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Editorial

The Editor and his colleagues on the Editorial Board gratefully acknowledge the ready response of the Hon'ble Chief Minister to the Government of Madras, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Government of Madras and other gentlemen to their request to contribute blessings and articles for this special annual number of the Madras Agricultural Journal. This is the first time that the Madras Agricultural Students' Union is bringing out a special number. It is hoped that it will have its own bright future in the years to come.

Agriculture in the Five Year Plan: India has attained an outstanding land-mark in the history of nations by its bringing out the text of the five year plan. Any reader of the plan will really come to the conclusion that it is a planned progress in a democratic way.

The Planning Commission has brought out the five year plan after two and a half years' labour, contemplation and consultation. Parliament has put its seal and now is the time when we should put forth all our zeal to implement it.

The Plan attempts to integrate the various activities in agriculture, industry and social services. Agriculture, as it is dealt with in the plan, is discussed in this note. The Five Year Plan for agriculture aims at self-sufficiency of food requirements and the substantial reduction of excessive dependence on imports. The target of increase in food production is nearly eight million tons. To attain this high level of food production in actual practice it is proposed to bring more than seven million acres of additional land under cultivation of food crops. In addition, provision is also made for new irrigation, through major works to more than eight million acres and through minor works to eleven million acres. Greater stress is laid in the plan on the minor works of irrigation as they yield quicker and more widespread results all over the country. The importance of other means of augmenting food production like usage of improved seeds of dependable viability, application of certified manures and fertilisers, etc., has also been touched upon in the five year plan.

The interests of other human requirements, that are as important as food, have also been very efficiently and effectively sought to be safeguarded in the plan. It is proposed to raise the cotton production by over 12 lakh bales and jute by 20 lakh bales. Production of oil seeds will be increased by 0.375 million tons and sugar by 0.69 million tons. These are the particulars of the agricultural targets of the plan.

The pattern of reorganisation of the agricultural status of India, as conceived in the five year plan, is really marvellous. The Commission has taken into consideration the deep attachment of the peasant to his land, irrespective of its size and has judiciously rejected the proposal of nationalisation of land as an impractical proposition, with its innumerable financial and social impediments and implications. As an alternative solution the Commission confidently recommends the organisation of Co-operative Village Managements. Under this scheme the entire village becomes a single unit to be managed, protected and taken care of by the concerned Co-operative Village Management. The holdings of the inhabitants of the village are to be pooled without infringing on their ownership rights, but paying each owner compensation in the shape of ownership dividends to be paid at the time of each harvest. Thus it is envisaged in the plan that the entire cultivable land in the village is to be cultivated on the most scientific lines on a co-operative basis to the maximum advantage of the nation at large. In this scheme all workers, owners, and non-owners will be paid on the basis of the work turned out by them.

The Government in power will constitute Village Production Council and Co-operative Farming Societies, besides establishing registered farms. If the plan is to attain its targets within the prescribed period, the public, particularly the peasants must co-operate with the Government in the successful implementation of the various proposals contained in the text of the five year plan.

When once agriculturally our India attains these targets, the other aspects of industry and social services will naturally improve, though in the plan simultaneous consideration and action are recommended. It is hoped that the ambition of the Planning Commission and the Government in power will be realised and that a stage will be attained in India, when every tiller of the soil gives his helping hand to build up a healthy and self-contained Republic through the dynamic plan designed to build up a dynamic nation of 360 millions of souls.