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*Occupational Readjustment*

The above analysis indicates a line of attack against this problem of too many low-income farmers. Evidently it is a case of excessive dependence on a single source of employment. The remedy, therefore, lies in enabling particularly the low-income farmers to seek non-farm employment. If the principal non-farm occupation, which to-day gives only partial employment to many persons, compelling them to take to agriculture as a subsidiary occupation, could be revived and made remunerative not only will the pressure on land diminish, it will diminish in a manner that will make the agricultural economy more efficient. There would be minimum of friction in such a process of transfer of occupation. In fact, there is no transfer at all. Instead of one person doing two jobs, both inefficiently, he will be helped to earn his entire living from the non-farm job, releasing the badly cultivated land for better use. The line of action suggested above, I submit, has the merit of probing at the root of the trouble, dealing with the case and not mere symptoms.

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 PROBLEMS OF THE LOW INCOME OR SUB-MARGINAL FARMERS

by

K. G. SIVASWAMY

*Low-income farmer is the main group in Indian agriculture*

The main problem of the low-income farmer is his income deficit. But yet he persists in holding on to his farm. The enquiry by the Madras Government in 1945 showed that the average family income for small holders owning 5 acres and less amounted to Rs. 681 or Rs. 108 per capita. According to the figures supplied by the ex-Premier of the Madras Government in his pamphlet on income parity, 51 per cent of agricultural families hold less than 2 acres, 31 per cent between 2 and 5 acres, 7 per cent between 5 and 10 acres, and 11 per cent above 10 acres. 82 per cent of the agricultural families are therefore submarginal farmers. This only means that agriculture is burdened with a large surplus population and is not a wholtime industry for millions. It hardly gives a living. The existence of the sub-marginal farmer and his family on this precarious source of livelihood eating full, and mainly grains just after the harvest, living on one meal on certain days, and on cheap substitute foods and yet surviving has been explained by Mr. H. H. Mitchell, Division of Animal Nutrition, University of Illinois, in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association (8th September 1944) that there is an energy called

'adaptation energy present' in limited quantities in the human body which minimises the damaging effects of food deficiency on it and that "this accounts for the ability of the people of India to thrive on calcium supplies so much less than American standards prescribe" and that this adaptation cannot however prevent death by starvation "when the stage of resistance merges into state of exhaustion". As a result of a lower intake of foods, the body loses in weight and economises in its expenditure of energy in digesting foods and its performance of muscular work. The reserve may become less to tide over long starvation but after the adaptation there will be no nutritional diseases as anemia, skin disease and dysentery, unless food consumption is largely deficient in quantity as well as quality.

How is this income deficit which is the cause of low life and partial starvation of the peasant to be met?

#### *Family farms and their limitations*

Many problems are beyond the farmer's control. Some of them can be solved by co-operative action and intelligent choice of different occupations on a farm but that means more ability, developed citizenship, and personal morale. "Where the people are educationally backward, the trend must shift to larger unions, because by means of the superior training of comparatively few operators, a higher level of efficiency of all the labour employed can be attained. If a collective is established by a capable man with a thousand backward peasants, this collective will undoubtedly be more successful than if the thousand peasants had been left to their own devices. But if a collective is established with a thousand efficient peasants under the charge of a manager who is less competent than the peasants, it will be a failure. It is only therefore as we succeed in making people more efficient that we can hope for success" (I.C.A.E. proceedings 1937 p. 289). A family farm with enough land and technical equipment may give a decent return though not to the same extent as large farms, but the main deciding factor here is the ability and enterprise of the farmer. But the sub-marginal farmer who lacks these qualities needs direction and supervision by a central authority and cannot improve himself on his own initiative by combination with others, even if all resources are placed at his disposal. Such direction by a central authority should however be so exercised as to develop mutual local effort and individual initiative and leadership.

#### *Not size of the farm is the problem but its proper organisation*

Low income farmers suffer under a number of disabilities. They can be made to increase their incomes from lands by a proper organisa-

tion of the farm for the use of land, labour and capital. The size of the farm is not the problem but the way in which it is organised. And this size will vary according to soil and crops raised. A soil requiring deep ploughing and hence draft power of a high degree needs a powerful pair of bullocks and consequently a large-sized farm which can give work to the latter. In a lighter soil a low-income farmer may be able to manage, provided he has sufficient manpower in his house. A small area for vegetables and fruit may be sufficient as a source of livelihood a bigger area may be necessary for grains and livestock. Combination of uneconomic holdings will also become necessary from the point of view of economic management of different crops and soils. An integrated use of irrigated, dry and grazing lands will have to be kept in view when devising a farm unit. This may not be possible to attain in all small farms.

The small farm creates too many managers who are responsible to take executive decisions regarding the best use of the farm. This leads to unequal development between one farm and another. This again needs a proper organisation of land.

#### *Soil exhaustion*

The low-income farmer over-crops and exhausts the soil. Owing to his too much exerting on the soil, the latter gets over-worked. Soil problems vary for the sub-marginal farmer in different regions. In the old deltas it is one of replenishing the exhausted soil by fertilising the land. In dry tracts subject to little rainfall, it is one of the devices for retention of moisture. In areas of heavy rainfall it is one of crop rotations and cover crops as to prevent soil erosion or of drainage. The nature of the crop has to be varied from the point of view of maintaining and enriching the soil, as green manure, pasture, trees etc. A low-income farmer has no capital to maintain the soil by the use of fertilisers. What little cash he has goes towards family maintenance. He cannot invest in pasture and cover crops as the return will be less over a short period, neither has he money enough to purchase cattle and take to mixed farming. Soil conservation means study of land resource, planning local projects of soil maintenance, instruction of and state-aid to the farmers for carrying out such projects.

#### *Sub-marginal lands*

The low-income farmer suffers for want of capital and technical information in the cultivation of sub-marginal lands. Some of them can be improved as a result of manuring, deep ploughing, contour-bunding to retain moisture, drainage or by an adjustment in the farm boundary

or by keeping them fallow. Or improvements in production, transport and marketing may change the classification from sub-marginal to super-marginal lands. Some may be fit for pasture and some for trees. Some lands will have necessarily to be acquired by the state with a view to prevent their unprofitable cultivation.

#### *Small irrigation sources*

The low-income farmer cannot also develop his water resources which will help to raise more crops. To dig a well means long-term credit. Some big owners draw away the water from the land of a small peasant by digging their wells in closely-adjoining lands to which water percolates. Also water for lands will first irrigate the lands of big holders who maintain the largest number of farm servants and can therefore use sanction of force against the poorer holders.

To the submarginal peasant small-scale irrigation facilities will help not merely to increase production but to stabilize his income by assuring him more work through more extended crops.

In addition to minor irrigation works, small schemes of conserving water which would irrigate below 50 acres can be easily promoted in dry tracts. The villager has far more local knowledge of such schemes than P.W.D. officers. We have little literature on surface levels and drainage of rain water and the most economic methods of collecting it at different spots. The possibilities of damming streams in villages near the foot of the hills has yet to be surveyed. Sub-soil surveys of the depth at which water is available have not been made for all the areas. Study and planning of these water resources and promotion of schemes by the co-operative efforts of the ryots by irrigation technicians have been recommended by the Royal Agricultural Commission. In wet areas, the small well in the field or the tank will be a source of supplementary irrigation. In dry areas they are the main sources of supply not only for agriculture but for the consumption by men and cattle. The introduction of electricity for water pumping has resulted in the deepening and broadenning of wells for extended irrigation. It ought to be possible to supply water from rivers to lands on a higher level with the aid of pumps and motors. Pipes and sprinklers can supply water to gardens. Priority in any scheme of stabilising and increasing the peasant's income should be given to the planning of small-scale irrigation works.

#### *Debt and Credit*

The low-income farmer cannot get short-term credit promptly and to the required amount and at a fair rate of interest for purchasing seeds

5. The Labourer: belongs to the class of proletariat with on possession of worldly goods and with only labour to sell for use on others' lands.

This depiction of the social hierarchy clearly shows that the problem under discussion has to be restricted to only two layers of the lower class in the agricultural economy. The agricultural labourers and their problems have to be left out of the discussion. But discussing as we are the problem of the small farmer as to be faced by policy makers or the nation as a whole, it is impossible to leave out the proletariat. For, the problem of small farmers is only a part of the bigger problem of the unprivileged class of people employed in agriculture.

## II. *The Pattern of Inquiry :*

It is a common, though unscientific, practice to hold on to a theory, consciously or unconsciously, collect 'facts', classify them, then analyse them according to some standards, and finally come to some precise conclusions. What is generally forgotten is the fact that a theory can only be evolved through research, and that even then it is only a system of abstract propositions being valid only to the problem under discussion. There is also another school, which believes that agricultural economics is simply applied general economics and holds the view that theory is simply an armchair method of research. "But what is needed is the visualisation of the conjoint relationship between *theory and fact*, so that when one looks for "facts" he is not seeing things merely through the limited focus of an inadequate system of conceptions, which operate as sheer prejudice when used without explicit recognition."\*

In order to bring this conception of theory to greater criticism this paper while discussing the problem of small farmers will use four different conceptions of 'scientific theories'. They are 1) The method of inquiry based on the deterministic philosophy associated with Malthus and others, 2) The philosophy of dialectical Materialism as used by Lenin in his book "Theory of the Agrarian Question", 3) Neo-Classical school of Economics and its methods, 4) The empirical philosophy as seen in logical positivism of John Dewey and others.

### (A) *Problematic situation :*

It is now appreciated more and more every day that there is great poverty in the rural areas. Poverty, as noted by well-to-do urban classes, is generally associated with the

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\* K. H. Parsons "An Approach to Research Methodology in Agricultural Economics" p. 25.

mation about available employment in towns. In his own village only low paid jobs such as carting, storing, deepening of lands, erection of mudwalls, fencing, and roofing of houses are available. He is in an economic squeeze.

#### *Free and forced labour*

The low-income from his farm naturally drives the sub-marginal farmer to the few available supplementary occupations. The agricultural population owning bits of land and supplementing it by tenancy is estimated in the Madras Province as 5 millions out of a total of 36 millions. This group of holders of uneconomic holdings are naturally obliged to bigger holders in various ways for their cash borrowings, grain loans, the lands they have rented, and particularly for any labour work which they may get in the off-season. The greater the dependents, the more the loss of economic freedom which thereby prejudices free contracts and forces this class of farmers to work for a less wage and to give free service of themselves and their bullocks for the landlord's farm. Sometimes they emigrate to the hills with their families and go to distant places for harvest or in search of work in neighbouring villages. Some farmers are better advantaged owing to nearness of urban markets for vegetables, fruits and milk. Those in the interior somehow struggle and live between one crop and another.

#### *Drought areas*

The position of the sub-marginal farmer who cultivates in problem areas subject to drought and flood is worse. Crop insurance may help where hazards are not excessive, but there are areas in our country as the Deccan tract where periodical droughts lead to failure of crops, fodder-famine, death of cattle, unemployment, high prices, and food scarcity and distress. To unemployment due to drought were added the evils of black-markets and high prices during the famine of 1942-43 in the Deccan tract. Government had to provide not merely work, but actual food so that cash wage might not increase the inflationary spiral and create more distress outside the relief camps. Every period of crop failure leads to sale of cattle at low price and more mortgages on the land leading to land sales. When the farm income diminishes, the farmer begins to live on land value. Certain farms are abandoned in periods of drought. Some of the farmers become labourers, some emigrate to tea and coffee estates and some work as tenants under money-lenders and big holders.

#### *Flood areas*

The problems created for the low-income farmer by floods and cyclone reveal the crash that comes on the rural economy in such crises



and the inadequacy of the state staff working on bureaucratic traditions to deal with such emergencies. The recent cyclone and floods in the Kistna, Godavary and Vizagapatam districts have upset further the already deficit rural economy. 738 lives were lost, 9 lakhs of acres damaged and laid waste, 500 minor and 115 major tanks ruined, many channels and bunds washed away. The cyclone destroys trees and removes the roofs of huts. Cocoanuts, lime and plantain trees which are the source of livelihood of small farmers and tenants have been destroyed. The sub-marginal farmer, the tenant and the labourer lose their huts and are thrown into the streets. On such occasions it is the personal experience of this writer who has distributed relief during floods and famines, that the responsibility of the rich landholder to rehabilitate his farm servants is weakened and relief agencies take his place. Where such areas get usually flooded even normally and therefore crop-share prevails, there is no one to recoup the cultivation expenses already incurred and lost. The landlord comes to share when there is a crop but has no responsibility to share the expenses in such calamities. Where lease prevails, it is left to the goodwill of the landlord to remit the rent but the Madras Government will not insist that when the land owner wants a remission in land revenue, he should equally grant remission on rents.

The immediate problems created by the floods are the repair of breaches of tanks and canals and roads and culverts with a view to facilitate the raising of the next crop, and transport. Priority of water supply has to be given to the damaged lands. Devastated lands have to be manured. Seed and manure have to be made available at a subsidised price. There is hoarding, black-marketing and starvation for the common man. Rationing of food articles alone will prevent these. The other communities such as fishermen need not only housing but also the fishing materials which they have lost. Profiteering should be put down with an iron hand. The floods point to two more problems. What is to be done with the silted lands? There is no policy at present of examination of lands from the point of view of their maximum utilisation. Change-over to groundnut or castor may be more profitable in some cases than removal of sand at great cost for restoring the land to paddy cultivation. Secondly canals and tanks are so weak in their bunds that they cannot withstand an obnormal flood. Flood-moderating reservoirs are few and far between. Railway lines have not been so constructed as to allow flood waters to pass. Bunds of tanks have not been so constructed on the basis of local knowledge. Neither the currents of water in rivers have been studied from the point of view of the amount of strengthening required in the banks. Relief rehabilitation and restoration in such periods of cyclone and floods need a devoted staff in all rural depart-

ments, effective co-ordination and drive, all which cannot be expected from an administrative apparatus which has been evolved for a police rather than a welfare state.

### *Regional problems*

The problems of the low-income farmer vary for different regions. In wet areas densely populated, he is more often a crop-sharer, suffering by want of land, capital and employment. In the dry areas peasant-owners suffer by want of irrigation facilities, failure of crops, dearth of cattle, want of credit and necessary equipment for deep ploughing. In the wet areas near the foot of the hills there is dearth of labour and loss of crop owing to the ravages of malaria and wild animals. The recent extension of cultivation for food-crops in unreserved forests as in Malabar has added to the number of low-income farmers whose struggle for existence has forced them to fight malaria, to clear jungles, to raise tapioca, ginger, paddy etc., and to form new colonies unaided by the State. The same evils as in the plains, of indebtedness to the money-lender and to the trader, of difficulties in supplies and marketing, and of under-employment in the off-seasons has started on their career owing to the failure of the State to give the necessary aids to the colonists.

### *High costs of cultivation and living*

The recent increase in prices has in no way helped the low-income farmer. He has little to sell and make a surplus profit. The Economist who enquired into rural indebtedness of the Madras Government in 1946 says that those holding above 25 acres, 'have acquired the largest surplus income', between 1939 and 1945, those holding between 5 and 24 acres had a surplus of Rs. 121 in 1939 and Rs. 117 in 1945, thereby showing a slight decrease, those holding below 5 acres showed a further loss in income, and that the tenants whose deficit was Rs. 1-9-0 in 1939 had an increased deficit of Rs. 44.1 in 1945. It is noteworthy that in calculating the average expenditure of tenants, this economist excludes rent or revenue. It is out of his deficit of Rs. 44 that the tenant should pay his rent to the landlord.

Not only this class of farmers have little to sell but being partial producers have more to lose than to gain by a rise in prices. They are consumers for the greater part of the year. The principle of a price benefit which has a significance in countries with solvent holdings geared to a market economy is harmful to farmers of subsistence holdings and the latter to being uneconomic in size. The only benefit by a rise in the price of food-grains has been concomitant rise in the price of other

articles as cloth, jaggery etc., and agricultural requisites as cattle, green manure, straw, husk, bran, and oil-cakes, ashes, leather-buckets etc., which have tended to high costs of cultivation and partial starvation of the farmer, his family, and his cattle! While prices should certainly cover costs of cultivation and provide as much remuneration to the farmer as a worker in industry engaged in similar work under similar conditions, the lowering of food-grain prices to the minimum possible is absolutely essential for a people with low purchasing power. And where cereals form the major item of food consumption, the price of every article rises more when food-grain prices are high.

#### *Over-Capitalisation of land*

The low-income farmer suffers too by purchasing bits of land during times of inflation or selling a portion to pay off prior debts. In the former case the income that ought to go towards his living gets locked up in the over-capitalisation of land. In the latter his farm gets further reduced and consequently, scope for an assured employment for himself is also reduced.

#### *The problem of surplus labour*

When the farmer suffers by low-income and unproductive employment, hired labour working under him suffers still more. Labour is inadequately used in these small farms. It is possible to give more work for labour as a result of extended irrigation, soil maintenance, and raising of more crops. A time there was when labour born in farms found surplus lands to work and sanguinary ties between labour and peasant smoothened the inherent conflicts in the economy. Even so, there was always a class of serfs branded as untouchable classes. The struggle for existence has crystallised of late the ranks in the agricultural ladder into distinct classes.

High birth rates and low wages for labour are the features of rural labour economy. Unemployment is growing among labour. Casual labour has phenomenally increased in rural areas. Rural schools hardly create self-confidence in boys and train them in leadership. If youth is to grow it can only do so through jobs and there can be no substitute for the latter. Excess agricultural labour finds its way into towns and these depress the industrial wage. The dependents who work in a family farm are in a worse condition. They are sweated, have no housing facility, and no privacy. The peasant farm is a crude form of insurance against unemployment. As long as our society cannot provide full employment, aids to subsistence farming are a method of solving it. In

commercialised areas seasonal labour is required more, which is thrown on the streets when not wanted by landholders. There is a basic unbalance of seasonal labour particularly in areas of intensified cropping which even collective farms will not be able to solve. To maintain labour throughout the year will make agriculture costly and raise prices. Relief by state is equally a burden on society. But labour can be decasualised through local industries and public works. This means intelligent planning and directive efforts on a comprehensive scale which are easily said than done.

### *Insecurity and rents*

If the owner-farmer suffers by low income, the tenant-farmer suffers more, by having to pay a high rent out of this low-income. Recent enquiries into condition of tenants by the Government of Madras which were summarised by the ex-Premier in his booklet on 'Income parity' indicate the following facts:—

Estimated tenants population who, having no lands of their own, cultivate lands of others, in millions	.. .. .	5
Estimated agricultural population of small owners who cultivate lands of others in millions	..	5.4
Total estimated agricultural population in the Madras Province in millions	.. ..	36
Percentage of net share of tenant per acre	..	24 to 44
Percentage of net share of landlords per acre	..	56 to 76
Percentage of rent received by landlords to gross yield of paddy from land	.. ..	50 to 75

The existing rents can be paid only by the tenant losing in recovering cultivation expenses from his share of the yield. He pays his rents by using the asset of the land. He may be ejected any moment. He will naturally not improve the land but on the other hand exhaust it to the maximum. He will not raise grains or fodder which are fed to animals as such projects will take a longer time to give a return. He is interested in cash crop which deplete the soil. Manuring, removal of weeds, fencing, and maintenance of buildings are not to his interest as any improvement of the land will only tempt the landlord to either increase the rent or dispossess him. When a low-income farmer takes lands on lease, his practices are more injurious than those of a landless tenant as the former would like to do his best for his own land and not mind any depletion of soil in the tenancy land. But another fact has

to be noted that incompetent farmers are generally greater in the tenant group than in the owner group. The low-income tenant, faced by under-employment, a large family to support, high rack-rents, and growing cultivation expenses all beyond his control surrenders himself to circumstances. He works without zest. He loses his sense of 'belonging'. He feels himself a no-body and keeps aloof from local civic life. But security of tenure alone will not achieve real prosperity. There are other factors as instability of prices and changes in demand which equally affect the security of a farmer.

### *Social Life*

The social life of the low-income farmer is naturally low in consequence of his economic insecurity and poverty. His food comprises cereals and 'chatnis' made of chillies. He rarely keeps cattle, and when they are maintained, it is more to make a living out of it than to use the dairy products for the home. His prejudices against certain animal foods act as a bar against the rearing of poultry. Some communities are even against the raising of poultry. Some agricultural communities particularly in dry areas where fish is not available have developed a superstition against the use of fish. The farmer has a great deal to be instructed in the judicious use of food articles, not merely in their use, but in preparing them.

His children have to work for the maintenance of the family. They come to school only when they are of no use for doing household work or small services as cattle-tending or taking food to the farm. The absence of a secure home leads to mental anxiety and this must react on the children more than the actual economic status. They cannot develop leadership as children of bigger farmers do in their more secure surroundings. Constant emigration of the parents for work shakes the security of the home and loosens family and community ties. These families get a lower status in the village, marry among themselves and become strangers to the community life of the better-situated classes.

Traditions and local superstitions grip their life, omens and auspicious days react on their sense of hard work and lead to delays in the performance of any task. The little income of the farmer is wasted on certain social items of expenditure, pilgrimages, payments to priests, and appeasement of gods.

Agricultural states working with a primitive economy have always less money than industrial states for welfare services. Slums, insanitary environment, periodical deaths in different seasons of epidemics, weak and puny children with protruding bellies, too many old and

decrepit men and women competing for all labour work, a class of unskilled middle-aged persons working with little vitality and energy on odd jobs, these form the social features of the low-income farmers' family life.

*Small farm or increased productivity, the goal*

In any schemes of solution of the problems of the low-income farmer, we should be clear about our goals. Is it our object to promote independent farm families, each developing a small farm irrespective of efficiency? Or should we step up production by all devices as joint-farming of individual plots on the family unit basis, or collective farming according to needs of efficient production? Small farms can exist though they may give a less return. With the aid of co-operative organisations for credit, buying and selling and for hiring out costly machinery, of artificial insemination which reduces overhead charges in maintaining stud bulls, of the facility for getting poultry chicks for breeding purposes, and the promotion of agricultural industries as supplementary occupations by the state, the small farm can certainly be made productive but productivity will be unequal, varying according to the capacity of the farmer to utilise technical and improved methods. Economies, efficiency, and larger production which are possible in large-scale cultivation cannot be achieved through family farms. Labour may get more work in possessing industries on such farms. Heavy losses which may occur in big farms owing to a fall in price of crop failures need not stagger us, with the growth of crop and cattle insurance. To quote Professor Ashby,—

“Much will depend on the rate at which the family farm system can adopt itself to new technical methods of production, to more efficient forms of capitalisation for equipment, to more efficient forms of internal organisation for production and external forms of organisation for marketing.”

*Borrow Skill and Capital Equipment*

India needs intensification of production in the shortest possible time and we cannot afford to wait until the farmer is made land-conscious and co-operative-minded. Savings for the purchase of capital equipment and soil maintenance, skills and managerial experience are needed for an expansion of production. It may take a century before we accumulate savings from current income or are in a position to supply a trained personnel for mechanised production. But to borrow them for a period with a view to increase productivity and train and equip the farmer is nothing unmoral.

Parity in the earnings of the agriculturist and the industrialist can be brought about only when the productivity of the former is raised to that of the latter by investment in machinery and capital goods. Productive efficiency alone will lead to a better income. Guarantee of prices and subsidies are premature devices which will fail without systematic and simultaneous measures to supply the farmer with all capital equipments and current needs and train him in the technique of production.

#### *Purchasing Power of the Industrial Economy*

In addition to organising land as an efficient unit, and public investments for stepping up production, the economic soundness of the urban industrial economy is equally important from the point of view of higher incomes for farmers. Purchase of food as cereals, vegetables, milk and meat will far more depend on the consumer income rather than any scheme of subsidies.

An improvement in the standard of rural education, training for urban jobs, farm placement and information service should all help to remove partly the surplus population on the land to industries, and to increase their earning capacity. At the same time planned effort is necessary to give more employment in agriculture and allied industries to low-income farmers. Diversified cropping with the aid of irrigation should give more employment to cultivators. Rural industries connected with agriculture and live-stock farming will occupy the idle hours of the cultivator. And no amount of caution will be too much in examining the profitability of subsidiary industries. According to Mr. S. Y. Krishnaswami, "Hand-spinning is for those who have little else to do. A worker with some experience in spinning can easily earn not less than about eight annas a day." Comparing power-driven with hand-driven chekku for oil-crushing, he says it is 'uneconomic'. The following are the estimates of returns in certain cottage industries. Hand-pounding will give a wage of 8 to 9 annas a day. Bamboo-basket making will give a similar wage. On the basis that labour was paid 8 annas a day, technician, Rs. 40, a clerk Rs. 25, rent Rs. 5 and a quire of hand-made paper sold at 8 annas, the net profit in hand-made paper making would amount to a magnificent sum of Rs. 13/- per month! With land given possession only to those who do some amount of physical labour, with the fostering of small holdings, and with a scheme of industrial employment in firka development schemes as mentioned above, the perpetuation of a subsistence economy and a low standard of life are assured for all time for this country! But if only we had a sound regional planning devised from the sole point of view of increased productivity, we would be planning live-stock rearing, processing industries, land-recla-



mation, soil-conservation, reforestation, irrigation and flood control and other public works projects.

### *Sound Organisation to Assist Small-holders*

With large-scale farming under trained managers, the organisational set-up for technical equipment, supplies, and direction will be complete. Problems of soil-conservation, water-supply, supply of seeds, manures and implements, marketing, live-stock rearing, crop and cattle-insurance, rural industries, minimum wage, social security, all will get their due attention under this type of farming. But efficient organisations manned by a trained and devoted service will have to be evolved in rural areas where individual small holdings exist and will need all these services.

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## PROBLEM OF THE LOW INCOME OR SUB-MARGINAL FARMER

by

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### I. INTRODUCTION

The title of the paper I am going to discuss presents a problem which has to be dealt with before any justice can be done to the subject for discussion. In other words, the words used in the title have to be defined before the actual problem is discussed. Thus the word 'Problem' as against the word problems makes all the difference in the discussion aimed at. For, if the title for the subject is taken as Problems, then only the farm management or business enterprise and other aspects of the problems faced by small farmers will have to be described and stated for scientific analysis.\* But when the word problem is used, it means that the socio-cum-politico-economic aspects of an all round agricultural policy will have to be discussed. In other words, it is required to state as to how the existence of the small farmers presents a serious problem to the agricultural economy. It is, however, assumed that the idea behind is to so state the problem that it will show the ways and means of solving the same. The problem, therefore, is defined as essentially that aspect of the confused situations which if modified will correct the difficulty.\*\* In other words, it is purely an attempt to isolate the

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\* For a good example of that type of study, refer W. W. Wilcox "The economy of small farms in Wisconsin" *Journal of Farm Economics*, May, 1946.

\*\* John Dewey "Philosophy" in Wilson Gee, Ed "Research in Social Sciences" p. 256, See also B. Ginzburg "Science" in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* Vol. 13.