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FARMING IN PHILIPPINES



THE RICE HARVEST



PLOWING THE RICE FIELD

It is known through all parts of the world that the soil of the Philippines is very rich and fertile. Yet unmeasured lands are lying idle in the constant bright sunshine and never tilled, and only shrubs and useless grasses grow on them.

This is due to many reasons, one of which is the lack of good roads. When there are good roads through all parts of our country, the farmer will be very glad to begin to wake up his sleeping land, because in the first place he can transport his products to the market easily, writes a Filipino student, in Farm, Stock and Home. From this fact he can obtain always much profit. When the roads are bad the farmer and the animal can hardly carry instruments to work with, and they get tired easily, but where good roads are built this is not true, for then he and his beast can work very fast.

During the rainy season the pigs on the farms should not be permitted to dig the roads in order to get food, for this causes destruction. As we already know, when the road from the farm to the town is good, the farmer can haul his products to the market easily,—in the rainy season as well as in the dry season.

Merchants are also very dilligent to go to his farm to buy his vegetables. Thus he can obtain always much gain. When the good roads have coaxed the farmer to produce more than he did previously, then there will certainly be many merchants to carry on commerce, and steamers to carry said products to every part of the globe and therefore the country to which these farmers belong will be in prosperity and progress.

It is the usual talk of the common farmer that one reason why he does not like to raise many vegetables is that other people steal them at night and this makes him lazy to work. Sometimes they steal also his instruments and his animals, but if there are good roads, those who keep order can travel fast to stop flight, to catch bandits and to do away with all kinds of public annoyances, and the robbers are afraid to steal any more lest they are seen and captured.

In general the typical land in the Philippines that is already under cultivation is as well developed as a cultivated land ought to be. We may say that it is yet in the beginning of real cultivation. It is the usual practice through all parts of this country to follow the so-called "one-crop" system of farming. When rice is the principal product, other crops are not

raised; when hemp, other crops are neglected. This is a very miserable method of farming because when rice or hemp fail to grow the people suffer very much from hunger, directly or indirectly.

"Diversified farming" is just the method that the Filipino must put at once into practice. On account of this fact he determines to raise more crops than he has ever raised before, in order to get more profit. With his gains he can buy better instruments and carabos for his farm. Now he can raise as many crops as he desires.

First of all he plants rice, after rice is harvested he can plant one-half his land with mangoes and the other half with corn. After that he can raise many kinds of vegetables and so on,—keeping on planting and planting. This process of diversified farming is very advantageous to the farmer as well as to the land itself. To the farmer, he can get always much profit, his chief aim. To the land, its soil becomes better and richer, consequently more productive. For this reason the farmer is now very diligent to raise many crops.

No person can obtain much wealth from his land unless he guards it, and takes care of his crops. Therefore the farmer wants to live permanently on his farm.

Practice declares that the success of the plants to grow, depends mainly on water. So irrigation is needed always in every time. Irrigation is needed to soften the land. The farmer has often a heavy thought how he can bring water from the river to his crops.

Many young men now are about to finish courses in agriculture. These young men are the realization of the Filipinos' hopes. These are the farmers of modern times. They will in not many years more set the examples and others will follow, seeing that the importance of the Philippines and her rank among the nations in the future depends upon the strength of the farmers' arms. Scientific methods of farming will be employed. A great rivalry will spring up among the farmers. This little word "rivalry" will be the means to hustle the country onto the platform of success and proclaim to the world that the Philippines is worthy the name—"Pearl of the Orient."

Very soon modern instruments will be in use by all, then more land can be cultivated and bigger and better crops harvested. Bigger and better crops mean bigger and better money, and so my country will reach a higher stage of usefulness and happiness and contribute the greatest possible service to the world.

Enjoyed His Work.

The late Charles A. Dana was as busy in old age as when a young man. He was at his desk up to his last illness. "How can you stand the infernal grind?" he was asked. "Grind!" he exclaimed, "I have nothing but fun."

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