielders, besides putting their product on a more commercial basis, which is a hopeful sign.

To show how one oriental country is coming to the front in the production of rice as a main export crop, the following figures may not be out of the way, for money is, after all, liquid prosperity. Siam is concentrating on rice production and is rapidly overtaking Indochina and will soon rank second, Burma being a good first. The export in cargo tons of rice for the year 1923 was 1,373,470; for 1924, 1,314,330; and for last year, 1925, 1,608,770 with a value of 157 millions of ticals. Imports of value, and the proportion rice bore to the latter for the same three years is also in-

teresting, as it shows that the government of this un-educated country takes a national interest in economics. In millions of ticals:

	Imports	Exports.	Rice
1923	136	173	143
1924	147	155	124
1925	159	191	157

While Siam has the soil and climatic conditions, plus irrigation, this nevertheless is a solid contribution to national wealth, which has nothing to do with politics whatsoever. We may also predict for this fortunate country an advance in wealth and higher standards based on real fundamentals—the wealth of its greatest natural resource—the soil—plus agricultural production. We might also state that this self evident fact is too patent. People see it without believing it. Sometimes a person is so close to a fact that he cannot see it.

### HOW TO KNOW THE TARIFF

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—Reprint from Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

### ANTI-LOCUST ACTIVITIES

Journal readers will recall that the bureau of agriculture has this year P100,000 for anti-locust work. The locusts have not been doing crops the usual amount of damage in many provinces; as a consequence there is opposition on the part of provincial officials in some instances to the operations of the bureau's inspectors, who are not made welcome. This is said to be true of Bukidnon and Zamboanga, provinces in which breeding places are suspected to exist in the highlands.

The bureau is confining its work to scouting for breeding places of locusts, awaiting the hatching of the eggs, then killing the hoppers. Work is in progress along this line in the mountains of northern Luzon and in Bohol. The bureau's agents scout for the breeding places. If these are found, guards are placed until the eggs hatch. The law compels all able-bodied men to turn out for the hopper drives. The present work by no means adequately covers the archipelago. It is in fact unfavorable weather and natural enemies that inhibits locust scourges temporarily. They will be certain to recur.

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