

his wiser counsel. His students have always cherished the highest regard for him and unanimously elected him the resident Vice-President of the students' Union for a number of years until he declined to hold office any longer on the plea that younger men should share the honour. He was one of the promoters of the Union and was largely responsible for its initial working.

Just before taking leave of us, he said that, unlike a large number of his old colleagues who entered service along with him but died in harness, he had been spared by Providence to retire on attaining his 55th year, fairly healthy and strong. If he only cares, he will soon find that owners of animals in Madras have not forgotten him and that his veterinary patients flock to him.

Mr. D'Silva has been fortunate in having as his partner in life, a lady who has been a good counsellor to him all these years. May they live long in their peaceful little retreat in Guindy which they have built on the bank of the river Adyar.

M. R. R. Sivan.

"The Munagala Prize" Essay.

[The economies of an Indian village with special reference to Agriculture, Cooperation and Accounts as at present exist, and how improvements could be brought about, with particular attention to the conditions of a typical village.]

The village of whose economic conditions, I am detailing in the following pages is fairly typical in its agriculture, in the class of its people, and in the general ways of their life of a good portion of Tanjore District. Lying on both sides of the Cauveri, the village of Sarukkai is bounded on the two sides by the rivers Coleroon and Arasalar, the branches of the Cauveri itself. There are thus within a breadth of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of this village three important rivers, with a net work of irrigation channels. The village is only two miles, from the nearest town of Papanasam, the newly constituted Taluq head-quarters,

a rising town, and an important Railway centre. Still, on account of three big rivers all unbridged between this place and the station, the transport of the products is now only very small, the bulk of the produce being sent up to the more important towns of Tanjore and Kumbakonam on the trunk road. The Govt. is considering the proposals of bridging up these rivers and if this is effected, every bit of produce will have a very ready sale. Similar difficulties are quite common in the Delta tract, the produce in many cases having to be carted a distance of 10 and 15 miles although the Railway Station is within a mile. The whole village of about 750 acres consisting of nearly half wet and half dry land is formed of deposit of rich alluvium, varying in depth from 5 to 20 feet lying on a bed of sand, with an excellent supply of sub soil-water.

The landed classes are mostly Brahmins, though a few non-Brahmins have recently purchased lands. The whole village was divided about 50 years ago into seven divisions, each division belonging to the members of a single family. The heads of these families formed the heptarchy, and on account of their strenuous exertions and cooperation they kept the village in an agricultural superfluity. This set of people have disappeared, and their place has not been properly filled up and there has not been a continuity of the old village organisation. These 50 years have wrought a great change in every Indian village. English education, the prospects of services abroad in various lines of work, and the development of Railways have tended to carry away the promising youngmen from their houses, who in many cases have lost touch with their native village altogether. The management of the lands, and the village organisation are now left entirely under the hands of 2nd rate men, men who have been found useless at school and, no better, as apprentices or clerks in private employ.

The constant division of landed property (production is rather more rapid in the Hindus than other nations) by the members of a joint family according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance, have made the holdings too small in most cases for economic farming. Although this division is "the handiwork of a law made by man, and can be removed by the same means" with great advantage to national welfare, is not

very easy at present, and it has thus to be considered as the **greatest** drawback to economic holding. This is even further aggravated by the scattered nature of even such small holdings. An average Mirasda (landholder) of about 15 acres has his lands scattered over at least half a dozen places. He has his single crop wet land in at least 4 places, the double crop lands in another 2 places and his dry and garden lands in 2 more places. Here I do not include his house sites, the topes, nursery beds and various minor pieces. This is due to the division of every type of land into several divisions, to ensure equality in partition, every member requiring a share of such lands which have special facilities such as nearness to the road, head of the irrigation channel and such others. The progress of scattering the holdings in this way is occasionally checked by a sort of mutual exchange of lands (Parivarthana) of the neighbours. Want of confidence, and the lack of fair play in such dealings have often been the cause in preventing the progress of the reverse process. The peculiar feature of a wet land village is that it is a barren tract for about 4 months, from February to June. In June the rivers receive the freshes and the paddy lands are soon irrigated, and the first crop planting is finished within a fortnight, with the seedlings raised dry in garden soils. There will then be a lull, except for an occasional ploughing of the single crop area, and the preparation of the nursery for the same. Two months will have to elapse after the planting of the first crop before the raising of the nursery for the 2nd crop. The first crop paddy is harvested in September, and after 2 or 3 consecutive ploughings, the second crop is planted within the period of a fortnight. There is then only one weeding and very occasionally two. The harvest of the paddy begins in January and continues to the end of February. In March there is the work of threshing, stacking straw and storing the produce. Kuliavettu which is preliminary to levelling in puddle is being done occasionally. The carting of the available compost would take about 10 to 15 days in May. There are thus full four months of no work, when the problem of providing work for the labourer has not been solved. In places where only one planting is done, there is a longer period of no work. This is the nature of work in a purely wetland tract such as is represented by a portion of the

District. But the existence of a good extent of garden lands of good fertility in this village has solved the problem of providing work for the coolies throughout the year. The bulk of the garden lands is put under ragi, which is planted simultaneously with the first crop paddy. This requires only one irrigation as the rainy season sets in soon after. Chilly is the next important crop of the village occupying about 25 per cent of the dry area. This is the money crop, and much attention is paid to it. A small area is put under various vegetable crops such as gourds, pumpkins and yams. These find a good market in towns. Large circular floats of pumpkins sailing down the rivers to distant towns is a common sight when the rivers are full and this is a very cheap form of transit. All these are the season crops. The winter crops are also varied. The ragi lands are put under maize, cumbu and other minor cereals. Gingelly helps the tenant to pay a portion of his rent in kind. A luxuriant crop of tobacco along the sides of rivers is an excellent sight. The plantain is also a very profitable crop of the padugai land. The soil on which the two latter crops are raised is formed of a rich deposit of fine sand and silt, on both sides of the river beds. As there is a constant addition of fresh silt every year and occasionally washing or scouring away of the same, these soils are always rich and grow any crop without any manure. The busy mirasdar would ever have his handsfull, if he chooses.

Many of the landlords of this as well as any other village in the district are absentee, and it is no exaggeration when I say that there are many such gentlemen who do not know where their lands are situated. Agriculture is not worth the attention of many who enjoy very lucrative professions—ministers of states, members of the bench and the bar, and many other distinguished men in various lines of work hail from this deserted village. The lands of these people are managed by agents who as a rule are paid very low. The agent has not any active part to take. The lands are cultivated by the tenant on share system, the landlord getting $\frac{4}{5}$ and the tenant $\frac{1}{5}$ of the grain and $\frac{1}{2}$ of the straw. The agent is not allowed to cultivate on pannai (Home farm) system because he could not be trusted with all sorts of income and expenditure which this system involves. He has

only to keep a stock of seed and advance it to the tenants, superintend the planting and harvesting and take the master's share. The lord does not trust the agent and the agent knows what opinion the master has of him, and so it would not affect him, if he now and then attends to his own interest at his master's expense. The tenant has a better example to follow, and he too can pilfer something now and then just before and during harvest, and escape free.

Some of the families have got a representative of their own, who after an attempt or two at secondary education, has been recalled to administrative duties at home. Agriculture is a despised profession for him because it is a punishment for not doing well at school, and even the very cooly condoles with him for his having been brought down from the pedestal of the town school to the village agriculture. He is himself loath to soil his feet with the mire of the wetland; he is moreover quite unaccustomed to keeping out in sun and rain. So in this instance also the tenant is allowed to cultivate on share system. The tenant will have more interest in cultivation, because, the greater the produce, the greater will be his share. This is how the bulk of the lands of the village, and also of the District are managed. It is these Varam lands that give the poorest yields. Very little manure is applied to these lands. Manuring is landlord's interest, but he has no or very few animals, and so he has very little manure. The tenant applies all his manure to the garden land which is really his bread-giver. A fifth of the produce of inferior grain would never be an inducement to apply manure to wetlands. Ploughing is only in name and after planting, the tenant turns that side, only during harvest, the work of irrigation being attended to by the village irrigator. If weeding is to be done, it is the landlord that must goad him to attend to the same, and he should also advance some grain for cooly wages. This disinterestedness on the part of the tenant is also due to the fact that the increased produce in paddy land is not in direct proportion to the amount of labour expended on the same, as is the case in garden land, where the ryot is sure of a greater income for every day he works there. The process of harvesting and thrashing is one of mutual deceit. The tenant would try to throw all the grain into the stack

by incomplete thrashing, so that he may remove the grain from the stack later on. The land lord has thus to be ever vigilant, and if he attended to another work while thrashing is going on several sheaves would have gone into the stack without being thrashed. And the landlord has his own turn; he measures out only the cattle thrashed paddy for the tenants' share, and the measurement too is less. It is not necessary to say who is a better cheat as unfortunately both are cheated by Mother Nature in not giving them half as much as She does to the more honest and industrious ryot.

There is still another type of landlords of real Agricultural merit, who farm quite well, and live a decent life. Very few people of such type are found in every village, and these have generally been trained from the beginning by their parent in Agricultural pursuit. These people invariably keep a number of plough animals, engage permanent men, and do wetland cultivation themselves. Such people are called Pannai cultivators. Even these people, only cultivate the paddy lands themselves, and let the garden lands to their permanent coolies and tenants on annual leases. In the case of better type of tenants, the land is continued to be kept by the same tenant for several years, the lease being renewed each year. The lands are estranged even from such a ryot and given away to another man for short periods, on a higher rent, for cultivating more intensive crops like plantains, betel vine or tobacco. These crops require some capital and more skill and labour for raising and marketing. These every ryot cannot afford and only men with experience and capital undertake this work. The same land cannot be put under such crops every year and they thus go after fresh lands each year. There is thus a disturbance in the cultivation of the land by the same tenant. The lands after such intensive crops are also left poor and are given away to the usual tenants at lower rates. This and the want of mutual trust are the reasons why lands are not given away on longer leases. The garden lands are thus never sufficiently improved.

These are given away to the cooly class for cultivation because they are difficult to be managed by the easy going wetland mirasdar. Permanent coolies are preferred in the first instance, because the cooly

cannot be provided with work throughout the year, and he can supplement his wages by the income he gets from the garden land where he works during the off season. It is only the offering of the garden land at a lower rent that is the inducement to attract coolies to permanent service. The accepted meaning of the term permanent service is that the attendance of the cooly is compulsory when the landlord requires it, but there is no guarantee of permanent work throughout the year and whenever he is not provided with work he would not get any wages. Wherever there are not enough drylands there is a custom in the District of giving about 35 cents of wetlands free of rent for the coolies' own cultivation.

With permanent work for more than half the year, and excellent garden land at low rent for his cultivation where he can work during his leisure, one would expect the position of the labourer to be very comfortable. But this is rather an exception, than the rule; the cooly can attend to his work only when the mirasdar can spare him. Ragi planting and paddy planting are simultaneous, but the tenant can only attend to his work after the paddy planting is over. The season thus gets late. His own paddy may be over ripe and the grains will be shedding but he should finish the harvest of his master's crop before he harvests his own. Thus notwithstanding the low rent and good soil, the tenant cooly gets only a poor crop. The operations cannot be done in season and a poor crop can only be expected, and the cooly is scarcely able to make both ends meet. Not only the pannai cooly, but even the varam cultivator has certain compulsory obligations to the landlord. The maize or tobacco may be wilting for want of irrigation but the varam tenant must attend the marriage festival of the mirasdar for a week or so. Attendance on minimum or no wages is quite compulsory on occasions such as storing grains in the saer stacking straw and so on. If I ask a mirasdar, why he does not allow the tenant to harvest his paddy crop, until his own is finished, the invariable reply is that the tenant would not attend to the landlord's harvest afterwards but would go away for daily wages outside, which is specially high during harvest time. This is also to a great extent true.

The title of "Mirasi" is commonly associated with certain false and most prejudicial notions about manual labour, which is supposed to be a mean and degrading act. This is noticed here even among the non-brahmin class. "Hollow Moopnar" I recently addressed a friend of mine who was working with his coolies, "You seem to take much interest in agriculture now-a-days." The poor young man had almost lost his wits at being thus seen in company with the coolies in actual work, and he offered a hundred apologies by way of explaining his unworthy act. By way of contrast I cannot refrain from alluding to another instance. When last I went to Mr. Abraham Panditha's garden at Tanjore to see his son, a friend, and class mate of mine in the Agricultural College, he was not able to talk to me until his work was finished. How proud he was to be at work with his workmen in a work man's costume. It is men of the latter sort that every village is wanting in. Labour is dignified, and agricultural labour is far beyond comparison. This repulsiveness to manual labour is noticed not only in the richer class but also in the poorer ones whose very existence depends upon their own exertions. The caste cooly man works in the mire, and does every kind of work, but the cooly woman would not do the planting for her husband; it is supposed to be beneath her dignity. Although there are more than 200 families of the cooly class in this village, with atleast twice as many woman capable of manual work, there are only about 100 pariah women coolies who would attend to transplanting. The period of planting is thus unduly prolonged. The coolies' housewife would rather pick up fallen ears in others harvested fields and do petty pilfering, pocketing all insults from the pariah watchman, but would not stoop to help her husband in harvesting his field. Nothing more ruinous to the poorer class (no less to the rich) than such silly notions about manual labour. There are about 200 families in this village entirely dependant upon the village and the area per family works to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres of which a little less than 2 acres will be wetlands and the remaining garden lands. This area ought to be more than sufficient to engage the full labour of a family and provide a happy home. One pair of plough-cattle is kept for every 5 - 6 acres of wetland, or

for every 3 acres of garden land approximately. As the water is lifted by the picotah, big cattle are very rare, except for cart use.

The cattle of this village, as of every wetland tract, are the weakest and smallest of their kind. They are supposed to be sufficient, as wetland requires very little ploughing. These cattle are of course the natives of the land, and no mother ever condemns her son of any fault however bad he may be. So the landlord is quite happy with the products of his own cow. Every bit of land is under cultivation. The stubbles of the harvested paddy field are the only pasture and that for 4 months in the year for the whole cattle of the village. Indiscriminate grazing and breeding is the rule. Paddy straw is almost the only fodder that the cattle can have and concentrated food is too costly for these creatures. Under these conditions, one cannot expect better type of cattle to be bred in the District. With about 45 inches of rain fall, excellent water supply, rich soil and good garden lands this village is pre-eminently suited for raising very good crops of fodder at very little cost. Cutting a crop when in full bearing, for feeding cattle is a strange story. It is supposed to be a sin to cut the crop like that, and the ryot's range of imagination is very wonderful in comparing the action to the murdering of a pregnant female. But this idea is bound to go, as many superstitious ideas have gone before, when people realise the advantage of this system. A certain amount of demonstration is only necessary and the younger generation of the agriculturists referred to above, would really like to try these novel things. I feel sure that these people may more easily be persuaded to agricultural improvements with the advice of the officers of the Agricultural Department. The raising of fodder crops, for which there are many facilities, would make common grazing unnecessary to a great extent, and no body would then afford to keep these wretched cattle. With consolidation of holdings and the system of raising fodder crops established, the evolution of a system of enclosures is only a question of time.

With these broad features of the agricultural practices of the village in view, the question of improvement does not offer serious

obstacles or difficulties, as the problem is a very simple one. Their agricultural sayings and the details of cultivation are the essence of generations of agriculturists. The materials are all there and a good workman is only necessary to lay a proper foundation, and the edifice of economic agriculture will be raised by the people themselves in a short time.

The division of landed property by the members of a family is inevitable, but the educated non agricultural member who is earning a good income abroad need not be so very particular to have his just share of the ancestral property which he is either not able to look after or which is too small for his constant attention. The procedure will be helpful to both parties. The scattered nature of the holdings require immediate attention. The work of mutual exchange must be more thorough and efficient. A certain considered amount of Govt. interference in checking this evil would be a great boon. Some more concessions may be given to start with by way of lessening stamp duty for this purpose. The systems of cultivation as at present practised have got to be radically changed. The annual nature of the leases, whatever the cause of its existence may be would never tend to improve the land. The want of trust in tenants who may leave the shores at any moment, is brought forward as one of the reasons why long leases are not given. The bulk of the emigrants of the village are bad cultivators with adventurous spirit. The loss of such men are not really so much felt, and the village is probably the better for having lost some of the useless men. But it is only the leaving of heavy debts behind them that causes loss and disaffection among the landlords. The production of a certificate by the emigrant to the effect that he has no debts to be discharged before he quits the shore or some similar way of protection of the landlords, interest is sincerely wished for. About the better type of tenants, they may be encouraged by giving them advances for purchasing good pairs of cattle and for raising more valuable crops themselves occasionally in their own lands. It is even good to work on joint partnership with the tenant. He can expend much of manual labour, and the mirasdar may pay up the rent, the value of manures and any extra charges in cultivation.

The net profits may be divided equally. This system is bound to work successfully and both would be much better off. The share system is good in principle, but the tenant's interest must be made greater by offering him a greater share. The better yield that would then be obtained would more than compensate the extra share the landlord gives the tenant. Even then that the absentee landlord should try to go into share system of cultivation, would not work well. The best thing for him would be, if he cannot manage the lands with the sole aid of an agent, to let the lands on long leases to reliable individuals. He should be prepared to bear a portion of the charges on permanent improvements that the tenant effects upon the land. This would be a real inducement to the ryot to improve the land by heavy manuring, sinking wells and such other ways. The pay of the agents who manage the lands is quite insufficient. With very poor pay and various temptations, it would require a very strong will to always look to the master's interest alone. In many cases the trial of an improved method or the growing of green manure crop has been to a great extent hampered by these agents. If a departmental officer suggests anything to the absentee landlord, the matter is naturally referred to the agent. This man somehow does not brook to be intruded upon by outsiders and his business is to see that the trial, in the first instance, is a failure so that the landlord may not bring any further suggestions. The trial of an improvement is a progress in the wrong direction, and a success in the same would pave the way for further improvement, which means a greater attention upon the land by the landlord. This is a great check to the agent's interest which he does not like. A better paid more interested agent would not do this. An interest in the land can be created by better pay and also by allowing the agent a portion of profits over and above the normal.

Failure in an attempt has too often been the cause of condemning the very further attempt at the same. It does not make them enquire into the cause of failure, and to see that further can be done. The lack of such an interest is one great cause of degeneration. Failure should be made a sign of success. Even the Pannai cultivator is not

without his defects. He has to be taught the most elementary principles of Farming. The haphazard, happy-go-lucky plan which is at present adopted will not help to successful agriculture. Agriculture is a business, at any rate is becoming a thorough going business, and only men with business habits will succeed. They should be made to realise the changes in time and that men should adapt themselves to circumstance if they are to succeed in the keen competition for existence. Other nations study our tastes and requirements in order that they may produce such articles and sell it to us. But the Indian cultivator is only producing what he was doing when the village was self sufficient. But now the extra produce goes to industrial centres, and the ryot does not care to know where his produce goes, how the article is sold to them, whether he can grow different crops suited to other markets and so on. Thus for instance maize is grown in this village to a large extent. This is used as food by the lower class and the rest is sent to Pudukotta, a distance of 37 miles where the stuff is partly fed to cattle and partly used as food by the cooly class. The American corn flour which is a daily requirement in almost every house in the Dt. can best be produced at home, by trying the introduced maize crops and a small capitalist will have a busy trade. Tobacco again is a very luxuriant crop and the ryot only adopts a very crude system of curing and the cured product finds only a poor sale. How very profitable it would be if any one would learn the improved methods of curing, and marketing. He should be able to know what sort of tobacco the market requires and should be able to prepare that kind of production.

The economical use of labour is not understood. The carrying of head loads of grain and straw from the thrashing floor to the place of storage or to the home stead is a very common practice. The carting of the stuff is a far cheaper and quicker method. Absence of roads to wetlands is one of the reasons why the former practice is adopted. The construction of roads into the wetlands is a very important improvement. As it is, the produce, unless it is carried immediately in head loads from the thrashing floor, has to be temporarily stored there for more than a month, before the lands dry up for cutting cart

tracks. Pilfering is the consequent evil. In some cases the produce has to be urgently transported either for sale or other reasons, then heavy charges have got to be incurred. The putting up of a road running along a number of important thrashing floors is a necessity. There is no waste of land as coconuts would thrive very well if planted on both the sides.

The question of manuring the lands is never paid any importance and I may say the value of manure in production is not fully understood. Green manuring is out of question where indiscriminate common grazing is the rule. Even the raising of green gram in the whole of the village has been stopped for want of union ; any member in the village simply allowing his cattle to trespass on the ground that he would allow the cattle to graze in his own land which lies in the midst of the other fields containing pulse crops. This trespass of cattle by disinterested members increased gradually and now the raising of field gram has absolutely stopped. Truly the question of moving space for cattle necessitates that there should be some area set apart for that. Then one part of the village may be reserved for grazing and the other part may be used for raising a green manure crop. This step would be of much use. The use of phosphatic manures to wetlands ought to prove highly profitable here as the soil survey, and experiments on crop show, and demonstration and preaching are necessary. The financial condition of the agricultural population of the village may be very easily guessed from their agricultural practices. Capital is only had by the absentee landlord as a result of his non-agricultural earnings. Most of the regular cultivators are in perpetual debts. The wetland produce is not quite sufficient to meet his annual family consumption, the cooly wages and also the assessment. In a normal year the first two instalments are paid by the sale of paddy in the thrashing floor itself. For the rest he goes to the tenant who owes his rent for the garden land. The ragi crop the ryot has harvested, is partly used up and the rest he can ill-afford to sell. The green chilly which was giving him daily some money he could not accumulate into a lump sum, for the number of taverns, on his way back from the town where he sells his chillies, are so many that atleast one of them attracts his

unwary mind and he spends most of his money. The root crops and minor cereals only give a portion of the rent and the rest he has got to meet by loans from the landlord himself at 18% interest. In abnormal years which are not infrequent the amount of indebtedness only increases. The mirasdar's banker is the Nattukottai Chetti who gives him money at 12% interest. One marriage in the family means another heavy debt. The number of expensive festivities in connection with one individual during one generation is really very large. An average landlord with 15 acres of land costing about Rs. 15,000/- will have to set apart at least Rs. 300/- every year. This I take from the following calculation. A big marriage would happen once in 6 years and would cost Rs. 1000/- and the secondary ones for the 5 succeeding years, at least Rs. 150/- a year. But he gets from his lands only a rental of Rs. 600 a year, with which he has to pay the assessment maintain a big family and meet litigation charges. He has again very little working capital. A portion of the produce he sets apart for cooly wages, the few implements are made every year on payment of a few Madras measures of paddy. A pair or two of cattle are the progeny of his own cow, which only feed upon the paddy straw which is had in sufficient quantity. Land is good, labour is plentiful, but capital is nil. With a cheap and sufficient labour and fertile soil capital can easily be created. One thing is necessary, which is exactly what is wanting. This is interestedness. The landlord is abroad, and the tenant is asleep. Very few mirasdars keep any account of their income and expenditure, to enable them to find out their financial condition. Most of the transactions are only entered on the indelible pages of a strong memory, developed at the expense of a skilful intellect necessary for successful agriculture. It is thus quite a common thing for the sons and wife to assemble around the dying man, and enquire about his monetary transactions. It is only then that the full assets and liabilities of the family are known.

The ryot when asked for an account of his returns, expenses and profit, invariably gives the same answer, that if the ploughman begins to calculate he cannot have even an olock of grain as profit. This is really true, and the immutable belief in this theory has been the cause

of the nonsaving of even an ollock of grain. The few accounts that they keep, are never of any use in helping to find out the profit and loss of any cultivation he has done. Nobody cares to calculate the expenses under various items of cultivation charges compare the same with others or with his previous figures and find out where he has lost. It is this sort of accounts that is really necessary to successful farming. This has yet to be created. The ryots clamour of heavy assessment and little yields and no profit, but they are not able to substantiate their statements by properly kept accounts. It is only then that they will be able to convince the Govt. about their grievances. In a place where people do not keep any accounts of their own income and expenditure—in fact many of them do not know how to keep it—it is hardly possible for them to understand anything about the village accounts. Few people know the survey numbers of all their fields, their correct measurement and the definite assessment. The karnams accounts are invariably the gospel and the receipt given for the money by the village munsiff, settles the thing for the year. Certain common works in the village such as the clearing of the irrigation channels the drinking water pond and cost of temple festivities are all met with from the proceeds of the common lands which gives about Rs. 300 a year. The villagers assemble once a year or more on the pial of a vacant house, and discuss work to be done, the budget is passed, and the works done according to their urgency. No regular accounts are kept for this also, loose bits of paper showing the expenditure are kept by one of the prominent members, and are destroyed after the work is completed.

The village common land is a sort of basis for the present cooperative activity that is at present existing, which is essentially the clearing of the main irrigation channel, and deepening the same. There is very little else done in this direction at present. Even marriages and funerals where the presence of atleast one member from each family is a social obligation, are not properly attended. The possibilities of cooperative activity in agriculture here are vast, and their appearance is only a matter of time. The present inactive state is due to the disappearance of the older type of men and the coming in of a

fresh generation, who have begun their agricultural life only now. These should make themselves at home with their new business before they can develop further activities. They have perhaps failed to pass examinations at school, but are educated enough to understand the principles of cooperation, and under the fostering care and guidance of an educated sympathetic village every one of them would make an excellent cooperator. Paddy is the most important crop of the village and cooperation in matter of getting seed, purchasing manures, the raising of green manure crops, would all save a great amount of expenditure. The paddy crop planted at different dates ripen almost simultaneously and problem of harvesting quickly, and at a cheap cost by the joint purchase of an efficient harvesting machinery would be an effort in the right direction. The period of harvest and the time of paying land assessment come together, and the ryot could only sell his paddy crop to pay off his rent. A very large amount of stuff is suddenly sent to the market and the value suddenly goes down and the ryot has thus to choose one of the two alternatives, to preserve the paddy until the normal price is reached and borrow from chetties at 12 to 15% interest, or to sell the produce for a very low price, to prevent the accumulation of debts. An agricultural bank, which would advance ryots on the security of their stock, at low rates of interest, can be usefully started, which may be under the control of a central bank. This village, as I said boasts of many rich educated men. In as much as the progress of a nation is greatly aided by its administration and patriots so also the progress of a village depends upon the effect which the wiser and more talented men of the village bring to bear upon their less enlightened brethren. Instead of their giving their earnings on loan to the chetties at 6 to 9% who lend out at from 12 to 18% they may very well give some money to these villages, through a cooperative bank. A Cooperative Society here, as in every village of this district, is very easy to start if the big wigs would advance some money to the society, take part in the activities, until some of the younger men are trained in business methods and have realised the objects and the effects of cooperation. If the objects of cooperation are instilled into their minds, the work done by this means, the progress attained in other places, explained to them, and the necessity for the same be brought

home to their minds by facts and figures suited to their understanding; and if one of the richer sympathetic mirasdar would resolve to spend a few of his vacations in his village, with the object of working at this subject, co-operative Society of a very strong foundation is only a matter of a few days' or months' work. The improvements to be effected in every village are many sided. These when attempted produce good results but in most cases they are not lasting. For permanent improvements to be effected, two points have got to be brought home vividly to the mind of every ryot. (1) Dignity of labour among the rich as well as poor and (2) importance of business methods in Agriculture. These may be effected by a series of lectures in every village about the defects in their agricultural practices, how they effect their national development as well as their own well-being, how improvements could be effected. The usefulness of magic lantern demonstrations along with the lectures in demonstrating the business methods, cooperative activities, the use of machine powers and various improvements by other nations need not be too strongly emphasised.

A word to the Leaders of Public life. The Legislative, Municipal and other Councils are not the only places where the salvation of a nation can be worked out. Let me appeal to some of the less successful patriots who have failed by few votes to secure a seat in those coveted positions. Please turn now to the village where you were born, think of the youths now grown into mere men, with whom you played in your youthful days. They require urgent succour. Lift them up and the nation will lift itself up. For they form the foundation of a nation, especially a nation that depends mostly upon its agriculture. Any colossal structure or ambitious scheme is doomed to fall to the ground when the foundation cannot support it. Here is the whole work that has been long neglected. Better late than never. Here is ample work for a thousand patriots. The unaided missionary work of the Agricultural Department is bound to produce fruitful results but your help would accelerate the progress a hundred times and more.

(Sd.) K. RAGHVACHARIAR.
