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INTRODUCTION

THERE is no field of human life and relations which is not touched by economics. It is, however, amusing to find that when our science emerged, it rested upon the assumption of an abstract creature, still cherished in the class-room, whom we call the economic man. It was not before the social psychologist came upon the field dominated by the theorist, and confronted him with the criticism that the economic man is a mere figment of imagination and does not exist in the real world, that economics became humanized, ceased to be labelled as a dismal science and came into close grips with social realities.

Nowhere has there been a greater neglect of the realities of economic life than in the curriculum of economics in Indian Universities. The Indian student can hardly find in his text-book a description of the economic environment in which he lives. The systems which are built up for him are 'castles in the air.' When he comes out of the University, his theories instead of helping him towards interpretation and concrete achievement are a handicap to him. I believe that this to a large extent is responsible for the fact that we have many social visions and utopias in India and few constructive programmes which the masses can understand and work out for immediate benefit.

We look upon an Indian School of Economics and Sociology to correct this divorce between the academy and the market place, to relate the social sciences to the needs and ideals of Indian life and labour. We have also to train our students in the technique and method of economic and social investigation of problems which press us from day to day, and the country expects the departments of economics at the different Universities to give the lead in this matter. We must endeavour to give



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a practical bias to economic teaching, attempt a solution of those problems of agricultural and social economics, for instance, which demand an urgent solution in India. Above all, we must encourage a rustic outlook among our graduates. The Universities have to give a lead in a rural reconstruction movement. This has been recognized by the Royal Commission on Agriculture. In their report we read:—

‘Universities are commonly situated in large centres of population, and those of their members who are attracted by the call of social service naturally tend to apply themselves first to the problems of the town. We wish strongly to press the claim of the rural areas upon the time and interest of the best of India’s youth. It is upon the homes and fields of the cultivators that the strength of the country, and the foundations of its prosperity must ultimately rest. We appeal to both past and present members of Indian Universities to apply themselves to the social and economic problems of the countryside and so to fit themselves to take the lead in the movement for the uplift of the rural areas.’

In the Universities there has been a change of emphasis in the different disciplines. Hitherto we have been accustomed to the cultivation of the different attitudes of mind by different bodies of systematized knowledge. Broadly speaking, a study of the Classics and the Humanities was expected to give us a wide liberal outlook, sympathetic understanding and keen sensitiveness. On the other hand, science would give us habits of analysis, accurate observation, clear thinking and precise mode of expression.

Recently, thanks to the rise of a new group of studies that are intimate with Life in its origin and development, such hypothetical divisions of knowledge and discipline have broken down. At such a juncture, the need for a new standpoint is strongly felt. Now this standpoint must rest on an appreciation of human values. These must be based, in the first instance, on a rigorous, scientific analysis of human motives and behaviour.



Secondly, such values find a different institutional expression in different environments and thus a historical and statistical study of the region becomes necessary. Lastly, these values must be compared and co-ordinated, and we have to rise to the plane of philosophically conceived *ideals*. Economics as the first and foremost of the social sciences ceases to be the ledger-book of a self-seeking shop-keeper. It deals with the activities of normal human beings in a milieu of social co-operation, and normal men are relatively impervious to the concept of law and their activities in their very nature evade complete schematization. Economics thus viewed becomes a philosophical discipline, dealing with ends and ideals which the non-moral economic man could never cherish.

In the Indian economic world, in the village communities and guilds, in the rules and regulations relating to labour and craftsmanship, in payment in kind in rural economy, human values and obligations were interwoven with economic transactions. As a result of the operation of world-forces, India is thrown into the vortex of Industrialism. Industrialism has come to stay in India. No doubt it has brought material prosperity unknown before, but it has also given a rude shock to and unsettled the social fabric. It is the task of economics in India to smooth the adjustment of the new economic method to old conditions so that there might not be any social misfits. The disparity between urban expansion and rural decay, between the old social cleanliness and the sordidness and impurity of the new industrial town, between the time-honoured social harmony and the new class consciousness, all these exhibit unintended social changes in India which the economist must reckon with. Practical schemes can be considered only when we have carefully collected and sifted the materials. Thus the method by which we can reach them must involve a careful study of all economic problems in their regional relation. Definite surveys and enquiries in special areas and occupations have already begun in India and these are found to be the best correctives of economic abstractions of the past, and will also help towards economic



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renewal. Such surveys, again, must be informed by the primary consideration of social and human values, which alone can raise economics to the plane of a truly liberal culture.

In the following surveys offered as theses by the graduates of the Lucknow University for their M.A. Examination in Economics, we have similar data gathered for Oudh as those presented in the intensive enquiries of Mann, Slater, Calvert and Jack for the other provinces. The cultivator's time-table, costs and profits, the size and distribution of his holdings, his poverty and indebtedness have all been subjected to a meticulous examination. As in other densely peopled areas in India, the great majority of the villagers are found to occupy plots the size of which is less than that of an economic holding. In one village more than sixty-six per cent of the tenants cultivate under-sized holdings, the great majority of such holdings being divided into small and scattered plots. The average size of holdings is only four acres, which is much smaller than the typical holding in the north-western part of the province. The inadequacy of the uneconomic holding to maintain the peasant family along with a large measure of agricultural unemployment has created a growing class of agricultural labourers, which has been the subject of a separate detailed inquiry. The land system is not without its economic drawbacks: the discrimination of tenants according to caste, the levy of *nazars* and *bhents*, the concealment of rents, absentee landlordism, all have their share in depressing the position of the small tenant. The progress from life tenancy to the full status of the Bengal occupancy *ryot* is a long and difficult march though with education the outlook of both landlords and tenants is changing. Moreover, the protection afforded by law is counteracted by the ignorance of the peasantry, and by the delay and costliness of justice in the courts. Agricultural indebtedness is, as expected, heavy and cumulative. A close and systematic survey of indebtedness has been undertaken, and the data collected must give food for reflection to the economist and statesman alike. The decline of the ancient communal organization and the introduction of a money



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economy have been vividly portrayed. Such changes have been far-reaching in their character affecting the entire social fabric. A local study of the movement of rural prices and wages shows why the ancient customary payment in kind is now being superseded by money-wages. Agricultural labourers have improved their lot but they have multiplied themselves faster than the land, even under any elaborate system of multiple-cropping, can maintain. Thus there are part-time agricultural labourers, who tenaciously adhere to holdings too small to maintain them and who therefore supplement their income by working on other men's fields. With labour uneconomically distributed as between minute holdings of one's own and inefficient operations in the fields of others who despise manual labour, agricultural cost constantly rises, trenching upon the low standard of living of the people. Agricultural cost has also risen as a result of fractionalization of holdings due to expansion of population. In spite of the onslaughts of famine and disease, population continues to multiply. It is time now for the economists of the country to initiate and organize a propaganda of birth-control and preach the new gospel to the masses.

A new feature of such investigations has been the emphasis of sociological material. We have here the beginnings of social surveys. The relation between caste and occupation in the villages; the disparity of the proportion of sexes in different castes and its effects upon the economic status of women; the recreations and diversions of the cultivating classes, folk-culture and the system of village and caste government have all been touched upon, linking economics up with much else to give a picture not so much of abstract economic forces at work but of men and women in homes and fields, at work and in leisure. Such studies are on the whole vivid, and human.

Investigations which had been undertaken by students during only one academic session when they had also to attend regular lectures at the University must have their limitations. Such enquiries were in the beginning confined to Oudh. We hope to publish soon another



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series of village studies relating to other parts of the Provinces.

The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh may be marked out easily into distinct agricultural regions. The whole area lies at the meeting point of the two chief rain currents of India and thus has been liable to irregularity of rainfall as well as scarcity from ancient times. In the north-west canal irrigation, and in the north-east and east *jhils*, tanks and wells have secured comparative immunity from famines and help to maintain a high density of population. Most of the districts in the western, central and eastern portions of the Ganges Plain, however, have now reached more than 80 per cent of the net cultivated to the cultivable area. More and more the proportion of double-cropped area, i.e., the quality of intensive farming, governs the increase of the density of population. It is only by systematic economic enquiries in villages in different parts of the province that we can ascertain what effects the extension of irrigation, the introduction of a new and a more heavy-yielding crop or of a fresh rotation, etc., have in relieving the excessive pressure of population upon the soil and bringing about a rise in the standard of comfort. Where agriculture still depends a great deal upon rainfall and where all varieties of soil are met with, sand, loam and clay, as in this province, the scattered holding may not be the bogey it appears in the text-book. Scattered holdings are an insurance against the uncertainties of agriculture under the peculiar conditions of Indian rainfall; and it is only by systematic field enquiries that we shall find out the size of the economic holding as well as the limits of both consolidation and scatteredness.

Further, we are now on the eve of a phenomenal canal development that will add about 1·7 million acres to the total irrigated area of the province. The Sarda Canal now under construction will revolutionize the agricultural economy of the districts served by it. The Sarda Canal tract in transition will offer excellent opportunities for comparison between canal agriculture and high farming with the aid of well irrigation. The net gain to the areas served by the canal system from an introduction of a new



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crop or a change in the system of rotation which will accompany canals, can only be estimated after a careful scrutiny into the size of the economic holding, normal agricultural costs and outturn, normal profits, etc., in typical areas and over a number of years.

This province is agriculturally speaking, the most unique area on the surface of the earth. It is an area, in the first place, which is subject to enormous vicissitudes of rainfall. Secondly, this area comprises the world's greatest canal system which is responsible for altering the whole character of its cropping and distribution of population. Canal irrigation which benefits at present over three million acres of cultivated land may be said to have reached its limit in the Upper Ganges Plain, and the growth of agricultural prosperity here has now been eclipsed by the progress of agriculture in the Eastern districts with superior advantages of rainfall and well irrigation coupled with an arranged succession of leguminous crops with rice. Thirdly, the middle and central plain exhibits the most phenomenal well system in the world. In normal years wells irrigate four to five million acres representing over half the irrigated area of the province, while in dry years the area increases twice or three times that which is irrigated from canals. Fourthly, some of the most striking instances of crop adaptations to the conditions of soil and water-supply have been seen in this area. Lastly, modern agricultural research and experiment have improved upon long established crop and agricultural usage, and to-day we find some striking applications of science to agriculture spread broadcast in a densely peopled region. The area under two new wheats, Pusa 12 and Pusa 4 discovered in the laboratory alone covers over half a million acres.

This province, indeed, offers unique opportunities for field survey with reference to conditions of climate and soil and the factors of agriculture and population in their mutual action and interaction. The lines of such surveys may be briefly indicated as follows:—(a) an ecological survey of the region with special reference to types of vegetation and their succession in their relations to



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edaphic and climatic factors, and as affected by cattle and human population ; (b) a survey of the distinctive agricultural regions with special reference to the relation between cultivation and water-supply ; and (c) lastly, a statistical study of correlation between rainfall, agricultural productivity and density of population, and of seasonal or cyclical fluctuations of agricultural and social phenomena. Such surveys, ecological, agricultural and economic, must be carried on at the same time in selected areas and the tools and technique of investigation of the different sciences must be brought together in order that we can consider and inaugurate schemes of rural improvement, not separately, but as parts of a systematic programme of regional reconstruction. Throughout the densely populated valley our natural forest formations have practically vanished and the vegetation is savanna-like due *inter alia* to the enormous pressure of both human and cattle population. The problems of the supply of fuel, manure and the materials of rural housing are intimately bound up with the retrogression of vegetation due to intensive biotic interferences. A forward policy of afforestation will materially assist agriculture and rural life, but the mischief wrought by indiscriminate grazing, cutting of forest timber and the ascent of fields to the heights cannot be easily repaired. On account of the expansion of the arable area and uncontrolled grazing of countless herds and flocks of animals, the forest belt along the banks of large rivers in the plains, such as the Jumna and the Chambal has disappeared, and sterile, ravine lands are gradually forming and encroaching upon surrounding cultivation. The total area of such desert-like and inhospitable ravines in this province is between half a million and a million acres. In a district like Etawah where four hundred bighas of good cultivable land are annually lost to cultivation due to the encroachment of ravines, agriculture is found inextricably interwoven with wider ecologic conditions.

Again, throughout the province, in spite of the marvellous progress of irrigation, the fluctuations of rainfall have enormous reactions on cropped areas.



The *Kharif* crop is very uncertain. Out of seventeen years, 1908-1925, the normal *kharif* area could not be sown for ten years. The *rabi* crop is protected adequately by canals and wells, but drought from September to November or an early cessation of rain leads to large shrinkages of the *rabi* area as well. The irregular distribution or diminution of rainfall leads to sudden decline of cropped areas, and a whole series of movements, of prices, wages, labour, follow in more or less orderly sequence.

Ecological and agricultural surveys will enable us to measure the agricultural security and economic stability in different areas. Such surveys should be compared and collated, generalized as far as possible, and utilized towards applications in regional tasks. Scientific agriculture, afforestation, as well as judicious terracing and construction of embankments which protect riverine soil against erosion, gradual cultivation of defensive vegetation in sand dunes and reclamation of alkali land by suitable cropping are man's recent efforts to use an alliance with ecologic forces for the improvement of a difficult agricultural situation. Similarly the study of hydrographical conditions in the different parts of the river basin gradually leads to a more scientific well and canal irrigation, the improvement of drainage, the regulation of rivers and minor streams, or the development of fisheries,—all of which react favourably upon rural economy.

When there are full soil and drainage surveys the promise of canal irrigation will no longer be clouded by fears of salt-encrustation and water-logging, nor the sinking of wells rendered futile by the decline of the water-table. Similarly, a scheme of improvement of fodder supply will become sound and effective only when it is preceded by a study of ecologic succession in the grass-lands. Or, again, a policy of consolidation of agricultural holdings will become practical only when the distribution of fields has been carefully surveyed in relation to the conditions of supply of water and manure in the different zones of village settlement. It is one of the chief ambitions of the social sciences to



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forecast social phenomena. Now, the outstanding social phenomenon in this part is famine. As there are periodic fluctuations of rainfall, there are similar fluctuations in related agricultural, economic and social series. The study of economic cycles has just begun, and nowhere is the technique of Harmonic Analysis expected to yield better results than in this region. With the application of the statistical method to the seasonal or cyclical fluctuations of rainfall, crops and outturns, we shall be able to anticipate famines and probable deficiencies of crop area and outturn region by region. A famine is the gravest disaster that can befall an agricultural people; and, if economic surveys give accuracy and verification in this field such a method in sociology amply justifies itself. The late Lord Asquith once said, 'The test of every civilization is the point below which the weakest and the most unfortunate are allowed to fall.' Field description and statistical inference not only make economic theories more realistic, but lead to a precise understanding of standards or principles of economic progress which would greatly assist a backward region to pass from poverty to comfort.

THE UNIVERSITY,
LUCKNOW,
August 10, 1928.

RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE.



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FIELDS AND FARMERS IN OUDH

PART I

A Social and Economic Survey of Village Malehra, District Hardoi

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

ORIGIN AND SITUATION

THE village under investigation is known in the 'Wajibul-arz' (an official record about the origin and development of the village) as 'Malehra', and belongs to the Taluka of 'Berwa', District Hardoi, Division Lucknow.

It is one of the ancient village communities in the province of Oudh. It was an original revenue unit under the British administration, and became a 'Numbry' (originally recorded) village in Pargana and Tahsil Sandila, District Hardoi, during the first settlement.

It is situated six miles away from the railway station on the right side of the road leading to Beniganj.

On the east of the village there is a big Dhak jungle stretching about two miles from north to south, and on the west lies the turbulent stream of the Baita which runs almost parallel to the jungle.

About the origin of the village the 'Wajibul-arz' is not very clear; but the oral evidence of the old villagers goes to show that the village was founded by one Malhar Singh before the mutiny in or about the first quarter of the last century. It is said that this Malhar Singh, a Thakur by caste, was a remote ancestor of the present family of Thakurs in whose Taluka the village is now contained.

A very old descendant of the original settlers tells us that the village was formerly owned as a *pattidari* village by a number of Pathan chiefs in the service of the Nawab of Oudh, and later passed into the hands



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of the ancestors of the late Talukdar, Thakur Chandika Bakhsh Singh of Berwa, as a *talukdari* village. His widow, the Rani Sahiba Dalel Kunwar, has died but recently after a rule of about forty years. Since her death the year before last, the village has come under the administration of the Court of Wards as a result of a succession dispute between the two claimants of Berwa and Hathaura. Formerly, the village was situated farther towards the west around a *dahi* (a big tank) on both sides of the road, and there were many good buildings, forming a *garhi* or fortress, the ruins of which are still found in the various ridges and scattered hillocks. The present village site and the surrounding plots of land were formerly part of the dense dhak forest, which appears to have been cleared by Thakur Malhar Singh and his followers. The original party that settled consisted mainly of Thakur, Brahmin, Kalwar and Arakh families. The Muraos, the Chamars and other families have settled there very recently. Further, there is a popular tradition that the village lies almost at the centre of that sacred region where once during the time of Dadhichi, an ancestor of Sri Ram Chandra of Ayodhya, 84,000 *rishis* had assembled to attend the final sacrificial ceremony of that king ; and the *tapobhumi* (the ground occupied by the *rishis* for the ceremony) stretched as far as the holy Nimsar in the south and the sacred Hatya Haran in the north covering about five or six miles.

It is also believed by many that the *dahi*, a very big and deep tank with high regular embankments on all sides, situated on the right bank of the river Baita and to the west of the present village site, was the 'havan kund' of Dadhichi's sacrifice. It is situated just midway between Nimsar and Hatya Haran.

As evidence of this fact, the villagers point to the annual *Parikrama* or circumbulation of devoted pilgrims and *sadhus*, who while passing from Hatya Haran to Nimsar, stop for a day at the *dahi* to bathe in its holy waters.

GENERAL FEATURES

The site of the village, which is not a continuous whole, being broken at two places by a number of big



tanks, stretches towards the north, from the right of the Beniganj road and is surrounded on the east and the west by tanks. The homesteads are very irregularly built. The middle site contains the houses of the talukdars, the patwari, and of the higher castes. The village also includes a small market-place in which there are seven or eight shops in two rows with a big yard in the middle for weekly *hats* (bazars). The heavy rains of the last two years have done serious damage to the *sarkari hata* (talukdar's house) and many neighbouring ones.

The total area of the whole village is 3,636 bighas now; whereas at the last settlement it was 3,641 bighas. This is divided into non-cultivable, cultivable and cultivated areas. The following table shows the increase or decrease of area under the above-mentioned heads, as compared with the figures of the last settlement.

The details of each head are also given below it :—

Heads	Area at the present settlement 1924-25, 1332F.	Area at the last settlement 1892-93, 1300F.
I. Non-Cultivable—		
(i) Area under water ...	284 bighas	305 bighas
(ii) Homesteads ...	131 „	145 „
(iii) Barren or Usar ...	820 „	804 „
	<u>1,235</u> „	<u>1,254</u> „
II. Cultivable—		
(i) Not cultivated this year or Parti Jadid ...	135 „	78
(ii) Not cultivated for the last three years or Parti Kadim ...	226 „	82 „
(iii) Miscellaneous trees ...	20 „	2 „
(iv) Gardens ...	18 „	16 „
(v) Forest or bushes ...	478 „	523 „
	<u>877</u> „	<u>701</u> „

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Heads	Area at the present settlement 1924-25, 1332F.	Area at the last settlement 1892-93, 1300F.
III. Cultivated—		
By wells ...	88 bighas	208 bighas
(i) Irrigated—		
By tanks and rains ...	129 „	406 „
(ii) Non-irrigated ...	1,307 „	1,072 „
	<u>1,524</u>	<u>1,686</u> „
Grand total or total area of the village ...	3,636 „	3,641 „

The most striking point is the reduction of the cultivated area by 162 bighas, the decrease of the total area of the village by five bighas being probably due to re-measurement.

The agricultural population is made up of the following castes, families, and males and females :—

Serial No.	Caste	No. of families	No. of males	No. of females	No. of boys	No. of girls	Total No. in each caste
1	Thakur ...	2	2	4	2	3	11
2	Brahmin ...	10	25	17	10	13	65
3	Kayastha ...	2	4	5	4	...	13
4	Kalwar ...	9	27	22	7	14	70
5	Bania ...	10	10	18	16	9	53
6	Goldsmith ...	1	3	3	1	2	6
7	Blacksmith ...	2	5	6	7	4	22
8	Carpenter ...	1	2	1	1	2	6
	Total ...	37	78	77	48	47	246

Serial No.	Caste	No. of families	No. of males	No. of females	No. of boys	No. of girls	Total No. in each caste
9	Potter ...	3	4	5	6	4	19
10	Barber ...	4	5	9	4	7	25
11	Kahar ...	3	2	3	2	3	10
12	Teli ...	6	9	8	4	8	29
13	Murao ...	30	73	98	25	39	235
14	Gadaria ...	13	21	28	16	10	75
15	Dhobi ...	11	24	25	7	10	66
16	Bhurji ...	4	6	10	5	6	27
17	Faqir ...	3	1	4	2	5	12
18	Manihar ...	5	7	8	9	8	32
19	Mangta ...	1	1	2	...	...	3
20	Barai ...	1	1	2	...	3	6
21	Nut ...	2	3	3	2	2	10
22	Dhanuk ...	3	5	3	5	4	17
23	Arakh ...	27	34	40	54	144	242
24	Chamars ...	36	65	84	63	93	305
25	Pasi ...	15	23	29	12	28	92
26	Gwala ...	4	7	8	4	5	24
27	Ahir ...	1	2	2	2	...	6
28	Gaddi ...	7	10	13	6	5	35
29	Radha ...	1	2	1	...	1	4
30	Tailor ...	1	...	1	...	1	2
Total ...		218	383	462	274	406	1,525

Thus the total number of families being 218 and the total population 1,525, the average size of a family is 7.



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In the following table are shown some typical joint families of abnormal size in the village, which generally belong to lower castes .—

Caste	Name of the head	No. of males	No. of females	No. of daughters	No. of sons	Total
1. Lohar (Black-smith)	... Laltu	4	5	6	3	18
2. Dhanuk	... Madari	2	2	5	...	9
3. Chamars	... Teja	7	6	1	2	16
"	... Kishun	1	2	9	1	13
"	... Jhau Lal	4	4	1	...	9
"	... Jiyan	1	1	8	...	10
"	... Hirale	5	2	3	1	11
"	... Debia	3	6	1	2	12
"	... Madaria	3	7	1	...	11
"	... Beharia	3	6	...	...	9
4. Arakha	... Munna	6	5	13	4	28
"	... Ishuri	2	4	5	2	13
"	... Mangalua	4	7	...	...	11
"	... Raghubar	2	3	3	...	8
"	... Jigwa	3	3	2	...	8
Total		50	63	58	15	176

The total population of the village at present is 1525, and its variations from 1891 have been as follows :—

Year	Population
1891	1,451
1901	1,307
1911	1,273
1921	1,466
1925*	1,525

As regards population, therefore, as is evident from the above table, a remarkable feature is its continuous

* A private census of the village was taken on January 1, 1926, with the help of the villagers, for which no strict accuracy can be guaranteed.



decline in the first two decades, and then its growth during the last fifteen years.

The population is composed of the different grades of agriculturists as follows :—

Agricultural Classes			1891	1925
1.	Proprietors	...	8	1
2.	Cultivators	...	1,006	1,205
3.	Farm labourers	...	138	275
4.	Landless labourers	...	299	144
Total			1,451	1,525

We have seen in the last page that the total cultivated area of the village is 1,524, and the population as given above is 1,525, which means that there is only one bigha to support each head of population.

It is apparent that certain families, especially those of Laltu Lohar, Jiyan Chamar, Kishun Chamar and Munna Arakha are very large, there being an unusually large number of girls, e.g. 6, 8, 9 and 13 respectively.

There already exists a striking disparity in the proportion of the sexes, and this tends to increase with the growth of population as is clear from the following table :—

Years			Males	Females	Total population
1911	...	...	611	662	1,273
1921	...	...	684	782	1,466
1925	...	...	657	868	1,525

Unfortunately exact figures are not available to show the birth and death rates of boys and girls but



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from the statements of the villagers themselves we gather that the birth rate of the girls has been higher than that of the boys during the last four years, and that small-pox has affected the girls less than the boys within the same period.

The population of the village is arranged according to age and sex in the following table :—

Age		Males	Females	Total
Less than 5 years	...	104	135	239
5—10 years	...	76	123	199
11—20	...	94	224	318
21—30	...	195	118	313
31—40	...	105	141	246
41—50	...	52	87	139
Over 50 years	...	31	40	71
Total	...	657	868	1,525

CLIMATE

The climate of the region is very damp and moist in the rainy season, temperate in winter, and extremely hot in summer.

The characteristic features of the region which chiefly influence agriculture are :—

- (1) A big dhak forest on the east ;
- (2) Two seasonal streams, the Baita and the Loni, the one on the west and the other on the far east, beyond the dhak forest.
- (3) A large number of tanks.
- (4) Low ground level, with water-logging and floods.
- (5) Heavy rainfall.

WATER SUPPLY

The village is very fortunate in possessing numerous sources of water supply for irrigation and household



ORIGIN AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

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purposes. During the last decades there has been a large increase in water resources as shown below :—

—				Last settlement, 1893	Present settle- ment, 1925	
Wells—						
Kachcha	...	...	14	...	14	...
Pakka	...	...	4	18	13	27
Tanks	...	...	...	55	...	57
Rivers	...	...	...	1	...	1

It is thus evident from the above figures that the number of Pakka wells has increased by nine, and that of tanks by two since the last settlement ; but it is curious to note that the area irrigated by wells and tanks has materially diminished while the non-irrigated cultivated area has immensely increased, and at the same time the total cultivated area of the village has also gone down, as indicated below :—

Kind of area		Last Settlement 1892-93	Present Settle- ment 1924-25
		Bighas	Bighas
Irrigated by wells	...	208	88
„ by tanks and rivers.		406	129
Non-irrigated	...	1,072	1,307
Total cultivated area	...	1,686	1,524

These two anomalies, first that in spite of the increase in the number of wells and tanks, the corresponding area irrigated by them has decreased, and secondly, that in spite of the development of irrigation

facilities, the non-irrigated cultivated area has largely increased, can be explained only by the fact that, for the last three or four years, there have been very heavy rains in the region, resulting in constant floods in the Baita and the Loni rivers; water logging has increased in various lowlying parts of the village, and there has been a general rise in the subsoil water level. Even now, long after the rains are over, the water level in the Pakka drinking wells within the Abadi stands very high, so much so that water can be drawn with a rope only 6 feet long.

We also find from the above table that the total area cultivated has diminished by 162 bighas since the last settlement, which is again due to the same cause. Those parts which have been constantly under water, e.g. those lying on the banks of the Baita, have gone out of cultivation as having become less fertile and uncultivable, while the increase in the house sites has also contributed to the decrease in the cultivated area.

The rise in the subsoil water level has not only affected the fertility of the soil, but it has also greatly influenced public health; cholera, plague and small-pox have visited the tract in quick succession, causing high infant mortality as shown in the following table:—

Year	Deaths of infants of 1 to 5 years	Deaths of adults over 20 years	Deaths of old people over 50 years
1921	22 per cent of the total infant population.	2 per cent of total adult population.	6 per cent of the total old population.
1922	25 „	2.5 „	7.5 „
1923	26 „	2 „	9 „
1924	31 „	3 „	10 „
1925	34.5 „	3 „	10 „

The most violent attack of small-pox was during the last summer (May and June). About 90 per cent of the



children up to the age of sixteen were victims, and at least 40 per cent of the total number of children attacked died. The general rate of mortality for the whole village has gone up from 12 per cent to 15 per cent during the last two years. The deaths of children formed about 65 per cent of the total village deaths last year.

A common habit of the villager is to bathe, wash and drink in the same small pool, and this spreads epidemics.

SOIL

The soil of the village is generally divided into three kinds on the basis of fertility :—

- (i) Matiyar—containing pure clay with very little sand,
- (ii) Dumat—mixture of clay and sand,
- (iii) Bhur—containing more sand than clay.

There is also another classification of fields according to their distance from the village site as follows :—

- (i) Goind—nearest to the abadi—contains the best fields.
- (ii) Manjha—farther off—contains the second class fields and pastures,
- (iii) Palo—very far from the village—contains the poorest fields and the waste.

Fields situated near the inhabited area are generally the best. The reason is that, in the first place, the early settlers cultivate the most fertile plots first and settle nearest to them so as to keep constant watch and supervision, and in the second place, the soil nearest the Abadi is most benefited by the village refuse and nightsoil, and is naturally most cared for. Besides, a combined name, e.g. goind-matiyar in the Settlement Officer's phraseology, or one of the various permutations and combinations of the six kinds of soils mentioned above is given to a particular plot of land in which case the two bases of classification coincide, and this is not uncommon in this part of the province.

The remark of the Settlement Officer in 1893, on the general soil condition of the village, runs as follows :—

'The fields on the Baita suffer from excessive saturation. There is excellent dumat round the abadi

and on the east of the road. Matiyar fields are lying on the borders of the jhil (three tanks connected). A large majority of fields is dumat-goind, and a portion of land on the east of the abadi and on the borders of the jhil is goind-matiyar, yielding luxuriant crops of wheat, gram, barley and cotton. The *dumat* fields on the Baita, on account of excessive saturation as a result of the constant floods for the last three or four years, are fast turning into *bhur* fields, owing to the large amount of sand brought in by the floods.

Formerly these fields were suitable for rice cultivation, but for the last three years there has been no crop possible either in the Kharif or in the Rabi season. Some of the fields, which are goind-manjha, have been rendered useless at least for the Kharif crops this year by the overflowing of the neighbouring tanks on account of heavy rains.

Rabi crops have also been damaged by the large volume of water-logging in Rabi fields.

THE PEOPLE

Hardly 5 per cent of the people are literate, though there is a desire for learning, manifesting itself in private arrangement for night schools, which have no organization and discipline, but are, however, doing useful work. Until 1923 there was a primary school in the village which used to sit from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with an interval of two hours for recess. The Patwari took an active interest in the school, only so long as his own children were to be educated. On the average there was a daily attendance of thirty boys out of fifty-four on the roll in 1921. Out of these fifty-four boys thirty-six were local, representing Brahman, Kayastha, Kaiwar, Murao, Chamar and Gadaria castes, and eighteen outsiders, representing Brahman, Thakur, Sunar and Kurmi castes. In 1923 the school was transferred by the District Board to another village Semra—Mau, about a mile to the west of this village.

In spite of the fact that there is so much illiteracy, the people in general are simple, honest and well-behaved. Their morality is also fast improving. Drinking and



prostitution have become far less common during the last few years. Low castes, such as Arakhs, Muraos and Chamars who were formerly most intemperate and who used to introduce dancing girls into their marriage festivals, have improved in their morals. Formal resolutions have been passed condemning drinking and immorality in various caste panchayats.

The communal spirit in the people is still alive, and it is visible in co-operation in field work. It is quite a common sight to find cultivators pooling their ploughs, cattle, and labour, and cultivating and irrigating their fields in common. Common woods and pasture lands still exist around the village. Co-operative purchasing of raw materials and hiring instruments of production are very common in the village. The elements of co-operative sale are visible in the village custom of selling raw products jointly at such industrial and trade centres as Lucknow and Cawnpore.

As a result of ignorance and illiteracy the people are on the whole, superstitious and conservative. They have a great respect for everything old and traditional. New agricultural methods, howsoever useful, cannot readily be introduced. The Meston plough was imported by some cultivators not without great hesitation, but has been abandoned now, as being too heavy and expensive. Improved seeds are, however, now commonly used by well-to-do cultivators.

The cults of Sita Ram and Radha Krishna are very popular, and these names are the words of mutual greeting among most castes.

We also find Ganesh—the God of Prosperity and Happiness—installed above the house entrance, as the God of the household, or in the Khalyan (threshing floor). In many households, especially of the trading castes such as Kalwars and Banias, Ganesh is replaced or accompanied by Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth, and occasionally by Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning.

Some of the higher castes believe in Vishnu, the Supporter of the Universe, and call themselves Vaishnava; while others believe in Mahesha, the Destroyer of the Universe, and are known as Shaiva. There are village

Gods and Goddesses on all sides of the village as follows :—

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| To the east of the village— | | | Hardeva Raja—worship-
ped throughout the Hardoi
District as a good and
kind ruler of the past, and
founder of the village
Hari-drohi, now Hardoi. |
| To the west | „ | „ | Narayana Devata—the
village God worshipped
by all classes and castes
of people. |
| To the north | „ | „ | Bhuinhar Devata—the God
of the fields, and worship-
ped by the Arakhs who
have to guard the fields. |
| To the south | „ | „ | Holkayin Devi—worship-
ped by the women-folk on
all happy occasions. |

Snake, tree and water worship is also prevalent among the people.



CHAPTER II

PEASANT HOLDINGS

AGRICULTURE is the main source of the wealth of the village, and it is necessary to investigate in what manner and in what proportion land is distributed and cultivated by different grades of cultivators.

The total number in the 'Khasra' (official record of fields) of the village, according to the last settlement, was 2,574, of which thirty-three were cultivated by the talukdar and the remaining by the peasants. The total area cultivated was 1,686 bighas or 1,012 acres. Thus the average plot in this village at the last settlement was $\cdot 7$ bighas or $\cdot 4$ acres in area.

But to the great misfortune of the village the total area cultivated has diminished by 162 bighas or 97 acres, and is now only 1,524 bighas or 914 acres in place of 1,686 bighas or 1,012 acres, while on the other hand the number of the plots or fields has increased by 81 from 2,514 to 2,595. The average size of the plot has thus gone down to $\cdot 6$ bighas or $\cdot 3$ acres, from $\cdot 7$ bighas or $\cdot 4$ acres.

The number of plots of different sizes will clearly reveal the intensity of the problem of small holdings :

We give below the percentages of the total plots of different size to the total number of fields from the Khasra of the village :—

Total No. of Khatas of a size	Percentage to the total No. of Khatas	Size
373	14·3	$\cdot 15$ acres
535	20·6	$\cdot 3$ "
711	27·4	$\cdot 6$ "
695	26·8	1·3 "
114	4·4	1·8 "
85	3·3	3·0 "
56	2·2	6·0 "
17	$\cdot 7$	12·0 "
9	$\cdot 3$	30·0 "

It is thus clear from the above table, that of the total number of plots, 62.3 per cent contain one or less than one bigha or .6 acres, and 93.5 per cent of them contain three or less than three bighas or 1.8 acres. Only 6.5 per cent of the plots are larger than three bighas.

It will also appear from the above table that as the area of the plots goes on increasing from one bigha, the percentage to the total number of plots continually diminishes and when we reach the large plots of more than 10 bighas or 6 acres, the percentage falls still lower.

The total number of tenants in the village Khatauni (an official record of tenants and fields) is 279 and the total number of plots is 2,595 in the village according to the present settlement, hence the average number of plots per tenant is nine now.

A perusal of the following tables will indicate the distribution of plots and tenants :—

TABLE NO. I

No. of tenants of all kinds	Percentage to the total no. of peasants	No. of plots
56	15.8	1
95	36.7	2 to 5
75	28.9	6 to 10
37	12.4	11 to 15
11	4.2	16 to 20
4	1.5	21 to 25
1	.4	25 to 30

TABLE NO. II

No. of tenants	Percentage to the total no. of peasants	Size of the cultivated by each tenant
37	9.7	.6 acres
41	13.0	1.3 "
23	8.8	1.8 "
20	7.3	2.4 "
25	9.6	3.0 "
16	6.1	3.6 "
30	11.6	4.2 "
12	4.6	4.8 "
19	7.3	5.4 "
12	4.6	12.0 "
27	10.4	9.0 "
12	4.6	12.0 "
4	1.6	15.0 "
1	.4	18.0 "

But in spite of the fact that ordinarily a peasant holds 9 plots on the average, he does not cultivate more than 6 bighas or about 4 acres, an area which is below the minimum standard necessary to maintain an agricultural family of five members in anything like comfort and efficiency in this part of the country. On the other hand, we find from the above table that more than 66 per cent of the tenants cultivate an area below this figure ; while 48 per cent cultivate an area below 5, and 31.5 per cent an area below 3 bighas. The situation is all the more acute, because the average size of a purely agricultural family in this village is seven instead of five, which is the usual size of a standard family.

* Holding means the total number of plots cultivated by each tenant.

Thus the average size of an agricultural holding, or the average area per cultivating family, is far less than what is required for even a tolerably decent standard of living, and is therefore uneconomic, so as to keep the whole agricultural population in abject misery and extreme poverty.

The excessive sub-division of holdings is due to many causes : (i) the growth of population due to the very low standard of living of the majority, and the consequent sub-letting of land, (ii) frequent family dissensions, and the consequent partition of the joint holding, and, (iii) the desire of the non-agriculturists and townsmen to acquire land for cultivation through mortgage or purchase due to the rise in the value of land and the price of food-stuff, and other agricultural product.

Two minor causes of sub-division seem to be operating to a certain extent :—(i) Preferences of the landlord and the development of a privileged class of tenants, who hold more land than they really need, and (ii) the attempt of the landless or farm labourers to capture land for their own maintenance, in which they are gradually succeeding as being better and more expert farmers than those already in possession.

At the beginning of the last decade of the last century, the population of the village was 1,451, but towards the end, it fell to 1,307. This shows that there was no pressure of population, and the excessive sub-division of fields (as shown in Appendix B) was due to various other causes, e.g. the disruption of joint families, the influx of new settlers, or capture of land by outsiders.

The table given in Appendix 'B' shows the extent of sub-division of holdings under the last settlement scheme due to all these causes.

Though in 1901 and 1911, i.e. in the two successive decades, the population of the village had continuously decreased from 1,451 to 1,307 and 1,307 to 1,273, yet it again rose suddenly in the third decade and stood in 1921 at 1,466, which means a net increase of 193 inhabitants in the village. There have been numerous cases of family separation, especially among the lower castes,



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within the last ten years. This will be evident from the following table :—

Caste	No. of families divided	No. of families after separation
Brahman	1	2
Bania	1	2
Sonar	1	2
Teli	1	2
Murao	3	7
Gadaria... ..	1	4
Dhobi	2	8
Bhurji	1	2
Manihar	1	4
Chamar	14	42
Arakh	1	3

Modern individualistic tendencies are already taking root in the village; selfishness and dishonesty are increasing. Brothers are ceasing to live and cultivate together, and frequent litigation is not uncommon. Thus family properties are being scattered. Similarly, sub-letting or the transfer of land from one class of holders to another with different rights and conditions, which is itself an outcome of the growth of population, is another cause of the minute sub-division of agricultural holdings.

The evils of sub-division are emphasized particularly among the lower middle class and the peasantry. A striking feature of the land distribution is the disparity of areas of land cultivated by the privileged and by the non-privileged classes.

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We take the following figures from the Khaduns and the Census Reports of 1911 and 1921 :—

	No. of cultivators —occupied and non-occupied	Percentage of cultivators	Area actually cultivated	No. of plots	Size of the plot	Population, 1911-1921-1925
			Acres		Bighas	
High and upper middle class.	47	16·8	466·8	740	1·05	212-244-235
Lower middle and lower class.	232	83·2	447·6	1855	·402	1061-1222-1290

These figures clearly show that 16·8 per cent of the total cultivators hold more than half the cultivated land, while the remaining 83·2 per cent cultivate less than half. Naturally therefore there is much greater pressure upon the latter area, as is apparent also from the above table. This area is divided into 1855 strips of land, many of which are as tiny as one twentieth part of a bigha or (1/40 acre). Such fragmentation has been brought about by a characteristic tendency in talukdari villages, to give preference to relations of the talukdari family or to servants of the estate ; old farmers are ejected to make room for such outsiders. Townsmen also are now keen to have some interest in land and acquire rights by purchase ; and this competition further lowers the social status of the village peasantry. This tendency which is manifesting itself in the province for at least the last two decades, is chiefly due to the rise in prices and the cost of living. The growth of middle class unemployment is not without its influence upon the size of agricultural holdings. The greater the encroachment upon land by the non-cultivating classes the smaller is the outturn per unit. The result is a very large reduction in the total amount of produce. Again, the smaller the area of land available



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For the cultivating classes, the smaller is the size of the agricultural holding. This tendency may constitute a great danger in the future, and legislative measures of a precautionary nature on the lines of the law of Preemption and the Land Alienation Act, may become necessary.

The growing discontent among the poorer tenants led to a dangerous outburst in 1922, known as the EKA movement. About 1,200 peasants of this village and ten neighbouring villages came under the spell of an Indian Jack Cade. They attacked the house of the talukdar and the patwari and wanted to wrest from them lease-holds (pattas) for life. The revolt was suppressed by the sepoys of the estate, but the Rani had to promise them security of tenure. Happily the new Oudh Rent Act brought statutory rights to them and has partly satisfied the most disturbing elements of the village. Not merely did the tenants clamour for security of tenure, but many of the ejected tenants tried their best to remain in the village as sub-tenants. This led to fresh sub-division of holdings. A perusal of the Khasra clearly shows how large is the number of those holdings which are less than one bigha or .6 acre. Their number is 1619, amounting to 62.3 per cent of the total number of holdings. The number of peasants holding them is 10 per cent of the total number of peasants.

It is necessary here to give below the names and areas of the holdings of the cultivators who have regained land recently after an interval of five years.

NON-LABOURERS

S. No.	No. Khatas	Names	Areas	Holdings	Rent
			Big. Bis		Rs. A.
1	1	Ali Bakas, Manihar ...	0 12	1	1 12
2	5	Indal and Bandi, joint ...	1 19	1	4 0
3	12	Kashi, Bania ...	1 0	1	3 0
4	17	Kanhai, Barhaie ...	1 11	1	8 0
5	18	Kushal, Arakh ...	0 10	1	1 0
6	30	Gangu, Gadaria ...	1 4	1	5 0

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S. No.	No. Khatas	Names	Areas	Holdings	Rent
			Big. Bis		Rs. A.
7	32	Gangu, Brahman ...	1 7	1	5 0
8	37	Chanad, Maha Brahman ...	0 17	1	1 12
9	77	Teja Dhobi ...	1 3	1	7 0
10	85	Durga, Bania ...	1 1	1	8 0
11	89	Debi Din, Kumhar ...	0 11	1	1 0
12	108	Pragi, Chamar ...	0 13	1	2 8
13	114	Pancham, Teli ...	0 15	1	5 0
14	139	Baiju, Murao ...	0 13	1	3 8
15	233	Himma, Arakh ...	0 11	1	3 0

LABOURERS AND SERVANTS

S. No.	No. Khatas	Names	Areas	Holdings	Rent
			Big. Bis		Rs. A.
1	244	Dularya, Arakh ...	0 8	1	1 0
2	255	Chokhey, Kahar ...	1 10	1	...
3	256	Jagnu, Pasi ...	0 1	1(b)	...
4	257	Debi Din, Bania ...	0 1	1(b)	...
5	258	Raghubar, Brahman ...	0 1	1(b)	...
6	259	Lachhman, Kahar ...	4 5	3	...
7	260	Hiraman, Gadaria ...	2 12	1	18 12
8	261	Behari, Chamar ...	0 12	1	6 0
9	264	Jhau Lal, Chamar ...	0 4	1	2 8
10	265	Hiria, Chamar ...	0 3	1	2 8
11	266	Dalel, Murao ...	3 5	1	21 0
12	268	Debi Din, Arakh ...	1 5	1(b)	8 12
13	271	Baldi, Brahman ...	1 7	1(b)	15 0
14	272	Chheddi, Dhobi and Mula, Chamar ...	1 0	1(b)	4 8
15	273	Jawahir, Chamar ...	0 14	1(b)	3 0
16	274	Laltu, Chamar ...	1 7	1(b)	7 8
17	275	Munna, Arakh ...	0 12	2	1 4
18	276	Nokhey, Kalwar ...	1 14	1	5 0
19	277	Baldi, Nat ...	0 1	1	...
20	279	Must, Munna ...	1 13	1	5 0

Six of the above-mentioned cultivators have been given land on the 'Batai' system for which no rent is



charged in cash. They have to pay half the total produce to the landlord directly, or to the superior occupancy tenant from whom they lease the land. It is undoubtedly a symptom of the present agricultural crisis that four of them (S. Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 19 of the 2nd table) cultivate only one-twentieth of a bigha, i.e. .03 acre. One cannot imagine how such incredibly small farms serve to maintain the peasant's family. Naturally they have to supplement their income by extra earnings. (Labour in the village is absolutely stay at-home). The villagers are often heard saying 'Ghar Ki adhi bhali, bahar Ki samuchi nahin achhi', i.e. 'Half a loaf at home is preferable to the full abroad'. Thus instead of seeking employment, they attach themselves to their holdings, howsoever small and inadequate they may be for the maintenance of their family.

Not merely are the holdings small but they are also separated by long distances. The fact that different plots of the same cultivator lie at long distances from one another, leads to difficulties in management and supervision, as well as waste of labour and time in taking implements and cattle from one plot to another, especially in the busy season, and at the time of critical operations when concerted action and concentrated attention are most needed.

Owing to the difficulties resulting from the scattered nature of holdings it often happens in this village that, in the case of big cultivators, who hold a large number of plots, as many as 20, 25 or 30, only a few are actually cultivated for want of time, labour, and supervision generally; the rest, lie uncultivated, and are known in rural terminology as 'Parti' land.

According to the estimate of the peasants themselves, the loss at present, resulting from the scattered nature of their holdings is never less than three maunds per acre on the average, taking the whole area (cultivated and that which could not be cultivated for the same reason) into consideration.

In terms of money, the loss of three maunds of ordinary grain per acre nowadays is equal to Rs. 15 at least. It follows that if the fragmented plots of land of the



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cultivator could be consolidated into one compact block, his gross assets will surely increase at a minimum by Rs. 10 or Rs. 15 per acre.

Although a complete idea of the extent of the fragmentation of the peasants' holdings may be gathered from Appendix 'A' yet we give here a few specimen cases of an extreme nature which will give an idea of the whole situation. The following table will show how small areas of land have been divided into incredibly tiny strips :—

Total area of a farmer's land. Bighas-Biswas				The number of plots in which land is divided
9-2	...	...	...	11
13-16	...	...	...	13
16-19	...	...	...	17
13- 0	...	...	...	14
25- 0	...	...	...	16
10- 0	...	...	...	12
4- 5	...	...	...	10
10- 7	...	...	...	14
12- 5	...	...	...	15
24- 2	...	...	...	22
8- 7	...	...	...	12
16-19	...	...	...	25
15- 5	...	...	...	21
24-13	...	...	...	27
12- 9	...	...	...	15
8- 0	...	...	...	10
13- 6	...	...	...	18
13- 4	...	...	...	16
17- 8	...	...	...	19
10-14	...	...	...	13
8-19	...	...	...	16
33-14	...	...	...	25
14-13	...	...	...	19

A number of specimen maps, showing the distance of scattered plots from the homesteads of the cultivators, have been given in Appendix 'C'. A glance at these maps will at once convince one how much time and labour is wasted simply in reaching the fields and returning home with cattle and plough.



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The average number of holdings per head is nine, and the average size of a holding is 6 acres at present. If these nine plots were put together in one compact holding its size will increase nine times on the average, which will mean surely greater economy in management and greater efficiency in production, leading to a higher standard of living, and greater comfort and happiness in life.

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CHAPTER III

STANDARD OF LIVING

A VERY striking feature of village life is its apparent uniformity, inspite of the fact that there exist real fundamental differences between different individuals, families, castes or classes as regards the sources and modes of their respective income and expenditure, hence it sometimes becomes almost impossible to determine the basis of classification, and the exact limit and size of agricultural classes.

Other difficulties that stand in the way of studying the real economic position of a family are the villagers' suspicion, ignorance, and an inability to keep accounts. But a few sample data have been elicited by close personal observation.

As the village is a big one, containing about 30 castes and over 200 families, the plan adopted to study the standard of living of the cultivators was to classify the whole population, according to the land cultivated, the rent paid, the income derived and the social status held by a family in the village, into the following broad divisions, and then to pick out typical cases for inquiry :—

(1) *The Higher Class*, consisting of families whose net annual income from all sources is above Rs. 500, which cultivate sufficiently large areas of land as occupancy tenants, and are in a sound economic position.

(2) *The Middle Class*, comprising those families whose net annual income from agriculture and other subsidiary occupations, is below Rs. 500, and whose position is insolvent and status low.

(3) *The Lower Class*, containing families having no land or very little of it, and which depend for their



maintenance chiefly upon daily wages. They are the lowest in the social scale.

Below are given, the budgets of two typical families of the first class, side by side :—

(1) The first is the annual budget of the Patwari's family, consisting of 7 members and cultivating 33 bighas or 20 acres of land.

(2) The second is the annual budget of the Lohar's or Blacksmith's family, consisting of 14 members and cultivating 14 bighas and 6 biswas or 8.5 acres.

THE BUDGETS OF THE PATWARI'S AND THE LOHAR'S
FAMILIES FOR 1924-25

COSTS AND PROFITS OF AGRICULTURE

(BUDGET NOS. 1 AND 2)

Costs of Cultivation

	I		II	
	Rs.	Per cent. net profits	Rs	Percentage to total net profit of cultivators
1. Pay of three farm servants (1924-25) ...	180	18	...	...
2. Weeding expenses ...	50	5	20	6
3. Irrigation „ ...	75	8	10	3
4. Reaping and picking servants ...	25	3	10	3
5. Seed ...	100	10	50	16
6. Bandha or communal dues. ...	30	3	25	8
7. Price of instruments purchased during the year ...	50	5	10	3
8. Rent (real amount actually paid) ...	200	20	75	24
Total ...	710	...	200	...

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Profits of the same farm

	I	II
I. <i>Kharif harvest</i> —	Rs.	Rs.
1. Kapas or cotton valued ...	90	50
2. Urd or pulses ...	75	35
3. Dhan or paddy ...	100	20
4. Eikh ? Unkh ? or Sugar-cane ...	250	150
5. Makai and jawar (Indian corn and maize) ...	50	5
6. Mungphali or groundnuts ...	30	...
7. Shakarkand or sweet potatoes ...	15	...
II. <i>Rabi harvest</i> —		
1. Gehun or wheat ...	550	160
2. Chana or Gram ...	120	12
3. Matar or peas ...	45	...
4. Jao or barley ...	100	...
5. Arhar or pulses ...	50	45
6. Oilseeds ...	110	35
7. Alu or potatoes and other vegetables in ' Zoid ' ...	60	2
8. Lahsun and piaz, etc. ...	20	1
Total gross profits of cultivation ...	1,665	515
Total costs of cultivation ...	710	200
Total net profits of cultivation ...	955	315

Income from other sources

	I	II
	Rs.	Rs.
1. Income from Government service for the year 1924-25 ...	216	...
2. Communal service ...	...	955
3. Extra income from miscellaneous sources ...	200	25
4. Grocery and trade in cotton, wheat and grain, etc ...	...	300
Total annual income from other sources ...	416	1,280
Total annual income from agriculture ...	955	315
Total income from all sources ...	1,371	1,595



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Expenditure of the families for 1924-25

	I	II
	Rs.	Rs.
1. Food	240	250
2. Clothing	100	100
3. Vegetables and meat, etc.	50	20
4. Milk, ghee and oil	125	100
5. Spices and tobacco, etc.	30	20
6. Light	12	8
7. Domestic servant	15	...
8. Education and travelling	50	10
9. Festivities and house repairs	60	150
10. Social ceremonies	200	500
11. Charity and amusement	25	30
12. Old debt instalment of principal and interest	124	...
Total Expenditure ...	1,031	1,388
Net annual saving ...	340	207

Out of this saving of Rs. 340 in budget No. I about Rs. 150 have been advanced as loan to four or five cultivators, Rs. 100 spent on ornaments for the coming marriage of the second son, and the remaining sum is put by to meet the other expenses of the same marriage to be held this summer.

In budget No. II there is a saving of Rs. 207, out of which Rs. 105 have been spent in purchasing a new pair of good bullocks, and the rest is laid by.

As there were two daughters and four sons in family No. I there has been taking place, on the average, one marriage in the family every five years for the last fifteen years, and some other supplementary ceremony every three years.

The following table gives an account of the total expenditure on such important ceremonies as betrothal,

second marriage (Gauna) and even third marriage (Rauna) for the last fifteen years.

CEREMONY	Year	Net expenditure
		Rs.
1. Tilak or betrothal of the eldest daughter	1909	300
2. Her marriage	1910	1,600
3. Her Gauna (or second marriage)	1911	200
4. Her Rauna (or third marriage)	1913	150
5. Tilak of the second daughter	1916	200
6. Her marriage	1918	1,000
7. Her Gauna	1919	150
8. Her Rauna	1920	100
Total net expenditure ...		3,700

CEREMONY	Year	Net income
		Rs.
9. Tilak of the eldest son	1921	50
10. His marriage	1922	400
11. His Gauna	1923	50
12. His Rauna and second son's tilak	1925	100
Total net income ...		600
Total net expenditure for fifteen years from 1909-25 ...		3,100

Thus the average annual expenditure on these social ceremonies has been about Rs. 200 from the year 1909 down to 1925.

A peculiar feature of the last table is that it shows a net expenditure up to the year 1920, but after that it gives the net income up to the year 1925. The simple reason for this change in the family budget is that the daughter's ceremonies cost much more than those of the son's, and therefore always result in a heavy expenditure. The same statement shows that up to 1920 all expenditure has been incurred exclusively on the daughters, but after that year and up to the year 1925, it has been exclusively on the sons. Family No. II has spent only last year Rs. 500 on a daughter's marriage—partly from the income of this year and partly from the accumulated savings of the previous years.

The average expenditure of this class of families is Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 on a daughter's marriage, and Rs. 200 to Rs. 500 on that of a son. They have to borrow Rs. 100 at the most for this occasion in a few cases only.

The item of expenditure on clothing in the budgets of 1924-25, includes the usual needs of the family plus the abnormal needs of the occasional ceremonies. But, for the last few years, with the gradual increase in resources and change of fashion, due to education and contact with the city people, there has been a steady, though slight, increase in the expenditure on clothes. As far back as 1913 or 1914, the use of foreign stuff was quite unusual, but now for the last four or five years, since the coming of age of the eldest son, and his younger brother following right in his foot steps, an improvement in taste and the use of fine and costly clothes are clearly discernible.

But this tendency should be attributed not to any appreciable increase in the income of the family, but to a growing sense of neatness and decency.

For example, formerly a rough shirt or kurta and a dhoti or loin cloth of home spun and home woven cloth, served the family's purpose very well in normal times, and either the same clothes when cleaned, or a new pair of them, suited any special occasion, e.g. marriage. But nowadays an up-to-date clean shirt with a gaudy waist coat and a beautifully bordered white dhoti are regarded

as necessities. Besides, a good coat, a nice felt cap in place of a cotton folding cap, and a pair of boots instead of locally made full slippers, have become very common on special occasions, say a marriage party or Holi or other festivals.

Although not keeping pace with men, women also are showing a gradual tendency to put on dhoties, saris and jackets, etc., in place of the old langha and dupatta (a heavy gown from the waist downwards, and a cloth to cover the head and the upper portion of the body).

As regards diet there is practically no change except that meat, fish and vegetables now form an essential part of it, in addition to milk and various milk preparations. Sweets are rarely taken except as gur and rab, and sugar only occasionally.

The quality of ghi or fat used is superior, ghi being prepared fresh every third or fourth day in each family.

Fuel is free, and forms no item of expenditure. Cowdung in all the families is more than sufficient to supply their normal fuel needs, and what is superfluous is also used for manure. Wood is also ample.

During the last few years the kerosene lantern has replaced the earthen lamp (dipa) in which linseed or castor oil is burnt, and therefore the annual cost of light is now almost double what it was before the war.

The building occupied by each family of this group is a spacious one and is divided into three parts as follows :—

(1) The zenana which consists of two or three big kothris (rooms with one door), a baithak (drawing room), a thatched kitchen in one corner of the courtyard, a raised platform for keeping water jars with a pakka floor below it for cleaning utensils in the other corner, a granary and a spacious courtyard.

(2) A cattle-fold adjoining the zenana consisting of two cattlesheds and a spacious yard.

(3) The chaupar adjoining the zenana on the north, and consisting of five big rooms with one door and two or three windows. It has often a thatched verandah and



a big yard in front of it. In front of the chaupar there is some open space, and often a thatched shed for keeping bullocks, horses and the cart.

The following are the annual budgets of three families, which are typical of *all the sections of the middle class* :—

(i) The first family here examined is a Murao family of 6 members, cultivating 8 bighas 12 biswas or 5.2 acres; this is a purely agricultural family.

(ii) The second family is a Bania family of four members, which is carrying on a fair business in exporting cotton and importing cloths, and supplements its income by the meagre produce of its farm which is a small plot of 1 bigha 1 biswa, or 3 acres.

(iii) The third is an Arakh family of one of the village servants, consisting of 6 members and cultivating 3 bighas 7 biswas or 2 acres of land.

The Annual Budgets of I, II and III

Costs of Cultivation of all the three families in 1924

	I		II		III	
	Rs.	Per cent. net profits	Rs.	Per cent.	Rs.	Per cent. net profits
1. Rent ...	33	12	8	12	8-8	4
2. Seed ...	12	4	6	9	16	7
3. Weeding and reaping ...	15	5	4	6	10	5
4. Irrigation ...	5	1.7	2	3	2-8	1.5
5. Miscellaneous ...	5	1.7	2	3	5	2.5
Total cost of cultivation.	70	25	22	33	42	20

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Profits of cultivation of all the three forms for 1924-25

	I 52 ams	II 3 ams	III 2 ams
I. <i>Kharif</i> —	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Dhan or paddy ...	30	25	20
2. Kapas or cotton ...	45	...	50
3. Urd or pulses ...	15	...	15
4. Makai, jawar or bajra. ...	25	3	5
5. Sugar-cane ...	40	...	...
II. <i>Rabi</i> —			
1. Wheat ...	80	32	80
2. Gram ...	32	20	30
3. Barley ...	18	...	...
4. Arhar ...	30	...	25
5. Oil-seeds ...	12	5	10
III. <i>Zaid</i> —			
1. Melons ...	6	...	3
2. Vegetables ...	15	2	3
3. Fruits, etc. ...	10	...	...
Total gross profits of cultivation.	358	87	241
Gross profits of cultivation ...	358	87	241
Costs of cultivation ...	70	22	42
Net profits of cultivation ...	288	65	199

Income from other sources

	I	II	III
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Trade in raw materials. (Export of sale outside the village) ...	150	100	...
2. Shops ...	...	100	...
3. Communal services ...	...	...	60
	150	200	60
Total income from all sources during the year 1924-25 ...	438 ✓	265 ✓	259 ✓

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Total expenditure of all the three families in 1924-25

—				I	II	III
				Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1.	Food	120	85	100
2.	Clothing	...	...	30	40	25
3.	Light	...	...	6	8	5
4.	Festivities	...	...	15	20	10
5.	Social ceremonies	...	...	100	200	100
6.	Vegetables, spices, tobacco, etc.	...	...	25	10	5
7.	Charity and amusements	...	...	5	1	5
8.	Debt charges	...	...	20	50	25
Total expenditure				321	414	275
Net result				117	149	16
				(Saving)	Deficit	Deficit

It is evident from the above budgets of the three middle class families, that in all cases between 30 to 40 per cent. of the total income of the year from all sources is spent on food, which is made up of ordinary grains (wheat, barley, dhan, etc.), pulses, milk and vegetables. The majority of the first two castes are vegetarians. The Arakhs generally rear pigs, and therefore pig-meat forms an essential part of their diet with paddy or rice. About the same percentage is wasted on expenditure on social ceremonies.

There is no doubt that any economic improvement should begin with the reform of social customs and ceremonies, as a very large part of family earnings is improperly and unproductively employed, and this is one of the main causes of their growing indebtedness. In fact, it is because of the round of festivals and ceremonies that old debts are always lingering, and are never cleared off wholly.

Again, clothing is another important item of expenditure of all the middle class families, which is in no case more than 10 per cent of the total expenditure.

Clothing.—In general there is much uniformity in clothing among most castes and classes. The philosophy of 'simple living' everybody seems to understand very well, and even people, who can afford to put on fine and costly apparel, would not do it.

Again, for the majority of the villagers, good clothing is most undesirable in daily life on account of the rough nature of their agricultural work.

The vast majority of population, being illiterate, has no taste or refinement, and hardly is there a sense of cleanliness. And ultimately one of the most important reasons for not using costly dress is the universal economic stringency of the poor peasants who cannot afford it.

Thus in winter, a loin cloth, a double cotton jacket and in some cases a wrapper, an ordinary cap, and a pair of shoes constitute the dress of this class; while in summer, in the majority of cases, only a loin cloth is the usual dress; the kurta or a loose shirt is seldom used.

Debts.—Old debts which are a great burden to the people of almost all the classes, are generally the debts of the liquidated co-operative society, which are ever multiplying. From the expenditure columns of the above tables it appears that from 5 to 10 per cent of the total expenditure goes to the Mahajan or Co-operative Society, to which about 10 per cent. of the middle class people are very heavily indebted.

Housing.—Housing is very cheap and costs very little, because land and building materials are all freely available. Repair costs little in most cases, because



generally people do petty repairs themselves, without engaging extra labour.

The undesirable features of the housing arrangements are:

(1) Their low-roofed long cells, with only one small opening, which serve as sleeping rooms.

(2) The kitchen is adjacent to the sleeping rooms; generally the thatched verandah in front of the sleeping room serves as a kitchen.

(3) In some cases cattlesheds are also situated too near the cottage, making the whole site unclean and malarious on account of mosquitoes.

(4) The surroundings of the house are most insanitary, the daily refuse of the house being thrown immediately behind or to one side of it, in a ditch.

Bedding.—The majority of this class sleep on straw beds spread on the ground during winter, while in summer, 'charpais' covered with 'kamlis' or ordinary dirty guddies or rags are generally used.

Literacy.—Not more than thirty or forty cultivators of this class are literate, but that they have got a literary taste and an æsthetic sense, is apparent from the fact that during the rainy season the Aalhâ (a popular historic poem) is widely read and heard by large audiences till late hours every night, and similarly the Ramayan during the summer. Various nâch and râs parties are locally organized during the idle months of April, May and June. Marriages, Kathas, and all other ceremonies are performed during the same period, when there is greater freedom from agricultural operations.

Next we study the budgets of two families of farm-less and land-less labourers, and this will be fairly representative of the third or lower class families.

(1) The first is the family of one Baldi Nat, tenant-at-will of the taluqdar, who cultivates 1 biswa or (.3) acres on share system. His family consists of three members, and his supplementary sources of income are hunting, fishing and farm labour.

(2) The other is the family of one Ghazi Chamar consisting seven members, and depending for its maintenance on the daily earnings of its members within and without the village.

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The net income of the first family from agriculture

Cost of cultivation			Profits of cultivation		
	Rs.	A. P.		Rs.	A. P.
Rent	1	12 0	(50 per cent. of the gross produce)	Kharif—	
				Dhan	... 2 0 0
Seed	0	4 0		Rabi—	
				Gram	... 1 8 0
	2	0 0		Gross profits	... 3 8 0
				Cost of cultivation	... 2 0 0
				Net profits of cultivation	... 1 8 0

Income from other sources

	Rs.
(i) Hunting and fishing	... 30
(ii) Farm-labour	... 50
Total income	... 81

The net annual income of the second family from labour on the farm and elsewhere.

Income in the village

Kind of labour	Scale of wages	Period of work	Members of the family	Total wages
				Rs.
1. Irrigation ...	0-4-0 and 1 sr. gram.	2 months	Husband and wife and two children.	20
2. Weeding ...	Rs A P Husband or wife 0-5-0 Children 0-2-0	3 ,,	Husband	60



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Kind of labour	Scale of wages	Period of work	Members of the family	Total wages
				Rs.
3. Reaping ...	RS A P 0-4-0	1 month	Husband	8
4. Loading Threshing {	Man 0-4-0 Women 0-3-0	} 2 months	„	15
5. Pasturing ...	...	8 „	2 grown up children.	8
6. Wood cutting in the forest	...	2 „	„	16

Outside the village

	RS. A. P.		Rs.
1. Road repairing ...	0 6 0	1 month, husband ...	12
2. House repairing ...	0 8 0	1 „ „ ...	15
		Total ...	154

Total annual expenditure of both the families

Item	I	II
	RS. A. P.	Rs.
1. Food... ..	35 0 0	68
2. Clothing	8 0 0	20
3. Light	2 0 0	4
4. Festivities and ceremonies ...	50 0 0	50
5. Old debt instalments ...	12 0 0	24
6. Miscellaneous	6 0 0	...
Total expenditure ...	133 0 0	158
Total income ...	84 0 0	154
Total deficit ...	52 8 0	4



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The first of the above two families of the third group is typical of shikmi tenants or tenants-at-will, who lease lands from the taluqdar, or from superior occupancy tenants for small periods of five, seven, or ten years, and are liable to ejection at any time in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

In the case under consideration, Baldi Nat, who holds only one biswa or $\frac{1}{20}$ of a bigha or .3 acre, and that too on a batai system from the taluqdar, is recorded in the Khetauni as Kashtakar Shikmi, or the sub-tenant of the taluqdar. From agriculture his income is only Rs. 3-8-0, out of which Rs. 2 go to the taluqdar as the Batai share and for seed, but he supplements this small income by farm labour, hunting and fishing, from which his earnings amount to Rs. 81-8-0, while he spends Rs. 133 or 50 per cent more than the income, and thereby incurs a debt of Rs. 52-8-0 annually.

His life is most miserable, and he has to support three small children who are motherless. These children are always underfed and are seen begging for a loaf or two. They all sleep on bare ground, or on straw payal in winter, if the taluqdar is kind enough to spare some. The children, at least for six months in the year, go quite naked. In winter they sometimes get a rag from a kind hearted villager, or else try to protect themselves from cold near a fire. For all these reasons they are all sickly and weak. Their home life is pitiable.

It is interesting to note that a landless labourer, as represented by family No. II, is comparatively much better off than many shikmi tenants or even occupancy tenants.

As there is scarcity of labour in the village, the landless labourer and his family is in a position to earn enough from farm labour in the village, as well as from other kinds of labour outside the village. We have, on the previous page, estimated the annual income and expenditure of one Ghazi chamar, whose family consists of a husband, wife, three sons and two daughters. The husband is busy for about two months with irrigation work which enables him to earn about Rs. 20.

Again, weeding, which is one of the most critical of agriculture operations, keeps the husband and wife both



busy for about two months, from which source they earn about Rs. 60 at the rate of 5 annas per day. Similarly, they undergo joint labour in loading, but for that work the rates for a male labourer are 4 annas a day and for a female 3 annas a day. The boys are also busy in wood-cutting and pasturing cattle, from both these sources they can earn about Rs. 24 a year. When idle, the husband goes to town for employment as a hired labourer where he manages to earn from annas 6 to 8 per day; or again he finds some employment in the neighbouring villages where labour is scarce.

The main items of his expenditure are on food, social ceremonies and festivities, and repayment of old debts. From the budget we see that in his case the income and expenditure are almost equal. But while he is earning the maximum amount, he is spending the minimum, and thus there is no room for making any improvement whatever. His standard of living must therefore remain stationary, provided his family does not increase, and the price level remains constant. A slight increase in any of these will bring him down to the subsistence level, and possibly below the poverty line.

Now bringing all the budgets of the different classes of families together, we may have a rough idea of how much an average family of seven members requires for its maintenance on a moderate scale.

Thus Rs. 534 is the amount necessary to maintain an average family at an average standard of comfort. As this amount also includes an average payment of Rs. 37 towards the principal and interest of old debts (of which the majority are incurred for social ceremonies and non-agricultural purposes), we can fairly assume that the minimum income of an average family from all sources ought to be at least Rs. 500.

If improvidence is kept within bounds, and thrift observed on occasions of social ceremonies and festivities, it is possible that Rs. 500 may keep a family of 7 members in a solvent and sound position.

At a rough estimate it has been found that out of 216 families in the village only 55 families, generally of Thakur, Brahmin, Kayasthas, Kalwar and Murao castes,



Average Expenditure necessary to maintain an Average Family of Seven Members

Items of expenditure	I		II		III			Total	Average for one family
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Food	240	450	120	85	100	55	60	1,125	161
2. Clothing	100	100	30	40	25	8	20	323	46
3. Light	12	8	6	8	5	2	4	45	6
4. Vegetables and meat, etc.	125	100	...	...	...	...	...	225	32
5. Milk and ghee	50	20	25	10	5	...	...	110	16
6. Spices and tobacco	30	20	...	...	...	...	...	50	7
7. Festivities	60	150	15	20	10	30	35	320	46
8. Social Ceremonies	200	500	100	200	100	20	15	1,135	162
9. Old debt payment	125	...	20	50	25	12	24	256	37
10. Education and travelling	50	10	..	...	...	...	...	60	9
11. Charity and amusements	25	30	5	1	5	...	...	66	9
12. Miscellaneous	15	...	...	...	...	...	6	21	3
								3,746	534



have got an income over Rs. 500 per annum, and belong to the first group. Thus while 25 per cent. of the population of the village are living above want and attain to a standard of comfort, the remaining 75 per cent. (II and III groups) show a very low standard of living, and of the latter, about 20 per cent. are quite insolvent, dragging out a miserable existence.

A remarkable feature of the village, as is evident from the budgets themselves, is that the families, which depend for their livelihood upon wages are economically more prosperous than those who live on the profits of cultivation alone.

Now considering the effect of the rise of prices on rural prosperity we arrive at the following results:—

(1) Those families which had to sell more than they could purchase have gained more than those which had to purchase more than they could sell. That is, the families of very small farmers (whose farms are less than 4 acres each) in the village have become more insolvent, chiefly because a large portion of the increased profits of cultivation went to the creditor and the landlord.

(2) The rents were enormously increased by the Taluqdar, which on paper form 20 per cent. of the net profits of cultivation, although in reality, they are not less than 50 per cent. of the total profits.

(3) In very few cases comprising not more than 10 per cent. of the rural population the rise in prices has materially contributed to a higher standard of living.

As the profits increase, villagers become more improvident, and hence the level of comfort cannot rise. This is particularly true of the lower agricultural tribes and castes.



CHAPTER IV

THE ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURE
AND TRADE

As everywhere else in rural India, agriculture is the mainstay of the people and therefore the foremost industry of the village.

Except a few landless labourers who form not more than 3 per cent. of the total population, all the rest, that is, 97 per cent. of the villagers, are *agriculturists*, and of them 85 per cent. are actual tillers of the soil. The number of cultivators in the village has increased from 1006 in 1891 to 1205 in 1925, i.e. by 20 per cent., and of farm labourers from 138 in 1891 to 275 in 1925, i.e. by 100 per cent.

(A) AGRICULTURAL LAND

Before the passing of the Oudh Rent Act, land cultivation was carried on either by non-occupancy tenants who were liable to ejectment after seven years, or by shikmi tenants or tenants-at-will who had no security of tenure at all. But now, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, the cultivators of the village numbering 279 in the khetauni have been classified as follows :—

(a) **Kashtikaran Sir** or persons cultivating land which they own. The taluqdar is now the only cultivator of this class. At the last settlement, there were eight proprietors in the village, called the pattidars, but all of them have been gradually ousted by the taluqdar who is now the sole proprietor. The act further subdivides this class into :—

1. **Kashtikaran Sir Khudkast** or proprietors who cultivate the whole or part of their sirland themselves. The taluqdar, as such, cultivates only 92 bighas or 55 acres out of 189 bighas or 114 acres of his sirland.

2. **Kashtikaran Shikmi Sir** or peasants who cultivate the taluqdar's sirland as tenants-at-will. The total



number of such tenants is 20—that is 7 per cent. of the total number of recorded tenants.

(b) **Kashtikaran Haqdar** or occupancy tenants with life tenures. In this class are included all those tenants who had been, before 1920, holding lease-holds for more than twelve years, and this is by far the largest class of tenants, about 84 per cent. of the total number.

(c) **Kashtikaran Ghair Haqdar** or Non-occupancy tenants, further subdivided as

1. Heirs of subclass (b), about 6 per cent. of the total, and

2. Others, about 3 per cent. of the total.

The whole cultivated area of the village has been divided into what are known as 6 *hars*. A *har*, in the rural terminology, means a very large area of land with a particular kind of soil suited to particular types of crops, and is generally named after the crop it specially grows, or the situation it occupies.

The fields lying nearest to the village site are naturally more fertile than those lying farthest from the homesteads; and, greater care and labour can be bestowed upon the former than upon the latter. In fact, the greater the distance of the plot from the home of the cultivator, the greater is the cost of production per unit, and the less the fertility the heavier is the loss to the cultivator.

Matyar-goind fields lying in close proximity to the village site yield luxuriant crops of cotton, wheat, and potatoes; while dumat-manjha fields lying a little further off produce very good crops of gram, arhar, urd and jawar. Again low lying bhur fields near the Baiba are very suitable for the production of rice.

(B) AGRICULTURAL CAPITAL

The next important factor of production, after land, is capital upon the proper security and right employment of which the success of agriculture largely depends.

Implements.—One can find in the village almost all stages of agricultural development existing side by side, and often overlapping. We see that while the hoe, spade and plough form necessary implements of production of

the superior cultivator, the hoe or spade is sometimes the only implement with the inferior cultivator. But, on the whole, however, it can be said that the various agricultural appliances which the rayats use, are of a very old and crude type. Only a few years back, on the initiative of the local co-operative society and its financing central bank, a few well-to-do cultivators were led to hire Meston ploughs which did very well during two or three harvests, though entailing harder labour on the part of both the cattle and the cultivator. Unfortunately, there occurred two unexpected deaths in the two families that had made use of the new ploughs. As might be expected from extremely superstitious persons, there was a great sensation in the village, and the deaths were attributed to this new change in their old and traditional ways of agricultural life. The result was that everybody was bent upon finding fault with the new ploughs. They were however abandoned, not only because they were inauspicious, but also because they were, in the farmer's eyes, too expensive for them, and too heavy for ordinary bullocks.

It is certainly *very difficult* to introduce new agricultural implements and processes among the ignorant and conservative villagers. The following is a list of the important agricultural implements that are used by the rayats at large :—

Names of implements	Description	Material made of	Price per unit	Average durability
			Rs. A. P.	
1. Plough—				
(i) Phara ...	Plough share...	Steel ...	1 8 0	8 years.
(ii) Parahri.	Share-sole ...	Wood ...	0 1 0	1 year.
(iii) Kurh ...	The step ...	"	0 1 0	"
(iv) Paratha.	The stilt ...	"	0 4 0	"
(v) Muthia...	The handle ...	"	0 0 6	"
(vi) Haris ...	The beam ...	"	1 0 0	3 years.
(vii) Parel	Pegs to secure the different parts of the plough.			
Pachchar				
Agamsi				
Pachmasi		"	0 2 0	1 year.

Names of implements	Description	Material made of	Price per unit	Average durability
			RS. A. P.	
2. Yoke—				
(i) Machi ...	Upper bar ...	Wood ...	...	...
(ii) Tar machi.	Lower bar ...	„	...	...
(iii) Gat ...	Inner pegs ...	„	1 0 0	3 to 4 years.
(iv) Sail ...	Outer pegs ...	„	...	...
3. Nahna ...	Rope attaching yoke to the beam ...	Leather.	0 8 0	3 years.
4. Chouga ...	Funnel attached to the handle down which seed is furrowed ...	Bamboo.	0 0 6	3 „
5. Phaura ...	Spade for digging ...	Iron and wood.	1 0 0	4 „
6. Kudari. ...	Narrower spade.	„	0 12 0	„
7. Khurpa ...	Hoe ...	„	0 6 0	„
8. Kulaba ...	A kind of hoe...	„	0 8 0	„
9. Hasya ...	Sickle for cutting crops ...	„	0 6 0	„
10. Garansi ...	Chopper ...	„	0 8 0	„
11. Kulhari ...	Axe ...	„	0 12 0	3 „
12. Sarawan ...	Beam used for clod crushing.	Wood ...	1 8 0	5 „
13. Pachchi ...	Flat board for making irrigation bed ...	„	0 4 0	1 year.
14. Pur ...	Water bucket used for irrigation purposes ...	Leather.	4 0 0	4 years.
15. Kondra ...	Hoop to hold the mouth of the bucket open ...	Iron ...	1 0 0	5 „
16. Bariat ...	Rope ...	Hemp ...	2 0 0	„
17. Khutti ...	Handle attached in the rope to the pur ...	Wood ...	0 4 0	2 „

Names of implements	Description	Material made of	Price per unit	Average durability
			RS. A. P.	
18. Gurri ...	Pulley for drawing water ...	Wood ...	0 8 0	6 years.
19. Dhoriti ...	Uprights on which pulley rests ...	,,	0 2 0	,,
20. Pattar ...	Beam at the mouth of the well on which the pur is landed ...	,,	5 0 0	2 ,,

Generally, the average cultivator does not own all these implements. It is only the superior grades of cultivators who keep them all. The majority of the higher and the middle classes, and a small minority of the lower class cultivators, possesses about half of them. On the average these implements do not last for more than four years, and are repaired once in two years. The habit of mutual help and co-operation among the villagers reduces to a great extent the need of their being purchased by all.

The following table shows the fluctuation, for the last quarter of a century, in the total number of ploughs and carts which form an essential part of agricultural capital of the village:—

Year	Ploughs	Carts
1899	141	8
1904	191	10
1905	154	9
1915	119	9
1920	189	14
1925	191	18

In spite of the fact that the taluqdar is a resident of the village, no great improvements however have been effected. But it is a happy sign that he is sympathetic and is ever ready to do his best to help his tenants in the sinking of new wells and the repairing of old ones.

During the last thirty years eight pakka wells have been built by the ryots with the help of the taluqdar,



who was kind enough to give them all the necessary materials they required to make pakka bricks for masonry wells.

Very recently the taluqdar has sunk one masonry well near the dahi at his own cost, which is of great use to the cultivators, who had to spend much time and labour as well as money in irrigating the fields from the river by means of Beris.

Thus at present there are in all 27 wells, out of which 14 are Kachcha and 13 Pakka.

Agricultural capital necessary for the purchase of implements, cattle and seed, etc., or for payment of rent, is now supplied wholly by local money lenders, as the Co-operative Credit Society, which existed for about 13 years from 1911 to 1924, has now gone into liquidation.

(C) LIVE STOCK

Live Stock or cattle form a very important part of agricultural capital, and the fortune of the agriculturist, to a very great extent under the existing circumstances, depends on cattle power.

It is therefore the intimate concern of every cultivator to maintain his live stock in a healthy condition.

With the rise in the price of cattle, (about 50 per cent. since 1915), the cost of their maintenance has also increased correspondingly.

The cost of daily maintenance of cattle is estimated by the villagers as follows:—

Cattle	Material on which fed	Cost of maintenance per day	Average of annual cost
			Rs. A. P.
1. Bullock ...	Fodder 5 seers, gram 2½ seers ...	Annas 6	136 14 0
2. Buffalo ...	5 seers of fodder ...	„ 2	45 10 0
3. Cow ...	5 seers of fodder and 1 seer oil cake ...	„ 3	68 7 0
4. Cow-buffalo...	7½ seers of fodder, 2½ seers oil cake and castor seeds ...	„ 8	192 0 0



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For want of adequate medical relief and on account of the widespread prejudice against inoculation, rinderpest exacted a heavy toll upon the cattle of the village last year in the months of May and June, when out of a total of 2,079 cattle at the beginning of 1925, 216 died, causing a total loss of about Rs. 8,640 to the village, or about Rs. 6 per head of population.

The following table shows an increase or decrease in the total number of cattle of all species in the village from the year 1899 to 1925 :—

Cattle	1899	1904	1905	1915	1920	1925-26 (January)
1. Bulls and bullocks ...	314	387	239	370	364	509-404
2. Bull-buffaloes ...	282	382	345	482	411	419-392
3. Cows and cow-buffaloes ...	56	100	117	...	...	111-64
4. Calves and heifers ...	366	402	302	419	374	434-423
5. Sheep and goats ...	343	703	351	766	266	606-380
Total ...	1,361	1,974	1,354	2,037	1,415	2,079-1,563

From the above table it is evident that bulls, bullocks and bull-buffaloes have decreased during the course of a year by 132, cows and cow-buffaloes by 47, calves, heifers by 11, and sheep and goats by 226, the last figure including animals that died and those that were killed for meat and sacrificial purposes.

In 1921 the local Co-operative Society was thinking of starting a Co-operative Cattle Insurance Society in the



village, but unfortunately the scheme did not mature, owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the credit society itself.

(D) SEED

Seed is also an important item in the assets of an agriculturist, and is a source of great anxiety and expense to ordinary cultivators who are not in a position to lay by for their future needs.

The ledgers of the liquidated society of the village, show that seed forms the third kind of object for which advances have been freely made to the cultivators, in order to save them from the clutches of the agriculturist money-lenders who deal both in grain and money.

Roughly estimated, about 70 per cent. of the village cultivators have to borrow grain for seed or *Behsar*, as they call it, because what they ought to have saved for the future, is already spent in paying the highly fictitious rent and in purchasing the necessities of life.

The system of lending and borrowing seed is very vicious and entails a heavy loss to the cultivator.

It has been shown in the chapter on 'Credit and its results' that the cultivator, when he borrows grain for seed, gets seed of a very poor quality and the loan is calculated in terms of money, so as to enable the lender to get the best quality as well as the largest quantity at harvest time.

In this transaction the cultivator loses at least 50 per cent more than he would lose, if he purchased the same amount of grain from the market or from another cultivator.

There are hardly 10 per cent. of the village cultivators who can save sufficient from their last year's produce for seed purposes. Improved seed is now freely used by cultivators who can afford to purchase it from the Co-operative Central Bank at Sandila, about six miles from the village, or from the Central Seed Store at Hardoi belonging to the Agricultural Department.

The following table gives the rates of the amount of seed required per acre per crop :—

Crop				Amount of seed used per acre		Price	
						Rs.	A.
1.	Wheat	...	...	2 mds.		12	0
2.	Gram	...	...	1 md. 20 srs.		6	0
3.	Barley	...	...	1 „ 20 „		5	0
4.	Cotton	...	...	15 srs.		3	0
5.	Sugar-cane	...	...	4,500 slips		12	0
6.	Rice	...	...	1 md. 10 srs.		5	0
7.	Jawar	...	...	3 srs.		0	5
8.	Bajra	...	...	3 „		0	8
9.	Potatoes	...	...	1 md. 20 srs.		3	8
10.	Pulses	...	...	30 srs.		4	4
11.	Oil Seeds	...	...	15 „		3	0

(E) MANURE

Although the cultivators are alive to the fact that manuring is essential to maintain the fertility of the soil, yet they are helpless, partly for want of adequate knowledge of the subject, and partly for want of sufficient manuring materials at their command.

The only material used at present is cowdung mixed with house sweepings, ashes and useless straw. All the refuse is heaped outside the house and carried to the fields during the manuring season.

In a few cases hemp is grown during the rainy season in the fields which are prepared for Rabi crops. Within three weeks, the hemp plants become sufficiently high, then one or two ploughings thoroughly mix them with the soil where they are then left to rot for a month or so. For wheat and cotton growers this is a most ingenious way of securing fertility to the exhausted soil.

Another way of bringing about the same results automatically is the rotation and mixture of urd, arhar, mung and other leguminous crops, whose leaves are most conducive to the strength of the soil.



As a matter of fact the turn of each field to be manured comes, on the average, every third year. Special attention is given to the manuring of wheat, cotton, sugar-cane and other paying crops.

The manuring season, referred to above, comes just before the rainy season, during the months of May and June, when cultivators are generally free from more important agricultural work. It is usual to find quite a large number of loaded carts following one another from the village to the fields. Carters earn a handsome living at this time. Each cart charges from Rs. 1-8 to Rs. 2-8 per day together with fodder for bullocks, and carries a load from 12 to 15 maunds of manure.

Nightsoil is seldom used as manure, because the majority of it is wasted in the bushes surrounding the village which are its latrines. Besides, pigs also consume a very large part of it.

Again, cowdung cakes heaped in a pyramidal shape called *bathia*, and containing about 15 or 16 maunds of manure, would suffice at least for an acre and a half of sugar-cane fields. These are sold for Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-8 to the neighbouring townsmen who use them for fuel purposes. At a low estimate 20 to 30 bathias, or say about 300 to 500 maunds of manure, are annually exported, bringing only Rs. 40 to Rs. 60 to the village in return, which falls far short of the net increase of yield that might result from the application of the same quantity of cowdung manure to village fields.

Besides, a great deal of cowdung is also used in the village as fuel, (inspite of the fact that there is no scarcity of wood,) especially for the purpose of heating and boiling milk. In house-cleaning also it is largely used. The cowdung cakes in the pastures and woods are almost wasted, and seldom brought to the village. There is an ample supply of fish in the neighbouring stream of Baita, but nobody cares to use them as manure. They are, of course, used to a limited extent when new trees are planted.

A very useful source of manure is wasted in throwing away the bones of the dead cattle, which are taken away by the distant traders almost gratis. The only reason

for the waste is the absolute lack of the knowledge of their scientific composition and utility as manures.

Oil-cakes are not used at all as manure.

The cultivators do not, however, purchase manure, though more than 60 per cent of them have to pay for carting it. At a rough estimate of the villagers, about 500 carts of manure are annually taken to the fields, thus costing about Rs. 1,000 to the village as a whole, about one-fourth of which goes outside the village, because the village carts are not sufficient to meet the demand.

(F) AGRICULTURAL LABOUR

It has been shown elsewhere that there is an actual shortage of labour in the village during the critical periods of agricultural operations, e.g., weeding in Kharif and irrigating in Rabi. During such periods at least 100 labourers are hired from outside in every normal year, and the wages also go up from 25 to 50 per cent.

Labour is generally required for the following operations in the village :—

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| (i) Ploughing. | (v) Picking. |
| (ii) Sowing. | (vi) Reaping. |
| (iii) Weeding. | (vii) Threshing. |
| (iv) Irrigating. | (viii) Loading. |

There are about forty families of Thakurs, Kayasthas, Brahmins and Kalwars in the village for whom the above operations have to be performed by hired labour, and therefore, as is evident from a typical budget of this class of families, wages form about 50 per cent. of their total cost of production.

In other cases, all other operations except weeding and irrigation are done more or less by the members of the family.

There is a system of *jita* labour existing in the village as a survival of the old communal organization.

In this system all the members of a group of families join together to perform all the urgent operations of weeding or irrigation for one family, and quickly finish them. Next they take up the work of another family of the same group and finish it in the same way,



and then of a third and so on. This system is prevalent only among the poorer and lower castes who show greater cohesion and solidarity than the richer and the higher castes. This is perhaps due to the very nature of the circumstances in which they are placed, necessitating combination for common welfare, and mutual goodwill. Sometimes ploughing is also done on the same system, though rarely.

During the sowing season there is a great rush to the fields, and labour is urgently required, especially during the rains when Kharif fields are sown. There is a popular saying 'Terah Katik Teen Asarh', which means that thirteen days in Katik or November and three days in Asarh or July are the most critical periods during which Rabi and Kharif crops must be sown or there is no hope. Hence in order to make the best of any clear days during the month of July, a number of labourers are required to sow all the Kharif fields.

It often happens that when carts are not available labourers are engaged to deposit manure in the fields; the rate of payment is 1 or 2 pice per basketful containing from 10 to 15 seers, and an average labourer can make 15 to 20 rounds during the whole day working in all for about ten hours.

Similarly in other kinds of labour, as weeding, reaping and threshing, etc., the time of work and the scale of wages are as follows :—

Labour	Working hours per day	Wages		
		Man	Woman	Child
		RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.
1. Weeding ...	10 to 11	0 6 0	0 4 0	0 3 0
2. Reaping ...	9 to 10	0 4 0	0 3 0	0 1 6
3. Picking ...	10 to 11	0 4 0	0 4 0	0 3 0
4. Threshing ...	9 to 10	0 4 0	0 3 0	0 2 0
5. Loading ...	„	0 4 0	0 3 0	0 2 0

(G) IRRIGATION

In this connection irrigation deserves special attention, as there are various systems of irrigation practised in the village, and there are accordingly different ways of engaging and remunerating labour.

(i) *Beri or Lift System*

This is by far the most popular system of irrigation, on account of the large number of tanks in the village.

In this system there are four men in two pairs engaged at one place, each pair replacing the other at suitable intervals. They hoist up water from a low level by means of a rectangular basket or *beri* to which two ropes are attached on each of the two small sides, which are held by the two men standing on both sides of the place from which water is to be lifted.

The number of *beris* is proportionate to the number of successive ground levels over which water is to be taken, and the distance of the fields from the irrigating centre.

Except in the case of a *jita* or mutual labour arrangement, *beri* men are generally paid at the rate of 4 annas a day plus two seers of grain working from ten to twelve hours per day.

(ii) *Pur or Garra System*

The *pur* or *charsa* is a leather bucket for drawing water from the wells. The *pur* is attached to a thick rope or *bariat* which is drawn over a wooden pulley either by 2 or 4 bullocks or 8 or 16 men yoked in pairs. In order to reduce labour there is a regular slope adjacent to the wells down which the *garra* is drawn. By this means about 5 biswas a day utmost can be irrigated, and the average cost comes to Rs. 2 to Rs. 4 per day. If the plots of various cultivators are irrigated, the cost is met by a *per capita* contribution in due proportion to the area covered.

(iii) *Dhekuli or Lever Lift*

This kind of irrigation arrangement requires the labour of only one man. The whole mechanism consists of one long beam supported on one or two strong poles at a



convenient point. At one end of the beam which is nearer the ground a heavy weight of mud is attached, while at the other a water bucket is hung by means of a long rope sufficient to reach the water level of the well. The man stands at the mount of the well, and, when the bucket is full of water, leaves it to come up on account of the weight at the other end of the beam.

(H) AGRICULTURAL SEASONS AND PRODUCTS

Really speaking there are only two agricultural seasons, i.e. the Kharif and the Rabi, but to these two is added a third season called the 'Zaid' which means an extra or catch cropping.

Roughly speaking, the Kharif extends from July to November and the Rabi from November to April. The remaining two months, i. e. May and June may be said to be occupied by the Zaid.

The following table gives the different crops grown in all the three harvests during the year :—

I. <i>Kharif</i>		II. <i>Rabi</i>		III. <i>Zaid</i>	
Indian name	English name	Indian name	English name	Indian name	English name
1. Jawar	(large mil- let)	1. Gehun	Wheat	1. Tarbuz.	(Water- melon)
2. Bajra	Small mil- let	2. Jau ...	Barley	2. Kharbuza	(Melon)
3. Kapas	Cotton	3. Chana	Gram	3. Kakri ...	„
4. Dhan	Rice	4. Posta	Poppy	4. Karela.	„
5. Makai	Indian corn	5. Sarson	Mustard	5. Kumrha.	„
6. Arhar	Pulses	Til ...	Sesamum	6. Loki ...	„
Urd	„	Alsi ...	Linseed	7. Toroi ...	(Bottle- gourd)
Mung	„	Kusum	Safflower	8. Phut ...	„

I. <i>Kharif</i>		II. <i>Rabi</i>		III. <i>Zaid</i>	
Indian name	English name	Indian name	English name	Indian name	English name
Moth	Pulses	6. Ukh...	Sugarcane	...	(Bottle-gourd)
Masur	„	7. Alu ...	Potato	9. Chanwa.	(Fodder)
7. Matar	Pea	8. Shakar-kand	Sweet potato		
8. Andi	Castor	...	...	...	...
9. San	Hemp	...	...	...	...

The table below gives the total area cultivated (in Bighas) and the total outturn in maunds under the three harvests from 1892 to 1925 :—

Year	KHARIF		RABI AND ZAID		
	Area cultivated	Total outturn	Area cultivated	Total outturn	
1892-93	...	599	4892	703	8440
1896-97	...	638	4855	347	3827
1905-6	...	775	6200	533	6386
1915-16	...	743	5261	695	8345
1923-24	...	655	4585	667	6668
1924-25	...	611	4397	657	6530

Cotton, sugar-cane, wheat, gram and potatoes are the special crops grown over wide areas for commercial

purposes. Their net yield and the cost of production per acre may be estimated as in the following table :—

	CROPS				
	Cotton	Sugar-cane	Wheat	Gram	Potato
I. Total outturn (grain and Bhusa) valued at ...	Rs. A. P. 140 0 0	Rs. A. P. 200 0 0	Rs. A. P. 125 0 0	Rs. A. P. 70 0 0	Rs. A. P. 200 0 0
Cost of production—					
1. Rent ...	15 0 0	10 0 0	15 0 0	9 0 0	12 0 0
2. Seed ...	1 8 0	40 0 0	10 0 0	6 0 0	8 0 0
3. Manure	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
4. Ploughing and sowing ...	0 6 0	0 12 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 8 0
5. Weeding	10 0 0	4 0 0	...	...	3 0 0
6. Irrigation	...	2 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0
7. Reaping and Picking	8 0 0	2 8 0	1 8 0	1 8 0	2 0 0
8. Threshing and Winnowing and Loading	...	...	0 8 0	0 8 0	...
II. Total cost ...	36 14 0	63 4 0	35 0 0	22 0 0	31 8 0
Net Profits per acre (I minus II) ...	103 2 0	136 12 0	90 0 0	48 0 0	168 8 0

Besides, there are some other miscellaneous crops of some importance, produced in the village, as follows :—

1. *Pan* or *Betel* is grown by the village *Barai* or betel-seller of the village. There is one *bhit*, a piece of sloping ground enclosed and thatched by *sentha* or reeds and dry grass so as to protect the delicate creeper from the hot and dry winds. At first it requires careful and repeated waterings. This *bhit* produces only

two kinds of betel, (i) bungla (sweet) and (ii) desawari or round leafed. In the same shed a vegetable crop is also grown, which is known as *Parwar*.

2. *Singhara* or *water calthrops* are grown by the *Kahars* in almost all the village ponds for which they have to pay some rent to the taluqdar. This is one of the most important products of the village during the winter season, and is a useful means of supplementing the income of the village Kahar or Gorla.

3. Fruit crops like mango, jamun, tamarind, mahuwa, all grow in the village: the mango crop is generally sold. Last year it was sold for Rs. 18.

(I) ROTATION OF CROPS AND DOUBLE CROPPING

An expedient to keep up the strength of the soil is the rotation of leguminous crops and double cropping.

Regarding the rotation of crops, the only system which is now-a-days prevalent in the village is to use the fields alternately for Rabi and Kharif crops and to allow a part of the land to remain fallow every year. The area of land under cultivation, lying fallow in 1924-25 was 135 bighas or 100 acres and that which has remained fallow for the last three years is 226 bighas or 135 acres.

This system is really based upon traditional practice, and does not seem to take into consideration the direct and immediate effect of different crops upon one another.

As a general custom hemp precedes cotton in good dumat soil. Jawar and bajra (millets) are followed by gram and barley or *bijhra* in bhur or outlands. Similarly, sugar-cane and wheat follow cotton in the better matiyar-goind lands.

While there are certain fields which yield only one crop in the year, there are others, called dofasli, which yield two crops during the same period. Rabi fields are usually left fallow during the Kharif season, and are prepared with great attention and labour for crops like wheat, gram, barley and oilseeds. Arhar and sugar-cane crops occupy the fields for the whole year. Gram mixed with barley or *bijhra* are sometimes sown in the fields which have produced an indigo or rice crop. The muraos generally produce as many as three crops in the



year and their fields are seldom fallow, on account of the luxuriant vegetable crops which come in quick succession. It is this vegetable cropping after rabi which has been called a zaid crop or a catch crop.

The system of mixed cropping is very common among the cultivators, and has its roots in the uncertain nature of agriculture. In case one crop is destroyed the cultivator has the satisfaction of reaping the other. Thus mixed cropping is a sort of insurance against total failure. At the same time, mixed cropping goes a great way in maintaining or replenishing the fertility of the soil, especially, in the case of the leguminous crops of arhar, urd and mung, etc.

The following table shows the main crops and the subsidiary crops mixed with them :—

Main crops	Subsidiary crops
1. Wheat	Mustard, Kusum, barley, gram, etc.
2. Gram	Linseed and peas
3. Cotton	Arhar, castor and hemp.
4. Sugar-cane	Castor, melons, mung and lobia, etc.
5. Jowar	Arhar and urd.
6. Makai	Kakri and urd.

(J) COSTS AND PROFITS OF CULTIVATION

The problem of the costs and profits of cultivation is, at present, the most important of all agrarian questions, because it is this study alone which can reveal the true relation existing between the different factors of production on the one hand and the shares in the agricultural income on the other.

Besides, this study will also enable us to estimate the total costs and the net profits per unit of cultivation, which may again help us, by reckoning the average cost of maintenance per normal family of the village, to determine roughly the economic unit of cultivation, that is to say the holding economically necessary for the support of an average family of seven members in the village.

In the following table have been calculated the total costs and profits of cultivation per acre from the budgets of the families which have been studied elsewhere.



ECONOMIC HOLDING FOR A FAMILY OF FIVE MEMBERS

It has been shown in the above table that the average cost of cultivation per acre is Rs. 21-12-0, and the average net profit of cultivation is Rs. 49-8-0 for an average family of seven members.

Now the net profits per acre being Rs. 49-8-0, and the total average annual cost of maintenance of a family of seven members being Rs. 498 (as arrived at in the chapter on 'Standard of Living') the average size of a farm which can support an average family ought to be 10 acres or 15 bighas. But this farm is meant on the average for a family of seven members and therefore a family of five members with one plough and two bullocks will require for its support at least 7 acres or 10 bighas.

This 10 bigha or 7 acre farm is, then, the economic unit of cultivation for an average family for this village, (which is nearly the same as estimated by the villagers themselves, i.e. 25 local bighas or 10 standard bighas,) that can be managed with a plough and two bullocks at the present cost of cultivation, and in the conditions that have been standardized by traditional agricultural practices and customs.

The same table also shows that the average rent paid by an average cultivator is 20 per cent of the total net profits of cultivation, which means that one-fifth of the profits of cultivation are absorbed by the taluqdar and only four-fifths go to form the cultivator's net assets.

But a very important point to be noted here is that the rentals given in the official records are quite misleading. These contain a very large number of fictitious rentals, which means that the actual amounts exacted from the cultivators are much higher than those recorded in the books. Hence it follows that the percentage of rent to the net profits of cultivation must also be correspondingly higher.

It is impossible to collect complete statistics of such

fictionitious rents. Some typical cases are given below for comparison.

Cultivators.	Rent recorded	Percentage to net profits of cultivation	Actual rent Realized	Percentage to profits
	Rs.	Per cent.	Rs.	Per cent.
A ...	35 0 0	11	75	24
B ...	24 0 0	...	60	...
C ...	15 0 0	...	35	...
D ...	50 0 0	12	90	21.6
E ...	56 0 0	...	86	...
F ...	74 0 0	12	120	19
G ...	34 2 0	...	55	...

The rates of the rental on which the present assessment has been based are Rs. 3, Rs. 6 and Rs. 9 per bigha or .6 acres for bhur, dumat and Matiar lands respectively, but the actuals stand at Rs. 5, 10, 15 and Rs. 20 respectively.

The enhancement of rents may have been actuated by the desire to safeguard the profits of the estate from the demands of the Government.

Another motive in concealing the actual rentals, though it has very little justification in itself and is certainly against the spirit of the law, seems to be the wide disparity between the rise of prices and the rise in the value of the rents.

The prices, according to the 'Inquiry into the rise of prices', have increased 40 per cent. since 1915, but the rentals could not be raised in the same proportion, as the statutes provided only an increase of one anna in the rupee after seven years, or 0.86 per cent. per annum, or 8 per cent. in all during the last ten years.

Thus profits could be raised legally by 16 per cent.



only, land-revenue remaining the same, and naturally therefore, for the remaining 24 per cent, other methods were bound to be adopted.

Now this difference of 24 per cent is made up by any one or both of the following ways:—

(1) Demanding higher rentals which will not be recorded in the books.

(2) Sub-letting and even re-letting of land to the person prepared to pay the highest amount as Nazrana or premium on admission.

There is no doubt that, at the same time, rise in rents has been partially due to competition among cultivators whose number has increased by 199 from 1891, and to the growth of population by 74 from the same year.

One of the greatest proofs of this competition is the decline in Sir land of the taluqdar, and the consequent development of a new class of non-occupancy tenants, called the Kashtkar-Shikmi,—Sir (or sub-tenants of the taluqdar), whose full list is given in Appendix A, and from whom he now earns a little to meet the higher cost of his living.

Thus the rise in rent has adversely affected the profits of agriculture, and consequently, the economic status of the agriculturists.

The problem of the relation of rents to the gross and net-profits of cultivation is very serious in the agricultural economy of the village, and deserves special attention at the hands of the Government and the taluqdar both, because it is upon this adjustment of rents and profits that the future of this predominant industry as also of the people entirely depends.

RURAL TRADE AND TRANSPORT.

As is natural, the problem of buying and selling grows in importance as the village comes in contact with outside markets, and further so as farming develops from the cultivation of staple crops to the cultivation of commercial crops.

It also follows at the same time that with the growth of agricultural products and the multiplication of the



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daily needs of the agriculturists, the direct dealings between producers and consumers become almost impossible, therefore there emerges an intermediary, the middle man or the trader—to help both the producer and the consumer, who now live and work at a great distance from each other.

Although the middleman does an important service to both producers and consumers and is entitled to a share of the profits, yet it generally happens that he commands the market, and virtually controls all the channels through which farm produce is forced to pass in the process of transfer from the producer to the consumer.

This evil is best illustrated by the existence of arhat shops in the neighbouring markets of Sandila and Beniganj, where all the produce of the village is purchased and stored wholesale, and the producers have no opportunity to deal directly with the town consumers. These shop-keepers or their agents, called *arhatias*, advance money to the farmers long before their harvest is ripe and ready for sale, and they are thus in a very advantageous position both as creditors and as traders. They buy all the produce at a very cheap rate and sell it to the town consumers at the dearest possible rates in the local or distant market, e.g. Lucknow or Cawnpore.

Apart from this system of individual trade on a wholesale basis, there are present healthy signs of a system of joint or co-operative marketing of farm products.

During the cotton season, a number of villagers who are not necessarily cotton producers, hire a number of ponies from some neighbouring hamlets, load them with cotton purchased at a very cheap rate, take it to the towns and sell it to the mill agents and local cotton dealers at much higher rates. Afterwards, they distribute the profits among themselves in proportion to the capital contributed by each for the enterprise. This year, when the cotton crop was very poor, a party of such traders earned from Rs. 2 to Rs. 4 a day per head.

Similarly, other farm products are exported to the towns by camels and carts.



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The following is a list of all the exports from and imports to the village :—

EXPORTS		IMPORTS	
1. Wheat	...	1. Cotton and woollen cloth.	
2. Cotton	...	2. Silk and cotton threads and pig tails, etc.	
3. Gram	...	3. Combs and looking glasses.	
4. Arhar	...	4. Lac and bronze ornaments.	
5. Sugar-cane	...	5. Brass utensils.	
6. Oil seeds	...	6. Caps.	
7. Bajra and millets	...	7. Toys.	
8. Hides and skins	...	8. Kerosine oil.	
9. Milk	...	9. Salt and spices.	
10. Ghee	...	10. Laces.	
11. Curd	...	11. Golden and glass bangles	
12. Cowdung cakes	...	12. Stationery.	
13. Wood	...	13. Lanterns.	
14. Baskets	...	14. Needles.	
15. Mats	...	15. Sticks.	
16. Hemp and hempstrings	...	16. Gold, iron and silver, etc.	
17. Earthen materials and toys.	...	17. Slippers and shoes.	
18. Straw and hay	...	18. Watches and chains.	
19. Groundnuts	...	19. Rings.	
20. Melons and vegetables, etc.	...	20. Soaps and oils, etc.	

Many of the imported commodities are articles of luxury.

Cloth is generally brought in and sold to the village by the peripatetic Vyaparis, the Marwaris and the Aghas, who undertake credit dealings with the villagers on conditions of repayment at the harvest time.

All other commodities are imported in the village through the bi-weekly 'hats' or bazaars in which peripatetic traders assemble and carry on a brisk business on Sundays and Wednesdays.

The village has got two permanent shops of grocers, three shops of cloth merchants and two Bhurji shops, which satisfy the daily needs of the village.

There is only one kachcha road leading from Sandila to Beniganj on which, midway between the two railway stations, stands this village. It becomes very bad and uneven during the rainy season. Between Sandila and Malehra there are two very big bridges on the Loni River, at which places the road is very high, while at



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others it is so low that it remains covered with water for about two months after the rains. Communication and transport become most troublesome for about four or five months in the year. Carting is specially difficult and dangerous under such circumstances. The Kharif trade, chiefly cotton transport, suffers very much on account of the badness of the road.

However, to the great satisfaction of the people the District Board has proposed to make the road pakka and has actually let the contract for Rs. 1,200. It is expected that in the course of a few months the road will improve, and then the trade of the village will also increase correspondingly.

Besides, on account of the dense and extensive Dhak forest, the road is infested with robbers, and there is hardly a year in which several cases of serious robbery are not reported to the Sandila Police Station. The only remedy for this state of affairs is a much more effective Police supervision and arrangement than at present.



CHAPTER V

CREDIT AND INDEBTEDNESS

AGRICULTURE is so precarious an industry, and so uncertain and speculative an employment, that credit forms a vital part of agricultural economy, and indebtedness a natural feature of agrarian life.

There is perhaps no country in the world in which agriculture can altogether dispense with credit, and this is truer still of countries having a large majority of small tenants and small holdings. The really important point therefore is not the nature and extent of credit for agricultural purposes or productive uses, but the nature and extent of credit for those unproductive and non-agricultural purposes which constitute the majority of objects of borrowing in India ; and it is in this sense that indebtedness is a curse to the country.

As indicated in a previous chapter, 93·5 per cent of the total number of holdings in this village are below three bighas or 1·8 acres, and only 6·5 per cent of the holdings go beyond this size. Again, we find that, although the average area cultivated by an average cultivator is 7·49 bighas or 4·5 acres, as many as 31·5 per cent of the recorded peasants cultivate less than three bighas, i.e. much below the minimum economic unit of cultivation.

Hence indebtedness is inevitable in this village. As Prof. Carver observes in his *Principles of Rural Economy* :—

‘ Small holdings invariably mean small incomes, and in backward countries where expenditure is less determined by income than dictated by custom and necessity, small incomes sooner or later mean debt.’

Really speaking, money-lending is the direct result of a great agricultural necessity, that is, the supply of capital for agricultural operations. Hence, the money-lender should not be ignored or condemned merely because he carries on this profession. Mr. Darling

remarks in this connection :—‘ Yet it was human nature for the money-lender to do what he did, there was no other opening for his capital, the financing of agriculture was a necessity, and the cultivator was ignorant, improvident and irregular—and like others who have had great power, he abused it. To censure him is to censure the imperfections of mankind. We should rather blame the system than the man it has moulded, as unless controlled, money-lending demoralizes the lender and the borrower both.’ We will therefore direct our inquiry under two heads :—

- (1) The systems and agencies of credit prevalent at present in the village under investigation ; and
- (2) The extent and results of such credit systems.

CREDIT SYSTEMS AND AGENCIES

The various forms of lending and borrowing in the village economy are as follows :—

- (1) Simple grain dealings for petty agricultural operations and for household purposes.
- (2) Ordinary interlending of money and interlocking of liabilities for social and domestic needs.
- (3) Non-monetary dealings.
- (4) Complex money dealings with professional money-lenders.
- (5) Dealings with a Co-operative Society.

I. GRAIN DEALINGS FOR AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS AND DAILY HOUSEHOLD NEEDS

Dealings in grain are undoubtedly the most common form of agricultural credit, and represent the true relics of the old barter economy, which still survives, to a great extent, in the village.

As the majority of the peasant population belongs to the class of small tenants who do not cultivate more than 1·8 acres of land on the average, and whose holdings are further fragmented into six or seven tiny plots situated in different soils and distant areas, it can be well imagined that these small tenants have to borrow grain for seed (or behsar as it is called), for irrigation, weeding and maintenance.



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Behsar or seed is the most important object so far as grain credit for petty agricultural operations is concerned. According to a common estimate of the village elders who both lend and borrow, no less than 70 per cent of the total borrowings of the small holders are meant for seed, and about 25 per cent for household needs. The creditors or lenders in this case are generally the superior cultivators and well-to-do tenants of all castes; the majority of them, of course, belong to the higher castes, the Brahmins, the Kayasthas and the Banias, who have certainly stronger tenancy rights, larger areas of land to cultivate, and higher social status.

The lenders in this sort of dealing are always at an advantage, because they dictate their own terms to which the borrowers have meekly to submit on account of the weakness of their position and the pressure of their necessity.

The ordinary procedure in this system of grain lending is that the lender advances as much grain as he safely can to his debtors, usually for a period of six months or one harvest. The quality of the seed is generally very poor; only the worst grain is stored for this purpose because it cannot be profitably sold.

Again, the grain advanced is valued in terms of money and not in kind, and has to be repaid at the harvest time. There is thus a clear advantage to the lender, as is quite evident from the following illustration.

A certain cultivator X borrows 10 seers of wheat seed, worth Rs. 2 at the seed time, from a superior cultivator B. When the harvest is ready and the grain of X is brought on the threshing floor, B recovers grain worth Rs. 2 which, according to the harvest rates, may amount to sixteen seers and it is the best quality which B prefers. Thus there is a net loss to X both in quantity and quality as regards the repayment of the principal only.

Again the interest charges are very high, for two reasons :—

- (1) The risk involved in the advance of the capital.
- (2) The pressing necessity of the borrower.

The common rate of interest charged on grain loans is 25 per cent or (Savaya), but it varies according to circumstances upto 50 per cent or (Deorha), and even 75 per cent in certain cases.

Also taking into consideration the loss that the borrower has to suffer in the repayment of principal alone, it is rightly estimated that the rate of interest is sometimes even higher than cent per cent. And there are many more illegal exactions both in labour and kind which go to swell the profits of the lender because the borrower generally loses his economic and social independence owing to his weak position.

II. INTERLENDING AND INTERLOCKING OF LIABILITIES.

In a country where expenditure is determined more by custom and necessity than by income, mutual lending and borrowing is not an uncommon feature of social and economic life.

There is hardly a man in the village who does not borrow for his private needs apart from his occupational needs; hence it is natural that a system of mutual give and take should grow up in a society which is remarkable for its stability, solidarity and fraternity, as well as for the equality and uniformity both of its standard of living and its status. Mutual help and co-operation are the traditional ideals of the people and consequently there has grown up a complex net-work of interlending or interlocking of liabilities.

It is quite impossible to find the exact extent of interlending, because people try to keep their indebtedness secret; but the popular opinion of the village experts is that more than 80 per cent of the total peasant population is inter-related as lender and borrower, as creditor and debtor. Even allowing for a certain percentage of over-estimation in this calculation, the extent of such mutual indebtedness is certainly great.

The greater number of such loans is either without interest or bears very little interest, because the amount so lent or borrowed is very small and the risk involved is very small, owing to satisfactory personal security and close supervision.



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A limited enquiry in this connection gave the following facts showing the complex interlocking of liabilities :—

Lenders	Amount	Borrowers	Lenders	Amount	Borrowers
	Rs.			Rs.	
A ...	8	G ...	G ...	5	L
B ...	15	H ...	H ...	10	M
C ...	3	I ...	I ...	5	N
D ...	12	J ...	J ...	20	O
E 2 }	6	K ...	K ...	5	P
F 4 }					

Net liabilities

G owes Rs. 3 to A.
H „ „ 5 to B.
N „ „ 2 to I.
O „ „ 8 to J.
K „ „ Re. 1 to F.

In this system of credit, mutual knowledge and confidence play a very important part, as the only security is the personal character of the borrower, and all money dealings are of an informal kind, although the repayment is generally expected at the next harvest. It is clear from the above table that both borrowers and lenders generally try to clear off their respective dues and liabilities by mutual transfer.

The rate of interest on such loans, if charged, is 2 pice per rupee per month which is equal to $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum. These petty loans are generally meant partly for incidental expenses of agriculture, but mainly for social and domestic needs, e.g. births, deaths, marriages, Holi, the Dewali or other festivities, feasts and ordinary ceremonies; in short they are taken generally for unproductive purposes. These form from 5 to 10 per cent of the total borrowings of the agriculturists.

This type of mutual credit is a sort of economic and social relationship which perhaps can never be dispensed with altogether in a village community and a rural brotherhood. But there is no doubt that interlending

though on a small scale, has a far-reaching effect upon the general economic condition of the cultivators to whom, however little be the amount due to them, it is a great source of trouble and anxiety, and a material addition to their misery and poverty.

At the same time it is a great help to the people, who have to spend something on social customs and time-honoured usages which, at this stage of their social and cultural development, they are quite unable to do away with. It saves them at times from that shame and mortification which are bound to follow from their inability to perform a social ceremony or a customary duty; they prefer debt to dishonour.

These money-lenders also advance money on the hypothecation of ornaments. The amount advanced is only half of the estimated value of the ornaments mortgaged; whereas a bank would perhaps lend 66 per cent of the value. The rate of interest charged is the same, 2 pice per rupee per month, i.e. $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum.

This system of credit is very popular among the well-to-do peasants of the lower castes, Arakh, Chamar and Gadaria, etc., because in the absence of any other reliable security, ornaments offer the greatest security. It is especially useful in the case of suspicious characters, and probably has its origin in dealings with such people.

There is another credit practice prevailing in this village, which has become a very common and most peculiar feature of this region. This is the practice of 'Naudasi' loan (i.e. Rs. 10 repayable after a month for every Rs. 9 advanced, thus bringing $133\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. interest per annum) advanced only on the occasion of marriage. The loan is advanced a month or two before the date of marriage, and is repayable after the ceremony is over from the proceeds of the 'Tikawan' (or customary donations made by the relations and friends for the marriage whether of a son or of a daughter, which is an old custom among the Hindus of all castes, and is a proof of the great economic solidarity and mutual help and co-operation existing among the Hindus). In case the Tikawan money is insufficient to meet the total demands of the Mahajan after the marriage, the arrears



are converted into a regular loan bearing the common rate of interest.

We pass next to another professional agency of money-lending which has come to the fore only recently, say four or five years back.

There is a very big Seth, a famous banker at Moradabad, who has spread his investments over extensive areas, and is carrying on his business very successfully, through a vast army of agents and *Munims* (clerks).

This is the Ugahi system, that is a system in which principal and interest are recovered together, and the whole amount of loan, both principal and interest, is thus automatically cleared off within a given period, a year, for example.

The agent and the Munim, together with two orderlies, are constantly moving from village to village, arranging their programme so as to visit every village concerned at least once a month. Their work consists in the distribution of fresh loans and collection of old ones when they mature.

It is customary with these people to advance Rs. 10 at the beginning of the year and recover Rs. 12, in instalments of Re. 1 per month, in twelve months. Defaulters have to pay extra interest as a fine at the usual rate of 2 pice per rupee per month, i.e. $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum. Fresh loans are also advanced even when the old ones are continuing, provided the conditions are satisfactory; but they are generally avoided, as they increase the liabilities of the borrowers.

These people also deduct 2 pice per rupee in the beginning as their own customary right.

This Ugahi system has become very popular among the peasants, and has worked successfully so long, chiefly because they definitely know what they have to pay. The interest charges are only 20 per cent per annum and the arrangement for repayment is also easy. Hence this system is liked most by the villagers.

A great majority of the villagers are a victim to this system, and the Munim's khata would indicate the correct situation of the indebtedness of the people, but as strictest secrecy is maintained in this matter it is not possible



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to get full details about all of them. Later, we will give a list of some of those indebted to this Mahajan who has now got a very strong hold upon the whole village.

III. NON-MONETARY DEALINGS

It is not only money or grain that is taken on credit, woollen and cotton cloth is also purchased by the people on a credit basis from the 'peri' vyapari or trader. The Afghans generally bring woollen cloth and blankets, etc., to the village, and the Marwaris bring desi dhotis, saris and shirting cloth, etc., for the people. The Afghans (Aghas) generally return for the recovery of the price of their cloth after one year when the Rabi crop is harvested; but the Marwaris visit the village oftener, at least twice a year at harvest times, and collect their dues. The reason for this seems to be that the Afghans, being both strict and quick tempered, of whom the people are afraid, find it easy to realize their dues, whereas the Marwaris cannot do so. The rates at which cloth is sold by these *vyapāris* are certainly much higher than the market rates, and besides, they also charge high rates of interest for full one year on the total exchange value of the cloth sold. Thus there is a double loss to the villagers in such dealing. But because it is easy to purchase on credit and there is sufficient time for repayment, people do not give up this system of credit dealings.

There are similar credit dealings with the local grocers and shop keepers, but they are comparatively more expensive and more troublesome to the people than dealings with outsiders, because their accounts are kept monthly, therefore their demands are more vexatious for the ordinary agriculturists who can repay only at the harvest time. About 25 per cent of the population is annually indebted to these *vyapāris*, and this debt amounts to about 10 per cent of the total liabilities of the village.

IV. COMPLEX MONEY DEALINGS WITH PROFESSIONAL MONEY-LENDERS.

Fortunately or unfortunately, there is no big money-lender in this village, but there are a few Kalwars and



Banias who, of course, carry on a petty trade in money-lending. Their livelihood does not, however, depend upon their money-lending business only, as it does in the case of real professional money-lenders, e.g. the Aroras of the Punjab or the Rastogis of U. P. Some of them have local shops and are grocers or cloth merchants, or they are exporters of raw materials, and almost all of them have agriculture as their supplementary industry.

This is one of the reasons why they are less dangerous to the local peasantry. But, truly speaking, the village cannot do without them. The needs of agricultural life must be satisfied somehow or the other. Moreover, as a matter of fact, 'money-lending is so profitable, and opportunities for investment so many, that anyone in this country with spare money is tempted to lend'. This necessity has given rise, in the first place, to two local Mahajans (called by Mr. Darling 'Agriculturist money-lenders' in the Punjab), and, in the second place, to the practice of borrowing from outside professional money-lenders.

The 'agriculturist money-lenders' have come into existence during the last two decades in this village. They now undertake large-scale dealings, and are competing fairly with outside professional money-lenders. Mr. Darling, speaking about the Punjab, says:—'The agriculturist money-lender is worse than his professional rival. He is by no means a new feature in our village life. Heard of in 1876, he has recently come to the fore.'

It was only natural that the absence of big money-lending agencies in the locality drove the peasants into the clutches of outside money-lenders who, finding their profession very paying, immediately grew into a class and made money-lending their main occupation.

The remark of Mr. Darling, that 'the agriculturist money-lender is worse than his professional rival', does not hold good in this case, because here the local agriculturist Mahajans advance money on very easy terms and on very low security, as, being one of them and living amidst them, they have full confidence in their

debtors who are their neighbours, friends and tenants. Economically they are certainly much better, cheaper and easier to deal with than the outside, distant, unknown and even unseen creditors of whom we will speak hereafter.

The local Mahajans have much more sympathy, fellow-feeling and co-operative spirit than their outside professional rivals. Their only defect, from the point of view of the borrowers, is, that they are always knocking at their doors for payment, if not of principal, at least of interest. But, properly speaking, that is a benefit, for it reduces regularly the burden of the borrower which, in the other case, becomes unbearable in the course of time, and ultimately leads to poverty and insolvency.

Again, the local money-lender understands the nature of the borrower's needs much better, and watches over the employment of his capital more carefully than an outsider does or can do, and is in this respect a benefit to the people at large.

In spite of all this, however, it cannot be denied that the defects inherent in the very system of money-lending are common to both types of money-lenders.

The outside professional money-lenders also are of two types :—

- (1) Those living in the neighbouring villages, and
- (2) Those living in a distant city or town.

There are three villages around this village (which is a Nambari village) within a radius of not more than two miles, which abound in such professional money-lenders, as follows :—

Name of village	Distance from this village	No. and caste of the money-lenders
1. Debiapur ...	800 yards	2 Brahmans
2. Masurha ...	1 mile	20 Thakurs
3. Semramau ...	150 yards	5 Brahmans



Village No. 2, i.e. *Masurha* is a regular, money-lending colony, because there the whole population constitutes of money-lending families of Thakurs.

These money-lenders advance money at the beginning of the Kharif harvest in the month of June or July and charge interest at the rate of six pies per rupee per month which comes to $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum; but the same rate does not continue for the whole year, and if the money advanced in May or June remains unpaid by the end of November, or new advances are made in the month of December, the rate of interest is raised to 25 per cent per six months, i.e. 50 per cent per annum. These rates have become customary minimum rates, and the reason for this difference between the rates prevailing in the two harvests seems to be that Rabi crops are more costly as well as more important to the cultivators than Kharif crops, hence they are more in need of credit, which means greater competition among the borrowers.

They also deduct one anna in the rupee at the time of advance as their rightful dues.

IV. CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT

Happily for the village and the neighbouring hamlets as a whole, a Co-operative Credit Society was established here in 1911 with the object of supplying cheap and easy credit to its members. The members, whose number in 1923-24 rose to 62, freely made use of it and saved a good deal by way of shares, deposits, and reserve. The society maintained a keen competition with the professional money-lenders, and saved the inhabitants from their usurious exactions.

But, unfortunately, as has often been remarked, cheap and easy credit is a curse, the members very soon became heavily indebted, partly, owing to the negligence and inadequate supervision of the Panchayat, and partly, for want of proper co-operative education. The result was that after a miserable existence of twelve years the society went into liquidation in 1923-24, when its total dues from the members amounted to Rs. 3,658-12-0.

The people still believe that it was due to their own



carelessness and want of sincerity that so good an institution met with such a sad fate. Now they repent, especially when they find themselves again in the strong and cruel grip of those money-lenders whom they had once disgraced and boycotted.

The liquidation proceedings are still continuing and the members owe even now Rs. 2,532-8-0 to the Central Bank, Sandila, to which the society was affiliated.

But, there is no doubt that these protracted proceedings are creating a sense of hatred and prejudice in this Pargana against the co-operative movement as a whole, and are damaging its reputation in the district. Some of the members are very much dissatisfied with the affair. They say that they have been paying their interest regularly but it is still outstanding against them. Some of them suspect the supervisors and the officers of the department. This state of things is not unnatural when the liquidation proceedings in a particular area continue for years. Even those persons, who believed in co-operative institutions and in the movement in the beginning, are now strongly opposed to it, inspite of the fact that they are aware of the high potentialities of such a humanitarian movement as co-operation.

The ledgers of the liquidated society show that in the majority of cases loans were contracted for the repayment of old debts, for the payment of rents, for the purchase of bullocks, for the purchase of seed, manure and ploughs. It appears from the same record that about 5 per cent of the loans were advanced by the society for the liquidation of debts due to the professional money-lenders. As a result, therefore, a large part of the peasant indebtedness and the burden of debt was reduced by the society, and consequently the earning capacity and the economic stability of the peasants who formed the clientèle of the society were slightly raised.

It is no exaggeration to say that co-operation is the only remedy for all agricultural ills. But the one important condition is a ceaseless propaganda for the diffusion of co-operative principles and practices, together



with elementary and adult education; and the existing co-operative material available in the village should be utilized to the full, so that it may not look like a state imposition from outside, but a genuine growth from inside, and a natural manifestation of the genius and aptitude of the people. Moreover co-operation ought to be taught as an idea and a faith, rather than a force and a machinery for the mere economic uplift of the people.

Again, the true purpose of co-operative credit ought to be brought home to the people, 'who', according to Wolff 'have not yet grasped it.' According to the same author, the village society should be made the pivot of the movement, and not the Central Bank, as is the tendency in India at present.

'Centralization in finance can be balanced and balanced well by decentralization in use' is the deliberate judgment of a great co-operator of international fame.

Hence, if co-operative credit is to succeed in India as it has done in European countries, it will have to be decentralized and federated.

At this stage, it is essential also to examine in detail the various circumstances that force the cultivators to incur debt.

(1) It is self-evident that one of the chief causes of agricultural indebtedness is the small size and fragmentation of present holdings. This has been already considered in the beginning of this chapter.

(2) Agriculture in this village depends mainly on rainfall, the nature of which is uncertain and irregular; sometimes it is very scanty while at others it is very heavy. Ten or fifteen years ago it was the scarcity of water which caused great damage to the crops and hardship to the people, and the result was indebtedness; whereas now the conditions have changed entirely, and the same result has been brought about by the heavy rainfall of the last three years, and the inundations in the adjacent Baita river have now become a grave economic problem to the village.

It is a pitiable sight indeed to find that all the plots lying on the banks of this turbulent rivulet are submerged

deep under water. As a result, the Kharif crops are totally lost; and the fields do not dry up sufficiently so as to grow even the Rabi crops satisfactorily. This state of things causes a great panic among the peasants to whom such water-logged areas belong.

Even if the taluqdar is kind enough to remit the rent of those holdings, the peasants cannot bear the loss, those especially, who have got a number of fields in that area. Fortunately the village has a number of tanks, but even these are flooded during the rainy season, and the neighbouring fields are logged with water to the detriment of the Kharif crop.

This phenomenon, perhaps, partly explains why the total area and the yield under the Kharif crops have specially declined during the last two decades, as follows :—

Year			Kharif	Rabi and Zaid	Dofasli
			Acres	Acres	Acres
1905-6	...	...	775	533	286
1915-16	...	...	743	695	369
1923-24	...	...	655	667	342
1924-25	...	...	613	658	305

The last two lines of the above table show that floods and heavy rainfall not only affect the Kharif crop, but influence the Rabi, Zaid and Dofasli crops as well.

(3) Another cause of indebtedness is the improvident and unthrifty nature of the people themselves.

As has been often pointed out, 'expenditure in India is determined by custom and necessity rather than income.' There are certain fixed customary practices and conventions which must be observed, if for no other reason, at least for fear of losing caste and social prestige, whether one can afford to do so or not matters very



little. Public opinion and the verdict of the brotherhood weigh more than personal opinion and individual capacity.

A concrete example will illustrate this fact best. Last year one Jaijai Arakh had to perform the marriage ceremony of his daughter, and his only source of permanent income is an area of $3\frac{1}{2}$ bighas or 1.8 acres of land divided into six plots. The rent he is paying amounts to Rs. 9. He supplements his income by occasional labour in the neighbouring town, and somehow manages to support his family which consists of himself, his wife, two widows, and two grown-up daughters. In fact he is living in abject misery and is liable to the village Mahajan for Rs. 70 even now.

With these limited means and narrow circumstances, he gave, in all, Rs. 200 as dowry, including clothes, ornaments, utensils and cash, and spent about Rs. 100 in giving two big dinners (Bhat and Barhar), which everybody is bound to give according to the custom of the caste. After the marriage, the total outstandings against him amounted to Rs. 220, out of which he cleared off about Rs. 50 from the Tikawan (customary contributions by the members of the same brotherhood), and the remaining Rs. 170 he had to pay out of his own earnings.

(4) Dr. Lucas thinks that 'a three or four acre farm leaves a man with 200 idle days, and this enforced idleness is one of the greatest causes of peasant proprietors' poverty in the Punjab'; and here also a peasant with a three or four acre farm remains really idle for at least four months, or 125 days, when there is no work for him either at home or outside. At the same time, there are very few cottage industries in the village and whatever there are of them, they do not go to supplement the income of the majority of small holders. Thus they have usually to borrow even for their own maintenance.

(5) Cultivators have also to borrow in order to pay their rent in time to the Zemindar and to pay their monthly *qist* or instalment to their Mahajan as part payment of their old debts. The Co-operative Society books prove this fact completely—the ledgers show that

the main object for which loans have been advanced are rent and repayment of old debt.

(6) As described above, the development of a class of professional money-lenders and, therefore, of cheap and easy credit, also gave great temptation to the cultivators to borrow even for those petty needs which could have been easily met or postponed.

Under such circumstances a Co-operative Credit Society added only fuel to the fire, and failed to serve its true purpose among a people who were most improvident and irregular in repayment. The result was that it also left the people heavily burdened with debt.

(7) Above everything else, litigation is a constant cause of compelling people to borrow to their entire extent or even more. At a low estimate at least Rs. 3,000 are annually wasted in law-suits out of which at least Rs. 2,000 have to be borrowed from the Mahajans.

RESULTS OF CREDIT

The foregoing account of the different credit systems and prevailing practices in the village, brings out clearly the fact that it has passed through various banking and credit stages, right from the fraudulent and troublous period of barter economy and pure grain credit down to that of the present money-lending and co-operative credit.

Figures are not available to show whether the peasant indebtedness was greater or less at the beginning of this century than at the end of its first quarter, but there is reason to believe and evidence to support the view that on account of an abnormal rise in prices and the cost of living, and an enormous increase in rents on the one hand and the growing banking facilities on the other, indebtedness has certainly increased both in intensity and extent.

Beside these different money-lending agencies the estate has also advanced loans in the shape of Takavi from time to time which have proved an extra burden to the poor peasantry already groaning under heavy debts.



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The following table shows the respective assets and liabilities of some of the village peasants of different castes and classes :—

Name	Liabilities	Assets	Total value of the assets	Loss
	RS A P		RS	RS A P
1. One Brahmin	656 4 0	1. 1.25 bighas or 14 acres occupancy land 2. House 3. One cart 4. Six bullocks 5. One cow-buffalo	550	105 12 0
2. One Gadar	820 0 0	1. 12 bighas and 19 bis. or 8 acres occupancy land 2. House 3. Two bullocks 4. Five cow-buffaloes 5. Two cows 6 Other property	700	120 0 0
3. One Kumhar	210 0 0	1. 11 bis. or 3 acres of occupancy land 2. House 3. Two goats 4. Earthen pots 5. Other property	150	60 0 0
4. One Pasi	125 0 0	1. 1½ bighas or 8 acres of occupancy land 2. Small cottage 3. One goat 4. Other belongings	80	45 0 0
5. One Chamar	220 4 0	1. 3 bighas and 16 bis. or 2.5 acres of occupancy land 2. Two bullocks 3. House 4. Cow-buffalo	150	69 12 9

Table showing Productive and Unproductive loans advanced by the Co-operative Society in 1920 (January to June).

Names	Amount Borrowed	OBJECTS	
		Productive	Unproductive
	RS		
1. Debi Arakh ...	40	Rent	Birth ceremony
2. Durga Brahmin ...	25	...	Sacred thread ceremony
3. Dalla Dhobi ...	10	Seed	.....
4. Durga Bania ...	30	...	Tilak ceremony
5. Damna Chamar ...	20	...	Father's death
6. Nokhey Kahar ...	50	Rent	Puja and feast to Brahmins
7. Narayan ...	60	Cows	.....
8. Nabi Manihar ...	15	...	Khatna ceremony
9. Pancham Teli ...	20	...	Birth ceremony
10. Pemma Chamar ...	5	Seed	.....
11. Badlu Arakh ...	50	...	Marriage
12. Bakhtawar Gaddi ...	50	...	"
13. Bihsi Murao ...	25	...	Katha and Puja
14. Bhurwa Arakh ...	10	Rent	.....
15. Bhawani Arakh ...	12	...	Old debt
16. Misri Brahmin ...	40	...	"
17. Munna Murao ...	50	...	"
18. Moti Chamar ...	45	Bullock	.....
19. Kushel Arakh ...	5	...	Birth
20. Kalika Pasi ...	10	Rent	.....

Another view commonly held by the elders of the village, and corroborated by the records of the Co-operative Society as well as those of the Mahajans, is that indebtedness has increased proportionately to the rise in the status or *haisiat* of the cultivators. As a matter of fact those who enjoy greater credit borrow more than others but it is equally true that those who borrow less can repay it more easily than those who borrow more.



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This fact is illustrated below in the table showing the borrowings and repayments during the next six months, i.e. from July to December, 1920 :—

Names	Total outstandings			Repayments		
	Principal			Interest		
	RS	A	P	RS	A	P
1. Debi Arakh ...	46	0	0	2	4	0
2. Nokhey Kalwar ...	77	8	0	8	2	0
3. Narayan Gwala ...	64	0	0	1	0	0
4. Badlu Arakh ...	25	0	0	3	12	0
5. Bakhtawar Gaddi ...	30	0	0	4	8	0
6. Munna Murao ...	20	0	0	5	0	0
7. Moti Chamar ...	15	0	0	4	0	0
8. Dalla Dhobi ...	10	0	0	1	8	0
9. Damna Chamar ...	20	0	0	3	0	0
10. Nabi Manihar ...	15	0	0	2	4	0
11. Pemma Chamar ...	5	0	0	0	12	0
12. Bhurwa Arakh ...	10	0	0	1	8	0
13. Bhawani Arakh ...	12	0	0	1	14	0
14. Kushal Arakh ...	5	0	0	0	12	0
15. Kalika Pasi ...	16	0	0	2	8	0

Dues of the Mahajan and the Vyaparis (year 1925-26).

Names	DUES			
	Mahajans	Vyaparis	Others	Total
	RS	A	RS	A
1. A, Kumhar ...	5	0	...	6
2. B, Chamar ...	22	0	...	25
3. C, Murao ...	4	0	...	8
4. D, Arakh ...	11	8	...	11
5. E, Arakh ...	15	0	...	15
6. F, Chamar ...	5	0	...	7
7. G, Gadaria ...	10	0	...	17
8. H, Arakh ...	16	0	...	22

Names	DUES			
	Mahajans	Vyaparis	Others	Total
	RS A	RS A	RS A	RS A
9. I, Dhobi ...	5 0	5 0	...	10 0
10. J, Teli ...	13 0	1 0	2 0	16 0
11. K, Pasi ...	10 0	2 0	...	12 0
12. L, Chamar ...	33 0	...	2 0	35 0
13. M, Chamar ...	5 0	2 0	...	7 0
14. N, Nao ...	4 0	3 0	1 0	8 0
15. O, Gwala ...	6 0	5 0	...	11 0
16. P, Murao ...	35 0	5 0	3 0	43 0
17. Q, Chamar ...	15 0	10 0	...	25 0
18. R, Bania ...	12 0	...	1 0	13 0
19. S, Chamar ...	22 0	5 0	...	27 0

It is possible, however, to summarize the inherent defects in, and results of, all the current credit systems and practices prevalent in the village as follows :—

1. The grain dealings are ruinous to the peasants owing to their ignorance and the commanding influence of the Mahajan.

2. All credit accounts are generally oral, and so are very misleading and disastrous.

3. The rate of interest on money loans is very high, the minimum being $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent without a maximum, individual security being the chief cause.

4. There is a deliberate attempt at keeping the borrowers always in debt, not only for monetary gain but also for social gain, e.g., free labour or 'begar', or personal influence.

5. The growth of a big professional money-lending class outside and inside the village means easy credit, which again means greater indebtedness and, therefore poverty.

6. People are generally getting accustomed to outside help rather than to self-help even for very petty needs.



7. The majority of loans are taken for the liquidation of old debts and the performance of social ceremonies, that is, for unproductive purposes.

8. Once the loan is taken there is no genuine attempt on the part of the borrower to repay the principal as quickly as possible, and the common tendency is to prefer interest paying to principal instalments.

9. Debts seem to increase in proportion to prosperity, because the greater becomes the power of a man to repay loans, the greater is his temptation to borrow.

10. There is no thrift and no remunerative saving, and if at all, it is in the ornaments of females and children, which are always deteriorating in value and are open to risk. The women are literally 'the Savings banks' in the village.

The economic position can be summed up briefly thus ; the peasant is unthrifty, gullible and illiterate ; he is no match to the money-lender who is thrifty, cunning and well educated.



CHAPTER VI

THE VILLAGE HIERARCHY

ONE of the characteristic features of village life is the common employment, by the whole community, of a set of artisans, functionaries and labourers, whose social status and remuneration are all governed by the rural community to whose needs and requirements they minister. We still find in this the survival of the old system of village self-government, now depressed and disorganized.

Mukhia and Patwari.— Apart from the Taluqdar, who is fortunately a resident in the village and its ultimate proprietor, and apart from the Patwari, there was the village Mukhia or Sarpanch, who, though he had no direct hand in the revenue administration of the village, was an important and respectable man, as it was he who still led the people in all social and religious matters and presided over the occasional village panchayats. He was the oldest man in the village and was therefore respected by all classes of people. He was addressed as Lambardar which was his hereditary designation. Since his death in July last his office has passed to the village Patwari, who is called the *Dewan* (councillor), and who now presides over the occasional panchayats or meetings of the village, and organizes the village fairs, and periodical worships and village Havans (burning of ghee and other materials with the recitation of Vedic *Mantras* or hymns). The Lambardar also held 10 bighas or 6·25 acres of land rent-free, which has now passed as such to his descendants.

Bisrawar and Chowkidar.— Similarly we see that the village Bisrawars (watchmen) who were formerly required to guard their respective number of hârs (or a specific number of plots taken together in different soil areas) on all sides of the village against thieves and wild animals, and were also responsible for the safety of life and

property of the whole village, have now been supplemented by the Chowkidar to whom is entrusted the duty of the police administration of the village by the Government. The Chowkidar could certainly not replace the excellent communal organization of the village watch and ward, but he really lightened the work and therefore increased the efficiency of the Bisrawars who now guard the fields only. But the introduction of the new police official has materially affected the status of the Bisrawars by proportionately reducing the rate of their remuneration. It is often heard at the threshing floor, when there is a good deal of higgling between the cultivator and the circle Bisrawar as to the amount of grain he should get, that he formerly used to get two anjulis (about 4 seers) from the grain heap, whereas now he gets only 1 anju or 2 seers in Rabi and half of that in Kharif.

The Bisrawars generally belong to the Arakh caste and by themselves form a class of important village servants though with a very low rank in society. In addition to their customary dues they have been given small areas of land for cultivation by the taluqdar on reasonable rents—as occupancy tenants.

The following is a list of village Bisrawars with their respective areas and rents together with the number, area and situation of plots each is in charge of:—

Name	Area Cultivated		Rent paid	Situation of plots	No. of plots in charge of	Area of plots
	Bigh.	acs.	RS. A.			Bigh. acs.
1. Ghura Arakh.	1 10 or	93	4 8	South of the village.	228	140 or 84
2. Jaijai Arakh.	3 11 or	2.1	9 0	North ...	420	206 or 123.6
3. Debidin Arakh.	3 7 or	2	8 8	West ...	300	180 or 108
4. Hemna Arakh.	0 11 or	3	3 0	South ...	225	133 or 79.8

Name	Area Cultivated		Rent paid	Situation of plots	No. of plots in charge of	Area of plots	
	Bigh.	acs.	RS. A.			Bigh	acs.
5. Raghu-nath Arakh.	2 13 or	1·6	7 0	West ...	224	130 or	78
6. Ramdin Arakh.	0 11 or	3	3 0	East ...	200	100 or	60
7. Girdhari Arakh.	6 0 or	3·6	22 0	North ...	527	345 or	207
Badlu Arakh.	4 7 or	2·6	13 0	East ...	471	290 or	174

Thus we find that the superimposition of the governmental machinery of administration has led to a reduplication of the village police and magistracy.

Blacksmith.—Next we pass on to the more important class of village artizans who render real economic service to the village, and are always at the disposal of every agriculturist.

The blacksmith and the carpenter are the two most essential employees of the village community, as they undertake to prepare and repair almost all the crude implements and machines that are absolutely necessary for the success of both the agriculturist and the manufacturer in the village, so that without them the whole economic activity of the village would come to a standstill.

Fortunately for these artizans, the sphere of their work and therefore the extent of their remuneration, has enormously increased on account of a gradual development of a number of small hamlets around this original and 'numbry' village, which have not had so long their own blacksmiths and carpenters, and have therefore to depend on this village for their economic needs. The blacksmith has to construct and repair the



following instruments of production in whole or in part :—

- (1) Phara or Nasi, the share of steel.
- (2) The iron blade of the spade.
- (3) The iron blade of the Kudali or a narrower spade.
- (4) The iron blade of the Khurpa or hoe.
- (5) The iron blade of the Sikla.
- (6) The iron part of the Garasi or chopper.
- (7) The iron blade of the axe.
- (8) The iron hoop for the water bucket (Charsa or Pur).

Now all these implements are neither possessed by all cultivators nor require repair every year, and once the cultivator has got any or all of them he does not stand in need of changing or replacing them except once in four years on the average unless, of course, they are lost or stolen.

Of these the ploughshare is the most important, which has to be, of necessity, beaten and resharpened at least twice in both the harvests or four times in the year.

As regards the other implements they scarcely go to the blacksmith more than once or twice a year at the most.

At a rough estimate we can, therefore, say that every ploughshare in the village with all its concomitants goes for repair at the most ten times in the year, which can, in no case, take more than 10 hours or one full working day of the blacksmith.

There are at present 191 ploughs in the village. Assuming that all the ploughmen own all the implements mentioned above, their repair will not keep the blacksmith busy for more than 200 days in the year, working sincerely for ten hours a day. On the other hand, according to the present scale of remuneration his customary dues amount to 55 seers per plough per year, i.e. 20 seers and one Dabi or bundle of $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers from each grain heap in both the harvests, which multiplied by 191 (which is the total number of ploughs in the village) gives 10,505 seers in one year or in other words, at a rough calculation an income of Rs. 955 as estimated in his budget, from his non-agricultural occupation.

At the same time, as mentioned above his work is not only confined to this village, but also extends to the surrounding subordinate hamlets, which keep him busy for the rest of the year, because he is seldom seen idle except for a while during May or June when generally there is little work for him.

Leaving aside that income, which is certainly not less than Rs. 100 per annum he earns Rs. 4-12-0 a day when he works for the village only, and the average for the whole year comes to about Rs. 2-12-0 per day.

Carpenter.—Standing on an equal footing with him is the village carpenter, who is the next most important artizan in the village hierarchy. His services also are of the same nature, because it is his business to supply the agriculturists with all their wooden tools or parts of them. He has to work naturally much more and much longer than the blacksmith in order to satisfy the agricultural needs even of his own village, simply because of a fundamental difference between the two materials, iron and wood, with which each class has to deal. Iron implements are certainly more durable and less liable to damage and loss than the wooden appliances because these do not withstand the tear and wear of time and use, and therefore constantly need repair from the carpenter.

The carpenter has to prepare and repair the following wooden implements or their parts for the use of the agriculturist :—

- (1) *Parhari*—the sole on which the share is shod.
- (2) *Kurh* or the step.
- (3) *Paretha* or the stilt of the plough.
- (4) *Muthia* or the handle of the plough.
- (5) *Haris* or the beam of the plough.
- (6) *Hareni* or the cross-bar to which the yoke is attached.
- (7) *Parel*
Balihar
Agmasi
Pachmani
- (8) The yoke consisting of
 - (a) *Manch*—the upper bar,
 - (b) *Tarmanchi*—the lower bar,

} or pegs to secure the different parts of the plough.



(c) *Gat*—the inner pegs, and

(d) *Saitha*—the outer pegs.

(9) The handles of

(a) *Phaora* or spade, *Kudali*, *Khurpa* or hoe, sickle, Chopper and axes, etc.

(10) *Sarawan*, a beam for clod-crushing after ploughing.

(11) *Kutti*—wooden handle attaching the rope to the Pur.

(12) Pulley or *Girri*.

(13) *Dhorati*—uprights upon which the pulley rests.

(14) *Patar*—the wooden board or beam upon which the Pur is landed.

Most of these wooden handles, pegs, boards and beams are very soon spoiled when in constant use, and therefore not only require repairing but also replacing very often. They do not last, on the average, for more than two years.

Some of these instruments are also used in various social ceremonies, e.g. the *haris* (at least four) are used in building a thatched canopy or *mandap*, and the *sarawan* in erecting the *khamb* or central support to the *mandap* on marriage occasions.

Besides, it is customary for the carpenter on these occasions to supply the household with a number of *pirhas* or *patas* (small thick wooden boards to sit on), foot sandals, wooden lamp stands, and a few more petty things which are all made use of during the ceremony and which entitle the carpenter to a special cash gift on the occasion.

Similarly, when there occurs the death of a child in a family one spade is required to dig the grave for the child. The corpse then being laid in the grave and the whole being fully covered with earth and water, the wooden handle of the spade is left upon it as a matter of custom, and the iron blade is brought back to the carpenter to be refitted with a new handle.

Thus there is a lot of strain upon the carpenter, who is constantly busy in making and repairing other articles of daily use, e.g. carts, stools, benches, *Takhats*, *Chaukis*, sandals, churning instruments (*mathani*), cane



crushing and oil pressing machines, beds, writing boards (takhtis) for boys, doors, windows, gutters (dhunnis), lathis, mugdars, utensils, boxes, etc.; but for all these articles wood has to be supplied by the owner and wages have to be separately paid in cash or in kind.

The carpenter has therefore to work all the year round with his sons and brothers, and to work as long as eleven or twelve hours a day when there is a pressure of work of a remunerative nature. His customary dues are just the same as those of the blacksmith, i.e., 55 seers per plough per annum, i.e. Rs. 955 a year. This income is amply supplemented by his income from non-agricultural work, for which he gets remuneration in cash or kind.

Thus there is practically no difference between the average income of the blacksmith and that of the carpenter. Taking into consideration the economic nature and agricultural importance of their vocations, these artisans form an everlasting fibre in the warp and weft of the rural texture, and therefore hold, and will hold, a still higher rank in society with the growing recognition of the dignity of labour, the gradual improvement in the shape and pattern of their respective outturn, and the social appreciation and patronage of the same.

Baya or Weigher.—The village *baya* who has to weigh all that has to be sold outside the village, whatever be the material or whosoever the parties, plays an important role in the economic life of the village. Generally speaking cotton is sold in large quantities in October and November, ghi in January, February and March, and wheat, gram and barley in April, May and June. The weighing charges are realized from the purchaser at the rate of one pice per rupee, half the total amount of which goes to the producer and the rest to the *baya*, who buys the weighing contract from the taluqdar. Mulai Kalwar has taken the contract for Rs. 80 for the current year and is the present *baya* of the village.

Kamins.—Though not in order of their social rank, the Kamins (cobblers) and the goraitis (organizers of labour) come next in order of importance to the agri-



cultural life. They belong to the class of menials and stand on the lowest rung of the social ladder.

The Kamins had a traditional right to all the village hides and skins from times immemorial, and it was their duty to supply the cultivators with all the leather articles needed for agricultural work, e.g. the nahna i.e. leather rope attaching the yoke to the plough, the baddhi i.e. leather string round the neck of the bullock when yoked, or again the pur or charsa i.e. water bag and a whip or panaithi; and in addition, two pair of shoes to every man of the cultivator's family the year, one before Dewali and the other before Holi.

Accordingly, they used to get as their customary dues one bundle or dabi of 10 seers of unhusked bejhra (gram, barley) in Rabi, and one bundle or dabi of 10 seers of unhusked rice in Kharif together with one anjuli or 2 seers of good husked grain from each grain heap in both the harvests. But now conditions have, to a certain extent, changed and counteracting forces, disturbing the old traditional customs, are in operation, and these should never be lost sight of. Formerly each Kamin had to pay as a royalty only one he-goat to the taluqdar of the value of Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 on the Durga Puja occasion; but now ever since the outbreak of the war and the enormous rise (80 per cent) in the price of tanned hides and skins on the one hand, and a high cattle mortality on the other, the taluqdar has begun the practice of selling the contract by auction at which only village Kamins are allowed to bid.

Last summer a cattle epidemic carried away 216 cattle out of 2,079 cattle in the village, giving a high mortality of 10 per cent.

Naturally then there was a very keen competition among the Kamins and they went on out-bidding each other at the annual auction of the hide contract which generally takes place in the month of Baisakh (April-May) every year. At last it was arbitrarily stopped by the Patwari, and the sale finished at Rs. 360 as against Rs. 75 last year. Thus the taluqdar makes a handsome cash income from this contract sale, and in addition continues to take all the necessary leather articles



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gratis from the contractor or the party of the contractors, in addition to the traditional nazrana or present of one good he-goat from each of them.

The Kamins tan leather with babul bark and sell a large part of it to the *vyaparīs* in the neighbouring towns and at Cawnpore and Lucknow. They have also begun to charge a cash price of Rs. 4 to Rs. 8 for a pur or water bucket and Rs. 1-8-0 to 2-8-0 for a pair of shoes from every cultivator who requires them. It is only very petty things, such as leather strings, whips or ropes that he supplies to the cultivators free of cost. For these services he now gets only a bundle of unhusked rice of about ten seers in Kharif per plough and the same amount of grain (barley or gram) in Rabi. In some cases the bundle is $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers only.

The following table shows the economic position of all the Kamins of the village in 1924-25 :—

	NAMES OF KAMINS								
	A, Chamar			B, Chamar			C, Chamar		
	Bigh.	Bis.	Acr.	Bigh.	Bis.	Acr.	Bigh.	Bis.	Acr.
Area of land cultivated.	3	4	or 1·9	13	19	or 8·4	7	13	or 4·6
Rent paid ...	Rs. 12			Rs. 49			Rs. 13-8-0		
The value of the contract purchased.	Rs. 25			Rs. 25			Rs. 25		
Income from export of leather and sale of leather articles.	Rs. 60			Rs. 105			Rs. 55		
Income from customary dues in kind and cash.	95½ mds. or Rs. 255			95½ mds. or Rs. 255			95½ mds. or Rs. 255		
Total income ..	Rs. 315			Rs. 360			Rs. 310		
Total net profits from their occupations.	Rs. 290			Rs. 345			Rs. 285		

These huge profits are abnormal for this year on



account of the large percentage of cattle mortality, i.e. 10 per cent of their total number and their customary dues, which the Kamins still command inspite of their reduced services.

These Kamins are Chamar by caste, and form the lowest strata of the society. They supply various kinds of begar to the taluqdar, e.g. sweeping his chaupar, looking after his cattle and horses, preparing the fields before ploughing and reaping and fagging, etc. Their females work as nurses at the time of child birth and are paid for in the following manner:—

Services	Grain dues	Cash dues
1. <i>Narkatai</i> (the first ceremony just after child birth.)	One winnowful of Akhat or grain, i.e. about $2\frac{1}{2}$ srs. and	2 as. 6 ps. in the case of a son and 1 a. 3 ps. in the case of a daughter.
2. Living with the Zacha or the mother in confinement.	$1\frac{1}{4}$ seers of grain per night.	...
3. 4 baths during confinement period.	One winnowful of Akhat or grain or $2\frac{1}{2}$ srs. on every bath and.	2 as. 6 ps. in the case of a son and 1 a. 3 ps. in the case of a daughter.
4. <i>Maswara</i> , that is, the last bath and final freedom from confinement after $1\frac{1}{2}$ months.	Do.	Do.

The *Gorait* is another important servant of this village community and performs a great economic service. He is in charge of the supply, accounting, and payment of agricultural labour.

It has been shown already that the total number of landless labourers in the village is about fifty, and that of farm-labourers 275, who hardly suffice for normal agricultural operations. But it is generally found during periods of critical agricultural operations, e.g. weeding in Kharif and irrigation in Rabi, that there is a real scarcity of labour, which is clear from the fact that during those periods the wages suddenly rise from 25 per cent to 50 per cent and, therefore, according to a popular estimate, at least one hundred labourers have to be imported and hired annually from neighbouring villages where they are in excess.

It is exactly here that the services of a Gorait are indispensable. This does not mean that he is useless at other periods, because even for ordinary needs of cultivating, picking, threshing, winnowing and loading etc., extra hands are generally required by substantial and superior cultivators, as also by the majority of ordinary tenants. In the case of higher and upper middle classes, e.g. the Brahmins, the Thakurs, the Kayasthas and even Banias, labour takes away, (as is apparent from their budgets in the chapter on 'Standard of Living') a large part of the net profits of cultivation, i.e. about 30 per cent of the profits.

There are however about forty or forty-five families of both occupancy and non-occupancy tenants in the village which never require any extra help in any period of the year, and it is these families that grudge most the customary payment to the Gorait at the harvest time, and which results sometimes in serious quarrels.

Thus we find that the changing economic and social conditions are creating a disparity of communal interests, which necessarily reacts upon the social solidarity and common welfare of the village as a whole.

Another service which the Gorait has to perform for the taluqdar is to light the lamp of his chaupar every evening in fortnightly turns, to entertain and accommodate the guests and visitors of the taluqdar and do all the work of like nature especially from 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening to 10 or 11 o'clock in the night.



Their economic position and scale of dues are as follows :—

Names	Area of land cultivated	Rent paid	Customary dues	
			Rabi	Kharif
1. Pancham Dhanuk ...	Bigh. Bis. Acs. 1 4 7	RS. A. 3 2	One anjuli of 2 srs. and one dabi or bundle of 5 srs. from each grain heap	$\frac{1}{2}$ of the Rabi dues.
2. Madari Dhanuk ...				

These Goraitis come of Dhanuk families, but they form undoubtedly quite a distinct caste from sweepers, to whom they are sometimes said to be related.

Charwaha.—The agricultural prosperity of a people greatly depends upon the security and strength of their cattle, and therefore on their adequate care and proper pasturing, which therefore form a very important class of duties in an agricultural population. These duties in this village devolve upon another set of village menials, called the Charwahas, who look after cattle while grazing outside the village during the day time, and see them safely back to their respective places and owners at sunset. They are responsible to the owners if any of them is lost or goes astray, or is taken to the pound. In such cases they have to undergo punishment—generally a fine to make good the loss incurred by the owner on the decision of the talukdar or a few elderly people of the village, which appears to have been once one of the duties of the village panchayat, which is said to have existed only four or five decades back and has now fallen into decay since the talukdar has taken up permanent residence in the village.

The Charwahas do not all belong to the same caste, and are recruited from the different lower strata of society.



This work of charai or pasturing is generally done by small children, whose pastimes and jocund company sometimes remind one of the Lord among His dumb, innocent creatures—Krishna among His cow-herd, or Christ among his sheep-flock.

The following is a list of all the Charwahas in the village with their respective economic status and annual dues :—

Names		Area of land cultivated		Rent paid	Rabi dues	Kharif dues
		Bigh.	Bis.	RS. A.		
1. A, Pasi	...	1	5	4 4	A dabi or bundle of 5 srs. from each grain heap.	Same as in Rabi crop.
2. B, Pasi	...	2	0	6 8	"	"
3. C, Pasi	...	1	7	6 0	"	"
4. D, Chamar	...	4	1	4 0	"	"
5. E, Chamar	...	0	13	2 8	"	"
6. F, Gadaria	..	1	7	6 0	"	"

Well-to-do families, having a large number of cattle, sometimes pay an extra monthly cash wage to the Charwahas, so that they may exercise special care and supervision over their cattle, and this they gladly and



whole-heartedly do, but that is the case only with four or five families in the village.

So far we have confined our studies to the village-artizans and menials who serve the economic needs of the rural community ; but there are other functionaries who are equally important in the social life of the village, and whose services are paid for by doles of grain during harvest seasons.

Priest.—Most respectable of all the village functionaries is the priest, who is the highest religious authority there and the only spiritual guide of the people.

The various functions that he has to perform are as follows:—

(1) To undertake periodical worship in the family household throughout the year on particular days and occasions, e.g. Durga Puja, Navratra, Nagpanchmi, Shankrant, etc.

(2) To perform important services during marriages, Shradhs and other ceremonies:

(3) To recite stories or Kathas from Scriptures, e.g. the Kathas of Shivabarta on Shivaratri day, and of Satya Narain on other days when required by a householder in connection with social ceremonies.

(4) To accept invitations and gifts of money, clothes, utensils and cows from the religious-minded and the more superstitious class of people.

(5) To advise the people as regards the auspicious days and moments for commencing any new or important work, e.g. dates of marriage and other ceremonies.

(6) To prepare the horoscopes of newly-born children and the yearly life-readings of grown-up persons.

(7) To perform the village havans, which are usually organized once or twice a year.

The priest is generally paid in cash, for all these services immediately after they are over, but still he holds a customary share in the produce of the village, for which there appears to be no rational justification.

The names of the Purohits or priests of the village

together with their economic status and traditional dues are given below :—

Names	Area of land cultivated	Rent paid	Rabi dues	Kharif dues	Extra vocational income estimated
	Big. Bis. Acs.	RS. A.			RS.
1. A, Brahmin ...	5 1 or 3 (occupancy land).	10 8	1 anjuli or 2 seers from each grain heap on the threshing floor.	Half the Rabi dues.	50
2. B, Brahmin ...	11-18 or 7 (occupancy land).	29 0	„		100

Temple.—There is an allotment for the maintenance of the village temple, where Narayan or Bhagwan is installed. The devotee of the temple, an old Sadhu, collects these dues from all the cultivators at the harvest time at the rate of 1 anjuli or 2 seers from each grain heap, part of which he uses for himself and the remainder is dedicated to the temple for its daily needs, the havan and the bhog articles or Samigri, and for its annual repair and white-washing.

Faqirs or Beggars.—Then in the traditional scheme of economic distribution, there is also provision and place for the poor and the needy, to support whom is the philanthropic duty of the whole community.

As a matter of fact, in some remote past history of the village, 1 anjuli (2 seers) from each grain heap at the harvest time was given to one or more families that could not earn their own livelihood on account of various mental or physical disabilities, but their descendants have now made it a regular profession to go out begging alms daily in the neighbouring villages

and towns and also take their customary share of the produce.

This system of giving indiscriminate relief, even when it is not needed, is an encouragement to idleness, demoralization, and economic dependence or destitution.

There are two Faqirins (or beggar women) in the village whose economic position is given below :—

Names	Area of land	Rent paid	Rabi dues	Kharif dues
A	Big. Bis. Acs.	RS A		
1. (Faqirin).	1 6 or '84	4 0	2 srs. of grain from each grain heap.	Half of Rabi.
B				
2. (Faqirin).	0 19 or '6	2 8	„	„

There is a custom in the village that each family performs the Naiza ceremony once on behalf of every child after its birth for its protection and safety. Thus there is a large number of Naizas (tall bamboo sticks) erected every year, and the cloth with which they are wholly wrapped, and the customary amount of money (10 pice in the case of daughter and 20 pice in the case of a son) tied to them, all go to the Faqirin. From this source, each of the two earns at least Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 a year.

Aesthetic and Recreational Services.—Although the functions of the washerman, the barber, the goria and the gardener are menial, yet they are certainly the outcome of an æsthetic sense and an artistic perception of humanity. Hence viewed from this stand-point they are an important class of the traditional village hierarchy, but the economic conditions that govern their relation to the community as a whole and the present nature of

central doorway of the house by hanging on it a gaudy and bright jhalar made of reeds, gilt-edged coloured paper and silken threads, etc.

Besides, the special artistic production of the Mali on this occasion (the son's marriage) is the Maur, the customary diadem or head-gear of the bridegroom, for which he gets Re. 1, as his right or haq when it is put on for the first time.

(4) On the first day of the spring season he presents a 'dali' or basket full of all the fruits of the season, and a number and variety of chosen flowers and leaves, nicely arranged as a token of love and joy that the happy spring brings with it, for which he generally gets a pice or two as reward or inam.

He also serves as a medicine man for small-pox, which is believed to be an expression of the displeasure or even the pleasure (when the attack is slight) of the various goddesses of the village, chiefly Holkayin Devi, whose place is situated to the south of the village, and whose only devotee is the Mali, with whom they are supposed to be much pleased and satisfied. This epidemic is also a great source of income to him, as shown in the table.

The local Mali is dead and his place is now taken by a Mali in a neighbouring village, named Nanhu, whose big family serves the needs of the village. His customary dues are as follows :—

Small-pox	Rabi and Kharif dues	Cash and other payments
3 seers of good grain on every day for 7 days in each case.	One bundle of 7½ srs. of paddy in Kharif and the same amount of gram and barley in Rabi. Anjuli payment no longer made.	Re. 1 per Maur of the bridegroom, Rs. 2 to 4 on various items during the marriage days, Re. 1 for Mandap's decoration, food and clothing extra.

The Dhobis or washermen in the village form a distinct functional caste of their own, and supplement



their occupational income by cultivating a few bighas of land each.

As is the case with all menial workers they also come within the low class category ; but for one, who has a human heart to recognize and appreciate their services, especially when, during the coldest months of the year, they have to work half wet and half benumbed incessantly from the early morning long before sunrise, and perhaps much earlier than the ploughman goes to the field, till late in the afternoon—this class of people should be regarded as more than a blessing to the society. Usually the washerman does not take more than four or five days to clean the clothes he takes at a time from a family, and the quality of his work is much superior to that of the city washerman, who takes at least ten days and is paid at least 2 pice for each piece.

The higher classes take advantage of their position by forcing him to take and return their clothes on alternate days.

Each separate family of Dhobis in the village undertakes to serve a limited number of households according to its resources. These represent his 'Jajmani', or clientèle.

This Jajmani is the traditional property of a washerman's family, and as such can be transferred, mortgaged, bought and sold.

There is a peculiar custom among all the higher castes of the village—Brahmins, Thakur, Kayasthas, that on the Basant Panchmi or the first day of the Spring Season, when the gardener brings his basketful of fruits and flowers, the wife of the family-washerman comes in her best clothes, with her hair oiled and combed and the parting heavily painted with *saindur*, in order to bestow *Suhag* or the boon of conjugal bliss on the women of the household. These women then dress themselves in like manner, take the red lead with their fingers from the parting of her hair and place it on their own, and then touch her feet and give her *akhat*, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ seers of grain and 5 pice in her own vessel which she brings with her. Thus she goes about doing the same in all the households with which she is connected and



their manifold work and services, have degraded them very much in rank, though the barber and the gardener (i.e. Nai and Mali) hold a comparatively higher status in society than the Gorla or Kahar and the Dhobi or washerman.

Nai or Barber.—The barber, whose most original and regular function seems to be shaving, rubbing oil and Uptan (a mixture of oil and flour) on the body and thus making it neat and clean, has, in addition, to perform various other duties of a low grade as follows :—

(1) To take invitations to the brotherhood or the whole village on occasions of marriage, betrothal and other similar ceremonies.

(2) To attend feasts and other festivities for miscellaneous work, and especially to keep the *hugqa* and *chilam* or tobacco pipe always ready.

(3) To entertain and look after the comfort of the guests.

(4) To accompany funerals to the grave, to collect people and bring all the necessary material for the occasion, e.g. cloth for shroud, bamboos and sticks, and strings for the funeral rites, or again a spade for digging the grave, generally in the case of child deaths.

(5) To be the bodyguard of the bridegroom on the occasion of the son's marriage, while his wife performs the same duty on the occasion of the daughter's marriage.

On marriage occasions and other ceremonies the barber and his wife get cash payments, clothes, and food, while there is no payment generally made for shaving and other services. Of course the wife of the barber, whenever she goes to the household for the following services, gets her fixed *Khonchis* or about half a seer of pulses in her apron :—

(1) To pare the nails of the inmates.

(2) To comb and oil the hair of the ladies and grown-up girls.

(3) To help in other petty affairs of the household, e.g. livening of the dough, grinding the spices and pulses or again the sifting and winnowing of wheat, gram, rice, etc.

The following is the table showing the economic position of the barbers of the village :—

Names	Area of land cultivated	Rent paid	Rabi and Karif dues	Cash payments
A 1. Nao.	Bigh. 4 11 or 2·7	RS A 10 0	One bundle of 10 seers of Juar and bajra in Kharif and one bundle of 10 seers of gram and barley in Rabi. Formerly he got the anjuli also from the gram heaps; but not now.	On marriage occasion both the barber and his wife get in all Rs. 3 to 6 plus food and clothing each. On other occasions like the betrothal or gauna or second marriage Re. 1 to Rs. 2 and a jora or full dress for the barber's wife plus food.
B 2. Nao.	4 17 or 2·8	15 0	„	„
C 3. Nao.	4 7 or 2·6	12 0	„	„

Mali or Gardener.—He is the man who does real æsthetic service to the community, because his chief function is to supply flowers, leaves, garlands, bark and wood-sticks. He is in fact the village botanist.

Apart from this regular duty, he has also to perform special duties on special occasions as follows :—

(1) On katha or puja occasions he has to provide plantain leaves and flowers for the decoration of the mandaps, and the performance of the puja.

(2) On the occasions of havans, to supply dry mango-sticks and flowers.

(3) On marriage occasions to decorate the ' Vivah mandap ' or the marriage pandal with bunting, fruit, and beautiful leaves of various kinds, and to decorate the

collects grain and money as given in the following table :—

Names	Land cultivated	Rent paid	No. of house-holds served	Rabi and Kharif dues	Income on Basant day	Other income from trade, etc.
	Bigh. Bis. Acs.	RS. A.			RS. A. P.	RS.
1. A, Dhobi.	1 9 or 9	5 15	22	One Dabi of 10 seers in both the harvests	1 11 6	...
2. B, „	4 14 or 2'94	16 8	16	„	1 5 0	...
3. C, „	6 0 or 3'75	21 0	20	„	1 9 0	20
4. D, „	8 7 or 5'20	33 0	15	„	1 2 9	45
5. E, „	6 6 or 3'9	21 0	26	„	2 0 6	15
6. F, „	1 8 or '87	2 0	35	„	...	...

Goria, Kahar or Dhinwar.—The Goria's work chiefly consists in cleaning the utensils, sweeping the house, and drawing the water for the higher classes. They are no longer the servants of the whole community ; perhaps they never were. They are now the paid servants of those households that can afford to keep them, generally the higher castes, and are paid both in cash and kind. The cash wages are paid in regular monthly instalments of 4 as. to 8 as., and the wages in kind take the form of annual harvest dues as in the case of others.

There is only one Goria, Lachman, who earns about Rs. 2 from five or six families, and gets 5 seers of unhusked paddy in Kharif and the same quantity of gram



and barley mixed, *i. e.* bejhrā in Rabi from all of them. He supplements his income by fishing and agriculture. He cultivates 8 bighas and 4 biswas or 4.9 acres, and pays Rs. 10 in rent, as a shikmi or sub-tenant, with no security of tenure, to the Sir land of the taluqdar.

On marriage occasions he gets in all Rs. 2 to 4 plus food for three days and clothing both for himself and his wife. The important and usual services that he has to do on such occasions are :—

(1) The drawing and supplying of water from the well, and the cleansing of the kitchen and the place where meals are taken.

(2) The shouldering of the palanquin of the bridegroom and the bride.

(3) Other petty miscellaneous services of a menial nature.

He belongs to the caste of Kahars, Dhinwars and Gorias and holds a little lower position in society than the barber or the gardener, but not the washerman.

Kumhar or Potter.—The Kumhar or the potter also satisfies one of the greatest needs of the society, namely the supplying of earthen pots and vessels, *e.g.* big and small jars, tubs for feeding the cattle, plates, dishes, lamps, packs and tumblers, as well as toys of various sizes and patterns, both painted and unpainted.

He is certainly one of those village artizans who serve the needs of all classes and castes of people right from the top—the Brahmins and Thakurs,—down to the bottom—the messenger and scavenger. Whereas, on the one hand, he supplies articles of daily use as well as of special use on special occasions, he supplies also, on the other hand; the objects of children's and village amusement and worship in toys and idols.

His popularity is chiefly due to the special skill and value of his creations, particularly on the Dewali festivals, when his out-turn is the largest in the year owing to a universal demand for small *dipas* or shallow crucibles used as lamps during the night for illumination purposes, and the exceptionally large number and variety of toys required to decorate every Hindu household in the village.

There is another festival of Herchhat in the month of Bhodon (July-August) when women worship the Goddess Hartalika, the protector of the sons. On that day every mother requires six small miniature jars (called Kulhias) for each of her sons, to be filled with parched gram, barley and wheat, which are all distributed among the children of the family.

On all such occasions his dealings are generally in ready payment in cash and kind, but more in the latter than in the former.

There are only two Kumhar families in the village whose economic position may be indicated as follows :—

Names	Area cultivated			Rent paid	Rabi and Kharif dues	Extra income
	Bigh.	Bis.	ACS.	RS.		RS.
1. A, Kumhar.	2	3	or 1·34	7	One anjuli of 2 srs. from each grain heap and a bundle or Dabi of 10 srs. of unhusked rice in Kharif and gram and barley in Rabi.	20
2. B, Kumhar.	0	11	or 34	1	„	30

The Mangta and the Salari.—The recreational needs of the village are satisfied by the Mangta, who keeps a number of dancing girls for the musical entertainment of the villagers on special occasions and festivals like the Holi, the Dewali, the Dasehra, the birthdays of Ram and Krishna and so on. He gets about 5 seers of unhusked grain in both the harvests from a limited number of cultivators. He supplements his income by earnings at fairs and in other villages where he goes with his dancing girls.



But, in fact, this family is demoralizing the village population, especially the young men who becoming an easy prey to them, waste their money, energy and manhood.

The Salari is the man who provides instrumental music on his pipes and drums, on all occasions of childbirth, betrothal, marriage and other petty ceremonies, as soon as he hears of it, whether sent for or not. He belongs to the sweeper caste. On these occasions he earns a small income, say, about 2 as. 6 ps. to 5 as. a day.

Scavengers and Messengers.—Then there are also the messengers and scavengers; the Pasis and the Bhangis or the Dhanuks who carry messages, clean houses, Chaupars, remove the dead animals and perform other services of the same kind. They have also got a traditional share in the village produce—about 5 seers of inferior grain from each grain heap in Rabi and half of it in the Kharif.

Having thus reviewed the whole village hierarchy of social and economic services, it is possible also to consider succinctly the conditions which determine the social status of these artisans, functionaries, servants and menials in spite of the fact that the nature of their respective ranks in society has been already discussed.

(1) *The untouchability* or the social segregation of certain castes, which are ethnically traced back to the aboriginal races, e.g. Munda or Dravidian races, against whom the high castes—Dwij castes or the twice-born—Brahmins and Kshatrias close their doors for fear of being polluted by their contact. To such castes belong the Bisrawar, the gorait, the scavengers and messengers, which may be called the new socio-economic designations of the original Arakh, Chamar, Dhanuk and Pasi castes. Thus we find that the old social groupings, based on ethnic origins, are yielding place to new groupings on an economic and functional basis, which may lead to the formation of new and more liberal groups in the future. These people have the lowest rank in society.

(2) Again, where untouchability ceases to be a determining factor in social gradation, the pollution of water touched by certain castes becomes prominent. For instance we find in the village that the highest castes, i.e.

the Brahmins and the Kshattriyas, or even the Baniyas would not drink water touched by Dhobis and Faqirs and Charwahas; but they do so in the case of Barhais, Kahars and gardeners. The former, therefore, hold a higher position in society than the Bisrawars, the Goraitis and the scavengers, but lower than the latter.

(3) Another factor in determining the status of the village functionaries is the honourable or dishonourable, nature of their respective vocations, e.g. the work of the Blacksmith, the Carpenter, the Kumhar and the Baya is regarded as much more respectable than that of the Barbers, the Kahars, and the gardeners; and so their status is naturally higher than that of the latter.

(4) Finally, the economic status or *Haisiyat* of a man also goes very far in determining his rank and place in society.

As an example we find that the village blacksmith, Laltu Lohar, has a large property both movable and immovable and so commands greater regard, sympathy and influence than many a poor Brahmin and Baniya whom nobody cares for.

Thus we witness the evolution of a new social stratification based on economic and social opportunities and successes in the village, instead of that which had followed the ethnic or traditional line upto this time.

This survey of the communal organization of artizans, workers and labourers, will, however, remain incomplete unless we also consider its merits, demerits, and the present counteracting tendencies and forces.

The greatest merit, then, of such a system of rural economic organization on a co-operative basis, consists in :—

(1) Providing for the easy, economic and adequate satisfaction of the collective needs and wants of the people by a careful standardization of functions and division of labour.

(2) Bringing about social harmony and peace on the one hand, and the reduction of social waste due to economic friction and unhealthy competition, on the other.



(3) Solving the problems of wages and value, by making payments of wages in kind and values subject to social recognition and real wants.

But the grave defects, that have crept into the system for want of sufficient education and social latitude necessary to develop it on healthy and prosperous lines, are:—

(1) Its inability to change according to circumstances, e.g. the provision for the customary dues of the priest and the Faqir in the village economy even when they are no longer needed or justified.

(2) The encouragement to idleness and parasitic life as a result of the first.

It is on account of these evils that the community has begun to grudge the dues of various functionaries, e.g. the gorait, the priests and the mangta whose services do not appeal to the people, and so there has arisen a disparity of interests leading to social friction especially due to the following counteracting tendencies:—

(1) The introduction of money economy gradually taking the place of the old barter economy, which has meant a duplication of the dues of customary wages at the harvest time, resulting in a greater strain upon the poor classes.

(2) The enormous rise in prices and the cost of living has made it impossible for the middle and lower classes of the community to pay these customary dues at the same old rates, and so have led them to forego their claims and dispense with their services as far as possible.



CHAPTER VII

WOMEN IN VILLAGE LIFE

Men and Women.—Religious sanction is still powerful in governing the marital relations of man and woman in the village. Marriage is even now a sacrament here rather than a contract, and cannot be broken by a decree of a court or otherwise.

In the village there are two Brahmin families, where a polyandrous relation seems to continue though this has not obtained social approval. In both the families there is only one wife among two brothers, this being an open secret in the village. Then there is also an instance of the polygamous form of marriage in the family of the present taluqdar, where there are two widows of the same husband, one living at Malhera and the other at Birwa.

The age of marriage for girls varies from ten to fifteen years, and for boys from twelve to twenty years among the higher castes; while among the lower castes it oscillates between five or six and eleven or twelve for girls, and between eight and fifteen for boys. The system of early marriage is really responsible for many social and economic ills, and is in fact a curse to the whole community.

But the Shastric injunctions apply only to the higher castes—Brahmins, Thakurs, Baniyas, also Kayasthas and Kalwars, etc., among whom divorce has no place and no meaning, not only because there is no religious authority of sanction to back it, but especially because the very idea of divorce is foreign to their traditional ideals and practices.

Of course, among the lower castes—Muraos, Bhurjis, Kumhars, Nais, Kahars, Dhobis, Arakhs and Chamars and chiefly among the last two, *chhutauti* or *divorce* is very common. Almost every year among these castes



there occur four or five cases of *chhutaui*, approved by the caste panchayat. In some cases the husband's brother is taken for husband by a woman who is divorced by her husband or who herself divorces her husband which is rarely allowed by the panchayat. This is another form of the old levirate custom. The illegal union of a woman with a person other than the husband is regarded as contrary to the interests of society, and is punishable by ostracism. The only alternative for the offender is to offer a big feast to the *biradari* together with an apology on oath to the panchayat.

Among all castes in the village sisters and daughters are very much respected and stand only next to the mother. This regard for daughters and sisters finds its best expression in a universal ceremony at the time of marriage, called *Kanyadan* (girl's gift) in which every elder male or female relation of the bride touches the feet of both the bride and the bridegroom, and gives them as much money or gold as he or she can afford, by putting it together with a small amount of leavened dough on the palm of the bride placed upon that of the bridegroom, accompanied by suitable benedictions and prayers for the joint happiness and longevity of the couple.

It is a common feeling in the village that a father or brother is always indebted to the daughter or the sister, and can never be free from this debt in his life, and this idea is carried to such an extreme that all those people, who once take part in the *Kanyadan* or *pain-pujji* (feet-worshipping) ceremony of the girl, are morally bound not to eat, drink, or use anything at the house of the girl's husband, though there is now a tendency to pay sufficient cash for all that is used or consumed.

Again, there are four chief seasonal festivals—the *sujjan* and *garria* in the month of Sawan, i.e. July and August and *karwa* and the *bhaiya dwij* in the month of Kartik or November in which the sisters and the daughters show their sincere affection and respect to their brothers and fathers in various ways and receive gifts of grain, money, clothings and sweets, etc. This regard for the sisters and the daughters, and this periodical cycle of seasonal festivals and gifts may perhaps be attributed to

the economic position and legal status of women as regards their share in the ancestral property of which they are altogether deprived by the Hindu Law.

At the same time woman is the mother of the race and the queen of the household. The bearing and rearing of children are the most important and responsible duties of a mother. She is the first protector, instructor, guide and friend of the children. This duty is more particularly observed among the high caste families, where women have very few chances of leaving the house or engaging themselves in agricultural or subsidiary occupations, than among the lower castes, where it is not possible to snatch sufficient time from hard occupational work or agricultural labour for the proper care and upkeep of the children, whose physical and intellectual development greatly suffers for this reason.

Daily Routine.—Apart from the time and attention that a woman devotes to the children of a family and other dependent members, for example old and disabled matrons, she has to work the whole day with proper supervision and control over her daughters-in-law and sisters-in-law in a regular daily routine of domestic life, and her duty consists in :—

- (a) Graining corn for the day's consumption.
- (b) Sweeping the house, cleaning utensils and drawing water from the well except in the case of those three or four families where servants do that kind of menial work.
- (c) Milking cows, buffaloes and goats, etc., at about seven o'clock in the morning before they go out for pasturing, and at about the same time in the evening when they return home.
- (d) Heating and churning milk and preparing ghee, curds and other milk products till nine or ten o'clock.
- (e) Cleaning, dressing and feeding the children and sending them either to school or to the fields.
- (f) Cooking food for the family and taking it to the husband at the fields.
- (g) Selling farm or cottage products in the neighbouring villages and towns.



Participation in Agriculture.—Except in the case of forty-six families of the higher castes, women play a very important role in the agricultural life of the village by working both on their own and on others' farms as hired labourers.

The healthiest and the most active of all the women-folk in the village are the Murao females, who work very hard on their farms throughout the year, and have neither time nor necessity to work as hired labourers. Their social status and economic position are also the highest among all the low castes.

It is usual to find a Murao woman laden with silver ornaments even while working at the farm. The Muraos are also the least indebted in the village. The one and only reason why the Muraos as a caste are much more contented and prosperous than others is the combination of sincerity, industry and foresight in their women as a whole.

In direct contrast to the Murao, the Chamar and the Arakh woman is less sincere and less industrious chiefly because of her lower economic position as a hired labourer on others' fields. Her very position of dependence and slavery has moulded her like this. Although she has to work on her own plots as well, yet for the major part of the year she has to work as a hired labourer and a serf.

The field operations that women generally perform and the wages they earn are given as follows:—

1. *Sowing or 'bowai'.* This is an operation which is undertaken wholly by females and, in most cases, it is the women who bring seed from the house of the cultivator and follow the ploughman on his tracks dropping it behind him in the furrows; when hired for this work they do it for about six hours in the first part of the day, and earn one anna and six pies and one seer of inferior grain as 'bai', i.e. wages for sowing.

2. *Weeding or 'Nikai'.* It is the most critical operation in the busiest part of the year, and its most characteristic feature is the army of women and girls who are employed. Labour becomes very scarce at this time and consequently wages and the working hours in the day

increase to 6 annas and 11 hours per day respectively. In this work the percentage of women to men is as ninety to ten and their wages are almost equal; in fact in some cases those of the former are higher than those of the latter in the ratio of 6 to 5 annas per day. A group of about twenty or twenty-five Chamar women seems to have specialized in this operation, as peasants have found out that these can daily cover at least an area one-third bigger than the area of land which the same number of hired men labourers can do. The quality of work done is almost the same in both cases. Girls are engaged in weeding and get 3 annas or 2 annas per day. Even small children get 1 anna or $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas per day.

3. **Reaping and Picking.**—Reaping is usually done by men, though not less than 40 per cent of the labourers engaged for reaping are females, but for picking, which is almost simultaneously done, only woman labour is employed. The number of hours that are generally put in for these operations is ten per day and the ordinary rate of wages for women is 4 annas per day on the average.

But in picking, the wages are sometimes determined by the kind of work done as follows:—

Labour	Remuneration
(a) Picking of wheat	... $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total amount of grain picked.
(b) „ „ gram	... $\frac{1}{2}$ the total amount picked.
(c) „ „ barley	... $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total amount picked.
(d) Separating grain from the ears of Makai.	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ seers per maund separated.

4. **Threshing, Winnowing and Loading.**—These employ almost an equal number of both the sexes but their wages are different—4 annas for men and 3 annas for women. The usual working day extends to about ten hours.

5. **Removing of Dry Grass.**—It is a minor operation undertaken just before ploughing, and does not require a large number of labourers, but it is all done generally by women at the rate of one anna for six hours.

OTHER OCCUPATIONS.

Cotton Spinning.—Only two years ago cotton spinning was the most popular and paying occupation of the females of the various castes in the village, and was a good means of employing the idle and aged women, who showed special taste and dexterity in the art. Fortunately for them the whole amount of cotton spun by them was consumed locally and profitably by the village weaver. Since his death this important cottage industry is decaying. It appears that in 1922-23 there were working about thirty Charkhas or spinning wheels and two fly-shuttle looms in the village, but now there are only six Charkhas working. Although there are a number of Koris and Behnas who carry on the weaving trade in other villages, and use homespun cotton both in their warp and weft, yet spinning and weaving in this village are steadily declining. The only spinners in the village at present are four Brahman and two Bania widows, and to these cotton spinning and ginning is a subsidiary source of livelihood. Wool sorting, carding and spinning, and Kamli making are the important occupations of the majority of Gadaria women, and the industry is certainly in a prosperous and hopeful condition. One woman can prepare one Kamli worth Rs. 3 in six days, working for about four hours a day.

Oil Pressing.—The next most important and most flourishing of all the subsidiary occupations in the village is oil pressing, which is conducted exclusively by the Telis. There are ten kolhus or oil-pressing machines working at present in the village, and it is generally the women who are in charge of the pressing operation. Their chief business in this connection consists in collecting groundnuts and the oil-seeds—mustard, castor, and sesamon, etc., from various households, pressing them and returning the oil at the rate of one seer of oil to

three seers of seeds, and retaining the oilcakes and charging an extra amount of grain equal to the oil. The males take the accumulated products to other villages and distant towns. Sometimes they also export oil and oilcakes to Cawnpore and Lucknow. They are generally busy with agriculture.

The Teli (wife of the Teli) also sits at the shop for retail sale and especially on market days, when there is usually a brisk sale and the dealings are largely in kind and seldom in cash. In all cases except one, the machines used are wooden and of an archaic type. Improved appliances will certainly give an encouraging outturn and superior quality.

Pottery.—Another cottage industry which can be said to be of some importance, and in which the females play a still larger part, is pottery, which is the traditional occupation of the village-Kumhars.

The Kumharin (the wife of the Potter) goes out every morning to dig earth from the village tanks generally in the dry parts of the year, collects it at a high place, and then gradually brings it home. The Kumhar or the potter usually works at the wheel. The Kumharin also fetches wood and cow-dung cakes for fuel from the neighbouring jungle. She paints the pots and the toys red, white and black and keeps them all in order. It is she again who takes water jars, tubs and other utensils of daily use to the families of the superior and high caste cultivators both on special and ordinary occasions. In two periodical fairs—one at Hatyahan in the month of October and the other at Berva in the month of December—the sale and profits of the Kumharin are substantial.

At these fairs the competition between all the Kumhars of the region is very keen, which results in a display of articles of various shapes and patterns, and the reduction of prices particularly towards the evening or on the last day of the fair. Sometimes, however, it is the beauty of the Kumharin which determines the amount of her sales. A fortnight or so before the fairs, therefore, the Kumhar families are busy day and night. Again, on the occasions of birth, marriage and Puja the Kumharin supplies the *charwa* or ceremonial jar, *pitrola* (a number of small



jars on marriage occasions), and the *kalas* or a water jar for puja purposes.

Dairying.—Almost all the Gaddi women and a majority of Gadaria females are busy for a long time every day with dairy products—milk, butter, curd, ghi, khoya, etc., which they daily take to the neighbouring towns for sale. Most of them have permanent customers in sweetmeat-dealers and other grocers who deal wholly in milk and its products.

Fuel Selling.—The great majority of low caste females, e.g. Arakhs and Chamars, etc., prepare cowdung cakes at their own houses, and heap them up in *bathias*, leaving them to dry in the sun.

They also collect fuel and cowdung from the jungles, and sell them in the towns.

These Gaddins and Kandawalis (cowdung-cake sellers) with their baskets full of their respective commodities on their heads are daily seen going to Sandila in large numbers, and returning in the afternoon after their shopping.

Grain Parching.—A number of village females are busy parching grain and are called Bhurjins. They also collect dry leaves for their hearth. The Bhurjin charges in kind for all kinds of grain at the rate of one seer for every five seers parched. She takes paddy from the cultivators and prepares it into '*chura*' after husking and beating it, and charges $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers of paddy for every ten seers of *chura* prepared. On marriage occasions there is a common custom of taking '*chharpuria*' or parched barley from the bhurjin, which she always brings at this time. For this she gets 5 annas and 0-2-6 during a son's and a daughter's marriage respectively.

Basket-making and Rope-making.—Basket and rope making are important sources of income to the women of low social status—Natins, Chamarins and Arkhins. They grow hemp and collect bark and reeds for their handicrafts from the village woods and ponds. They are very expert and skilful in their craft. Their nimble fingers move very fast even when they are not actually paying attention to the particular piece of work that they do. They sell their products in the neighbouring

towns and markets and the bi-weekly *hats* in the villages.

Broom-stick making.—The Dhanuk women of the village are mostly occupied in preparing *jharus* or broom-sticks, *soops*, i.e. winnows and *chalna*, i.e. sifting instrument, from *jhau*, a dry weed, and *seenk*, a long pointed reed. As these articles are of daily use in all families there is a large demand for them both in the village and outside it and this work is therefore sufficiently remunerative.

Pattal-making.—The village also stands in need of *pattals* and *donas* or plates and cups made of big dhak leaves, generally on feast and puja occasions. This service is done by Arakh women who collect dhak leaves from the neighbouring jungles, and make *pattals* and *donas* out of them. These articles are sold at the rate of 4 annas per hundred when dealings are in cash, and at the rate of 2½ seers of grain per hundred when in kind. The Arkhin especially supplies these articles on the bhat or *kachcha* feast day during marriages, and gets one rupee or more for her labour. They also make fans and mats and sell them in the towns.

Bangle-making.—The Maniharin or the wife of the bangle-maker prepares bangles or '*churias*' of lac or glass of various fashions and designs, and occasionally visits the households with her basket full so as to enable the inmates to select the '*churias*' of their own taste. She also helps the ladies in putting on the bangles for which she gets some quantity of grain in addition to the price of the bangle sold.

Bone and Skin Picking.—Picking of bones and skins in the village surroundings are the leisure occupations of Chamar women in the village.

Reh Collecting.—A very large part of the village area on the north-west of the village, which remains water-logged for a long time during the wet season, is covered with Reh, which is at present collected by Dhobi women and children for washing clothes. If this reh could be collected on a large scale it could be utilized in making the best kind of caustic soda.

It is clear from the above that the diverse occupations



of the village women, which represent the existing cottage industries of the village, are to a very great extent determined by their caste which institution has certainly contributed to the survival of the old arts and crafts of the village.

FEMALE INSTITUTIONS AND DIVERSIONS

The highest regard for womanhood in India finds its concrete expression in the popular conception that small girls are but goddesses in human form. This conception has given rise to the institution of Kunwaris or Virgins, who are periodically invited, fed and worshipped in almost all the households of the village in batches of seven. Theoretically, no caste distinction is to be observed in this matter, but practically, higher castes do not invite untouchables or low caste girls.

Then there is an institution of *bhik* or begging, which is mainly organized and worked by females of various low castes. Generally after the two harvests many parties of women, headed by one whose face is covered by a cloth and who holds a tuft of the *nim* tree in her left hand and a beggar's bowl in the right, start on their begging rounds, and collect grain from each household for the purpose of performing *pujas* and *havans* in honour of the village gods and goddesses.

Again the month of *Sawan* or July-August, with its *gurria* or doll-festival, is literally the month for girls and is full of female activities and amusements. As the girls of the village are all married outside the village they are customarily called back to their fathers' places during this month, and thus once in every year they get an opportunity to live, play, sing and swing together for at least four weeks. This is undoubtedly the happiest and the merriest time in the village, when small companies of gay young women dressed in fine garments are seen moving about in the village in sportive mood, and participating in dances and music, by tanks and groves to the tune of the seasonal showers. During the night they enjoy swing parties accompanied by appropriate music—*sawan* and *baramasi*—which is associated with dark nights and rumbling rain-clouds.

On marriage and other similar occasions we also come across characteristic recreations of the women-folk. On the night when the marriage ceremony takes place at the bride's house, the females at the bridegroom's house, usually stage an extempore NATAK or drama, which includes music, dancing and jests in which all the young women of the household have to take part. This entertainment continues throughout the whole night. A similar performance is undertaken by those low caste families in which the bride and her male relations have to go to the bride-groom's house for the ceremony.

Besides music and dancing the village women display their artistic skill in various other ways. Their drawings and paintings are best illustrated during certain festivals, such as the *Harchhat*, *Dwij*, *Jwit* and *Karwachauth* on which occasions they have to draw big human figures, pictures of birds, animals as well as of household articles. They also draw various geometrical designs with their reed pens and powdered rice mixed with water, both on the walls and on the floor, already coated with cowdung and painted with the juice of green leaves or herbs.

On festivals like the *Sakat*, the *Shivratri*, the *Mahalakshmi*, the *Holi* and the *Diwali* they show their constructive powers by preparing various articles of rice, dough, and clay for purposes of worship.

Again, on the occasions of the Govardhan Puja and Holi the women-folk make many things out of cow-dung for their traditional worship which is accompanied by lengthy stories, related by the eldest woman in the family. It is evident from the above account that the women-folk of the village make the best of their circumstances, and lose no opportunity to gratify their artistic sense, and to preserve their aesthetic and religious ideals.

In fact, they conserve the culture of the race, and contribute not a little to lessen the rigours of poverty, and bring joy and happiness in the midst of want and misery.



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CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

THE village of Malehra, the social and economic survey of which has been but very imperfectly attempted in the foregoing pages, is certainly one of the typical Oudh villages, and possesses all the interesting features of an ancient communal organization, the remains of which are still found in the collective habits and co-operative undertakings of the villagers, inspite of the counteracting forces of landlordism and the pressure of population upon the land.

A great drawback to the agricultural life of the village, however, is that the vast area of low lands on the west has been, for the last three or four years, continually flooded by the River Baita. There is thus great uncertainty among the cultivators of these lowlying plots, where, not even the Rabi crops, let alone the Kharif can be satisfactorily grown, owing to water-logging. The matter is of urgent importance and therefore ought to be taken in hand at an early date. It will be well if the Agriculture and the Irrigation Departments combine to find out the real cause of these annual floods which have ruined many a family in the village, and are affecting the prosperity of the village as a whole.

In the chapter on 'Peasant holdings' it has been shown that owing to several causes such as the growth of population, the encroachment of outsiders upon the land, family disruption and the taluqdar's preferences, there has been going on a process of continuous subdivision of land, which has resulted in reducing the size of an average holding to 6 acres. As we have already seen this is much below the size of the economic holding.

Again 10 per cent of the total number of the cultivating families in the village have to depend for their subsistence upon plots of even smaller size. At the same time the average number of such plots cultivated by an average peasant family is ten. The disadvantages of the cultivation of such a large number of strips are obvious. Further these are separated by long distances and subdivided into tiny fragments which are quite unfit for any remunerative cultivation. These bring about a loss to the cultivator approximately from Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per acre as estimated in Chapter II.

The minimum economic holding for a family of five persons ought to be 10 bighas or 7 acres in a compact block, so as to enable the members to live in moderate ease and comfort. The consolidation of holdings is, as elsewhere, the crying need of the village. Voluntary transfer or exchange through the intervention of a co-operative consolidation society are impossible so long as the land system is not modified. On the other hand, any piece of legislation to bring about this much-desired agrarian reform must be backed by public opinion before it can be initiated. All these considerations are, however, beyond the scope of our discussion.

We have also seen that rents absorb approximately one-fifth of the total net profits of cultivation, and sometimes more than this proportion, and hardly leave a bare margin of subsistence for an average cultivator. Unrecorded rents and other levies of the taluqdar, both in labour and materials, also contribute to diminish further the profits of small holders.

Due to an increase in the number of actual cultivators and farm labourers, and a corresponding reduction in the number of landless labourers, the problem of agricultural labour has become acute for the village as a whole. As a consequence wages have risen from 3 annas per head per day before the war to 4 annas, that is, by 33 per cent, although in periods of critical agricultural operations they go up to 6 annas a day. Except during special seasons, wages have not kept pace with the prices which have risen at least 40 per cent since the war. This has reacted unfavourably upon the



economic position of small holders. Wages now form, as can be deduced from the consolidated table showing the costs and profits of cultivation in Chapter IV, 40 per cent of the costs and 15 per cent of the gross profits of cultivation.

This state of things has rendered the position of the cultivator most insecure. Apart from the exigencies of an unfavourable season, a fodder famine or an epidemic, the cultivator has to borrow to meet the ordinary needs of his occupation, for seed, for the payment of rent, for the inevitable expenditure on domestic and social ceremonies, and even for meeting the daily requirements of the household.

Whatever meagre inquiry could be made into the total indebtedness of the people, shows that about 11 per cent of the families of low caste owe in all Rs. 2,532-8-0 to the Co-operative Central Bank, and about the same proportion of the middle class owe Rs. 306 to the Vyaparies and local Mahajans. Unfortunately figures are not available to show the total indebtedness to the outside Mahajans. However, the figures quoted in the Chapter on 'Credit and Indebtedness' clearly indicate that there is a tendency to borrow for unproductive and speculative purposes. Domestic and social ceremonies, festivities and religious performances encourage improvidence; while the presence of a large number of money-lenders in the neighbouring hamlets stimulates the habit of borrowing. The prevailing minimum rates of interest are $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum during the Kharif season, and 50 per cent per annum during Rabi. The maximum rates are uncertain.

The liquidation proceedings of the old Co-operative Society still linger, and are a great source of trouble and anxiety to the villagers involved. This has contributed not a little to the unpopularity of the Co-operative Department throughout the taluqa.

Besides the cultivators proper, we have in the village a large number of functionaries and menials, whose services and wages have undergone considerable change with the transformation of the ancient communal organization.



The introduction of a money economy has seriously affected the economic position of the inferior agriculturist by increasing the charges of various social functionaries, e.g. the priest, the Kamin and the Mangta whose services to the society have decreased from the standpoint of utility.

One of the most striking and interesting features of the social composition of the village, is the growing disparity in the proportion of the sexes from census to census. During the marriageable age the proportion of females to males is about 3: 1. Eight or nine is certainly a very high number of daughters for one family, and this phenomenon has a direct bearing upon the social and economic stability of such families, as marriage is often the chief cause of family poverty and ruin. Marriages involving big dowries and feasts have made indebtedness inevitable even for well-to-do families, and this has inaugurated the system of 'nau-dasi' loans for marriage occasions. The minimum interest charged on these loans is 133 per cent, at the rate of Re. 1 for every Rs. 9 advanced per month.

Apart from its economic implications, the difficulties and anxieties of finding a bridegroom, no matter whether suitable or not, are being keenly felt among all castes, high or low. Families with higher social and economic status, solve this difficulty by offering handsome dowries and other allurements to the bridegrooms' relations; while the poorer families especially of the middle class, have to take recourse to borrowing large sums for this purpose.

The effects of this social mal-adjustment are intensified by the economic subservience of women in the Indian families. Where women are economically useless, and are the cause of indebtedness on account of the expenses of marriage, there cannot be any economic stability to the family life. On the other hand, among the lower castes and tribes, it is the excess of females over males which is indirectly balanced by the superior economic position of the female, as compared with that of the female in the higher castes. The following figures show



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the proportion of the sexes among the higher and the lower caste families :—

Castes	No. of Males	No. of Females
Thakur	4	7
Brahmin	35	30
Kayastha	8	5
Kalwar	34	36
Murao	98	137
Arakha	88	184
Chamar	128	177

It is among the lower castes that we find women taking a very large part in economic activity, and gradually extending the sphere of their work as is apparent from their increasing appearance in the field, the shop and the market.

Indeed among all the lower castes, where the disparity between the proportion of females to males is greater than among the higher castes, women participate in agriculture and thus improve their economic status. Among the higher castes, on the other hand, women have not similarly improved their economic position by working for an independent livelihood. They have taken to spinning and needlework only. While cotton-spinning among the women of the higher castes is declining, lace-making is becoming more and more popular especially among the girls. Sooner or later, however, more remunerative employment for women must be found among the higher castes as well which may improve their economic status and may not make them a menace before marriage and a burden after it.



PART II

CHAPTER I

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE VILLAGE

RUDHUI is a village situated at a distance of about nine miles north of Lucknow. The metalled road to Sitapur passes through Bakhshi-ka-Talab¹, which is a small hamlet attached to the village and also a railway station on the Rohilkhand and Kumaon Railway.

On account of its historical importance and the fact that it is used as a camping ground for troops, it, rather than the village of Rudhui, gives its name to the station.

The boundaries of the village are as follows:—

North	...	...	Rampur Deorai
South	...	...	Sharakpur Sarrayan
West	...	...	Bhouli
East	...	...	Bargadi Magath

On the east lie the camping grounds for troops, the metalled road and the railway station.

¹ The small hamlet known by the name of Bakhshi-ka-Talab has a short history behind it. It contains a big tank, with a magnificent flight of steps leading down to the water, and four towers at the corner. Beyond is the temple of Bankey Bihari (a name of Lord Krishna) now in ruins. The tank was constructed about a hundred years ago by a gentleman named Bakhshi Tipur Chand. He was employed as a Naib by Nasiruddin Haider, Nawab of Oudh. The Bakhshi was an important and influential official. His duty was to realize the revenue of the Nawab and to maintain an army on behalf of the state. The construction of the tank involved a large expenditure of money which caused a serious deficit in the state revenues. This brought



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The village represents a type which is commonly found all over the plains of Northern India. There is nothing about it of that old rural self-sufficiency which once characterized Indian village life. This may be due to its close proximity to the city marts of Lucknow where the people can easily purchase their necessities of life other than grain, cheaply and conveniently. The facilities of communication by the metalled road and the railway line, have greatly lessened the cost of transport. Agriculture forms the sole means of livelihood of the people of the village.

On approaching the village, one is struck by its drainage system, a feature common to most villages in this locality. It shows how those, who first constructed houses and allotted fields, realized the importance of husbanding the resources of water in a place where there is no river or other means of supply. In such cases the rain water is made to accumulate in a village pond, which, in the first place, has been excavated to supply earth for the construction of mud huts. Our village has five ponds, big and small, four of which are used for irrigating fields. The supply of water for drinking purposes is from wells, some of which are of masonry work.

about his dismissal from the Nawab's Court. In order to save his life, he fled to Kanauj which had lately come under the British rule. The villagers, still in their characteristic Indian fashion, gratefully recollect the memory of Bakhshi Ji, and pay their tribute for the charitable construction of this work of public utility. There are some fields and gardens attached to the tank for the maintenance of the temple. The Bakhshi, when he left the place, left a *Farman* entrusting all the property to Mahant Narayan Das as a trust, the annual income from which is 600 rupees. At the present time the tank is in a very bad condition. There is no outlet for water with the result that it has become stagnant and moss-covered. The tank is serving no useful purpose at present. It is neither fit for irrigation nor is the water good enough for drinking. The more sensible of the villagers deplore the present neglected condition of the tank and its surroundings. They wish that a permanent trust composed of responsible persons, be constituted for its management instead of leaving it in the hands of an irresponsible individual like the Mahant.



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The total number of people living in the village, including Bakshi-ka-Talab, was 719 according to the census of 1921, as compared to 742 in 1911, and 860 in 1891.

The census figures give the following details as to the composition of the population as regards sex and religion :—

Census Statistics of Rudhui

—	1891	1911	1921	Rudhui	Rudhui Parao, i.e. (Bakhshi-ka-Talab)
Number of houses ...	...	173	151	150	1
Total population—					
511 Males ...	} 860	742	719	654	65
349 Females ...					
Hindus—					
Males ...	...	388	380	320	60
Females ...	...	305	312	310	2
Total ...	...	693	692	330	62
Mahommadans—					
Males ...	...	23	15	12	3
Females ...	...	25	12	12	...
Total ...	...	48	27	24	3
Others ...	...	1	...	...	...

These figures show that the village of Rudhui shares in the general trend of the decline of population that has been going on during the last two decades in the whole of the Lucknow District. Lucknow has suffered severely from plague. The decrease in the number of houses by 22 is also significant. In the decade 1901-11 the decrease was due to the famine of the year 1907-08, and epidemics of malaria and plague. In the last decade, viz. 1911-21

influenza and plague, again, were serious factors. Emigration is another but less easily recognizable factor. This factor is of considerable importance in regard to this village, because the pressure of population on land is rather great.

Practically the village may be said to be a Hindu village. The number of Mahommadans in the population is only 27. The population finds its sustenance directly and indirectly from the soil, and consists of 22 rent receivers, 13 exproprietary tenants, 115 cultivators, 80 shikmi or sub-tenants, and about 50 landless labourers.

The majority of the zamindars are Thakurs, though recently a few outsiders have purchased land and become co-proprietors. The bulk of the cultivating class consists of Ahirs, Chamars and Lodhs, though some high caste people such as Brahmans and Thakurs have also begun to cultivate their own fields. On account of the pressure of economic forces due to a change in the angle of vision of the higher classes, it is not considered degrading to put one's hand to the plough, and the Kshattriya Sabha has passed a resolution recommending to the members of their community the desirability of undertaking agriculture as an occupation. The low-caste people of the village are the Chamars, who supplement the income of small farms by menial service, and work as labourers on the fields of others.

The total area of the village is about 563 acres of which 76 acres are uncultivable, 55 acres though cultivable are not cultivated, while 432 acres or 690 bighas are actually cultivated. This means a little less than a bigha or five-eighths of an acre of cultivated land per head of the population, which would hardly suffice for the bare necessities of life if it were not for the fact that some of the local cultivators hold as many as 52 bighas of land in other villages. The following are the detailed figures of the classification of land in Fasli, 1331, i.e. A.D. 1924 as compared with those of 1866 at the time of the First Settlement in Oudh. The figures as they stand to-day are according to the Second Regular Settlement of Oudh in 1898.



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Details of the area under classified heads are given below :—

Classified Area of Rudhui including Bakhshi-ka-Talab

	(First Settlement 1866)			(Second Settlement 1898)		
	¹ Bigha	Biswa	Biswansi	Bigha	Biswa	Biswansi
Total area ...	900	16	0	901	4	6
Population area (Abadi) and roads		...		46	11	9
Usar (barren) ...		...		49	4	19
Talab and tanks ...		...		26	12	15
Total uncultivable ...	132	16	0	122	9	3(a)
Percentage of the total ...	...	14.83%	0		13.59%	
Grove land ...	35	4	0	35	10	11
Banjar ...	51	4	0	31	15	10
Parti (fallow) ...		...			...
Qadim (old) ...		...		9	10	17
Jadid (new) ...		...		11	18	12
Total uncultivated but Cultivable ...	86	8	0	88	15	0(b)
Total not cultivated (a + b) ...	219	4	0	211	4	3
Total cultivated ...	681	12	0	690	0	3
Percentage of cultivated area to the total ...		75.68%	0		76.56%	

¹ 20 Biswansis = 1 Biswa.
 20 Biswas = 1 Bigha.
 1 Bigha = 3,025 square yards.
 1 Acre = 4,840 " "
 ∴ 1 Bigha = $\frac{3}{4}$ or .625 of an acre.

Further, the cultivated area is distributed as follows :—

Year, Fasli 1331 or A.D. 1924	Bigha	Biswa	Biswansi
Held by tenants ...	391	6	11
Zamindar's Sir ¹ since 1895 ...	141	0	0
Zamindar's Khudkasht ² of twenty years' standing ...	91	0	0
Zamindar's Khudkasht of five years' standing ...	6	15	8
Total retained by Zamindar for his own cultivation ...	238	15	8
Chakdari or Exproprietary rights ...	16	13	13
Arazi Muafi ³ ...	43	4	11
Total cultivated ...	690	0	3

Out of 391-6-11 Bighas, 159 are sublet to Shikmi⁴ Káshtkârs or sub-tenants.

The total land revenue assessed in 1898 on the village is Rs. 1,518 as compared to Rs. 1,150 in the Summary Settlement of 1857-58, and Rs. 1,179 of the First Settlement of 1866. It comes to Rs. 2·7 per acre of area in the whole village or Rs. 3·6 per cultivated acre.

The total rental levied for the year 1924 was Rs. 3,380-12-1, of which Rs. 3,333-12-1 were in cash and Rs. 47-0-0 in kind.

¹ Sir—part of Zamindar's holding which he reserves for his own cultivation and does not rent out to tenants.

² Khudkasht—self-cultivated.

³ Muafi is rent-free land given for services religious or secular.

⁴ Shikmi—i.e. sub-tenants.



CHAPTER II

ORIGIN OF THE VILLAGE

Social history of the ruling castes

A large tract of land in this part of Oudh is said to have belonged to the Bhars from very ancient times to which no date can be assigned with precision. The Bhars are said to have descended from low-caste aborigines, akin to Kurmis. Some 500 years ago a Rajput family of the well-known Chauhan clan came here under the leadership of Kesari Singh from Mainpuri, a district in the United Provinces. One of the senior members of this family worked as a *Naib*, i.e. manager of the estate, to Dhandhu Bhar who ruled over fifty-two villages in the neighbourhood.

The Rajput Naib one day succeeded in inducing a Mohammadan barber¹ to cut Dhandhu's throat while shaving him. After Dhandhu's murder the Bhar raj was forcibly seized by the Chauhan family. The scene of this incident was Kathwara, the capital of the Bhars. Rai Dhandhu's fortress still stands there marked by masonry walls called *dihs*.

Kathwara is thus the parent village of an estate founded by the Chauhans.² The original in-coming Chauhan family consisted of three brothers who divided the Bhar kingdom among themselves. The eldest, Kesari Singh established himself at Bhouli, taking thirty-two villages for himself as his share. The second brother Achhraj seized eight villages, Kathwara being one of them. The third Bachhraj got the remaining twelve villages, and

¹ The Mohammadan barber in addition to monetary payment was allowed by the Chauhan Rajputs to attend and work in marriages. His descendants still serve the Chauhans of Kathwara in their household on ceremonial occasions.

² *Lucknow District Gazetteer*.



established himself at Bargadi Magat after clearing the forest which consequently was for a long time known as *Bankat*, i.e. forest-cleared. The division among the brothers was not in the nature of separation but seems to have been made to facilitate administration. These three groups of villages form compact blocks. The following is the list of villages falling to the shares of the three brothers respectively :—

I. KESARI SINGH

Names of the villages	Area in Acres
Bhouli	2,099
Hardourpur	706
Bhawanipur	218
Mahipatpur	79
Parbatput	269
Pachhangaon	320
Purwa	253
Dhangra	455
Sherpur	318
Sheokhai	192
Majhoria	302
Deorai Kalan	229
Purabgaon	269
Farrukhabad	282
Kamalpur	95
Kamalabad	117
Sarryyan	276
Gangjor	87
Mubarakpur	608
Terrhibya	163
Saidapur	270
Kundri	190
Lachhmipur	124
Umarbhari	181
Sadhupur	182
Palchri	509
Khattya	396
Dhubaila	276
Four other villages have not been identified.	



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II. ACHHRAJ

Names of the villages				Area in Acres
Kathwara	3,211
Kalwa	1,431
Kopramau	2,489
Raitha	...	...	...	1 606
Boroman	...	...	...	1,947
Dugar	...	...	...	1,005
Bharwara	...	...	...	...
Raniamau	...	...	...	342

III. BACHHRAJ

Names of the villages				Area in Acres
Bargadi Magath	...	...	...	441
Nabikotnandra	...	...	...	1,142
Chanda Konder	...	...	...	774
Kuhna Kalan	...	...	...	1,385
Rampur Deorai	...	...	...	543
<i>Rudhui</i>	...	...	...	563
Mampurbana	...	...	...	1,083
Paikraman	...	...	...	1,035
Fattehpur Kamrehi	...	...	...	468
Mawai Kalan	...	...	...	396
Dhanauri	...	...	...	436



Our village, Rudhui, is one of the third group and the present form of tenure is *Zemindari-Pattidari* of which we shall speak in detail in the next chapter.

Here we get an opportunity of tracing the origin of the *Pattidari* system of tenure. As stated in the history of the village, the original founder, Bachhraj, held an estate of twelve villages. It is very unlikely that, with the passage of time and the increase in the number of the members of the family, the estate would long have remained joint.

In quite a large number of cases families agreed to divide, so that many villages which were held in earlier times under a single owner are found to-day in a state of division into *pattis* as regards ownership, cultivation and enjoyment of land. Generally, in such a case as the above where the original founder of the estate was one, the division into shares is according to the Hindu law of inheritance. Each share is called a *patti*, its holder a *pattidar*, and the system of tenure *pattidari*.

The land in the village is mostly in the hands of the descendants of the Chauhan Rajputs still. There have been divisions and sub-divisions of shares, and partitions resulting in the *pattidari* form of tenure. This illustrates how a modern *pattidari* tenure is, in origin, a disintegrated joint *Zemindari*.

In this village the portion held by each *pattidar* is stated in terms of rupees, annas and pies, as shares of one as a unit representing the village.

OWNERSHIP OF LAND

The village, as we find it today, is held under the *pattidari* system of tenure. It is imperfect¹ *pattidari* in the sense that, although the major portion of the village is divided into separate shares, out of a total area of 900 bighas, a portion of the village, say about 80 bighas or 50 acres, is still held undivided, and all the co-sharers

¹ Where part of the land, i.e. that held by tenants and that used in common, is left undivided. *Vide* Baden Powell, *Land System in British India*.



have a joint control over the common waste lands, e.g. jungle and gardens, because the division of these into small fragments would be useless and tedious.

The undivided *Zemindari* is managed by all jointly, and the proceeds, after paying the Government revenue, are distributed among all the proprietors according to their shares in the *Khewat*.¹

Every *Pattidar* (co-sharer) manages his separate *patti* directly without any outside interference. He has an exclusive right over his divided share either to lease it out on rent, or to reserve a part or the whole of it for his own cultivation as *Sir* or *Khudkasht*.

The *Lambardar* is the headman of the whole or a part of the village, and his chief duty is to pay the Government dues in connection with the revenue and cesses. In 1866, at the time of the first regular Settlement, three such *lambardars* were appointed by the Government. The *lambardar* is entitled to get a remuneration at 5 per cent of the *Jama* or revenue assessment of the village. In this village the office of the *lambardar* is hereditary.

If a stranger purchases a share in the *lambardar's patti*, he cannot be appointed *lambardar*, but if he purchases the whole of it he may become a *lambardar*. A *lambardar*, who fails in his duty to pay the Government dues, is liable to be removed from his office which is filled by another *Pattidar*, resident in the village, by election, subject to approval by the Government.

There is no *Muafi*, or revenue-free land in this village. But the proprietary body have allowed their lands rent-free, i.e. *Muafi*, chiefly to Brahmans as Sankalp (religious gift), and to village servants and menials for services. However, there is one interesting case of *Muafidars* in this village, viz. the Kayasthas who also were given land for services rendered. The reason for this peculiar exception is that at the time of the Summary Settlement of Oudh in 1857-58, the village had two Patwaries who were Kayastha by caste. In addition to their

¹ One of the Settlement Records, containing a list of co-sharers and proprietors in the village with their interests and shares of revenue payable.

salary they were given land *Muafi* i.e. rent-free and their descendants hold a part of it even now. The distribution of such rent-free land is as follows :—

	1866			1925		
	Bigha	Biswa	Biswansi	Bigha	Biswa	Biswansi
Brahmans (Sankalp) ...	32	6	0	37	19	11
Kayasthas (Patwariservices) ...	14	16	0	2	9	10
Carpenter ...	0	10	0	Nil ¹	...	...
Blacksmith ...	1	13	0	Nil ²	...	...
Barber ...	4	8	0	2	2	10
Manihar ...	0	16	0	Nil ³	...	...
Washerman ...	0	...	0	0	7	0
Chamar ...	0	...	0	0	6	0
Total ...	54	9	0	43	4	11

The Brahmans will in all probability hold their *Muafi* for ever, because of the religious sanction attaching to the gift; and their shares may go on increasing. Even some Pandas of Muttra, Gaya and Puri have some *Muafi* land given to them by the people of this village who went to visit those religious places. The land held by village artizans is of course limited by the period of their service.

RIGHTS BASED ON CUSTOM

Partition, which follows the Hindu Law of Inheritance, is characterised by the fact that the sons only, and not the daughters, are entitled to share in the property, women having only life interests.

¹ Now he gets customary wages, viz. *lehna* and *tihai*.

² *Ibid*.

³ He gets ready payment either in money or in grain.



All the grove lands in this village are held by the higher castes while the lower castes hold none. Members of the higher castes can, if necessity arises, bring grove land under cultivation, but the Government have a right to assess revenue on the increased area so brought under cultivation. The State is also entitled to any valuable minerals or other treasure which may be discovered in the village. To bring *Banjar* land under cultivation, the consent of the whole of the proprietary body would be essential.

The cattle of the village freely graze in the common pasture, no payment being made for this. There is also a *Gaurhi* where the village cattle stand.

Every inhabitant of the village may build a house for himself provided he does not obstruct the public road or footpath. Formal permission is given by the *Zemindars* on the presentation of a *Taka* (2 pice) and a *Bira* (betel leaf).



CHAPTER III

THE FARMER'S ROUTINE

THE agricultural year of Oudh consists of two complete seasons, one known as the *kharif*, comprising the rainy months from July to September, and the other, the *rabi*, comprising the cold weather months from October to April. Generally, two *fasls* (crops) are raised in the year the *Rabi*, i.e. wheat, barley, gram and pea, and the *Kharif*, namely, paddy, maize, *bajra* (spiked or bulrush millet), *jowar* (great millet), *urd* (pulse) and *Arhar* (lentil). The *Rabi* crops grow in the months of November, December, January and February, and are, therefore, known as the Winter crops.

In addition to these crops, some green vegetables, e.g., peas, cabbages, cauliflower and potatoes are also grown. The bulk of these is sent to the city of Lucknow where it finds a ready market, a very small quantity being consumed locally. Melons form a *Zaid* or extra crop, which has assumed importance due to the fact that they are highly prized in Lucknow which has got a name for the excellence of the flavour of its melons. The village thus produces only those crops which are used as food-stuff, other crops being conspicuous by their absence.

Farmers realize fully the advantage of preparing the soil for crops. They plough and harrow, and break up the soil and make it fine and porous, capable of retaining moisture for raising *Rabi* crops. The preparation of the soil for the *Rabi* crops begins towards the end of the rainy season; but for wheat particularly fields are ploughed during the rainy season as many as fifteen or twenty times, their standard for wheat being thirty-two ploughings. For *Rabi* crops 8 or 10 ploughings are considered sufficient.



Generally two waterings are necessary for the *rabi* crops at an interval of a month's time. The crops ripen in the month of March, and are harvested in the month of April. The *Kharif* season commences with the setting in of the rains and lasts till October, the period of high temperature and heavy rainfall.

The months of May and June, corresponding to *Baisakh* and *Jaith*, are spent by the farmers in storing grain in their homes. In the month of June they occupy themselves with repairing their houses and carrying manure to the fields. The heat in these months is excessive, and the *Loo* is blowing hot all the time, scorching all vegetation, even the barest grass. Dust and wind-storms are very common during this period. This prevents people from undertaking agricultural operations which almost come to an end by this time. The villagers do only such light work as the storing of grain or the repairing of houses. It is during this period that farmers get some leisure, and so most of the marriages among the Hindus are celebrated in these months. Other festivities also take place about the same period of the year. The reason is obvious. The cultivators are not only free from hard agricultural operations which come to an end by this time, but their homes are also full of food grains lately harvested. This is the period for enjoying the fruits of the hard year's toil. It is very characteristic that the two most important festivals of popular Hinduism synchronise with the ripening and harvesting of the two main crops, the *Dewali* coming after the *Kharif*, and the *Holi* after the *Rabi*. Another occupation which takes up their hard-earned leisure is litigation. Rent suits swell to an unusual proportion during these months.

As soon as the first showers are received, which is, generally, during the last week of June, the farmer gets busy with his plough and team of oxen to prepare the soil for sowing the *Kharif* crop in the month of July. The months of August and September (*Sawan* and *Bhadaun*), which are periods of heavy rainfall in this part of the country, are devoted to weeding.

Farmers realize that weeds are an obstacle to good cultivation. The process of weeding is very important in this *Fasl* for conserving the resources of the soil, and enabling the principal crops to derive enough nourishment from it. The breaks in the rains are sometimes utilized by the cultivators in stirring up the soil between the rows of the sown crops, e.g. in millet. Their object is to aerate the soil, and at the same time to kill any weeds which may have sprung up, although the illiterate agriculturists are not able to explain the process in so many words.

During this season Nature provides enough water to meet the necessity of the crops for this season, and, naturally, there is no need for artificial irrigation ; but when the rains fail, or are untimely, they are hard put to it to save the crops by artificial irrigation. The *Kharif* crops not only produce food for farmers themselves, but also yield a valuable supply of green fodder for cattle.

No fences are put round the fields. The open field system, which is the general rule throughout the province and the country, is practised in this village also. Fields are demarcated by low boundaries, which also serve as footpaths in the cultivated area. Water channels are sometimes built along the boundary marks and run parallel to them.

The work of watching the fields is entrusted to a village functionary known as the *Gorait*. In the *Kharif* crop, as the plants are of a higher stature than in the *Rabi* crop, farmers have to take special pains to keep personal watch over the fields, and to prevent birds, stray cattle of the village, jackals and other wild animals from damaging the crops. Sometimes they prepare a raised platform called a *Machan* in the centre of the field, roof it with *Sirki*, and spend the major portion of their days and nights there. Scarecrows are also in common use, and they serve their purpose well, particularly for the *Rabi* crops.

The soil, throughout the Gangetic plain, is alluvium, and the soil of the village presents no striking contrast to this. Roughly it may be called loam, i.e. clay and sand mixed together, with a higher proportion of the former.



Villagers classify the soil under three heads on the basis of its fertility due to the proportion of sand and clay in the mixture :—

(1) *Matiyar*, (2) *Dumat* and (3) *Bhur*.

The first is clay, the last sand, and the second, as its name imports, is composed of both sand and clay.

Villagers are aware of the suitability of these soils for different crops according to their nature. The accumulated experience of centuries of farming tells them that *Matiyar* is the best for wheat, paddy and barley; *Dumat* especially for root crops, e.g. potato, carrot, radish and ground-nut; and *Bhur* for water melons.

Out of the total cultivable area of 681 bighas, 449 is *Dumat* and 232 *Matiyar*, there being no *Bhur* in this village.

Besides this classification of the soil according to its quality, there is another adopted by the cultivators and is based on distance from the central village site :—

1. *Goind*, i.e. nearest to the village.
2. *Manjhar*, i.e. intermediate.
3. *Paleo*, i.e. distant (out-lying).

Generally, the fertility of the soil diminishes with increasing distance. Of this we shall speak in detail in the Chapter on Rents.

Cultivators realize fully the necessity of replenishing the general fertility of the soil by manure. They love it so much as to regard it in the light of a living organism. So far as their circumstances permit, they try to store manure for the soil. The usual forms of manure used in the village are cattle dung and nightsoil, rotten straw and dead leaves, alluvial earth from tanks and other waste matter. In general, all the house-hold refuse, including the ashes of whatever is consumed, goes back to the soil. They deposit the available manure, not in pits as is done in some other parts of the country, but allow it to lie along with the sweepings and ashes of their house-hold, on the dung and scrap heap near their houses. They do not realize the serious draw-back in thus carelessly handling the small quantity of precious manure available for restoring the fertility of their fields and so some of the useful

elements of manure are lost by evaporation, or are washed away by the rains.

Cattle dung is the most important manure that is available, but two-thirds of it is consumed as fuel and only reaches the land as inorganic ash. Most of the dung which is collected in the home, or from the roads and fields, is made into round flat fuel cakes and dried in the sun. It is only during one quarter of the year, viz. the rainy season, from June to September, when cattle dung cannot be dried up to be used as fuel, that it is freely utilized as field manure.

The people are often looked upon as ignorant of the value of manure and careless of the fertility of their soil because they use so much of their cowdung as fuel, but those who hold such ideas about them do not realize that economic necessity forces them to do so. The consumption of cattle dung as fuel is necessitated by the scarcity of wood, which can no longer be obtained from the jungle in sufficient quantities, as the village banjar is slowly and gradually decreasing in area.

One reason why cowdung is preferred to firewood is the special advantage it offers to the village house-wife. Wood fire needs constant attendance. What the house-wife wants is a fire over which she can put her pot of food material for cooking and then go off to the fields or to the well with the certainty that the fire would smoulder on and gently simmer the food. The dung fire gives her exactly what she wants. It is best suited for boiling the milk, which becomes very delicious, as it gradually thickens over the self-regulated cow-dung fire.

Another way of restoring to the fields some of their natural fertility is the custom by which the village people have no fixed privy in their houses. They utilize fields in the immediate neighbourhood of their residences as the usual retiring place for the purpose. The value of this custom to the soil can hardly be overestimated. It is owing to this fact that the village is surrounded with a belt of well-manured, and consequently highly productive, soil.

The cultivators realize the importance of green manuring. They believe that it increases the produce by 50



per cent, but somehow they do not act upon this knowledge. It may be due to a lack of foresight or want of resources, which makes it impossible for them to wait for a month or so, the time taken for green manures.

They know that hemp, if utilized as green manure, will increase the produce of the soil but they seldom grow it except on the outskirts of the fields to supply themselves with the material for making ropes.

In accordance with the prevailing custom, manure is not sold in the village. Everybody collects his own manure and uses it, but it is not removed to other villages. Sometime back it used to be sold at the *parāo*, the halting place for carts, but now it is no longer done, owing to the fact that the persons who have got the contract utilize it themselves.

Manure is not given regularly to fields, nor is it available for sale in the village. Nobody has a surplus to sell; everybody is in want of more. They give manure to wheat, poppy, melons and vegetables at intervals of three or four years, because they cannot afford to give more.

Chemical manures and bone fertilizers are not only outside the sphere of their knowledge and experience, but also against their training and sentiment. The fact is that the utility of these things has not been demonstrated to them, and their hand-to-mouth living precludes any idea of making any experiment for themselves. The landlords who can do so are only too indolent to take the lead.

Long experience of cultivation seems to have taught the Indian farmer that a field, if used for raising the same crop, year after year, diminishes in fertility. He has, therefore, adopted a system of rotation of crops, which though not based on scientific knowledge, serves the purpose of good farming, the aim of the cultivator being to keep up the fertility of the soil without being required to manure it. Experience has also taught him that a field on which he grows maize, which ripens early in the kharif, gets sufficient time for the soil to recuperate by rest, to enable him to produce a mixed crop of wheat and barley, called *Gojai*; that jowar is a very exhausting crop, and except gram it is not possible

to raise any other crop after it in the following spring ; and that after gram or pea they can grow rice in the same field.

An ordinary schedule of the rotation of crops which they follow is given below :—

FIELD A

Year		Kharif (July to September)	Rabi (October to April)
1327 Fasli	...	Paddy	Gram.
1328 „	...	(fallow)	Wheat.
1329 „	...	(fallow)	Urd (pulse).
1330 „	...	Jowar (<i>Holcus sorghum</i>).	Arhar (<i>Cajanus indicus</i>).

FIELD B

1st year	...	Maize	Poppy.
2nd „	...	(fallow)	Wheat.
3rd „	...	Sama	Potato.

FIELD C

1st year	...	Paddy	(a) Pea or Gram or (b) Bejhra, i.e. (a mixture of any three of these, viz. wheat, gram, pea or barley).
2nd year	...	Kodo (<i>Paspalum serobiculatum</i>).	Gram, pea or barley.
3rd „	...	Maize	(a) Gojai, i.e. barley and wheat mixed, or (b) Melon.

The single crop system, however remunerative at first, is liable to end in failure sooner or later. The reasons are obvious and substantiated by modern science. A constant demand by the same crop for particular salts and manure ingredients on a land makes it irresponsible to that crop. Moreover special insect and fungus parasites accumulate in the field.

Rest is necessary not only to recuperate the energy of men and animals, but also of soils. The value of this



scientific principle is evident in the practice of leaving lands fallow for some periods in the year. The increased pressure of population on land is, however, minimizing the period of rest.

Very often cultivators grow mixed crops, such as jowar and arhar, gojai, i.e. wheat and barley, or bejhra, i.e. a mixture of three crops. They are not able to account for the practice, but believe that whatever the weather, one or other of the mixed crops is likely to come up.

The advantages of such a system are easily seen. It proves a sort of insurance against the vicissitudes of weather, for the circumstances which destroy one crop are very likely to suit another; it economizes tillage in small holdings, and assures a quantity of yield sufficient for the maintenance of a family.

The peasant gives his best soil, his manured and irrigated fields to the single grain which he sells to his banker; in the remaining fields he grows mixed grains which have little export value, and, as a rule, are not meant for sale. They are grown in order to be used as food by the farmer's family.

The mixtures most commonly grown are:—

- (a) Jowar and arhar—almost invariably mixed.
- (b) Paddy and kodo.
- (c) Paddy and jowar (rarely mixed).
- (d) Barley and wheat (known as gojai).
- (e) Three grain mixture—*bejhra*.

The primary need of the cultivator is to produce food for himself and his family, and fodder for his cattle. He must also pay rent for the land which he holds. He therefore produces some cheap crops, e.g. jowar, paddy, barley or gram and arhar and urd which supply him with food. Again, he grows some more valuable crops; e.g. wheat, poppy or urd, which provide him with enough money to enable him to pay the rents, and to buy his clothing and other necessities of life. It is his want and circumstances which determine his work. He concentrates his effort on the production of food for his family, without caring to grow more profitable crops. This tends to retard change towards more profitable agriculture. He has not yet learnt to grow crops of

commercial value, and live on the money realized from their sale. In practice, he follows the old and beaten track of his forefathers, and simply believes in growing everything that he needs.

The diet of the Thakurs and other higher castes consists of wheat, rice, urd, ghee, and mustard oil; while the staple food of the cultivators is made up of gram, barley, bajra, kodo, pea and arhar.

Thus a cultivator holding about 13 kachcha bighas, i.e. about $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres, will distribute his crops in the following manner:—

Area	Kharif	Rabi
4 bighas ...	Jowar (food and fodder).	Arhar (lentil)
4 ,, ...	Paddy (for sale, or food).	Gram (food and bhusa i.e. straw).
1 bigha ...	Maize.	Poppy (to pay rents).
4 bighas ...	Urd (for sale, or food).	Wheat (to pay rents).

A general idea of the routine of the cultivators through the year may be gathered from the following time-table:—

Months of the year	Business
<i>Chait</i> and <i>Baisakh</i> , i.e. mid March, April and mid May.	Rabi cutting, harvesting and threshing the grain, storing it in their homes.
<i>Jeth</i> , i.e. June ...	House repairs and building. Plastering, thatching and carrying manure to the fields.
<i>Asarh</i> , i.e. July ...	Kharif sowing.
<i>Sawan</i> , i.e. August ...	Weeding the kharif crop.
<i>Bhadoun</i> , i.e. September ...	Ploughing for the rabi crop.
<i>Kuar</i> , i.e. October and <i>Kartik</i> , i.e. November.	Rabi sowing.
<i>Aghan</i> , i.e. December ...	First watering of the rabi crop, e.g. Wheat. Also harvesting bajra.
<i>Pus.</i> , i.e. January ...	Harvesting late rice (paddy). Second watering of the rabi crop.
<i>Magh</i> , i.e. February ...	Collecting fodder for cattle. Otherwise free, if not engaged in ploughing for the sugar-cane crop.
<i>Phagun</i> , i.e. March ...	Cutting mustard.



Thus we see that the period, beginning with the coming of the rains till October or November, is a period of intense strenuous exertion for the cultivators. They have to gather their kharif and make preparations for the sowing of the rabi. Their next busy season approaches with the ripening of the rabi when they have to harvest wheat, arhar and barley.

Altogether for six months during the year they have to labour very hard. This points to the need of supplementary occupations to fill up the intervals when the work is not continuous, or when there is no work at all.



CHAPTER IV

THE FARMER'S CAPITAL

Implements and Accessories

THE village cultivator is working at a great disadvantage owing to the inefficiency of his clumsy and time-worn agricultural implements. The worst feature of tillage with such implements is that it takes an unnecessarily large amount of time. It causes a great waste of the time and energy of the cultivators, whose hard toil consequently is not adequately rewarded. The Indian wooden *hal* is simply a grubber ; it merely stirs the earth on the surface. It does not eradicate properly weeds which are a serious obstruction to good crops, because both compete for nutrition from the soil to the disadvantage of the sown crop. The iron plough is free from these defects, and is well worth adopting although it means increased expenditure. The introduction of improved tillage implements should open great possibilities for Indian agriculture, as it has enormously increased the production in other countries.

The implements used by the cultivators are of the simplest kind. For the breaking up of the soil they have their wooden plough tipped with iron. For doing odd jobs they have their spade. For levelling the soil after ploughing they have the wooden beam known as *sarawan* or *patela*. For weeding they have their *khurpi*, and for harvesting they use a sickle which is a curved iron piece with an edge on one side attached to a wooden handle.

These instruments are so simple in their construction that it requires no ingenuity on the part of the village mechanic, carpenter or blacksmith, in making or repairing them. The following table gives their names, approximate prices and the number of years for which



they are expected to last. From this has been calculated, as appended to the table, their annual depreciation :—

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS AND ACCESSORIES

Name	Approximate price	Usual duration period	Annual Depreciation
	RS A P	Years	RS A P
1. Plough and yoke ...	5 0 0	2	2 8 0
2. Clod Crusher ...	2 4 0	2	1 2 0
3. Spade ...	1 4 0	4	0 5 0
4. Hoeing Axe ...	0 12 0	8	0 1 6
5. Sickle ...	0 4 0	6	0 0 8
6. Pick-axe ...	0 8 0	8	0 1 0
7. Weeding-axe ...	0 6 0	3	0 2 0
8. Chopper ...	0 12 0	2½	0 4 10
9. Small-axe ...	0 3 0	4	0 0 9
10. Panchagur (wooden handle to turn straw). ¹	0 6 0	4	0 1 6
11. Mussakka ² ...	0 3 0	1	0 3 0
12. Water Bucket (pur) ...	7 0 0	2½	2 12 10
13. Rope ...	4 0 0	2½	1 0 8
14. Pulley ...	2 0 0	8	0 4 0
Total ...	24 14 0		9 8 9

Every cultivator in the village does not necessarily own this complete set of agricultural implements.

Seeds.—The cultivators are aware of the fact that the quality of the crop depends to a great extent on the quality of the seed used. They therefore reserve a portion of the best quality of their produce to be used as seed for the next harvest. Those who fail to preserve *besar*, i.e. seed have to borrow it from others, e.g. from the Sahukar or Mahajan or fellow-cultivators. The seed supplied by the bania is inferior in quality to that supplied by fellow-cultivators. The cultivators generally preserve the seed in a *bakhari* or *khatta*,

¹ This is used when the corn is being threshed.

² Used to cover the mouth of bullocks to prevent them from eating the corn while threshing.

It is borrowed on deohra terms, and the period of loan is about six months (from October to April in the case of the rabi crop). The rate of interest therefore comes to 100 per cent per annum. This is slightly offset by the fact that grain is cheaper in May, just after the harvesting season than when it is borrowed in the sowing season, viz. in October.

The quantity of seed sown per acre is governed by custom. They sometimes put more seed in inferior soil in the hope that some of it at least may come up. Generally no seed drill is used in this village. In case of inferior crops sowing is done broadcast, but in case of wheat which is the most important crop, seed is sown in furrows, while in the case of potatoes and cassava it is put at regular intervals.

The quantity of seed used per acre is estimated as follows :—

RABI

Name of the crop	Amount of seed in seers	Approximate price in rupees
	Seers	RS A P
Wheat	64	9 0 0
Barley	48	4 8 0
Gram	32	3 0 0
Arhar	4	0 8 0
Pea	64	8 0 0

KHARIF

Name of the crop	Amount of seed in seers	Approximate price in rupees
	Seers	RS A P
Paddy	32	4 0 0
Urd	8	1 0 0
Maize	8	0 12 0
Bajra (spiked millet) ...	2½	0 4 0
Jowar (Great millet) ...	4	0 8 0



Live Stock.—Cattle are considered to be an indispensable and valuable asset of the agriculturist. Without them it would be hard to carry on agricultural operations. Cattle supply the peasants also with some of the essentials of their diet and are used for transport and conveyance as well. With poor cattle agriculture becomes inefficient. As Clouston observes :—

‘ Poor draught cattle result in bad cultivation ; poor cultivation results in poor outturns of grain for the cultivator and of fodder for the cattle ; this again results in an impoverished cultivator and in weak and therefore inefficient draught bullocks.’

Then again, the number of plough cattle owned by a cultivator measures his economic position. This year the village has only eighty-three pairs of plough cattle, most of which are owned by the Thakur proprietors. The actual cultivators have in some instances a team of their own. There are a few who own only a single bullock and there are many who have none.

The following is a table giving in detail their numbers together with ploughs and carts in the village :—

Class of cattle.	Purpose for which used	1915	1920	1925
Bull ...	Breeding ...	...	...	...
Bullock ...	Ploughing, raising, conveyance ...	224	152	167
Buffalo ...	Do. ...	8	8	81
Cow ...	Milk ...	58	57	74
She-buffalo ...	Do. ...	53	45	50
Goat ...	Do. ...	185	34	92
Sheep ...	Wool ...	...	...	4
Pony ...	Conveyance ...	27	9	2
Mule ...	Do. ...	...	...	3
Camel ...	Do. ...	...	...	...
Total No. of cattle.	...	702	459	552
Plough ...	Ploughing ...	83	76	84
Cart ...	Conveyance ...	30	1	7
Grand Total	...	815	536	643

The above table shows that the number of cattle possessed by the village has increased roughly by 20 per cent since 1920, but as compared to the number ten years ago, they fall short by 150, i.e. a decrease of 21 per cent.

Their general condition cannot be considered satisfactory when 70 per cent are poor in physique, small and weak ; 20 per cent fairly good and 10 per cent only which may be classed as good.

The average area which falls to the share of a team comes to nine bighas, taking into account the fact that the residents of this village hold some 55 bighas in other villages. This is rather more than the weak cattle, which the village possesses, can properly cultivate. There is no bull for breeding purposes. The villagers purchase cattle in small fairs held in various localities in the neighbourhood.

The quality of cattle is poor and the reasons are not far to seek. There is no jungle or terai land near the village. Some of the pasture land has been brought under the plough. The fodder on which they have mostly to depend, is straw from the crops and grass from the less fertile meadow land.

The cost of maintenance of different classes of cattle in the village per month is approximately as follows :—

	RS
Per cow	6
Per pair of oxen	15
Per she-buffalo	12

The maintenance cost of the last is rather high because they are given oil-cake which is said to increase the yield of milk and clarified butter obtainable from it.

These sums are never actually spent by the cultivators as they provide the fodder from their own fields and seldom go to purchase it. In fact they never spend so much on their cattle, for obviously it is beyond their means. The cattle generally live on the fodder and straw raised on the cultivators' own farm. In the rainy season they live on green grass, and in summer, when there is scarcity of straw, cattle live on stubble and are half-starved.

The average life of a bullock is about sixteen years. Its



working period is about eight years commencing at the age of four. Taking Rs. 120 as a moderate price for a pair of bullocks serviceable for eight years, the annual depreciation amounts to Rs. 15.

The average cultivator changes his pair of bullocks every two or three years. He purchases a pair for Rs. 90, and having worked with it for three years disposes of it for Rs. 40 only. To this he adds Rs. 40 again and purchases a new pair at the next harvest. His depreciation charges approximate to Rs. 17 annually.

Though the depreciation charges are not very high, yet the replacement inevitably leads the cultivator into debt.

Better cattle might be more economical and valuable, but religious feeling prevents systematic elimination of the inefficient cattle, and consequently there is a surplus of weak animals which are a burden to the cultivators. These half-starved animals fall easy victims to disease and illness, and spread contagion around.

The provision and replacement of cattle is an important factor in rural indebtedness, and a system of cattle insurance will be a boon to cultivators. It will check the spread of disease and preventable mortality by the adoption of such methods and treatment as may be recommended by veterinary advisers, e.g., vaccine inoculation.

The problem of the supply of the requisite quantity of a suitable type of fodder for the village cattle is becoming more difficult day by day. The Kharif crop yields a good supply of green fodder; and a fair quantity of straw is obtained also from the Rabi crop. The cattle make up the deficiency by resorting to the village pasture which is not very rich and is further decreasing in area. In this area no land is reserved for raising cattle fodder. In fact, cultivators do not appreciate the practice of growing special fodder crops as is done in other countries.

A serious shortage of fodder may occur in seasons when the rains have ceased so early that the millet crops wither altogether, or are seriously stunted in growth. On the other hand, as was the case last year, too much rain or floods may also ruin these fodder-yielding crops. Failure to raise fodder has a disastrous effect.



It is the worst calamity that can befall a village. Food can be imported, but not fodder for lack of facilities and communication.

There exists a proportion between the quantity of land utilized for human consumption on the one hand, and for raising crops for animal consumption on the other, i.e. an equilibrium between the proportional quantities of arable land and meadow land. The proximate cause, which tends to disturb the equilibrium, is the tendency to extend the cultivated area due to the increase of population, which reduces the area meant for cattle.

An extension of the cultivated area is almost inevitable pending an improvement in agricultural methods, or as an alternative there will be a tendency to give up or to diminish materially the acreage under non-food crops and raw materials. So far the tendency has been to sacrifice meadow land for the extension of the cultivated area, but in the near future, with increasing scarcity of fodder, an opposite swing of the pendulum might be expected, i.e. a tendency towards the reservation of meadowland and grazing ground in preference to tillage. The best thing is to grow special fodder crops as is done in other countries.

IRRIGATION

Wells are now the only source of irrigation. Several cultivators help to sink a well by joint labour, and this serves the purpose of all of them. Days are fixed for each partner to draw water in turn.

A pair of oxen is an essential ally of the cultivator in drawing the big water bucket called the *pur*. The oxen alternately descend a slope while raising the bucket and ascend when the empty *pur* is going down. This ingenious way takes full account of the force of gravity. The recurring cost of this form of irrigation has, however, greatly increased owing to the high price of draught cattle and the increasing cost of their maintenance.

The poorest cultivators who cannot afford cattle for raising water to their fields, have to depend on their own



manual labour and use a contrivance known as the *Dhekuli* or leverlift, which consists of a long pole or beam of wood, at one end of which is tied a water bucket while the other end is counterpoised by a weight of dry clay. One man can work up the lever, and this method is adopted by the poorer cultivators who have no draught cattle either owned or borrowed. This is only possible when the water level is high. The cost of the lift is from two to three rupees, and worked by two men on and off during the day it will irrigate half a kachha bigha, i.e. $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an acre, from a depth of twelve feet.

There appears to be a fair scope for tube wells in this locality, because water is obtainable only at a depth of about fourteen feet below the surface.

The total number of wells is twenty-seven of which six are of masonry work, while twenty-one are kachcha. Of the former, three are exclusively reserved for drinking purposes, while the other three, which are on the outskirts of the village, are sometimes used by the zemindars for irrigating their fields.

A. *Estimate of a kachcha well.*—

	RS	A
The cost of a kachcha well is roughly.	14	0
Annual repairs	2	0
Usual duration period, i.e. life of a kachcha well is three years.		
Therefore annual depreciation is equal to Rs. $14 \div 3 =$ Rs. 18/3	6	0
One such well is sufficient to irrigate about ten acres of land.		

B. *Estimate of pakka (masonry) well*—

A pakka well costs about Rs. 300 to sink.

It will work for about sixty years.

Therefore annual depreciation is equal to Rs. 5.

But the zemindars do not allow the tenants to sink pakka wells, because it makes ejectment difficult. Moreover the zemindars have to pay compensation for such permanent improvements to the outgoing tenant.

Sometimes attempts to sink wells fail, usually on account of too much sand continuously appearing in the

lower beds of the soil. To protect wells from the falling earth and sand, the villagers put round a lining of *Jhankar*, i.e. of woven withies of Arhar (*Cajanus indicus*). Due to this the water drawn from kachcha wells is often found to smell slightly foul, and is sometimes not good enough for drinking purposes.

The village tanks supply water for the first watering of the Rabi crops. There are five ponds, four of which are used for irrigating fields; but in summer these ponds dry up. For fields close to the village, irrigation from tanks is easier and cheaper, especially if the water has not to be lifted to a very high level. It is usually done by means of a swing basket called the *beri*.

Generally 50 per cent of the acreage under Rabi crops is irrigated from tanks, but the village people depend on wells as a surer source of water supply. Of the total cultivated area, usually half is irrigated from tanks and wells for the Rabi crop, and the other half requires no artificial irrigation in the Kharif season.

Statistics for the year 1331 fasli, that is, A.D. 1924 are as follows :—

	Bighas	Biswas	Biswani
Area irrigated from wells ...	51	9	8
Area irrigated from tanks ...	9	11	10
Total area irrigated ...	61	0	18
Area not irrigated ...	628	0	5

Last year winter rains were very opportune, so less artificial irrigation was required than normally.

The Sarda Canal, which is one of the most important projects for irrigating the districts of Oudh, should be a work of great public utility, for it would satisfy the irrigational needs of the people of this village also, as one of its distributaries will pass through Rampur Deorai, one mile north of Rudhui. On its completion the present dependence of the people on uncertain and uneven rainfall would be very much reduced and the prosperity of the people would be increased.



CHAPTER V

THE FARMER'S COSTS AND PROFITS

THE expenses and profits of cultivation calculated per acre for each crop, can hardly be expected to be absolutely accurate. The estimate of the cost of each separate process of production, and an exact measurement of the out-turn of agricultural produce per acre, are matters of considerable difficulty. At best, an attempt has been made to strike averages from a large number of cases studied independently, making allowance for abnormal statements. Information was collected from a number of cultivators actually working on the fields, and a statement prepared representing the average figures. The village measures of weight, i.e. kachcha maund,¹ and of area that is kachcha bigha,² were converted into standard weights and acres.

Tendencies both to under-estimate and over-estimate agricultural profits were observable. At the present time when the Provincial Settlement operations are going on, the farmer naturally thinks that the enquirer means to increase his rent on the basis of increased agricultural profits. It is difficult to eradicate suspicion from his mind. This leads to an over-estimate of costs and an under-estimate of produce. On the other hand, the zemindar owners who live on rents realized from the land, believe that the actual cultivators are making huge profits, particularly from the increased prices since the Great War; although the post-war conditions as they exist to-day have changed in this respect, i.e. there has been a fall in prices since 1920. They think that they are entitled to enhanced rents, and in support of their claim always over-estimate the profits of cultivation.

¹ One kachcha maund is equal to 16 seers standard.

² 2½ kachcha bighas make one standard bigha or 3,025 square yards.

Information regarding crops and their cultivation has been arranged in the following order. A general description of the different crops, of the procedure and the mode of their cultivation is followed by an account of the adverse influences affecting the yield. At the end we have prepared a chart giving comparative figures for the different crops, stating the expenses incurred in the various processes of production, the yield and its approximate value, and from this are deduced the gross profits of cultivation.

WHEAT

It is a Rabi crop which is sown at the end of October or beginning of November, and is harvested in March or April. According to Hindi months, it is sown about Dewali and harvested after Holi. As a rule it is grown as a single crop for the whole year on a field, which has usually lain fallow in the preceding Kharif. The best fields are allotted to wheat, and the utmost attention is paid to its cultivation. It is sometimes sown mixed with barley (when the mixture is termed Gojai), and may be mixed with gram or pea. Usually a wheat field contains some mustard grown at the border.

The soil is worked up in the most careful manner during the rains and the oftener it is ploughed the better. The number of ploughings varies with the circumstances and opportunities of the individual cultivator, but fifteen or twenty times may be taken as the average number for a good crop. On comparatively inferior soils mixtures are grown with the idea that one of the crops will certainly mature. The amount of seed used per acre is about a maund and a half. Seed is spread broadcast. Fields are divided into rectangular irrigation beds. Usually two or three waterings are given to it in the winter season. No weeding is generally necessary as wheat fields are most carefully prepared beforehand.

The crop when ripe is cut by sickles and carried home. Then it is threshed by being trodden upon by bullocks. The chaff is separated by exposing the grain to wind, and dropping it from a basket or a winnowing fan. It suffers from the attacks of a microscopic fungus called



Gerui in Hindustani. A sort of brown reddish rust covers the ears and all the grain is lost.

The outturn of straw and grain per acre is about 16 and 20 maunds respectively. The straw makes fine fodder for cattle. Wheat alone is not usually eaten by the cultivators, whose staple food is made up of coarser grains. It is very often sold to the Bania in order to obtain money to pay off rents, and meet other household needs.

The cultivation of wheat requires so much labour, specially bullock-power in ploughing and watering, that a cultivator who does not own a pair of oxen cannot raise the crop. Borrowing and exchanging help a little, but growing wheat with hired bullocks will mean actual loss.

BARLEY

Like wheat it is also a spring or Rabi crop. But unlike it, it is usually grown as a second crop on land which had been used in the preceding Kharif season. It is generally mixed with gram and pea, when it is termed Bejra, i.e. a mixture of three grains. Rape and mustard are sown on the borders of these fields. Barley requires almost the same labour and trouble as wheat. The question naturally arises as to why barley is cultivated and not wheat, which is always the more valuable crop. The reasons are these.

First, that in one whole year only one single crop of wheat can be raised, while barley can be grown as a second crop. Moreover wheat is the more delicate crop of the two; barley, being a hardier crop, is affected less by frost, cold and the other inclemencies of the weather. It requires slightly less labour and care in ploughing and watering. Secondly, wheat is generally grown as a commercial crop for sale and export, while barley along with other coarser grain mixtures, forms the staple food of the cultivator and his family. Barley ripens also about a fortnight earlier than wheat, and being a cheap grain, is given to the village servants and artisans. The yield of grain and straw is about 18 and 22 maunds respectively.

GRAM

It is grown as a Rabi crop on the less fertile soil. No manure is needed, nor is any irrigation necessary. It is never weeded. It is a very useful plant; every portion of it is regarded as valuable. The grain is used both for bread and as pulse. The young plant is used as vegetable, the green seed is eaten raw and finds a good sale in the towns. The plant is thrown into a fire and the roasted seed, i.e. *hola* rubbed out and eaten. The gram straw is admirable fodder. The average grain yield is 14 maunds.

It may not be out of place to mention a well-known short story regarding gram. It runs thus: Having imprisoned Shajahan, Aurangzeb asked him to choose for himself one class of corn he liked best. The old king selected gram, because a large variety of preparations agreeable to Indian taste can be made from it.

PADDY

This crop allows a latitude in time. It is sown in July, and one variety is harvested by the end of September. This is known as Aghani rice. Another variety which undergoes a process of transplantation, takes longer time to ripen. This is ready by November, i.e. *Kuar*. Jowar is sometimes mixed with it, not with a view to gathering a double crop, but as an insurance against too little rainfall. But the usual practice is to grow it alone. The straw, called *payal* or *paira*, is given to cattle, but is not very nutritious fodder. The grain covered with husk is called *dhan*, and when cleared of chaff, rice. The field is weeded twice. It should be continuously kept under water, to enable the young shoots of the seed to come out with facility in the pulpy ground. It flourishes best in tracts of heavy rainfall and grows rapidly. It is a pleasant sight to see the green field of paddy with their long feathery ears. The yield per acre is about 12 maunds.

MAIZE

It is sown early in July as soon as the rains have set in. It is grown near the village site on the soil which gets a fair amount of manure. Several ploughings are as a



rule necessary, 8 seers of seeds will do for an acre, and are sown broadcast. Its cultivation is a laborious process, and so many cultivators do not undertake it. It is more popular in the western districts of the United Provinces than in Oudh. Weeding is an essential process. It ripens in about two months. The average produce per acre in this locality is about 12 maunds. If more carefully grown the yield may be greater. Fresh cobs of maize are roasted and much relished. The crop will fetch more money if sold at this stage than when the grain is fully ripe.

JOWAR

It is the commonest Kharif crop and is usually sown mixed with Arhar (*Cajanus indicus*). Jowar ripens quickly by October and is cut with sickles, while Arhar remains in the field till March to be harvested standing with the Rabi crops. Two ploughings are enough, and the monsoon rains generally give the necessary amount of water. The yield is about 7 maunds to the acre, when mixed with arhar. It may be 25 per cent more if it is sown alone. It yields a valuable quantity of green fodder.

BAJRA

Its cultivation is similar to that of Jowar, requiring slightly less labour than the latter. It is sown a little later and ripens a little earlier than Jowar. The yield is about $6\frac{1}{2}$ maunds per acre. Village people like to take it in the winter season because it is believed to have an invigorating effect. The crop also yields Karbi, i.e. fodder for the cattle.

URD

It is an important pulse grown in this locality. It is sown in August and reaped in October. It covers the whole ground. It is generally followed by wheat in the next year, because, being a leguminous crop, its roots are said to help the nitrification of the soil. The yield per acre is about 11 maunds

ARHAR

Of all the crops, except sugarcane, which is not grown in this village, Arhar takes the longest time to ripen. It is sown with other Kharif crops in July, and is harvested with the Rabi crops in April. It is invariably grown mixed with Jowar which is harvested in three months' time. The amount of seed required per acre is small, being about 10 lbs.

The crop is safe from the effects of weather except frost, to which it is highly susceptible. Its dry stalks are put to a variety of uses, e.g. lining kachcha wells, thatching and fencing. The produce of grain is about 7 maunds per acre, but when sown alone it may be about 11 maunds.

POTATO

The crop is getting popular because the produce is heavy and finds a good sale at Lucknow. It needs an assured supply of water. The yield per acre is four times the ordinary grain, i.e. about 60 maunds to the acre. It may be used as an excellent substitute for food-grains. The Indian farmer thinks, however, that he cannot live on potato alone like his Irish compatriot, and any alternative to grain food does not appear to him acceptable.

SAKARKAND

Its yield is great, and in bulk five times as much as that of wheat or other grains. It stands drought better and can be grown almost in any season, in the open or under shade. It is a nourishing food, agreeable to the Indian taste. It can be taken fresh, or may be kept for a long time. It has great value, therefore, as food for famine prevention. But the growing of sweet potato is limited by its demand. The yield is the highest, approximately 65 maunds per acre



POPPY

Every cultivator wishing to grow the crop must obtain a written license from the Government to do so, and receives at the same time an advance in cash before poppy is sown. The whole of the produce is purchased by the Government at a fixed rate, varying in different years. The price paid for the drug alone in a carefully cultivated field, is not less than Rs. 60 for each acre. Something more is realized from the sale of the seed and dried capsules. The market is absolutely certain. Thus the cultivation is very profitable and also popular, but its production may justly be restricted on moral considerations.

The landlords like to grow poppy themselves, and the cultivators would also like to sow a bigha of it, in order to realize money for the payment of rent.

It is sown in the same season as other Rabi crops, i.e. from October to March. It is grown on very highly manured land, the best *Goind* being preferred. It is most commonly grown alone, but occasionally rows of safflower are sown in its midst. About two seers of seed per acre are sown broadcast. The crop is always sown near a well because regular watering is essential. It requires efficient ploughing. The land is ploughed as many times as possible, and weeds are carefully destroyed. When the capsules are fully swelled, opium collection commences by making small scratches or incisions through which the opium exudes. For this an instrument called the *Chheni* is used. Each capsule is lanced three times. When the juice has all been extracted, the capsules are cut off and the *posta* seed is sold in the market. The empty capsules are purchased by native druggists (Pansaries). They are an efficacious material for poultices and fomentation. The poppy crop may suffer serious injury from damp weather, especially in the later stage of its growth. On the other hand an east wind is also injurious, because it dries up the poppy juice. The average yield of opium is about 8 seers to the acre, valued at Rs. 80 and about $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers of *posta* seed.

ADVERSE INFLUENCES

The adverse influences which affect crops and over which the villagers seem to have little control, may be classified as follows :

- (1) Wind.
- (2) Frost.
- (3) Hail-storm.
- (4) Depredations of birds and beasts.
- (5) Insects and diseases affecting the crops.

Strong west wind, familiarly known as the *pachiao*s weakens the hold of the roots of the plants, particularly of the wheat crop, which in that case can derive only an insufficient nutrition. If this wind blows early in February when it is time for the corn ears to appear, the deficiency in nutrition caused by uprooting does great injury to the produce, and the crop is dried up.

An east wind is harmful to poppy during lancing time, because the juice does not properly exude then.

Crops have to face the danger of frost in the months of January and February. Frost affects those crops most which are grown on comparatively dry soil. Moisture retained in the roots of plants, resists frost. Villagers are aware of this fact, and so irrigate wheat and barley several times. On the other hand those crops which do not require occasional watering for their growth, are most susceptible to it, e.g. arhar (*Cajanus indicus*), gram, pea, potato, ground-nut, and raspberry. This year extensive damage seems to have been done by frost to crops particularly to gram and arhar. Strong winds by day, and frost in the night destroy the crops wholesale.

Hail storms occur only occasionally. The injury depends upon the stage which the crops have reached. Ordinarily a storm in early January does little harm, but the danger becomes greater as the season advances. They are not very frequent and the area affected is generally small.

Birds and beasts, free denizens of the air and the jungle, consider it their privilege to prey upon the



ripening crops as the fields are as a rule unfenced and unprotected. If proper care be not taken, the damage done is enormous.

Monkeys specially present a danger which of late has grown serious. Constant and regular watch is the only remedy adopted at present in the village. Kanjars are also engaged to catch and deport monkeys to other villages. They are usually paid at the rate of 4 annas per monkey. But this affords no real solution to the problem. Incidentally one day, a Mohammadan was observed taking away a number of monkeys, some ten or twelve in number on a *thela* (cart). On being questioned he said that he had caught them in a neighbouring village, and would send them to Calcutta for sale, which is a big market for pet animals which are exported to foreign countries.

Cultivators find themselves helpless in combating the pests and insects by which the crops are affected owing to the abnormality of weather. They regard them as acts of divine dispensation. Sometimes the damage done by these is great.

The following is a list of the important insects and diseases affecting different crops

Crop affected	Name of the insect or disease	Size of the insect	REMARKS
Wheat ...	1. Gerui...	Very small, invisible to the naked eye.	It is a microscopic fungi. It covers the corn ears with a brownish red iron-like rust.
... ..	2. Lakhi.	(Disease) ...	The grain becomes black, and on rubbing falls off as a dark powder.

Crop affected	Name of the insect or disease	Size of the insect	REMARKS
Gram ...	Bahadura	1 in. in length...	It is green in colour. It is a well-known caterpillar, which attacks pea also.
Barley ...	Korhul ...	(Disease) ...	The ripe grain is converted into blackish dust.
Arhar (<i>Cajanus indicus</i>)	Chheda ...	$\frac{1}{4}$ inch ...	.....
Paddy ...	Gandhi or rice sap-per.	.....	It spoils the crop wholesale. Its botanical name is <i>Leptocorisa acuta</i> .
Jowar (Great millet)	1. Serga-da.	$\frac{1}{2}$ inch ...	It is yellowish brown in colour. It bores through the stem.
„	2. Kiri ...	Very small ...	It is smaller than a weevil.
Kodo (Paspalum— <i>Thutha scrobiculapum</i>)	Thutha ...	A small insect	.....
Mustard ...	Mahu ...	.....	The seed is spoiled at an early stage of its growth, when it is green.
Melon ...	1. Gulla	(Disease) ...	The crop gets rotten.
„ ...	2. Kharra	„ ...	The crop is withered.

Moreover grain stored up in granaries is affected by weevils which eat up the essence, rendering it worthless for use.



MARKETING.

The village Bania undertakes the business of marketing the agricultural produce of the village. He purchases it wholesale from the cultivators, carries it to the marts by cart or pony and disposes of the grain in the city market.

It is roughly estimated that about 70 per cent of the produce of the poor cultivator is thus sold off through the Bania and only 30 per cent remains with him. Hard pressed by his creditors, the mahajan and the zamindar, the cultivator has to make over practically all the produce, keeping barely sufficient to support himself and his family.

Paradoxical as it may seem, the cultivator is not the real master of his produce, because he cannot dispose of it exactly as he would like to do. In order to meet his obligations the cultivator has to sell his produce just after harvesting. This is a serious handicap, because the produce fetches lower prices at that time. He is not in a position to wait to enable him to take advantage of better prices later on. Thus the profit of marketing goes to the Bania, who ordinarily has a margin of at least 12 per cent owing to the difference in rates. The usual difference between the village and the city market rates in the case of valuable grains is one seer, while in the case of coarser grains it is 2 seers per rupee.

THE CROP CHART.

At the end is appended a chart giving comparative figures of the expenses, yield and gross profit separately for each crop.

Some explanation is perhaps necessary in order to make it clear how the calculations of the different items in the chart for the various crops have been made.

In column 2, rents noted for the different crops show a varying figure. The sum in rupees mentioned for each crop, has been put down in view of (a) the quality of the soil on which the particular crop is usually raised, (b) the period of time for which it occupies the soil.



In column 4, only the number of ploughings given for each crop, is noted without saying anything about its cost. In the case of a cultivator who owns bullock power the cost is nil, in the sense that he has not to pay for it. On the other hand he maintains his cattle on the straw produced on his farm. For this reason the price of the straw obtained, viz. in column 12, has not been added to the produce. The yield of straw goes to compensate for the cost of ploughing and the maintenance of the bullocks.

A cultivator who has no bullocks has to hire them for ploughing at the rate of Rs. 1-8-0 per pair per day ; but he does not incur expenditure in feeding the pair since he has straw of his own. A pair of good oxen will usually plough an acre of land in a couple of days. Similar remarks apply to the cost of watering in column 5. The Kharif crops, as a general rule, need no artificial irrigation.

In column 3, the price of seed has been put down in rupees.

In column 6, the cost of weeding has been calculated at the rate of 4 annas per labourer. Usually women and children are engaged and are paid 3 annas and 2 annas respectively.

In column 7, labourers at the rate of 4 annas per day are engaged for cutting the harvest.

In column 8, the threshing charges are one-sixteenth of the produce, as noted in customary dues.

In column 9, customary wages to the village servants and artisans and the charges of the watchmen, are calculated similarly.

In column 10 are given the depreciation charges for bullocks and implements. Per cultivator, these charges come to Rs. 15 + Rs. 9-8-9 annually. Supposing one set suffices to cultivate three acres, the charges are reduced to about Rs. 8 per acre. Further an allowance has been made with reference to the period a crop requires their use. Regarding these charges it may be noted that they are entirely ignored by the village cultivator. He feels the pinch only when he is forced to raise a loan in order to replace them. Ordinarily he takes no account of such expenditure.



In column 12, has been put down the average yield per acre of corn and straw in maunds.

Columns 11, 13 and 14, which respectively give the total expenses of production, price of the produce and gross profits, need no explanation; except that the last include the management charges and the wages of the cultivator himself, together with the help given to cultivation by other members of his family, viz. wife and children.

Column No. 15, contains special remarks relating to particular crops.

It appears from a perusal of the chart that gross profits, after allowing for rents, vary from crop to crop. The average figure for grain crops may be taken to approximate closely to Rs. 23 per acre for one full year, being highest in the case of wheat, which has an outside demand. Extraordinary profits are obtainable from poppy cultivation, but this is an exceptional case. Potato and casava are special crops which are governed by their markets. At present these are not popular as staple food in India, but are mostly taken as vegetables.

These gross profits include the wages and earnings of management. An average farmer is thus not able to earn more than Rs. 15 ($23 \times .64$ acres) for each member of his family in a whole year. This sounds rather odd, and it may be asked how a farmer manages to live on such a small income. It may be pointed out that in the first place he makes no allowance for the depreciation of his capital, which amounts to about Rs. 8 per acre, and which has been included in the estimate of his expenses of cultivation. In the second place, the amount of Rs. 15 has been arrived at on the understanding that he sells all the produce. Actually he does not do so. He keeps as much of it as possible for himself to enable him to live. Thirdly, his inability to make an economic living out of his holding, partly accounts for the increase of his indebtedness to the village money-lenders.

The cultivator of a small farm in the village is in a dilemma. He can neither leave his home farm, nor is it sufficient for his maintenance. He has to supplement

his earnings by working as a labourer in the fields of others.

It has been found that in many cases the agricultural labourer who earns wages, is in a better condition than the actual cultivator, but the latter clings to his tiny farm and the 'sweated industry' as Carver calls it, which yields a 'bare livelihood to many (people) who only continue on the land because they do not know what else to do', because it gives him some distinction and status in the village society, whereas the landless labourer is regarded as one of no account. Surely the ownership of property, however small in itself, apart from the social distinction it gives, satisfies one of the primary instincts of human nature. It has a charm and attraction by itself.

Agriculture in India has been the most under-capitalized industry in existence, and to this directly can be traced its backwardness. The Indian cultivator does his best with his limited means, and in most cases, fails not so much by his ignorance, as on account of the lack of means and opportunity.

There is an old saying that 'every body would farm well if he could afford to'. This is only too true in the case of the Indian cultivator. The Indian farmer, who lives from hand to mouth, cannot find money to invest in improvements and follow the advice of experts, unless his income increases and he has money to spare. Once the capital is made available improvements can be started, but without it all the examples and exhortations must go unheeded with his present means.



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Crop	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12		13	14	15
	Rent	Seed	Ploughing and Clod-crushing	Watering	Weeding	Cutting	Threshing	Customary Wages		* Depreciation of Capital	Total Expenses	Produce		Price of Grain	† Gross Profits	Remarks
								Artisans	Watchmen			Grain	† Straw			
1. Wheat ...	RS 18	RS 9½	TIMES 15	2 times	RS ..	RS 2	RS 3	RS 3	RS ½	RS 6	RS 42	MDS. 16	MDS 20	RS 6+4 (mustard)	RS 26	International Market. Poor cultivators, owning no bullock power, cannot grow wheat.
2. Barley ...	12	4½	8	1 or 2 times	...	2	2½	1	½	5	27½	18	22	40	12½	Cultivator's staple food.
3. Gram ...	10	3	3 or 4	...	...	1½	2½	1	½	4	22	14	10	33	11	It is easy to raise this crop.
4. Paddy ...	8	4	2	Rains	7½	2	1½	1½	½	3	28	12	...	40	12	It is a gamble in rain.
5. Maize ...	6	1	3	..	5	2	2	1	½	3	20½	12	Green Fodder	31	10½	Not as carefully cultivated here as in the Western districts of U.P.
6. Jowar ...	8	½	2	..	...	2	1½	1½	½	3	16½	10	..	28½	12½	Yields valuable Karbi (Green fodder).
7. Bajra ...	8	½	2	..	2½	1½	1	1½	½	3	17½	8	..	24½	6½	The yield is poor.
8. Urd ...	12	1	1	..	4	2	2	2	½	5	28½	11	...	44	15½	Much of it is sold to realise money for payment of rent.
9. Arhar ...	12	½	2	...	...	2	1½	1	½	5	22½	12	...	39	16½	It is the common lentil in use.
10. Potato ...	10	10	2 or 3	3 times	4 (Trans-plantation)	4	Miscellaneous Expenses		5	5	38	60	...	65½	27½	The yield is large. Its demand in cities is great.
11. Cassava.	15	5	2	3 ..	4 ..	4	..		6	6	40	65	...	81	41	The yield is great. But the market is limited.
12. Poppy ...	18	½	20	3 ..	12	2	..	22½	8	63	Milk 8 seers Seed 3½ mds.	...	...	90+23 =113	50	Its market is guaranteed, opium being a Government monopoly.

N.B.—Sum of less than ½ Re. have not been taken account of.

* Assuming one pair of bullocks and a set of implements to suffice for three acres roughly.

† Straw produced goes against the maintenance of cattle.

‡ Gross profits include the management charges and the wages of the cultivator.

CHAPTER VI

WAGES AND RENTS

Wages.—The remuneration for services rendered to the cultivators is governed by custom. The village servants, artisans, labourers, all receive their wages at the harvest time. The following is the schedule of their services and customary dues :—

Name of the worker	Service	Dues	Amount
1. Gorait ...	To watch the crops.	Bisar =	5 seers of grain per bigha, i.e. 8 seers per acre for each crop.
2. Black-smith.	To prepare the iron tip for the plough and to repair all agricultural iron implements.	Tihai =	6 kachcha panseris, i.e. 12 seers per plough per cultivator. Each harvest, i.e. 24 seers in the whole year.
3. Carpenter	To make the plough and yoke out of the wood supplied by the cultivator.	Tihai =	The same as the black-smith's Tihai, i.e. Kharif, 12 seers Rabi, 12 „
4. Barber ...	To shave and sometimes to go on errand	...	3 kachcha panseris, i.e. 6 seers per adult male member of the family. He gets extra in cash and as perquisite on ceremonial occasions. His wife who serves in the household is paid in handfuls of grain.

Name of the worker	Services	Dues	Amount
5. Washer-man.	To wash clothes	...	3 panseris, i.e. 6 seers on either harvest per adult member of the family.
6. Labourer Class (A)	(a) To thresh the corn.	Louni =	2½ seers per maund, i.e. one-sixteenth of the produce on an average. In Kharif crop he is given one-twelfth and in Rabi $\frac{1}{10}$ th only, because the produce in the latter case is generally more valuable.
7. Labourer Class (B)	To reap the harvest.	Lehna =	Approximately 1 seer of uncleaned grain, given on the field.

But money economy is replacing the old customary payments for services made in kind. In earlier times all the payments for services were made in grain, but all this appears to be undergoing a silent transformation.

The village artisans, viz. the carpenter and the blacksmith, have now begun to charge extra money payments for special work done, in addition to the customary wages for the customary services. The village servants, viz. the barber and the washerman also occasionally demand money wages. The tie of relationship between the village cultivator and the labourer seems to have loosened, and the engagement of the latter has become more irregular and casual. As a compensation for this he now wants to charge the full money wage of his labour. He is not content with the customary Lehna and Louni.

The present rate of daily wages for an agricultural labourer in the village is as follows :—

			RS	A	P
Man	...	...	0	4	0
Woman	...	...	0	2	6
Boy	...	...	0	1	6

Some of the poorest people are engaged as servants for menial work to the Thakur landlords. Their duty is to cultivate the master's fields, tend his cattle and chop fodder. For such services they are usually paid Rs. 2-8-0 per month. In addition to this they are allowed Lehna for threshing his corn. These poor people often cultivate small plots as sub-tenants. They are allowed to use the master's oxen after his work is finished.

Seven per cent of the inhabitants of the village are labourers, content with their services at the zemindar's house because they can find no land to cultivate ; and fifteen per cent support themselves by cultivation in their own plots as well as by working as hired labourers.

The agricultural population in the village seems to be in excess of the numbers required for efficient cultivation, but, owing to conservatism, fear of the unknown and attachment to the tiny home farm, the ill-employed village labourer is not prepared to migrate to towns and adopt more highly paid occupations, as for example, domestic service in Lucknow, where there is at present a shortage of such servants, and wages are high.

Wages have risen for some time in the past, but no exact figures are available to measure such fluctuations. In the absence of more accurate and elaborate figures, it is hardly possible to measure the growth of the real wages of the labourer in the village over a long period of years.

Since 1913 they appear to have doubled, but the labourer's employment is irregular. There is a great demand of labour during the busy agricultural seasons, for example, sowing and harvesting time, but during the rest of the year work is slack. On the whole it may be said that the high wages of the village labourer during busy agricultural seasons are off-set by the casual nature of his engagement.

RENTS

Difference in rents is based on a differential advantage due mainly to two factors, viz. (1) fertility, and (2) situation. The village people seem to recognize the importance of both. Their classification of soils is two-fold :—

- (1) With reference to the quality of the soil.
- (2) With reference to distance from the central village site.

Average rents with reference to the quality of the soil are represented by the following table :—

	RS
1. Matiyar (clayey soil) ...	14 per acre.
2. Dumat (loam, i.e. clay and sand mixed).	12 „
3. Bhur (sandy soil) ...	6 „

It will be observed that rents diminish with decreasing fertility according to the nature of the soil, the qualities of which have been treated more elaborately elsewhere.

On the other hand average rents with reference to distance are as follows :—

	RS
1. Goind (nearest to the village).	16 per acre.
2. Manjhar (intermediate) ...	14 „
3. Paleo (distant or out-lying) ...	10 „

The land nearest the village, with all the facilities and conveniences for sowing, manuring and watering commands the highest rents, because it is, as a rule, the most productive. As these advantages diminish with the increasing distance, the rents gradually decrease. A cultivator can pay greater attention to his fields, keep a stricter watch over them and protect them from the ravages of animals and out-siders, if they are near at hand.

Formerly rents were paid and accepted in kind but this is found inconvenient under modern conditions. One Kurmi whose forefathers have been permanent tenants of the Chauhanas for about a hundred years, is cultivating land on a rental of Rs. 16 only, which should otherwise fetch Rs. 24.

Competition to some extent is still controlled by custom—the great regulator of Indian affairs, but as population presses, competition holds sway. Now nobody makes any concession in view of friendship, kinship or caste relationship in fixing the rent. He who pays the highest rent is given the land for cultivation irrespective of other considerations. On the other hand, the zemindars dislike the idea of renting their land to fellow-castemen, because they are unable to force these *Biradari* men to work for them whereas the lower classes, particularly of other castes, are always ready to do extra work on the landlord's farm.

There is, again, a difference in rents charged per unit of area in the taluqdari and the pattidari villages. These are higher in pattidari villages, on account of the keen competition among the large number of tenants who out-bid one another because they have to live on land and by land alone, with the result that the zemindars are able to make a good bargain. In fact in the pattidari villages there is no system according to which rents are charged. Rent for every separate field is fixed in an arbitrary manner by a process of haggling and bargaining between the zemindars on the one hand, and a large mass of unorganized tenants on the other. This is at the same time one of the causes of the scattered holdings dealt with elsewhere. In taluqdari villages the management of the estate is left to the manager, and the collection and fixing of rents to the mukhtar. He is a low-salaried agent whose aim is to make the best of his opportunity and office. He is the intermediary between the Taluqdar and the tenant. He has no personal interest in the land. His duty is to realize the landlord's dues, in addition to which he tries to make money for himself to the best of his ability. He forces a Nazar for himself each harvest at the minimum rate of one rupee per tenant. He is occasionally the forced guest of the tenants. The same also applies to the Government officials.

In the taluqdari villages, the rent is slightly lower than in the pattidari villages, but it is of no real benefit to the tenant for he has to make other extra payments,



viz. Nazrana to the Taluqdar, gift to his Mukhtar or agent, and a percentage to the village patwari, in order to secure his lease against transfer or ejectment. The initial lease has to be purchased in the same manner through payments.

For the sake of comparison the rents usually paid by tenants for different classes of soils both in the pattidari and the taluqdari villages may be stated thus :—

AVERAGE RATES PER ACRE

		Pattidari village	Taluqdari village
		RS	RS
First class soil	...	22	10
Second class soil		14	7
Third class soil	...	8	4

The rates of nazrana and of rents vary in different parts of Oudh, being highest in the southern and eastern districts, viz. Rai Bareili and Partabgarh than in the Terai regions of Kheri, Lakhimpur and Gonda.

In this locality the rates of nazrana roughly approximate to these figures. In order to secure a lease of 100 bighas, the rates are :—

Taluqdar's nazrana	...	...	RS 200
His agent's nazar	...	...	100
Village accountant's percentage	...	...	25

These figures worked out per acre amount to :—

Taluqdar's nazrana	...	...	RS 3.2
His agent's nazar	...	...	1.6
Patwari's percentage	...	...	0.4

Leases granted on payment of the such premia will last for seven years. On renewal the new incumbents

have to pay higher rates than the old ones or their heirs.

The landlord determines rents in two ways : First, he can dictate rents to the tenant who is anxious to find land for cultivation and is prepared to pay high rents on account of the competition for land. Secondly, there is another way in which the landlord controls rents. This he does through the patwari whose record known as the Siyaha has to be countersigned by the landlord. The record on paper is often a formal figure since the patwari has to put in rents dictated by the landlord, whatever be the actual rent paid by the tenant.

The tenant is, in fact, too poor and weak to defend himself in a court of law. If he quarrels with the landlord, he risks his holding, which means the loss of his only means of sustenance. The landlord, at most, will lose a season's rent, although this seldom happens, for there are always more people wanting land than there is to meet their demand. The cultivator has no alternative but to submit to the terms of the landlord, for he is in constant fear of being ejected.

Some of the poorest people in the village who do not otherwise get land to cultivate, are content to be sub-tenants. The occupancy tenant naturally and easily sublets his land on a higher rent than what he pays to the proprietor. The sub-tenant generally pays 50 per cent more rent than the occupancy tenant. Three actual cases may be cited here with reference to this village.

Field No. on the cadastral map	Bigha	Biswa	Biswa	Rent paid by the occupancy tenant	Rent charged from the sub-tenant
				RS	RS
1. 740	1	3	0	2	10
2. 1	1	19	0	8	12
3. 641	1	9	0	9	15



The rents show a continuous tendency to increase which is really more than these figures indicate, because the area held by tenants has been diminishing since a good deal of it has been reserved by landlords for *khud-kashta*.

Out of the total cultivated area of 690 bighas in the village about 390 bighas are cultivated by tenants, of which 159 bighas are sublet to the under-tenants. This means that the area cultivated by the subtenants in this village is about 40 per cent of the total area cultivated by tenants. We have already shown the disparity between rents paid by the sub-tenants and those paid by ordinary tenants. This brings about a very serious state of affairs which is by no means peculiar to this village.

Some reform is certainly needed which will safeguard the interest of the actual cultivator, mitigate the evils of sub-letting and establish an agricultural partnership between the tenant and the landlord.



CHAPTER VII

INDEBTEDNESS

No exact information is available as to the extent to which people are indebted to money-lenders, but it appears reasonable to think that about 90 per cent of the village is, more or less, involved in debt. They are so deep in debt that, in most cases, they bequeath to their heirs their indebtedness even. It has been well said, 'Debt to them is customary; a man is born in debt, he dies in debt and his son takes over the burden along with ancestral property.' Their position is rendered more acute when they borrow loans on ruinous terms from unscrupulous money-lenders.

The money-lender carries on a business the intricacies of which he understands much better than his unfortunate debtor. The cultivator submits to extortion on account of his poverty and ignorance. He is poor and illiterate, has no capital which he can call his own, and is consequently in the clutches of the money-lender and at his mercy absolutely. Loans are contracted on such rates and usurious terms, with so much fraud mixed up with it, that the cultivator has no chance of repaying them. He is crushed under the weight of his debt.

The usual rate of interest is from two pice to one anna per rupee per mensem, i.e. from 37 to 75 per cent per annum. Persons of good credit in the village have to pay Rs. 2 per month for a hundred rupees borrowed. This amounts to 24 per cent, which is the lowest rate. Small borrowed sums often multiply to stupendous figures.

One instance of such a transaction may be quoted. A sum of Rs. 65, borrowed 13 years ago, now amounts to Rs. 1,365. It is twenty-one times the original sum. The rate of simple interest works itself out at 154 per cent per annum. This is due to the compounding of principal and interest every year or every six months, and accounts for the profitable nature of the money-lender's business.

The statement made in the beginning of this chapter, about 90 per cent of the inhabitants of the village being involved in debt, might appear to be a sweeping generalisation, but it is not so. The truth will be brought home to anyone who gives a passing thought to the figures of the mortgages on land held by the money-lenders.

Twenty-eight years ago, one Chandrika Prasad, a Baniya money-lender of a neighbouring village purchased land which represents 6.75 per cent of the total value of the whole village. In addition to this, he holds land on mortgage approximating to 22 per cent of the entire valuation. Other outside interests, viz. one Kalwar and another a Baniya, represent about 4 per cent of the village. Thus it appears that one-third of the village has already passed into the hands of the money-lenders, and more seems on the point of doing so. Further, a loan of five thousand rupees stands against one Thakur zemindar who will have, in the very near future, to part with his land as so many brother zemindars have done before him. The extravagant and intemperate habits of the Thakurs, their desire to adopt city standards of life, their injudicious expenditure on marriages and other festivals, e.g. Holi; usually accompanied by the *nautch* of dancing girls, are responsible for this deplorable state of affairs. Indebtedness, particularly among the Thakur zemindars has become a chronic evil, and the village land which is their only security for getting credit, is slowly and gradually passing into the hands of professional money-lenders.

Indebtedness has been continually increasing, and is due to the existence of a large number of money-lenders, anxious to find some outlet for their capital. This is a business in which every moneyed man in the village wants to take part, because of the lucrativeness of the profession, as has been remarked by an eminent authority 'that money-lending is one of the most profitable industries in the country (India).'

The tenantry is further harassed by another class of money-lenders—the Punjabi merchants. Their rates are very exorbitant, generally never below 40 per cent. The practice of these merchants is to advance money on loans and also cloth to the village peasants. They are very



shrewd businessmen, and make seasonal tours to realize their money together with interest, just after the harvest-time. After the Kharif crop they come in September or October, and after the Rabi crop in April or May.

The money-lender's business involves some risk and trouble, which is compensated by higher rates of interest. In spite of all this, the money-lender supplies an essential need of the poverty-stricken cultivator. Without the necessary capital, the peasant would have to sit idle. The reason why he goes to the Mahajan is due to the easy credit obtainable.

To the credit of the money-lender, it must be said that he gives full play to what is termed the elasticity of realization—a shortcoming which mars the utility of the Government taccavi loans, and accounts for the unpopularity of the rural Co-operative Credit Society. The money-lender is careful not to kill at one stroke the goose that lays golden eggs.

The Government, also, advances Taccavi loans for agricultural purposes, e.g. the purchase of seed, bullocks, etc. The rate charged is fair, viz. 10 annas per month for a 100 rupees, i.e. $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum.

But the reason, why the cultivator does not like the Government loan, is that he has to pass through several ordeals before he can get it. The intermediate deities which he has to propitiate are the Patwari, the Qanungo and the revenue clerk in the Tehsil, on whose favour the grant of the loan generally depends. He is to satisfy all these people before he can get the money, and the grant also takes time. This suggests that the charges on the Taccavi loans, which the cultivator has to meet, actually rise up to a much higher figure than the initial and customary $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, in addition to loss of time. Moreover the methods adopted for the realization of these loans are very exacting and often drive the unfortunate debtor to his only relief—the money-lender.

COOPERATIVE CREDIT

Bakhshi-ka-talab is the centre of a circle of fifty-five Co-operative Credit Societies. A paid organizer lives there, as also the Secretary of the Credit Society for

Rudhui. A review of the working of Co-operative Society for Rudhui will not be out of place here.

The society itself is financed by the District Co-operative Bank at Lucknow, which advances money to the society at 12 per cent per annum. The society gives loans to its members at 15 per cent, retaining a margin of 3 per cent for itself. The society was started in 1919 and is of five years' standing.

Below is given an account of the membership, the loans advanced to members and the working capital of the society for the different years :—

Year			Number of members	Working capital			Loans advanced		
				RS	A	P	RS	A	P
1919-20	...	...	24	1,130	4	0	875	0	0
1920-21	...	...	28	1,435	8	6	972	8	0
1921-22	...	...	28	1,197	13	9	450	0	0
1922-23	...	...	30	1,588	1	3	1,115	0	0
1923-24	...	...	30	1,265	6	3	405	0	0

The members generally come from the lower castes, the number of Chamars being the largest. The total is composed of :—

Thakurs	...	...	...	2
Ahirs	...	...	...	4
Pasis	...	...	...	8
Mohammadans	...	...	...	2
Chamars	...	...	...	14
Total				30

The society can hardly be called progressive with its present membership and a working capital of about



Rs. 1,200 only for a population of more than 700 persons.

The general complaint about the Co-operative Society is that it does not issue the full amount of the loan needed by its members. It is true that one of the aims of the co-operative movement is to encourage thrift, and the loans issued to individual members are necessarily limited by their *Haisiyat*, i.e. status; but on the other hand, it is a fundamental error of principle to give less than the amount really needed for a particular purpose. This means that the borrower must either go to the money-lender to make up the deficiency, or squander the money which is short of his requirements.

It is, further, observed that the junior officials of the Co-operative Department enforce the repayment of society's loan with such severity as to drive the members back to the money-lender.

The membership is also restricted by the fact that many good people shun the society on account of the risk involved in an unlimited liability association.

All these considerations point to a serious difficulty as regards the provision of one of the essential needs of agriculturists, viz., Capital. It confirms the verdict that the modern methods of relieving the agriculturist's burden, have only touched the fringe of the problem. They have not even lowered the rate of interest in the village as Co-operative Societies claim to have done in other places. It seems, the village Co-operative Society, like an exotic, has not taken root in the soil of this tract. It has set no example of thrift, no standard of economical production and consumption. It has trained none of its members in the virtues which the true spirit of co-operation brings with it, and until this is done, and the people are roused and become alive to the advantage which it brings with it, any improvement in the economic position of the small holder will remain an idle dream.



CHAPTER VIII

THE SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION OF FIELDS

THE census statistics give the population of Rudhui and Rudhui Parao as 719 persons. The total area of the village is 901 bighas, of which only 690 are under cultivation. As this does not suffice for the maintenance of the population, some people, resident here, hold land under cultivation attached to other villages. The total area of such holdings comes to about 52 bighas. On the other hand, some people of other villages cultivate land in this village. But their number is comparatively small and the area held by them is only 6 bighas. The net result is that for the maintenance of 719 souls, the land that is cultivated is only 736 bighas or 460 acres.

The pressure of population on land is, therefore, very great. It seems that one person lives and maintains himself as regards all his necessities on the produce of 1.0236 bighas, i.e. .64 acres only. As estimated in the chapter on the profits of agriculture, the annual yield per acre, on an average, approximates to Rs. 72, and the gross profit to Rs. 23, including the wages and management charges of the cultivator. This indicates an extremely narrow margin of subsistence on which the poor cultivator drags out his existence. The true explanation of the cultivator's poverty does not lie in his unwillingness to work, but in his inability to find work which he could engage in, when farming allows him leisure. The situation has been rendered worse by the fact that he has no supplementary occupation. It would be expected that the soil would be intensively cultivated; but the want of capital, the ignorance of the cultivator, and the hold which custom has on him, preclude the idea; and the cultivator sticks to extensive corn raising.

One serious difficulty in the way of efficient cultivation is the excessive minuteness of holdings. The total number of tenant cultivators in the village is 115. The

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total area cultivated by them is 391-6-11 bighas or 245 acres.

Thus we find that the average size of a tenancy holding, as distinguished from an ownership holding, is only 3-8-1-14 bighas or 2-13 acres.

Below is given a table which will indicate the size of holdings in the village :—

Area of the holding	No. of tenants with such holdings	Percentage to the total No.
(a) From bighas 0-0-0 to 1-12-0, i.e. from 0 to 1-0-0 acres.	46	40
(b) From bighas 1-12-0 to 4-0-0, i.e. from 1 to 2-5 acres.	37	32-17
(c) From bighas 4-0-0 to 8-0-0, i.e. from 2-5 to 5 acres.	20	17-39
(d) From bighas 8-0-0 to 12-0-0, i.e. from 5 to 7-5 acres.	10	8-69
(e) From bighas 12-0-0 to 16-0-0, i.e. from 7-5 to 10 acres.	Nil	Nil
(f) From bighas 16-0-0, and upwards, i.e. 10 acres.	2	1-74

Thus it appears that the holdings of nearly 90 per cent of the cultivators in the village are below 5 acres in area. Further :—

	No.	Area held bighas	Average holding bighas	Percentage to the total area
(a) Class of tenants	46	40 9 15	0 17 16-3	10-34
(b) Class of tenants	37	101 10 14	2 14 17-7	25-90
(c) Class of tenants	20	116 14 5	5 16 14-25	29-82
(d) Class of tenants	10	97 10 8	9 15 8	24-29
(e) Class of tenants	2	35 1 9	17 10 14-25	8-96
Total ...	115	391 6 11	...	99-94

The total number of holdings below 5 acres comes to 66 per cent of the total area held by tenants. The largest farm in the whole village is big has 3-7-0, while the smallest farm is .015 acres only. The area of an average holding in the village comes to big has 3-8-1.2. It must, however, be pointed out that the above does not fully represent the real state of the minuteness of the holdings. The eighty *shikmi* subtenants in the village hold only 159 big has, or on an average only 1.25 acres.

But the chief obstacle in the way of efficient farming is the scattered distribution of fields held by a tenant in the village. We have already noted that the average holding amounts to 2.13 acres only. Even such a small holding does not lie in one block, but is made up of a number of strips. The largest number of separate plots held by a single tenant in the village is 16.

In order to show the disunited nature of fields, the following table is drawn up:—

Holders of plots	Numbers	Percentage to the total
1	37	32.174
2	24	20.869
3	11	9.565
4	14	12.174
5	8	6.956
6	6	5.217
7	2	1.739
8	5	4.384
9	2	1.739
10	3	2.609
11	Nil	...
12	...	...
13	...	...
14	2	1.739
15	...	...
16	1	.870
Total ...	115	99.99

It is evident from the above table that 32 per cent of the cultivators are holders of one plot only and the rest,



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i.e. 68 per cent hold plots of land scattered in small fragments as is clear from the table given below :—

Holders	No.	Area held bighas	Average holding bighas	Percentage to the total
Plot 1	37	32 14 2	0 17 13·4	8·36
" 2	24	49 8 5	2 1 3·4	12·67
" 3	11	27 19 5	2 10 17·7	7·14
" 4	14	55 7 19	3 19 2·8	14·16
" 5	8	35 15 6	4 9 8·1	9·16
" 6	6	42 0 17	7 0 2·8	10·74
" 7	2	17 11 10	8 15 15	4·49
" 8	5	37 0 10	7 8 0	9·46
" 9	2	15 17 10	7 18 15	4·06
" 10	3	31 0 18	10 6 19·3	7·93
" 11	2	27 10 15	13 15 7·5	7·04
" 16	1	18 19 14	18 19 14	4·86
Total ...	115	391 6 11	3 8 1·2	100·07

Thus it appears from the above table that more than 90 per cent of the area in the village, cultivated by tenants, is distributed in more than one plot, as a result of which the fields are scattered.

The disadvantages resulting from this excessive subdivision and fragmentation of the holdings are obvious and hardly require any elaborate narration. There is a clear loss in the application of each one of the four factors of production. The evils may be briefly summarized thus :—

'This impedes efficient cultivation, and causes waste of time in attending to distant and scattered plots. Small out-lying fields are liable to be neglected.'

It prevents the undertaking of permanent improvements, e.g. building of pucca water courses instead of

the kachcha muddy channels. The cultivator cannot afford, nor is it worth while, to sink a well on each separate plot. In a compact block, it might be possible.

It prevents organization of labour and capital. Implements and bullocks have to be constantly shifted from one field to another every time they are used. The use of improved machinery on small and scattered fields is often uneconomic. It prevents the building of a home-stead on the farm. It cannot be expected that a change in this direction will come about in India very quickly. The people of this country have been accustomed, for ages, to live in closely packed village sites, with their fields scattered all around. Nevertheless, a change would be welcome. The cultivator would be able to pay greater attention and closer supervision to his work. Also the existing insanitary and occasionally congested conditions of Indian villages would disappear. There would also be room and space for cattle at farm-houses, to the benefit of the soil which would be enriched by dung, manure and cattle urine.

To sum up, the existence of small and scattered farms has created on the whole an uneconomic situation which prevents efficient organization and management. All these disadvantages go to complete the picture of the 'Uneconomic Holding' which does not remunerate adequately.

The process of sharing the inherited family property and the operation of the law of succession, not only lead to the division of large estates into small plots but also to the splitting up of small fields. Each heir tries to get a share out of every field, thus dividing it into small slices. There is further partition due to transfer by sale, mortgage or court decrees. This process of sub-division and fragmentation has been going on for years, and has resulted in the small scattered fields of inconvenient sizes and shapes.

A glance at the cadastral map of the village will illustrate the whole situation, which shows how the tiny holding of the village cultivators are generally scattered, and, more often than not, placed widely apart.

Some typical cases, which are by no means extreme, are mentioned here for reference :—

Tenant			Total holding bigha	No. of scattered plots.
1.	Lachman Ahir	... ..	11 9 0	14
2.	Nankan Ahir	... ..	10 10 5	10
3.	Musstt. Mahrani	... ..	6 14 10	9

The situation regarding fragmentation, is further aggravated by the fact that many tenants hold fields in other villages, which have been omitted from the above calculations.

In addition to this fragmentation as recorded in Government papers, there is a tendency among the people to further sub-divide and to sublet fields privately.

Parts of fields are too small to be indicated on the map. But, for the sake of illustration, one example may here be cited, viz. field No. 691 is divided into six parts, and cultivated by different farmers.

The ignorant cultivator may not realize fully the evils of such grotesque fragmentation, but the educated public and the Government cannot afford to be apathetic in this matter. If people shut their eyes to ever-increasing minute sub-division, agriculture will become more and more unremunerative. But the greatest difficulty in the way of consolidation is, of course, due to the difference in the status of the different proprietors and tenants, and consequently the tenants are opposed to any scheme which would not distinguish between the tenures. Further, the Zemindars also are not likely to favour any scheme which may reduce their powers of bargaining with individual tenants.

Reference may also be made, here, to the attempts made in the Punjab to solve the problem by means of Co-operative Societies. In three years, 133 societies have been formed with the sole object of consolidating the holdings of their 5,000 members, and 35,000 scattered parcels of



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land have been consolidated into 4,500. Such a task requires infinite tact and patience, as well as knowledge of the local conditions and circumstances, which the present staff of the department, certainly, cannot boast of. Voluntary exchange of holdings by Panchayats or arbitration societies might be a step in the right direction, and, perhaps, legislation, like that passed recently in Baroda, making it compulsory for the villagers to accept the principle of redistribution if a definite majority wants it, may be useful.



CHAPTER IX

PANCHAYATS

A STUDY of the village institutions brings home the truth that villages in India have always been self-governing, so far as the economic and social management, and the regulation of the relations of castes and communities towards one another, are concerned. Such administration and regulation are left to a committee known as the Panchayat. In origin, it is, perhaps, as old as the village community itself; in constitution, it is sometimes found as representative as any democratic body in a modern State; it has the additional advantage of not being artificial—an advantage which is not possessed by the present-day elective system, based, as this is, on property and other qualifications necessary for the exercise of the right of franchise. In Panchayats which run on more natural lines, the natural qualification for franchise is tacitly adopted. The age of discretion seems to be a more natural qualification for expressing opinion than the possession of a given amount of property. Since the community lives on the lines of the joint family system, the heads of families exercise the right to choose the personnel of the committee. Therefore, the Panchayat represents the considered opinion of the whole community, whose mouth-piece and embodiment it is, in the best sense of these terms. Its motive power is the force of public opinion which in its turn is moulded and modified by it. Thus both these, viz. public opinion and the good sense of the Panchayat, act and react upon each other, and work for the public good.

The word Panchayat is a generic term used to denote a committee. It is significant to note that this word is common to all the numerous dialects and languages spoken throughout the length and breadth of India; the institution, as Dr. Radha Kamal Mukerjee tells us, is

well known throughout the village communities of South-eastern Asia. Two well-known classes of Panchayats exist in this village. The first is a body composed of the influential and trusted members from amongst the residents of the village. The business of this body, from early times, has been to deal with all sorts of village problems of general interest. It is the accepted village authority which controls and regulates the actions, as also the differences and quarrels, between different classes. In pre-British days, it was also the revenue authority which settled questions of land dispute and ownership. It also distributed, without partiality, property and land among the heirs of the deceased in case of differences arising between them. It decided criminal cases, delivered its verdict of guilty or not guilty, imposed fines and other punishments on the wrong-doers, and awarded compensation to the aggrieved party. Indeed the function of this body was to deal with and decide all sorts of questions—social, religious, economic, or administrative, affecting the village, as a whole. It was the legislature and the executive of the village, combined in one, as also its 'guide, philosopher and friend'. Its sympathetic attitude and impartial dealings towards all created confidence in the public. Hence, all questions pertaining to the village administration, in general, were referred to it, and the Panchayat has always been the surest guardian of the interests of the community.

The second class of Panchayats is the caste Panchayat which is a peculiar feature with the low-castes of the village, e.g. Shudras. There are a number of these in this village. Each one of these controls the dealings of its caste members towards one another and decides social, domestic and other caste problems. A very strict surveillance is kept over the *Biradari* (caste brotherhood) through the caste Panchayats. Rules, regulating personal conduct, are made binding upon individual members, and penalties are laid down for breaches of discipline.

The Panchayat does not necessarily consist of five members though the name appears to signify this. It is a representative assembly, composed of the chosen



members of the whole brotherhood. It is mostly a council of village elders, mature in age and experience. Again, the Panchayats have territorially a limited jurisdiction beyond which their decrees do not apply. The jurisdiction of each one of the different Panchayats is not co-lateral, or equal in extent. It may comprise a single village or a group of villages. It usually consists of the whole brotherhood residing in a particular locality.

The members who make up the Jury of the Panchayat are technically called Panchas. The office of these jurymen is elective. Their head is called the Sar-Panch. His office is hereditary; but, sometimes, this too is elective. Sar-Panch is also the denomination adopted by the U.P. Local Self-Government Act, 1921, for the head of the Panchayat. But the head of the caste Panchayat is better known as Chowdhary in this village. Another functionary, often employed to serve Neota (invitation) to the members of the Panchayat is the village barber.

The Panchayats may assemble in three different ways according to the occasion and purpose.

- (1) *At caste dinners.*—Sometimes, members take advantage of the meeting of the Panchayat on such occasions and report a complaint which might be taken up at once.
- (2) When summoned specially by the aggrieved person.
- (3) When specially called to discuss some problem of importance.

The vitality of these caste Panchayats is much greater than that of the old village Panchayat representing the whole community. It is worthy of note in this connection that the less advanced, or the lower in status, a caste is in the social scale, the greater is the hold of its Panchayat on its members. Few higher castes have Panchayats, and those who have, have only weak organizations. The Brahman, the Kshatriyas, and the Banias have no caste Panchayats at all; not even the Kayasthas. Again the Panchayat of the Thakurs is a non-permanent committee. When any question of caste dispute arises in the Thakur

Community, the elders are called together to discuss the whole matter, and having given due consideration to it, deliver judgment. But for such occasional meetings for specific objects, their Panchayat is almost as good as non-existent. The cases which usually come up before the Thakur Panchayat, are those which concern the personal conduct of the members of the community. The Thakur Panchayat is an unwieldy body, not easily collected, and so, it is rarely called upon to deal with trivial matters. Among the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas public opinion works, silently and automatically, irrespective of the formal decisions of the caste body. The Panchayat, when assembled, only confirms the excommunication, already informally passed on an offender by general consent; in some cases it may substitute a lighter punishment for excommunication.

Not only are the Thakurs extravagant and lazy, but there are a good many of them whose standard of morality is not very high. There is a large number who will tolerate to a certain extent familiarity on the part of Thakur males with the females of the other lower castes. They are in sufficient numbers to form a majority of their own and have constituted themselves into a Jawar, i.e. a brotherhood. In fact among the Thakurs of this locality, there are two Jawars or brotherhoods. One may be said to be higher than the other in this respect that it will not tolerate, or give latitude to, its members in their relations with the females of other castes whereas, the lower Jawar would, to a certain extent, tolerate such things.

The Thakur proprietors sometimes keep concubines of other castes. If the concubine comes of a very low caste, that is, an untouchable, e.g. a Pasi or a Chamar, the privilege of the Hukka is denied to him by the community. A Hukka literally means a smoking pipe, but it is a symbol referring to commensality and inter-dining, in general. Stoppage of Hukka means the cessation of all intimate intercourse, and it amounts to an excommunication by the community which stops intermarriage and inter-dining with the defaulter. But, if the concubine belongs to any one of the castes that are regarded as touchables, the



Hukka is not denied. The distinction between the touchable and the untouchable castes, is based upon the fact whether or not the dwijas, i.e. the twice-born, viz. the Brahmans, the Kshattriyas and the Vaishyas, would drink water from the lota (brass vessel) of the caste in question. According to this criterion, the following is a classification of the lower castes into touchables and untouchables.

Touchables. Kayastha, Ahir (milkman), Kahar (domestic servant), Lodha (domestic servant), Nai (Barber), Bari (domestic servant akin to barber), Barhai (carpenter), Sunar (goldsmith), Lohar (blacksmith), Gadarya (grazier).

Untouchables. Dhobi (washerman), Kumhar (Potter), Pasi, Chamar (cobbler), Kori, etc. (watchmen and grooms are mostly recruited from the last three).

The Panchayats of the lower castes, most of whom have permanent organizations on a firm and sound basis have their head-quarters in this village, and their Chowdharies live here. These are the Ahir, the Chamar, the Lodha, the Bhurji and the Kalwar Panchayats. On the other hand the Panchayats of the Pasis and the Muraus have their head-quarters in other villages, and the representatives of this village have to go there to attend the meetings.

The Panchayats of the less advanced castes are the best organized, and permanent in character. Their power is great, and they deal promptly with all offences, however trivial. Of all the Panchayats, that of the Chamars is the most active. It enforces the strictest discipline on its members. It is always busy with one case or another, taking notice of the slightest breach of caste regulations. Their Panchayats forbid the Chamars to undertake any of the menial services mentioned below:—

(i) To remove horse dung : The Chamars regard it as the scavenger's duty. It is curious to note that several other castes which are higher in the social scale than the Chamars, do not object to this sort of work, e.g. the Ahirs, the Lodhas, or the Telies. The Zemindars, however, force their menial servants, most of whom are recruited from amongst the Chamars to do this, but they hide it from their fellow-castemen.

(ii) To remove the dead body of a cat or a dog. They object to this, although they would not hesitate to take away the carcase of a cow or bullock. Some Chamars have no scruples even in eating the meat of recently dead cattle.

(iii) To show a torch light to the suite of a dancing girl: They regard this as degrading.

The Chamar Panchayat meets oftener than others to decide cases, for it always has a busy session. The procedure is as follows:—

The man who wishes to call the Panchayat has to present three seers of grain (which is gram generally) and Re. 1-4-0 as preliminary fee to the Chowdhary for fixing the day.

When all the members of the Biradari (brotherhood) have assembled, the Chowdhary opens the meeting by stating its purpose and object. In case, a suit is brought before the Panchayat, the plaintiff first states, at length, the grievance or the injury sustained. The defendant is then allowed to have his say in the matter, to clear the issue and defend himself.

The question, in hand, is then taken up and all the members freely take part in the discussion. All the evidence is carefully heard, and a fairly comprehensive enquiry made on the spot. Any one may say what he knows to be helpful in elucidating the facts of the case. All the influential members, and specially the Panchas, consider carefully the pros and cons of the question. Then all the Panchas arrive at a certain conclusion, and their judgment is then delivered through their mouth-piece, the Sar-Panch.

One extraordinary feature of the decisions of the Panchayat is that they are always arrived at by unanimity of opinion, and not merely by 'Majority of votes'. Agreement of all judges is possible only where the underlying spirit is strongly communal. This does away with the danger of party politics tending to prejudice honest and impartial judgment, in decisions arrived at by the 'Majority of votes' system.

Caste dinners are another important feature of the caste Panchayats. When the whole brotherhood is



assembled, the Biradari is served with pucca food, i.e., *puris* cooked in ghee. This dinner is technically known as the *Chanda*. The next day, another dinner is given to the Panchas only, as their special Haq, i.e. right. All this feasting is at the expense of the host who has called the Panchayat together.

In ordinary cases, when a man is fined a small sum, say Rs. 5 or 10 only which will not suffice to feast the whole brotherhood, sweets or wine is purchased and the Chowdhary and a few other influential members drink and make merry. In such cases, it is not possible to invite the whole Jawar or brotherhood.

In case of a Panchayat assembly, following a caste funeral, the proceedings are more solemn, and the Panchayat is served only with *gur* (molasses), curd and bread. Thus, all the money realized by the Panchayat from fines or in other ways, is generally spent in feasting the brotherhood or distributing spirituous liquor and sweets.

The procedure followed by the other caste Panchayats is substantially the same as the one adopted by the Chamar Panchayat, described above in detail. In dealing with other Panchayats it would suffice to notice only a few special features.

THE AHIR PANCHAYAT

In ordinary cases of default, the fine imposed on the offender is Rs. 5 or thereabouts, but in important cases sometimes fines have been as heavy as several hundred rupees. The money realized, in this case also, is spent in giving feast to the brotherhood. The feasting consists of two meals: *pucca* food, cooked in ghee, being served on the first day, and *kachcha* food on the second day. The fine imposed, always, has reference to the status of the person who is in default, and his capacity to pay. Not only is the defaulter penalised, even the parents and other relations of the woman who is discovered to be immoral, are heavily fined. Supposing a woman of the Ahir caste carries on an intrigue with a man of a different caste, her parents have to bear the burden of the

penalty. If the latter comes of a higher caste the fine imposed is less than what it would be, if he belonged to any one of the lower castes, because greater stigma and disgrace is implied in the latter case than in the former.

All those who accompany the funeral procession of an Ahir are given one *pau*, i.e. quarter of a seer, of *gur* (molasses). After the funeral ceremony, the whole brotherhood is assembled and they take their meals at the expense of the family of the deceased.

THE LODH PANCHAYAT

The procedure of this Panchayat agrees, in essential details, with that of the Chamar Panchayat described before. Here we shall refer to an actual case which occurred only last year.

A Lodh woman of this village was involved in this case. She was married in a neighbouring village. Her husband having died, she was living with her parents. She had illicit connection with another man of her own caste, and became pregnant. The case was brought to the notice of the Panchayat which turned the man out of the Jawar, i.e. he was excommunicated. The woman was restored to the community on payment of a heavy penalty by the father, who had to feed the whole brotherhood consisting of 200 persons. Pucca food had to be served which must have meant an expenditure of about Rs. 150.

We have seen that the British Government and modern law do not interfere with caste rules and regulations, but leave such matters entirely to the caste councils. But the village commune has lately been superseded by a new body, established by law according to the U.P. Village Panchayat Act, 1921. This Panchayat was established in the month of October of the same year. It is authorized to try petty cases, both judicial and criminal. It can decide civil cases up to a maximum valuation of Rs. 25. It can deal with cases under the Cattle Trespass Act, 1871, and the U. P. Village Sanitation and Hygiene Act. It can also try criminal



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cases under the following sections of the Indian Penal Code :—

- Sec. 323. Voluntarily causing hurt to another, (not by dangerous weapons or means.)
- Sec. 352. Assault or criminal force without grave provocation.
- Sec. 358. Assault or criminal force on grave provocation.
- Sec. 379. Theft.
- Sec. 476. Mischief.
- Sec. 504. Intentional insult with intent to provoke a breach of the peace.

The Village Panchayat is particularly representative in composition, as it includes members from each one of the important castes inhabiting the village. The only exception is that there is no member from the depressed or untouchable castes. Its composition is as follows :—

Name	Caste	Office
1. Din Singh ...	Thakur	Sar Panch (President)
2. Chhutkau Singh ...	"	Panch (Member)
3. Jangi Singh ...	"	"
4. Nankau Ahir ...	Ahir	"
5. Chetram ...	Kurmi	"
6. Bhola ...	Lodh	"

The total number of cases so far tried by the Panchayat was 38 during the last four years ; of these 25 were civil and 13 criminal. The schedule below gives the number of cases tried in the different years :—

Year	Civil	Criminal	Total
1921 (from October onwards)	...	1	1
1922 ...	11	2	13
1923 ...	3	7	10
1924 ...	7	1	8
1925 (till 15th Nov.)	4	2	6

One criminal case was transferred to the court of the Deputy Magistrate in charge of the Sub-Division. In this case a man was charged with misbehaviour towards a young girl. The case being a complicated one, the Panchayat thought fit to forward it to the criminal court. The findings failed to establish the charge, as the girl was a child, merely seven years of age, and the man was acquitted.

It will not be out of place to mention at least two cases decided by the Panchayat.

Case No. 1. In 1922 seven Ahirs let loose their cattle to graze on the field of another man, who was a fellow-cultivator in the village. The Panchayat after enquiry declared their action to be wilful and malicious, and fined the offenders Rs. 2 each. Of Rs. 14 thus realized Rs. 7 were given to the aggrieved party as compensation for his loss, and the remainder went to the fund of the Panchayat.

Case No. 2. In 1923 a man cut the standing crop of gram from the field of another person at about 9 o'clock in the night. The Panchayat fined him Rs. 8 for this, which he paid promptly.

As regards judicial work, the Panchayat grants decrees to creditors for small sums, after ascertaining the amount and the genuineness of the claims. If any difficulty arises as to the realization of the fines, the civil courts at the head-quarters, i.e. Lucknow, confirm the decree of the Panchayat which then is realized through the agency of the Government.

From the above, it may be inferred that the work of the Panchayat, during the last four years, has been satisfactory and beneficial to the interests of the village, as a whole. The work of the Panchayat is of real significance. It relieves the courts of a large number of petty cases on the one hand, while on the other it exercises a wholesome influence in regulating the life of the village group. The introduction of this system has brought about great savings in expenditure on litigation, as many of the court formalities can be done away with, e.g. there is no necessity for stamped paper in order to file a suit with the Panchayat. It is true, that the nature of

the work done by the Panchayat (established in 1921 under the U.P. Village Panchayat Act) is mostly of a legal character, and the social work of the old village community has receded into the background. Yet this body often exercises its influence in settling miscellaneous village affairs.

We have noticed that, in all caste Panchayats, large sums of money are invariably spent on caste dinners and feasting. Not only is money lavishly spent in frequent dinners, but large expenditure is also incurred on liquor. Drinking is opposed to the Hindu code of morality. Nor does the Indian climate encourage it, but its use has become very common, and the evil now appears to be deep rooted among the lower castes. The Panchayat would be well advised if it could take active measures against communal drinking; but if that be not possible at once, they can at least curtail expenditure on the item, thus diverting the major portion of their funds towards such objects as would promote the general uplift of the community. But this requires the growth of a strong public opinion on the subject in the villages.

With a slight improvement on the lines indicated above, the Village Panchayat could be converted into a most useful institution, and the scope of its work may be widened with profit. It can be easily extended to other spheres where local knowledge and experience are essential and useful, e.g. village hygiene and sanitation, rural transport and communication.

The Panchayat could be, and, as a matter of fact, ought to be, to the village what a municipal corporation is to the city, or a notified area board is to a town. It could look after sanitation, repairs to roads and housing improvements in the village. It might be utilized for the joint sale and marketing of the agricultural produce of the village as a whole. It could open seed stores, where good and genuine seed could be purchased at fair market rates. The Panchayat could also be used as an organization for the supply of raw materials or improved tools on the hire-purchase system to craftsmen. It might also be an effective distributive agency for the products of the village looms and lathes.

Last of all, though of special significance in view of this particular village, the Panchayat may be entrusted with the difficult and delicate task of consolidating the scattered and fragmented holdings, by arranging voluntary exchanges and by settling the question of compensation amongst the villagers; for in the successful conduct of any such scheme, an atmosphere of mutual trust, goodwill and impartial justice is essential. These things, difficult as they appear to be, are not impossible, for we know how the indigenous local bodies have been effectively utilized for agricultural and educational revival in modern Japan.

The expenses, too, of such an organization need not be very high, as the workers will mostly be honorary. District Boards may allot a portion of the local cess, raised from the village itself, for expenditure on village sanitation, maintenance of roads, and distribution of medicine in times of general illness or cattle epidemics, etc. The Panchayat can further supplement its resources by organizing a village common-fund by charging small fees for particular services rendered.

The influence of indigenous village communities in India has always been recognized by eminent men of all ages and nationalities. Writing of these in 1830, Sir Charles Metcalfe said:—

‘They seem to last where nothing else lasts, dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution; Hindu, Pathan, Mughal, Maratha, Sikh, English are all masters in turn, but the village communities remain the same. This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause, to the preservation of the people of India through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of their independence.’¹

Sir Henry Maine, that distinguished authority and writer on Indian affairs, described them as ‘the little republics of India’, and clearly brought out the fact that

¹ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. iv, chapter x.



Indian villages formerly possessed a large degree of local autonomy which has disappeared since on account of the growth of individualism and the superimposition of British Law and its accessories.

Even the Decentralization Commission of 1908, recognizing its usefulness, recommended the desirability of the development and revival of the Panchayat system. The Montague-Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional reforms in 1919, also drew attention to the development of the Panchayat system in villages, and contemplated that the Panchayats might be endowed with civil and criminal jurisdiction in petty cases, administrative powers as regards sanitation and education, and permissive powers of imposing local rates. They recommended that an effective beginning be made in suitable localities as early as possible. Sir M. Visvesvaraya also observes, 'A system of village government is urgently needed to provide roads, water supply, irrigation, drainage, sanitary regulations and orderliness in village.' The present day low vitality and the comparative failure of village government, as Lord Ronaldshay admits, is due to the mistake initially made, of ignoring the indigenous village communities, and an attempt to impose from without a system of self-government with which our people were not familiar. Life comes from within, and so we must build from the bottom, as the experience of France and Japan suggests.

In fact, it may be said that even to-day, Panchayats are more or less living bodies in the villages of India. They are bodies, whose energy and influence can well be utilized in improving rural conditions and in regulating village affairs, on the lines indicated above. There are, no doubt, difficulties in their revival, but they are by no means insuperable, nor are they such as cannot be overcome by strenuous and persistent effort.



CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

We are now at the end of our survey, and it only remains to summarize some of the results of our study. The village of Bakhshi-ka-Talab may fairly be taken as a type representing the general conditions of agriculture and village life in Oudh.

The system of tenure in the village is imperfect Pattidari. The total number of proprietors is 22, who are mostly high-caste people, and the cultivation of the soil is usually undertaken by men of the lower castes, viz. Ahirs, Lodhs, Kurmis and Chamars. Among the smaller proprietors a tendency to reserve land for private cultivation is noticeable, because the profits of land, in the form of rents merely, are not sufficient for their living. On the other hand, the contact of the Thakur Zemindars with the extravagant city life, and their desire to adopt city standards, do not appear to have a healthy influence on them, because they generally squander their money, which is proved by the increasing mortgages on land. Thirty-three per cent of the land in the village has already passed into the hands of the mortgagees, and this state of things can hardly make for an efficient system of agriculture.

The condition of agriculture, as carried on in the village, cannot be regarded satisfactory from the modern stand-point. The village cultivator carries on his business in the old worn-out fashion; and the progress of science in the world all around seems to have affected him little. Amid all change, the village cultivator alone has stood still. In matters of agricultural technique, he stands where he was generations before.

Agriculture is the mainstay of our rural life. The whole of the village population is directly or indirectly dependent upon it. It is the only occupation of the



people in the village, and generally there is no alternative industry, to which they can resort, when not occupied with land. Generally, women do not contribute to the family income, although they do most of the household work. Hence the great need for cottage industries, particularly for the more or less idle dependents. Hence, also the need for education which would overcome their ignorance and conservatism which prevent them from migrating to the city, learning skilled work and taking up better paid occupations.

A detailed study of facts and figures regarding the cost of cultivation, and the estimate of produce and profits, lead us inevitably to the conclusion that agriculture on the whole, as conducted in the village, cannot provide a fair and decent living for the cultivator and his family.

The average gross profits per acre have been calculated to be about Rs. 23. It means that the average holding of 2.1 acres produces Rs. 49 only for the support of a family. If there are three members in a family, it follows that each one of them gets Rs. 16 annually, i.e. Re. 1-5 as. per month. The inadequacy of the sum is manifest and needs no comment. This is his money income; although the real income may be slightly greater.

Sometimes, the poorest cultivators are ousted by their more powerful rivals, and have to be content with cultivating merely as sub-tenants. The poorest cultivators supplement their earnings by working for others in their homes and fields. Thus we have already the beginning of a class of people who have been characterized as the landless proletariat, and whose numbers tend to increase.

Their economic position is far from satisfactory. A large majority of the people in the village live in perpetual want. Their standard of living falls below the subsistence level, even according to their own ideas. The pity of it all is that they appear so reconciled to their fate, that it seems impossible that they could raise themselves by their own unaided efforts. The plain reason of this is that the message of uplift, conveyed by co-operation to their brethren in other lands, has not

reached them, or been brought to them so as to teach them the lesson of self-help ; and it is this which has changed the face of agricultural population in Europe, and is capable of doing the same here, if only the subject is properly approached.

The density of population in the village (including in the total the area which the people of this village cultivate in other villages) is 775 persons to the square mile as compared with 414, the average for the whole of the Province. This is too high a figure for a village which can boast of no special facility or advantage for cultivation, except the fact that it is in close proximity to a city, which was a full-fledged capital of the Nawabs of Oudh some seventy years ago, and so far as social life is concerned, is to-day the capital city of the Province.

Thus for the maintenance of one person in the village only $\cdot 64$ ($\frac{460 \text{ acres}}{720 \text{ persons}}$) acres of land are available. This shows the extremely small scale on which the average farmer carries on his business, and it also emphasizes the fact how a poor man's want must be limited, as, in the last resort, all his wants have to be met by the produce of his tiny little field. So much pressure of population on land is certainly excessive. This brings to the fore the problem of fragmentation, and the scattered nature of the holdings in the village.

We find that the size of an average tenant holding is only 2·13 acres. It is to be noted that about 70 per cent of the holdings are less than 2·5 acres in area, while 90 per cent of these are less than 5 acres. The condition of 80 *shikmi* or subtenants is still worse. Their average comes to 1·25 acres only.

Regarding fragmentation, it may be said that about 68 per cent of the cultivators hold more than one plot. It means that a clear majority of two-thirds is inconvenienced on account of the present distribution and situation of their fields. The situation is further aggravated by the fact, that their inability to make a living from their holdings in the village, has compelled them to take up 52 bighas of land in other villages, thus multiplying the difficulties and inconveniences which follow from the



scattered nature of holdings and the fragmentation of land. These have resulted in uneconomic holdings which are incompatible with good scientific cultivation, which, as already remarked, is conspicuous by its absence in the village.

The two serious problems in this connection are (1) the satisfaction of the land hunger of the vast majority of the cultivators,—which is the inevitable result of the absence of any other source of livelihood in the village; (2) the working out of a consolidation scheme for scattered holdings in the village.

A rough calculation of the size of an economic holding for this locality, may be made here. The average agricultural profits for a year have been estimated to be about Rs. 23 per acre. Thus for a family of four members, if the minimum ¹ requirements of each be put at Rs. 3 per month, it should have $4 \times 3 \times 12/23$, i.e. about $6\frac{1}{4}$ acres of land.

To some, it will appear that this estimate of the economic holding is extravagant in view of the fact that the present size of the holding in the village is 2.1 acres only. But it must not be forgotten that, under the present conditions, the farmer makes no allowance for the depreciation of capital; that his indebtedness goes on increasing and his standard of living is as low as it can be. Eight acres or even 6 acres, if cultivated better than is done at present will prove to be the salvation of the farmer. The Oudh Rent Act has been passed recently conferring life tenancy, and affording protection against arbitrary enhancement of rents. Till lately, the greatest length of a lease was seven years only. Ejectment had been easy and in some cases resorted to within seven years. The problem of subletting also calls for notice, as about 40 per cent of the total area held by tenants in this village is sublet to subtenants. This brings to light the prevailing disparity between the occupancy and the tenancy rents. The *Batai* system, on which

¹ Rs. 3 is certainly a moderate figure if we keep in view the fact that the village labourers are paid at Rs. 2-8-0 per month in addition to customary wages in kind.



land is sublet to *Shikmi* tenants, i.e. division of produce into two halves, one of which goes as rent, judged from all standards and the point of view of economic efficiency, is objectionable.

As long, however, as there is less land in the village than there are people clamouring for it, these evils are likely to continue in spite of tenancy laws. It is the land-hunger which is ultimately responsible for the economic status of the tenant. As the peasantry becomes accustomed to a higher standard of comfort, and freely migrates to towns and industrial centres for employment, the agricultural occupation will be less crowded. This will react favourably both upon the cultivator's status and the methods of cultivation. No doubt this will be a long and slow process, but it must be remembered that he who would recreate India, recreates her agriculture.

APPENDIX A¹

CATTLE DISEASES AND THEIR TREATMENT

NAME OF DISEASE	SYMPTOMS	TREATMENT
1. Rinderpest (cattle plague) (Pokni, Mand, Chechak, Chauranga Mand.)	Shooting diarrhoea. Discharge from the eyes. Animal refuses to take food. Ulcerations underneath the tongue and gums. Faeces foul smelling.	Practically no treatment. Fatal disease. Mortality 80 to 90 per cent. Bacterial origin. Highly contagious. Preventive inoculation with sera and vaccines, only in healthy animals. Try the infusion or decoctions of the bark of astringent plants, e.g. Nim, Babul (Acacia).
2. Foot and Mouth Disease. Foot (Kharra) Mouth (Chnepra)	Cleft of the foot is affected. Ulcerations in mouth. At later stage, maggots develop in the wounds in the cleft of the foot. Animal rendered temporarily unfit for work. As the name signifies both foot and mouth are affected at the same time, although in some cases only one of the two may be affected.	Not Fatal. No mortality. Foot bath with phenyle lotion. Mouth wash with alum.
3. Haemorrhagic septicaemia (Ghutura).	Swelling of the neck. Temperature of the body rises. Animal feels dull, refuses to take food. In some cases diarrhoea also develops. It appears in sporadic form at the commencement of and during the rainy season.	Practically no treatment. Mortality very high. Animal dies within two to three days. Preventive inoculation for healthy animals. Internal antiseptics and astringents are tried in affected cases.

¹ This appendix has been prepared with the help of a Veterinary Surgeon.



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APPENDIX B¹

CATTLE DISEASES AND THEIR TREATMENT

NAME OF DISEASE	SYMPTOMS	TREATMENT
Ghturna (Hæmorrhagic septicæmia).	The neck is affected. The animal cannot take fodder or even water. They can hardly move their necks. The whole of the body becomes stiff.	The villagers apply moss from stagnant tanks.
Khurha (foot and mouth disease).	The hoofs get cloven and are affected with <i>Kira</i> (Maggots).	Make the affected animal stand in water. Lately in order to kill the maggots more effectively they put in a little petroleum, phenyle, or potassium permanganate in the water. The villagers are familiar with and know the use of potassium permanganate as it is also used for disinfecting wells.
Pokni Mand	... Diarrhœa The veins get swollen. It is said to be due to flatulence or wind trouble in the alimentary canal.	... Warming the body of the animal.
Chauranga Mand.	This is an advanced stage of the same. In this stage the whole body gets stiff. Shivering sensation all over the body. The animal is unable to move in the last stages of the disease.	No treatment. Results in death.
Fever Chapra (foot and mouth disease).	... Shivering ... The tongue begins to decay and rot.	Ghee and pepper. ...

¹ This appendix is prepared by direct inquiry from the villagers.



APPENDIX C

CULTIVATOR'S MAXIMS OR VILLAGE PROVERBS

The tendency to set its valuable experience in rhyme is inherent in human nature, as appears from popular sayings and proverbs, well known all the world over. The village peasants have also set to rhyme their experiences regarding agricultural practices, weather conditions and the advent of the rains. On suitable occasions these sayings and proverbs accidentally fall from their lips. They seem to have an implicit belief in these sayings; but when these empirical generalizations can sometimes be explained and supported by scientific reasoning, they will pass as gospel truth.

The village peasant always counts his agricultural operations by Nakshatras (lunar mansions) or asterisms, of which there are 27 in a year. The most important of these are the Ardra (a part of the Orionis), the Magh (Leonis Regulus), the Chittra (Spika Virginis), and the Swati (Arcturus).

The Ardra roughly corresponds to the second fortnight of June or early July.

Magh ,, ,, ,, second fortnight of August.

Chittra ,, ,, ,, second and third weeks of October.

Uttra ,, ,, ,, second and third weeks of September.

Swati ,, ,, ,, end of October.

Swati.—(third and fourth weeks of October) :—

Rain in Swati is very beneficent to wheat crop.

A village saying regarding rain in Swati translates itself thus :—

‘A shower of rain in Swati

The peasant’s wife wears leaves of gold.’

Uttra.—(second and third weeks of September) :—

Showers should be light and not continuous; for Sarson (mustard) and Rye are sown in this season.

Chittra.—(Second and third weeks of October) :—

The rainfall about this time should be light; a heavy downpour is injurious, as it is the sowing season for the Rabi (i.e. winter) crop.

Ardra.—(second and third weeks of June) :—

This, according to the local belief, is the right time for the setting in of the rains. This is roughly in agreement with up-to-date meteorological observations. The rain in Ardra should be light, and not heavy, as in the latter case there is an apprehension of its too early cessation.

The names of the twelve months of the year correspond to the twelve lunar mansions. The corresponding period in the English Calendar is indicated below :—

1. Chaitra or Chait falls in March-April.
2. Vaisakh „ April-May.
3. Jyeshtha or Jeth „ May-June.
4. Asarh „ June-July.
5. Savan „ July-August
6. Bhadra or Bhadon „ August-September.
7. Ashwin or Kuar „ September-October.
8. Kartik or Katik „ October-November.
9. Margashirsh or Aghan in November-December.
10. Paush or Pus „ „ December-January.
11. Maghi or Magh „ „ January-February.
12. Phaluni or Phagun „ February-March.

These sayings are based on the experience of centuries and are handed down by tradition from father to son.

Translation in English of some of the very popular ones is given below :—

1. Cultivation is the best occupation,
Business is middling and comes next
Domestic service is worse still and lowly,
Alms-begging, the last resort, is the lowliest of all.
2. As you sow, so you will reap,
If you sleep in Asarh, the growing season,
You will weep in Kartik, the harvesting season.
3. The wheat sown in Chittra (September)
The paddy of Ardra (June or July)
No rust eats that,
No heat injures this.
4. Starry nights and shady days,
' Bhaddar ' says, ' foreshow no rains '
5. Now the east wind, now the west,
And again if the east wind blows,
When the clouds clash with one another,
' It will surely rain, ' ' Bhaddar ' says.
6. If the east wind blows in Pus and Magh (December-January-February)
The Mahun, i.e. the Aphies eats up Sarson (mustard).
7. The moon in a circle of clouds is a sure sign of rain.
8. If Friday clouds bank on Saturday, they will not disperse without raining.
9. If the moon is cloudy, the days hot with sun,
And the eve bright with stars, believe these then to be the sure signs of famine.
10. For as many days as the east wind blows in Jeth, (May-June) for so many days will dust-storms blow in Savan (July-August).

Note.—The implication is that such abnormal conditions will bring about excessive heat and extreme dryness of weather.

11. If the month of Magh (January-February) be sultry, the month of Jeth (May-June) be cold, and the rivers and



- brooks fill up rapidly in Asarh (June-July) 'the rains', says Bhaddar's wife, 'will be of a doubtful character.'
12. If it thunders on the 7th of the light half of Savan (July) you must go to Malwa, my love, and I to Gujrat. Famines being unknown in these regions, the implication is that there will be a severe famine.
 13. If the sun be visible in the morning of the 7th of the light half of Savan (July), water will be found only in the sea, or in the wells where women go to bathe, i.e. there would be a severe famine.
 14. Molasses in Chait (March-April)
Oil in Baishakh (April-May)
Travelling in Jeth (May-June)
Bail (Aegle marmilos) in Asarh (June-July)
Pottage in Savan (July-August)
Curds in Bhadon (August-September)
Karela in Kuar (September-October)
Fish in Kartik (October-November)
Coriander in Aghan (November-December)
Zeera in Pus (December-January)
Sugar-candy in Magh (January-February)
Gram in Phagun (February-March)
He who keeps himself from these,
Will suffer not from maladies.

Note.—Here are prescribed twelve precautionary measures for the twelve months of the year

- 15 He who himself ploughs,
Is a true cultivator,
He is only half one,
Who merely supervises.

This reflects upon the evils of absentee landlordism. Its best expression in English is to be found in the well-known sayings :—

'The magic of property turns sand into gold'
'Give a man nine years lease of a garden,
He will convert it into a desert'.

16. Gosain Tulsidas, the well-known sage, poet and author of the *Hindi Ramayana*, advises people to worship the Gracious Lord, irrespective of hardships, with the proverbial devotion of the peasant—who is attached to his farm, even though the expenses grow fourfold and the debts multiply.

Tulsi, therefore, worship thy Lord
With the devotion of the peasant—
Who would not give up his art.
Though debts multiply and costs grow fourfold.

APPENDIX D

HYPERGAMY AMONG BRAHMANS

The sentiment for Hypergamy—the custom which forbids a woman of a particular group to marry a man of an inferior social status, is strongest amongst the Brahmans. In addition to the gotra (i.e. tracing their descent from the Vedic Rishis, e.g. Kashyap) which differentiates the exogamous groups among them, there is another measure of the respectability of families, viz. in terms of Biswa. Thus a girl belonging to a family with a certain *Augat* (i.e. family respectability) say 18 Biswas, cannot be married to a man with a lower *Augat* or family respectability. This has created a situation peculiar to the Brahmans. Every parent tries to give his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom of the highest *Augat*, i.e., social respectability. Hence a premium is placed on the boys of the higher *Augat* Brahmans. It is easier for the Brahmans of higher social respectability to secure wives, even if they are comparatively old in age, poor in the possession of wealth or property, less educated or in other ways less fit. They can even make a good bargain for themselves by charging a high bridegroom price, which the parents of the bride belonging to the lower dignity sections willingly pay. So that there is a regular movement of girls from the lower dignity families to the higher dignity families as wives.

Thus even the old and decrepit Brahmans of higher social respectability can easily secure wives and on their death leave them widows. But in their turn they find it difficult to obtain suitable bridegrooms for the girls of their own families, as the field of selection is very much limited, because they must not marry their girls into families inferior to their own. Thus these girls have occasionally to remain spinsters till fairly advanced in age. On the other hand the Brahmans of lower dignity cannot get wives without much difficulty, for nobody likes the idea of marrying his girl into such families. Shortly stated the problem among the Brahmans is that in families of high dignity there is a dearth of young men and an excess of women, while on the other hand in families of lower dignity there is a large number of young men who are forced to remain unmarried all their life. The spread of education and the uneven distribution and possession of wealth among the higher and lower dignity Brahmans tend to diminish this prejudice, and is helpful in setting up equilibrium between the two sections of the Brahman community.



PART III

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In early history Unao is associated with those scenes where Parashu Ram first commenced his slaughter of the Kshattriyas, and where King Dashrath of Ajodhia accidentally shot dead the Rishi Kumar, thus bringing upon himself and his family a series of misfortunes. Here also, it is said, were fought the fearful battles by Lava and Kush against their own father Rama, whose sacrificial horse they had captured. Long centuries passed by, and Unao became at different periods in history the scene of Rajput colonization and of Mussalman invasions. During Akbar's reign the district was included in the Subah of Oudh, while, in the Nawabi times the whole area was parcelled out into three distinct *chaklas* (districts)—Purwa, Rasulabad and Safipur. Unao, as a whole, was annexed by the British Government with the rest of Oudh in 1856, but it became a 'hotbed of turbulence' a year after, during the mutiny of 1857. The rebel chiefs were put down with a strong hand and nothing untoward has happened since then.

The total population of the district during the last census was 819,128, which shows a decrease of 91,787 since 1911. The causes of this decrease, which were common to the whole of Oudh, may briefly be enumerated as the Great European War and plague, influenza and other epidemics. It has an area of about 1,737 sq. miles and an average density of 471.57 as compared with 503.62 for the whole of Oudh. The districts of Hardoi, Lucknow and Rai Bareilly lie on its north, east and south respectively, while the River Ganges washes it on the west. There are no big towns in the whole district save Purwa, Asiwan and Safipur, where the population varies between 5,000 and 10,000.

The region has three main geographical divisions:— (1) The Ganges *Khadir*, lying along the river, (2) the Sai tract, which occupies the north-eastern portion, and (3) the uplands lying in the centre. The *Khadir* area is subject to floods during the rainy season, but it bears profitable crops when cultivated in the dry months. Water-logging in this area is inevitable after a series of wet years, and it makes agriculture impossible for some-time to come. The Sai tract too is lowlying, and differs very little in quality from the *Khadir* area of the Ganges. As regards the uplands, Mr. Nevill describes its surface as gently undulating, with ridges of high and somewhat sandy soil which give place to wide depressions of stiffer soil in which clay prevails. The whole of the area is dotted with a number of lakes and shallow swamps, formed of depressions which render most of the land fit only for rice cultivation. Also large tracts of 'usar' extending over several miles abound in this area. In short, 'a uniform dead level prevails, alternating rich and fertile tracts studded with groves, and waste arid plains of *Oosar*, the whole intersected here and there by small streams such as the Sai, the Lone, the Kalyani' etc., save where the country slopes down towards the Ganges. The large expanse of barren waste provides *reh*, which is found in many places. It does not appear on the surface of the land but is present in the soil just below the surface. *Kankar* is also an important mineral which is found here in large quantities but is not excavated on a large scale. The chief quarries are situated at Ajgain, Jaitipur, Makhi, Magarwara and Maurawan but there are smaller ones as well at several other places. Calcareous deposits are also found in small patches but only in some parts of the Purwa Tehsil.

As in other parts of Oudh, the soil may be, divided into three kinds. The best in quality is the *dumat* (*du* or *do* = two; *mat* or *matti* = soils) or loam, which is a mixture of sand and clay in varied proportions. Another kind is *matyar* or heavy clay which is dark in colour.

The chief crop grown upon it is rice, but wheat and other crops can also be raised if the land be sufficiently



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irrigated. The third kind is *bhur* wherein sand predominates. The crop chiefly grown upon it is *bajra* but other grains of inferior type may also be raised if rainfall is plentiful. A highly fertile and well cultivated soil known as *goind* is also recognized as an additional class of soil. It chiefly abounds in the vicinity of village sites. 'For the whole district the percentage of *goind* is 18·63, the figure being highest in the Purwa tehsil where it amounts to no less than 23·52 per cent. Loam comprises 48·46 and clay 16·71 per cent. *Bhur* occupies the remaining 16·2 per cent.¹

The average annual rainfall as calculated from the figures of the last thirty years (1894–1923) is 31·72. As in other parts of Oudh, the rains are heavy during the months of July, August and September, and sometimes continue till October. Slight showers also fall during January and February. In normal years the amount of monthly rainfall varies between 0" and 10·5". The year 1919 was an average one, and the figures for each month during that year were as follows:—

Months	Rainfall in inches in 1919	Average rainfall for each month as calculated for the period (1894–1923)
	Inches	Inches
January ...	0·88	0·53
February ...	0·13	0·60
March ...	0·19	0·19
April ...	0	0·18
May ...	0·28	0·25
June ...	0·20	2·84
July ...	7·69	9·14
August ...	10·78	10·47
September ...	8·29	5·08
October ...	1·77	1·07
November ...	0	0·32
December ...	0·03	0·24
Total for 1919 ...	30·24	Annual Average for (1894–1923) ... 13·72

¹ *Unao District Gazetteer*, 1923, p. 11.

The district is well provided with surface-water. The chief means of irrigation available at present are lakes, swamps, tanks, ponds, wells, rivers and other smaller streams flowing through the district. The largest river is the Ganges which flows on the western boundary, and the area lying along it retains sufficient moisture and needs little irrigation. The Sai River and other smaller streams also supply water occasionally to the lands lying close to them. The lakes and tanks are numerous in this district, and form a long chain passing through Purwa, Hasanganj and Safipur tehsils. The most important of these are Kundra Samundar near Jhalotar and others at Kantha, Unchgaon, etc., which supply ample surface water for irrigation. There are also small ponds, generally near the village sites, which hold the water that collects during the rainy season from the neighbouring fields. They irrigate the lands situated close to them for a few months only when the rains have ceased. The water is raised to the level of the fields by hand baskets called *behrees* usually worked by two men, and is led by channels to the fields. The number of such hand-lifts varies according to the distance of the field and the depth of water raised. Where surface water is not available, and fields need irrigation, the most common practice in the district is to dig *kachcha* wells. The number of masonry wells has also increased, but the insecure tenure of non-occupancy tenants prevents them from investing any considerable amount of money in permanent improvements in land. Much of this evil has been mitigated by the passing of the Oudh Rent Act of 1921, and there is now a marked tendency to increase the number of masonry wells. The most common way of water lifting is by means of the *pur* (rope and leathern bag), carrying from 15 to 20 gallons of water and worked by a bullock-run, but the *dhenkuli* (lever-lift), which irrigates from two to three biswas per diem, is also freely used in areas where water is not found at any great depth.

The total area irrigated during the year of the first settlement (1867) is recorded at 51.61 per cent of the total area cultivated, while it fell to 40.73 per cent in the year



of the last settlement (1895). As the new settlement of the district has not yet been completed, the figures of the whole district are not available, but, in spite of the fact that the number of wells has considerably increased, a decrease in the total area irrigated is noticeable in the Unao Tehsil and may be anticipated in other tehsils. Various causes have been ascribed to this decrease but the most plausible of them appear to be, firstly, a succession of wet years, and secondly, a growing tendency among the cultivators to raise such crops as require little or no irrigation. As regards canals there is only one in the district constructed during the Nawabi times, which is known as the Ghaziuddin Hyder Canal, but it supplies little water and remains dry throughout the year except in the rainy season. Its bed shelters wild beasts and bad characters in the dry weather, and drains off all the water from the adjacent villages in the rains, thus not merely depriving the neighbouring land of the water which would otherwise fertilize it, but causing a continual cutting away of all the neighbouring fields into ravines.

Another addition to the present sources of irrigation will, however, be made with the two projected distributaries of the Sarda Canal which is already under construction. The utility of this canal is very much doubted by the villagers of the district. They seem to think, that canal irrigation leads to a decrease in the total out-turn from the fields after a few favourable crop seasons. In fact, canal irrigation in the hands of an ordinary cultivator, often puts a brake to the wheel of life. 'The first thing, striking the traveller in the canal-irrigated tracts of Northern India, is the waste of water on all sides. The small channels of the cultivators, which lead water to the fields are so badly kept that bursts are frequent. The grading of the surface of the fields is poor. The field compartments (*kiaris*) are either too large or do not exist at all. The land is frequently unevenly watered and the subsequent cultivation is not uniform, leading to a poor tilth.'¹ Where

¹Howard, *Crop Production in India*, 1925.



canal water, howsoever abundant and cheap, is misused by the cultivator, the natural fertility of the soil is apt to suffer and give adverse poor returns after a few decades of successful crops. No modern system of improved agriculture would be complete by itself so long as there is a divorce between the triple problems of water saving, fodder production and methods of cultivation. The canal water will undoubtedly render considerable relief to the neighbouring fields during years of scarcity, if sufficient water is obtained from these distributaries, for one running ten to twelve miles away from and parallel to the river Ganges, is at the tail end of the canal itself. The large tract of *matyar* will obviously receive much help, as the level of the soil water will be raised to enable such valuable crops as wheat and cotton to be grown on it, and sold in the neighbouring market of Cawnpore.

Possessing so many water facilities and endowed with such a vast expanse of cultivable land, Unao was bound to be primarily an agricultural district. There are few industries of any great importance, and the trade in the district is limited to the supply of the ordinary wants of the inhabitants, the majority of whom are dependent upon agriculture. According to the census of 1911, the total number of farm servants and field labourers was 74,716 but it dropped to 44,943 in 1921. On the other hand, there has been a considerable increase in the number of 'ordinary cultivators' from 574,158 in 1911 to 584,415 in 1921, although the population of the district fell from 910,915 to 819,128 during the same interval. Mr. Edye accounts for this variation, to a certain extent by the rise in the wages of agricultural labourers, but mainly by the rise in the prices of food grains and the absence of a corresponding rise in rents. He aptly remarks that 'the increase in the number of "ordinary cultivators" is largely at the expense of labour, both agricultural and other.'¹ People have thus been tempted to leave their traditional occupations for agriculture, resulting inevitably in an increasing amount of pressure on the land.

¹ Edye, *U. P. Census Report, 1921*, p. 161.



In fact, the number of the agricultural labourers in the district is much larger than the census figure. Small boys who are allowed to 'play at work (e.g. weeding) merely to keep them quiet,' none the less render services which would otherwise have needed an outside labourer, if the system of joint family labour did not exist among the Indian cultivators. Moreover, there is a long array of artisans who turn to their crafts only in favourable seasons, and betake themselves to agriculture freely, but give their occupations to the census officer according to the caste to which they belong, or the work which they traditionally undertake.

Everywhere the vicissitudes of political life have left an indelible impress on the social status of cultivators. In Unao district, too, the history of agricultural labour is connected with the shifting fortunes of its agricultural population. The earliest inhabitants occupying the central parts of the district were, according to Mr. Nevill, 'the Lodhs, Lunias, Ahirs, Thatheras, Dhobis and Kurmis, who appear to have been a pastoral race, herding their cattle in the forests which then covered the country, and raising a scanty crop of grain in the clearings about their villages.' It was by dint of force that they were dispossessed of their original rights in the land, by the invading Rajput and Mussalman clans. Lands were seized by the conquerors, and given over to the fighting chiefs in recognition of their faithful services. The new masters of the soil assumed the role of main proprietors, and accepted the original inhabitants as their tenants. In Unao Tahsil the Kshattriyas, the Brahmins and the Khattris hold 26·13, 23·13, and 24·61 per cent respectively of the total area in the tehsil. The corresponding figure during the last settlement were 40·59, 20·46, and 18·19 per cent respectively.¹

In the absence of any kind of security to life and property of the small cultivators during the later days of the Nawabi rule,—when the talukdars, as described by Sir W. Sleeman in his *Tour in Oude*, used to have

¹ Panna Lall, I.C.S., *Roster Rent Rate Report of the Unao Tehsil, 1926.*

recourse to 'indiscriminate plunder and murder over all lands not held by men of the same class' and when 'no road, town, village or hamlet' was 'secure from their merciless attacks',—the poor cultivator was bound to wander from place to place in quest of safety and take refuge under some powerful chief, and had to accept a low place somewhere in the lands of the chief's rural subordinates. Jassa Singh, the most notorious of all the chiefs, is described to have been the master of his will, who used to turn out the villagers from their homes, and give them the choice of service or death if he caught them. The exactions of Bakhsh Ali and his deputy Mansab Ali, and 'their utter disregard of their engagements with the landholders and cultivators in Safipur, were sufficient, in the middle of the eighteenth century, to drive many out of their holdings and turn them into agricultural labourers.

The Pasis who were reputed of old for their fearless and courageous spirit, and who were in early days occupied in agriculture either as tenants or field labourers, joined the forces of the petty chiefs as fighting retainers during this period of insecurity, and became notorious for their outrageous acts of indiscriminate loot and plunder. The settled government of the present time has reduced these landless people to the ranks of either village *chaukidars* or landless labourers. Those who became *chaukidars* still occupy *muafi* (rent free) lands given to them by the village for their services, while the landless labourers have been able to acquire tiny fields through hard labour and frugality. Owing to the uneconomic nature of their small and scattered holdings, coupled with the necessity of mutual help and co-operation among the villagers to work successfully their fields, many of them still continue to work as field labourers.

So, the agricultural labourers of to-day are mostly the descendants of the original proprietors of the soil in this district. Even those belonging to the Mohammedan religion are mostly converts from among the Hindus, who preferred to change their creed either for fear of confiscation of their property in Nawabi times, or with a view to acquire more land. The original Mussalmans, who reside chiefly in the old towns, seldom cultivate land



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themselves, but either engage hired labour or rent out lands to small cultivators. The majority of the so-called agricultural labourers in this district have inherited their ancestral qualities, and are good tillers of the soil. But, what their position is, in the scale of the present rural economy, as a whole, the following pages will show.



CHAPTER II

AGRICULTURAL TIME-TABLE

WHERE agriculture depends upon rainfall, it is Nature and not Man which governs the time and condition of labour in the fields. The periods of work of the labouring classes in Unao too, are governed chiefly by the vicissitudes of the seasons. A favourable monsoon concentrates all the available labouring force on the fields ; but a failure of the rains scatters it, and makes the labourers seek employment in the mills and factories at Cawnpore. Misfortunes do not recur regularly but when they do come, the whole equilibrium of rural economy is disturbed and the labouring classes suffer great hardships. In Unao, as in the other parts of Oudh, the two important crops generally raised are the Kharif and Rabi. The former includes juar, bajra, maize, cotton, moong, arhar, urd, moth, sanai, sugarcane, til, groundnut, transplanted rice, etc., while in the rabi are grown wheat, barley, gram, gujari, birra, linseed, peas, tobacco, poppy (seed), rape and mustard. The Rabi has recently gained much greater importance than Kharif, on account of the gradually increasing area under its cultivation. The area under Kharif has decreased in nearly all parts of the district since the last settlement of 1895.

Recent figures for the whole district are not yet available, but the figures for the Unao Tehsil show that the area under Kharif has decreased from 57·8 per cent of the total area cultivated during the last settlement, to 55·1 per cent in 1923. The area under the rabi crop has at the same time increased from 61·2 per cent to 66·2 per cent.

Preparations for the Rabi crop begin with the first few instalments of rain received in the month of Bhadon.

Vigorous ploughing commences shortly after, and as soon as the hard soil is upturned and crushed to pieces, the harrow is run through the field. Usually the preparation of the soil begins with the partial cessation of rains, but as wheat requires better prepared soil than



other crops, ploughing in this case has to be started earlier. As soon as the soil is rendered fine and porous, and capable of retaining the requisite quantity of moisture, seed is sown either broadcast or in furrows. According to a familiar Hindi saying ' *Terah Katik teen asarhh* ', the sowing of the Rabi crop ought to be completed within three days of Asarhh. Consequently, the work of sowing the Rabi is finished by the middle of November. The first watering of the Rabi crops has also to be undertaken during this month, while another becomes due in the early part of January. After one or two more waterings, the crop is left till March to ripen by itself under careful watch so as to keep it safe from ravaging birds, intruding jackals and stray cattle. As fences round the fields are rare in this part of the province, this work entails severe strain on the cultivators.

A similar process has also to be gone through for the Kharif crop. After ploughing and manuring the fields, the crop is sown during Asarhh and weeding has to be carried on in Sawan. The crop becomes ready to be harvested during Aghan. Besides these two crops an extra crop called the *zaid* crop, comprising *chaina*, *matra*, etc., is also sown by the middle of May and harvested before the commencement of rains. It also includes different kinds of vegetables that find an easy sale in the neighbouring village *bazars*.

The agricultural year¹ is generally supposed to begin with the closing in of the summer season, i.e. the last

¹ The following table gives the more or less equivalent English dates for the corresponding Hindi months :—

Hindi Months.

1. Chait.	March 15 to April 13.
2. Baisakh.	April 14 to May 14.
3. Jaith.	May 15 to June 15.
4. Asarhh.	June 16 to July 16.
5. Sawan.	July 17 to August 17.
6. Bhadon.	August 18 to September 17.
7. Kunwar.	September 18 to October 17.
8. Kartik.	October 18 to November 16.
9. Aghan.	November 17 to December 15.
10. Poos.	December 16 to January 14.
11. Magh.	January 15 to February 12.
12. Phalgun.	February 13 to March 14.

functions are performed during this interval of agricultural idleness. As soon as the rainy season sets in, some of the labourers are recalled to the fields for the preparation of the soil. But real work commences after the heavy and incessant rains of Sawan and Bhadon. This is how agricultural labour is employed during the twelve months that make up the year.

It is quite obvious from the above that there can never be any exact classification of the work of an agricultural labourer, for he cannot anticipate when he may be compelled by circumstances to leave one occupation for another. However, we can roughly draw up his annual time-table and make a fair division of his work as follows:—

Indian months	Approximate English dates	Works undertaken
Bhadon ...	August 17 to September 17.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ploughing the field for Rabi crop. 2. Harrowing. 3. Weeding and hoeing of Kharif crop. 4. Collection of grass. 5. Supplementary occupations.
Kuar ...	September 18 to October 18.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ploughing for Rabi crop. 2. Collection of fodder for cattle. 3. Collection of grass. 4. Picking of cotton. 5. Harvesting of maize, juar, bajra and other Kharif crops. 6. Harvesting of sathi (60 days' rice).
Kartik ...	October 18 to November 16.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Picking of cotton. 2. Sowing of Rabi crop. 3. Collection of grass. 4. Harvesting of the 'five months' rice'. 5. Sowing of potatoes. 6. Harvesting of juar, bajra, moong, etc.



Indian months	Approximate English dates	Works undertaken
Aghan ...	November 17 to December 15.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. First watering of wheat crop and other valuable Rabi crops.2. Harvesting of the 'Aghan' rice.3. Supplementary occupations.
Poos ...	December 16 to January 14.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cutting and crushing of sugarcane.2. Preparation of 'rab' and 'gur'.3. Second watering of the Rabi crop.
Magh ...	January 15 to February 12.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Crushing of sugarcane.2. Preparation of 'rab' and 'gur'.3. Watering the Rabi crop.
Phalgun ...	February 13 to March 14.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preparation of 'rab' and 'gur'.2. Harvesting of mustard.
Chait ...	March 15 to April 13.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Harvesting of wheat, barley and other Rabi crops.
Baisakh ...	April 14 to May 14.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Harvesting of Rabi crops.2. Threshing of wheat and barley.
Jaith ...	May 15 to June 15	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Winnowing, threshing and husking of wheat, barley, etc.2. Sowing of sugarcane.3. Sowing of cotton.4. Grading and transportation of the Rabi produce.5. Other supplementary work.
Asarhh ...	June 16 to July 16	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Little of ploughing.2. Sowing of Kharif crop.3. Supplementary occupations.
Sawan ...	July 17 to August 15.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Weeding.2. Supplementary occupations.

The daily hours of work of the labourers also vary according to the season and crop. Generally speaking, in a busy season a labourer, if he has a small plot of his own, gets up early at day-break, and plods his way to the field, with a plough on his shoulder and a pair of bullocks in front, singing perhaps a well-known rustic tune. If he has to serve on another's field he is sometimes late. When the task is light, the labourer either reaches the field at a later hour or returns earlier after his work in the morning. There is no hard-and-fast rule as regards his daily hours of work throughout the year, but let this not be forgotten that labour is available at all hours of the day according to one's needs. The employer usually intimates his requirements to the labourer the night before, and engages him for the next day. More often than not, the labourers are bound for their services to a rich cultivator by debts, and have to submit to his timings. A landless labourer, though more independent to choose the time of his working hours, has often to wander from one field to another in search of employment, and has to make sure of his engagement for the next day.

When the labourers commence to work early in the morning, they get about two to three hours' rest at midday for their meal. They rejoin at about 1.30 in the afternoon and continue till sunset. When they work at their own farms, they receive their meals in the fields through their wives or children. During periods of continuous labour, as in case of sugarcane-crushing or gur-making, the labourers bring their day-meals to the fields and take leave by rotation. When digging wells, they are supplied by the employer with a meal of *sattu* and *gur*. Thus the tendency among the labourers engaged in agriculture, is to save time as much as possible in the busy seasons in accordance with their own rudimentary knowledge, but to waste a good deal of it in the slack seasons. A labourer never consults a watch when he goes to work, but measures his time by the movements of the sun. Save with the above reservations, his hours of work usually range from 5 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. during the summer, and from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. and from 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.



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during the winter season. Slack seasons and periods of light work demand only occasional and interrupted labour. The following table attempts to give a rough idea of the actual hours of work, that are spent in a year by a labourer, while engaged in agriculture.

Time measured by villagers according to Hindu festivals	Approximate English dates	No. of days	Average amount of daily work	Total No. of hours
			hours	
Nagpanchmi to Anant Chaudas.	August 14 to September 20.	38	3½	133
Anant Chaudas to Dasehra.	September 20 to October 16.	27	5	135
Dasehra to Diwali	October 16 to November 5.	20	3	60
Diwali to Kartiki Ashnan.	November 5 to December 5.	20	5	100
Kartiki Ashnan to Holi.	December 5 to February 28.	85	3	255
Holi to Sankranti	February 28 to April 15.	46	8	368
Sankranti to Baisakhi Amawas.	April 15 to May 15.	31	5	155
Baisakhi Amawas to the end of Jaith.	May 15 to July 9	55	3	165
Beginning of Asarh to Asarhhi (Bat Puja).	July 9 to July 25.	16	9	144
Asarhhi to Nagpanchami.	July 25 to August 13.	19	3	57
Total number of hours ...	.....	...	...	1,572

This means that an agricultural labourer spends only 1,572 hours or, taking a normal day equal to nine working hours, 175 days approximately on the field. For about six months in the year he has practically no work to do in agriculture. Such other means of livelihood, as may sufficiently repay him for his labours, are not always at

hand, and he has to leave his home in order to find work for his leisure hours, and to supplement his scanty income. But a landholding labourer cannot constantly leave his home without neglecting his own crop. He is much handicapped by his peculiar situation, and has to postpone his search for outside employment till his own work at the field is completely finished. The days of whole-time complete leisure are few in number, and therefore he is compelled to employ most of his time in non-agricultural pursuits. The cottage industries, at present, do not provide him with adequate remuneration, but engage him when he can find no other work to do.

To summarize briefly, an agricultural labourer has nothing like regular employment in the fields. He finds himself out of work at different periods of the year, and at different hours of the day. In a busy season he has sometimes to work for more than twelve hours a day, while in a slack season, he cannot possibly find employment on the field for more than an hour or two. Such an uneven distribution of his periods of work, amply demonstrates the necessity of providing for him some such occupation as might engage him profitably during his leisure without overtaxing his strength after the hard toil in the field. The sole remedy lies in the promotion of a variety of small handicrafts and cottage industries, that already abound in the country side, but need re-organization.



CHAPTER III

REMUNERATION OF LABOUR

UNAO is, mostly, an agricultural district, and save Cawnpore, which lies at close quarters towards the west on the other side of the river Ganges, there are no large centres of industry and trade in the district itself, to attract field labourers in large numbers from the interior. The inevitable result of the close proximity of Cawnpore has been a dearth of field labourers near about the Ganges Bridge (Gangaghat) which is the gateway for the exit of the unemployed labourers during idle intervals to the industrial city of Cawnpore. Consequently we find that the wages are comparatively higher on the fields around Gangaghat than in any other part of the district. Further, leaving the *bhur* tract aside, where cultivation is impossible and life is hard, we find an approximately equal distribution of village population, including the agricultural labourers, on every other portion of the land.

In the rural areas the factors that govern the remuneration for labour on the field are many. These are the labourer's sex, age or caste, nature of employment, custom, season, locality and the total produce of the field where he works. An agriculturist has to work hard in order to eke out sufficient income, even for his bare subsistence. He must convey water from a well, lake or river to the field, plough and cultivate the unyielding soil, reap, winnow, husk and watch the crops at night. The villager is prudent enough to make a fair division of his field labour among his family members, reserving hard labour for himself and leaving the lighter tasks for his female partner. We find an agricultural labourer ploughing the field, levelling the soil, working at the well with his *pur* (water bucket) or *dhenkuli* (lever-lift), reaping, winnowing and engaging in other hard jobs, while his

wife, in addition to her household duties, helps him in directing water into the fields, dropping seed in the furrows, husking and grinding corn, selling articles in the village market, collecting fire-wood, making baskets, spinning cotton, etc.

Thus the time-honoured custom of apportioning lighter work to the female sex has continued up till now. But the economic circumstances are rendering this arrangement quite impossible, and now it is not an uncommon sight to find a female labourer *working at the pur, irrigating the fields*, reaping the harvest, collecting fuel and carrying baskets full of earth. The only tasks that are denied her and which men are doing, are ploughing with *hal*, and digging with *phaora* (Indian spade). This situation is realized by the labourers themselves with whom it is a common saying : *hal phaora bacha hai*, meaning thereby that working at the plough and the spade only remain now to be done by women.

Some old persons of Rau, Asiwan and Purwa assert that such conditions never existed half a century ago. Woman was never given such hard toil, and her natural tenderness was respected. This outrage on her physique is only recent, resulting from the economic conditions that have prevailed since the famine of 1907-08. The agricultural labourer, with his tiny little holding, has declared a sort of economic war upon Nature to earn an income which is often below the subsistence level, and in this struggle he does not hesitate to employ even his wife and children as tools of warfare. A labourer who, more often than not, continues to hold a small plot of land, has to work in his master's field in addition to his own. He seeks the help of his female partner, and also engages his children in such labour as watching the field at daytime, transplanting rice, grazing cattle and picking up useless plants (*nikoni*). Women and children, when they become accustomed to such tasks on their own farm, do not hesitate to work on another's field for wages, and in course of time drift into the ranks of field labourers.

With such division of labour between the sexes, we naturally find a man getting higher wages than his wife or children. The idea of maintenance of the dependents

also does to some extent account for the higher rate of wages given to men. The argument in support of this statement is found in the very words of the labourers themselves who, at times, complain of their low rates of wages in these words: *apne larkan balan ker ka khabaibe*, meaning thereby—how will they support their children? Those male labourers who prefer to take wages in cash generally get from three to six annas per day. In Siras Chehri village the rate is sometimes even less than three annas per day. The taluqdars of Galgalha and Sarosi pay only from one and a half to two annas a day to the labourers who work at their fields. But the labourers in such cases do not work to their full capacity, and steal some of the produce from the land, in order to partially compensate themselves for such meagre payment. The labourers engaged on the fields lying near the banks of the River Ganges, sometimes get seven to even eight annas when labour is insufficient.

The wages of the female labourers are somewhat lower than those of men, and range between annas two to five. Children are not generally employed as labourers on another's field till the age of thirteen, but cases were not few in the district where boys of eight or nine could be seen sowing seed, or engaged in other agricultural operations on the field. The truth is that a peasant's child begins his period of apprenticeship under the care, and on the farm, of his own father, and gradually starts with employing himself as labourer now and then. He has enough work suitable for his physique on the farm of his own father, but he supplements the family income by working in spare hours on the neighbouring fields. The boys generally get wages ranging between one and a half anna to two and a half annas a day. On the fields near Jhalotar and Nivai village in the Mohan Tehsil, sometimes equal wages are paid to men, women and grown-up children. This is probably accounted for by the fact that the females have become accustomed to do all sorts of work practised by men, without any physical limitations. In the case of those labourers who receive wages in kind, the males get one *panseri* ($2\frac{1}{4}$ seers) of grain for work other than harvesting, and one *muttha*

(small bundle) out of every eight or nine *mutthas* of the harvested crop. One *muttha* of the harvested crop contains grain varying in quantity from three to five seers. A female gets about $1\frac{1}{4}$ seers of grain for half day's work and $1\frac{1}{2}$ seers for full day ; or, one *muttha* is given to her for every 12 to 15 *mutthas* that she harvests.

The caste of the labourer has also much to do in determining the rate of wages that he might expect on the fields. There is a well established idea among the labour-employing population that certain castes do better agricultural work hence, they naturally give preference to them while engaging and pay a slightly higher rate of wages than to the other castes. It is quite true that differences, to a certain extent, do exist between the various castes in this district in respect of their cultivating abilities, and that these differences are inherent in the people themselves and are difficult to level up. The Lodhs, Chamars, Kurmis and Kachhis are premier agriculturists in this district and are considered to be labourers of a very high order. The Lodhs and Chamars are spoken of as 'unsurpassed cultivators'. They are spread all over the district, but chiefly inhabit the villages near Achalganj, Jhalotar and Maurawan. Kurmis and Kachhis are most numerous near Bangarmau and in the Purwa Tehsil. They get wages ranging from four to seven annas, and even eight annas when labour is scarce. Kachhis are given preference for an additional reason, viz. that they can use night-soil as manure. The Gadarias, Koris, Tambolis, Kumhars, Barhais, Nais, Malis, Kahars and Dhobis are other castes that have been able in prosperous years to acquire small plots of land, but have been driven to the status of part-time agricultural labourers by the force of circumstances, and are not considered to be good agriculturists. They now do their professional work only in spare time, and have actually taken to agriculture as their chief occupation. They toil in vain on their small uneconomic holdings, get part-time work on the fields of the zemindars and are ultimately driven to the rank of landless labourers. Their rates of wages vary from three to six annas in different areas. In addition, they receive *Jeora* or *dustoori* or *neg* (custo-

mary payments) for domestic services which they have been rendering for generations, and *laoni* (perquisites) for the part-time spontaneous work they do on the fields. The following table of average cash wages which is the result of personal enquiries from numerous labourers, supplies very interesting information about the difference of wages among the various castes in the district of Unao:—

TABLE OF AVERAGE WAGES ACCORDING TO CASTES

Castes				Range of wages	Average wages
				Annas	Annas
Barais (Tambolis)	...	...	...	4 to 8	6
Lodhs	...	...	...	3 to 7	5
Chamars	...	...	...	3 to 7	5
Kachis	...	...	...	3 to 7	4½
Kurmies	...	...	...	3 to 7½	4½
Gadarias	...	...	...	3 to 6	4½
Abeer	...	...	...	3 to 6	4
Thakur	...	...	...	3 to 5	4
Brahman	...	...	...	3 to 5	4
Julahas	...	...	...	3 to 6	4
Behnas	...	...	...	3 to 6	4
Barhai	...	...	...	3 to 5	4
Nai	...	...	...	3 to 5	4
Faqir	...	...	...	3 to 6	4
Mallah	...	...	...	3 to 3½	3½
Other Mohammadan castes— Sheikh, Syed, Pathans, etc.,				3 to 5	3½

Barhais or Tambolis generally work on *pan* (betel-leaf) cultivation and are not engaged in any other agricultural work. The reason why Julahas and Behnas get much higher wages than the Sheikhs and Pathans, is that they are primarily cotton carders and weavers, but freely betake themselves to agriculture. They have been used to it for a long time, and have proved tolerably good agricultural labourers. Sheikhs and Pathans seldom work on the field, and if they do, they are paid a lower

rate of wages. Thakurs and Brahmins are too proud to handle the plough themselves and despise cultivation. They generally employ hired labour on their fields, and wherever they have themselves taken to field cultivation for economic reasons, they have proved to be husbandmen of an inferior type.

The wages of an agricultural labourer also vary according to the class of work that he has to perform on the field. Ploughing is the hardest task that he has to do on the field, and for this he is generally paid higher wages than for any other work. He gets *bhusa* for his pair of bullocks if they are his own, and in addition, is paid five annas a day on an average. The same wages continue to be given to him when he takes to irrigation work. For the sowing of Rabi or Kharif crops or potatoes the labourers are paid on an average four annas a day, but for planting rice they are paid usually at the rate ranging from four to five annas a day. When they take to harvesting of the Rabi or Kharif crops of rice they are paid in some places customary wages ranging from three to five annas, while in others the system of *laoni* or *loni* (perquisites) is in vogue. In Bauna Mau village in the Unao Tehsil, the cultivator gives one *muttha* (bundle) for every twenty-five *mutthas* that the labourer cuts with his scythe. In Jhalotar and Nivai Villages in the Hasanganj Tehsil, the cultivator has to give three *dabis* (Indian measure in bundles) out of every thirty *dabis* harvested, to the labourer who works on his field. Out of these three *dabis*, one *dabi* is taken by the labourer himself of his own choice out of the harvested heap, and two *dabis* are given by the employer with his own hands. Thus the average grain that comes out of the three *dabis* amounts to something like 9 seers in all, i.e. it varies from 3 to 3½ seers per *dabi*. In Padri village, a labourer is given one *poola* or *muttha* out of every twenty-five *poolas* harvested by him. In Baunamau the custom is to give one *muttha* out of every twenty-five *mutthas* harvested by the labourer. On the fields near Muradabad the common practice is to give away one *dabi* out of every twenty-five *dabis* to the labourer. In this case a *dabi* is equal to three *mutthas*. Customs differ in various



places, but usually the labourers are remunerated as stated above. The above applies to the harvesting of the Rabi crop. In case of the Kharif the system is quite different. For instance, the work of picking up *kapas* from the fields is generally done by females and small children. Every labourer collects *kapas* and makes eight equal *dheris* or shares, out of which one is given over to the labourer who collects it. The number of *dheris* arranged differ from place to place. It varies from eight to sixteen and even to eighteen and twenty. A similar system of shares is prevalent in the collection of *sila* i.e., gleanings. The females and children who collect it are paid half, one-third or even one-fourth of the collected lot, according to the custom of each place. Thus we find that an agricultural labourer is much better off during the harvest season, when he is repaid for his hard toil, than at any other part of the year.

Custom is a great factor in checking a sudden rise in the rates of wages among the agricultural labourers. The economic poverty staring in the face of every petty farmer, a general rise in prices and subsequent rise in the wages of the unskilled labourers engaged in non-agricultural occupations, have united to compel the zemindars to pay higher wages to the field labourers. The zemindars are now heard to complain that they do not find a proportionate increase in the produce of their land. The increase in the rates of wages has been the result of causes which are beyond the control of the cultivators themselves. There has been a general rise in the prices while there has also been a diminution of the labour force in the villages, and this has compelled the landlords to offer higher rates of wages to attract the non-agriculturist classes to the field, in order to get their lands cultivated, which would otherwise have been under-cultivated or have lain fallow for want of farm-hands. Old customs are gradually yielding place to new, and even these new customs do not now seem to have any permanency in them. About forty years ago, three *mutthas* of harvested crop used to be given to each labourer for every thirty *mutthas* that he could harvest. Now he is being given the same number

of *mutthas* for every twenty-five harvested. In some places, wages in money have been substituted to a very great extent for wages in kind, and these also show a tendency to rise, leaving the time-honoured custom far behind.

Remuneration of labour in cash wages or perquisites, differs from place to place, but since the area of our enquiry has been limited to the district of Unao merely, the difference has not been very marked. Still we find that at places near Pariar, Sikandarpur, and Harha which are close to the industrial city of Cawnpore, the system of perquisites is fast disappearing, and wages are being paid in cash, while at places near Asiwan, Mianganj, Magrair and Jhalotar which lie far into the interior of the district, field and domestic labour is being paid in terms of *mutthas* and *dabis* of the harvested crop.

But at times nature perpetrates cruelties of unimaginable severity upon the poor agriculturists. Indian agriculture is always a gamble in rain. Whenever the rains are deficient, labourers, in view of the approaching calamity, leave their homes to seek chances of employment in the industrial city of Cawnpore. During times of scarcity there is widespread agricultural unemployment, and starvation stares the labourers in the face. Some of the labourers, taking the enquirer into confidence, have confessed that they even take to pilfering and other illegal professions, when it becomes a question of life and death with them.

Jutai (ploughing) and *katni* (harvesting) is done in some parts of the Safipur, Unao and Hasanganj Tehsils on contract system, but the practice is not followed throughout the district. A part-time labourer, holding a small plot of his own, ploughs the field of his master on promise of being allowed to have the pair of bullocks, which he himself does not possess, for a couple of days in order to plough his own field. The rate for *katni* work varies from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 4 per *biga*. Sometime the work of levelling the ground with *pataila* or *mai* (clod crusher), and harrowing the field with *surrawan*, is also done on contract system by the labourers. They are paid in terms



of a few small baskets-full of coarse grain such as arhar, juar, etc., which varies in quantity from half to one seer per *bigha*. Some of the landlords and zemindars are prone to give their lands to be worked on contract system, but with a gradual rise in the rate of wages, this system is fast disappearing, and we now notice that the landlords have begun to give their lands on rent to the small cultivators. There are also a large number of farmers who have their small holdings near one another, and combine to work on the whole plot when they cannot do the whole work by themselves, and when the crop is ready they distribute the produce according to their varied proportions of land and labour. Sometimes a small farmer lends his small field to a neighbouring cultivator, and works on it to partake in the total produce according to pre-arranged shares.

The big zemindars and talukdars, under whom most of the agricultural labourers have each a number of small holdings, pay generally a lower rate of wages to their tenants who work occasionally and for short periods, on their farms. Such labourers, however, often render domestic services too, and receive extra payment from the zemindars as well as the village people on occasions of child-birth, marriage, Holi, Dasehra and other ceremonies and festivities. The economic and social relationships in the past have been so inter-twined that deficiency in one kind of payment was made good in case of another. The idea was to make every artisan's or functionary's family self-sufficient in one way or the other. The recent tendencies of disruption in the village organization have upset the old economic arrangement, and to-day we find the condition of the agricultural labourers quite different. They render the double duties of part-time labourers in the field on the one hand, and of domestic and public servants of the village, on the other. The *chamarin* (wife of *chamar*) serves as *Dai* or mid-wife in the village, and gets eight local *panseries* of grain at child-birth, with something more in case of a male child, and from ten to twelve *panseries* of grain in a marriage along with one *lhenga* and one *dupatta* or *chadar*. The male member of her family also gets some clothes for his outdoor

work, like the general *lipa-lhesi* (white-washing) of walls of the house and providing shoes, etc., for the family. He gets food for four days, and *mazdoori* (wages) varying from Re. 1 to Rs. 4, according to the payer's *haisiyat* for these services. At other times, the work of mending and repairing the zemindar's house is generally done in *begar* by the *kamins* (menials), consisting chiefly of the chamars in the village. As regards the economic relations of the chamar with other cultivators of the village, he, in some places, provides *kora* (whip) to the cartmen, and a leather rope to the cultivator to enable him to fix his yoke to the plough. But this custom is gradually disappearing and we find that, as chamars are taking to agriculture in increasing numbers, they are ceasing to provide these small daily necessities, which have now to be bought by the villagers in the weekly or bi-weekly *bazars* held either in the same or the neighbouring villages. A *chamar* may also be found cleaning *khalian*, separating grain from the harvested crop (*naj ko mandwata hai*) and doing *usai* business, i.e. separating dust and husk from grain. For these services he gets the whole quantity of the remnant *githra* (grain mixed with stalk of the plant) yielding about 20 seers of grain, and a *ras* (heap of grain) containing another 20 seers. The *chamars* are paid one *panseri* of corn for the removal of such dead cattle from the village as are of no practical use. For the removal of such cattle the skins of which can be used in making *pur*, the chamar gets the skins and has to give one *pur* out of it to the owner of the cattle. The skin of a buffalo provides two *purs* generally.

The *kumhar* (potter) supplies *matkas*, *gharhas*, and various other earthenware according to the necessity of the village people, and provides them with *dewlis* (earthen *chiraghs*) on the occasion of the Dewali festival, and such other articles in marriage and other festivities as the zemindar, Mahajan, and other village people require. In return, he is paid eight *panseries* or 18 seers of grain a year or something less, according to the *haisiyat* of the payer. He is also paid one or two small baskets-full of grain in addition to his usual *tyohari*, on important occasions like the Holi and Dewali. He is one of the

fourteen *parjas*¹ and gets, on occasions of marriage, one *lhenga*, one *dupatta*, a few ornaments and about Rs. 20 in cash. Nearly the same amount is given to the Kahar who is also one of the 14 *parjas*.

The *nai* (Barber) is an important factor in the village organization. He arranges the marriages of the village people, and delivers his Jijman's messages to his relatives in other villages. On the occasions of marriage he goes out to invite the relatives, and serves the guests of his master with *chilamtamakoo* (smoking-pipe), rubs oil on the body and shaves their chins. The *nain* (wife of the barber) rubs oil on all the female members of the house, dresses their hair, looks after their bodily complaints and accompanies the bride to the bridegroom's house. For such services the barber's family is paid from two to three *multhas* of harvested crop at the time of the harvest, and also gets food, clothes and cash in varied quantities. In the case of a daughter's marriage, a *nai* gets from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 in cash, and a few ornaments along with a certain number of small baskets-full of grain, and a *than* of cloth or *kurta* and *dhoti*, and one *lhenga* and one *dupatta*; while on a son's marriage he gets one *kurta*, one *dhoti*, one *lhenga*, one *dupatta* along with Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 in cash. In addition to this he gets supplementary donations from the bride's side also. *Bari*, being considered as a *parja* of equal importance, is paid the same amount as the *nai*.

The *turaiya* (sweeper) is not very common except in the big villages. The only task that he performs is to carry night-soil to the fields from the house of the zemindar or other people. Wherever a sweeper family has been living for a long time, it has *muafi* (rent-free) lands, (for example, in Sarousi), but in villages, where it has recently settled, the sweeper is paid cash wages in money at an average rate of eight annas a month and two or three breads a day. In villages near Padri, Korari and Achalganj, the sweeper's family is paid about a maund of grain annually at harvest, and receives *tyohari* on various festivals. A

¹ The fourteen *parjas* include *nai*, *bari*, *kumhar*, *kahar*, *barhai*, *lohar*, *sunar*, *chaukidar*, *mali*, *manihar*, *dhobi*, *darzi* and *bhanghi*.

turaiya gets some *inam* in cash or in kind at the time of the marriage of his *malik's* (master's) children, and collects the money that is thrown in the streets by the bridegroom's father over the *palki* (palanquin) of the married couple as it leaves the bride's house. In his spare time, which often coincides with the busy seasons of an agricultural year, he toils at his small holding and supplements his professional income with his small agricultural produce. He often carries dung or night-soil manure to the fields of the village people. It is the only agricultural work in which he is employed and for which he is paid a small basket-full of grain, *ek-tokri naj*, per day. Where *chamars* are not available, the *turaiya* generally undertakes the task of removing the carcass of a dead animal. Where the *bhangin* (wife of a scavenger) is available, the work of midwifery generally falls to her lot. For such work she is paid Re. 1 in cash, half a maund of grain, called *akhai* and one brass *lota* as her wages, and one *lhenga* and one *dupatta* as reward for the successful termination of the task. The *bhangi* gets, like other *parjas* of the village, one *kurta*, and a rupee or two in cash.

The other castes in the villages that are found with those enumerated above are the *kunjra*, *manihar*, *tehi*, *lohar*, *barhai*, *lonia*, *kahar*, *dhobi*, *mali*, *darzi*, *sunar*, *gurait*, (watch-man) *bhujwa* or *bharbhunja* and *faqir*, who also form part of the village organization. Though people of all these castes have been found to possess one or more small plots each, they seldom work as labourers on the fields of other cultivators. Lohars and Barhais do not work on the fields as labourers, but they help a great deal in mending implements which form articles of vital necessity to the agriculturist. For this task, each of them receives about 18 seers of grain annually at the harvest. Gurhais, who used to look after the fields and the village itself, were rewarded for their services in terms of *muafi* (rent-free) lands. The rent used to be shown in papers but was never charged in practice. The custom of engaging these gurhais is fast disappearing on account of the rise in the value of land which the zemindars now generally lease out on rent. Lunias go in for collecting saltpetre and are expert in testing



soils, but they sometimes also work as agricultural labourers. Kayasth cultivators are generally the Patwaris and karindas, who hold land and get them cultivated through labourers.

The system of remunerating labour in the villages is thus interwoven with the communal organization of the village, but we should not lose sight of the fact that counteracting forces are already at work, uprooting the village system gradually, and depriving the agricultural labourer of his ancient security and social amenities. The struggle for an economic living is becoming more acute. Women and children have begun to displace men in the fields and are ready to compete with them everywhere. The majority of the field labourers are gradually ceasing to work as whole-time day labourers. Land-hunger is daily increasing, and a day labourer tries hard to secure for himself a small farm, and, in spite of the most frugal living upon his tiny holding, he is compelled to work on wages in his spare hours. The customary payment in *mutthas* and *dabis* is still prevalent to a very great extent, but money payment is gradually coming into vogue. An agricultural labourer is thus further handicapped, for his days of scarcity and prosperity interchange with the rise and fall in prices of the products of the field, which, in turn, are controlled by the vagaries of the seasons.



CHAPTER IV

THE MOVEMENT OF PRICES AND WAGES

THE last decade has marked a distinct rise in the wages of the labourers engaged in agriculture, and this has profoundly reacted upon the social customs as well as village organization. No complete statistical data are available for tracing accurately the general trend of agricultural wages during the last fifty years, but information based on reliable statements of many old villagers, and verified by accounts kept irregularly here and there, may be summed up in the following table. Of course, it may be noted that while taking down the average wages per day, only cash wages have been taken into account and the question of remuneration in kind has been omitted.

Period	Average wages per day	
	A	P
Before 1885
1885-1890
1891-1895
1896-1900
1901-1905
1906-1910
1911-1915
1916-1920
1921-1925

A careful study of these figures along with a chronological review of the Indian famines from the year 1876 onwards, reveals clearly how they have governed the course of wages of the agricultural labourers during the last fifty years. The great famine of 1876-78 affected the district considerably when relief works and poor-houses had to be started. The distress was widespread all over the district. The area affected most was that of Auras-Mohan. Then there set in a long period of prosperity, and the agricultural condition of the district resumed its normal course. We have no reliable information as to the actual rate of wages prevalent during

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the famine years, but it has been reported that for an agricultural labourer in those days, it was very difficult to find any work on the field even if he chose to offer his services for a few pies per day. However, with the return of agricultural prosperity the wages of the field labourers were restored to their old level, hence, the general rate of wages before the year 1885 was one anna per day. In the course of the next ten years, famines, occurred in 1888-89 and 1891-92. But they were of shorter duration and hardly affected the district in any way. The other calamities which affected the population of the district, were fever that raged during the period 1899-1902 and cholera which broke out in 1894. However, the absence of famines during these years did not let the wages rise much till 1895. The average remained constant at one anna per day.

The year 1896-98 witnessed one of the severest famines that the country had ever known in its history, and this district being then most unevenly protected by wells, the distress was most severely felt in those tracts where such irrigation was deficient. The northern parts of Harha, Sikandarpur, parts of Jhalotar-Ajgain, the northern villages of Safipur, the upper circle of Bangarmau and Fatehpur Chaurasi, the north of Auras-Mohan and parts of Asoha, Purwa and Maurawan and the upland villages of Ghatampur and Daundia Khera were the areas which suffered most. The Kharif crops failed all round and the Rabi area was seriously affected, the total out-turn giving an estimate of only 42 per cent of the normal. The situation was much relieved by the opening of the local relief works, and by the suspension, and later on, the remission, of a considerable portion of the total revenue demand. Cholera also broke out in the district during the famine year 1897 bringing the death-rate to forty-three per thousand. Fever also spread widely during the same year sweeping away by itself about 36,077 souls. The zemindars, being thus circumstanced, were compelled to make a slight increase in the wages of the field labourers, which rose to an average of one anna three pies per day. During the next five years wages rose to one anna and six pies per day. Such slight

percentages of increase during these years, in spite of so many calamities which reduced considerably the number of agricultural labourers in the district, were due to the fact that whenever it was possible to engage labour on the field during favourable seasons, the wages paid generally were in kind rather than in cash, and so the severity of the situation caused by the rise in the prices of food grains did not affect the labourers to a very great extent.

In 1904 the rainfall was excessive, and the Kharif was considerably damaged by the heavy rains of July and August. The Rabi also suffered from frost of exceptional severity. In the succeeding year the rainfall was scanty and consequently the Kharif crop failed. The year 1905 thus produced a bad crop and was followed by a poor harvest in the spring of 1906, when most parts of the United Provinces again witnessed a famine. After two good crops during the next autumn and spring, the monsoon again failed entirely in the August of 1907, resulting in a severe famine which lasted till the autumn crop was harvested in 1908. The condition of the labourers was adversely affected during this period of scarcity when no work in the fields could be found for them. The condition of labourers, however, somewhat improved at the close of this period but the average wages showed no rise. The next few years were of comparative peace and improvement for the agriculturists, with a slight setback in 1913 when the monsoon began prematurely and stopped early. Much damage was also done by the floods in the River Ganges during the same year. Then followed the Great War in 1914. The labourers, who were dissatisfied with their lot in agriculture, left the fields and got themselves recruited for the war, where they were sufficiently paid. The supply of the labourers for the fields and farms decreased consequently, and the average rate of wages during the period 1911-15 rose to two annas per day. According to Mr. Moreland,¹ the rates ordinarily paid in 1911 lay between two

¹ Moreland, 'Notes on the Agricultural Conditions and Problems of the United Provinces and its Districts, 1913—District Notes', Unao, p. 6.



and two and a half annas. The period of war provided a great opportunity for the labourers to improve their financial condition by enlisting themselves as soldiers, while it also gave an impetus to the agriculturists to increase the produce of the field. The sturdy children of the soil having left the villages, a great competition ensued between the cultivators to secure efficient labourers. Thus the rate of wages again rose during this period. The famine years of 1918-20, and the influenza epidemic of 1918, aided by cholera and plague in the same year, created a havoc in the villages. The supply of labourers diminished to a very great extent, and we notice that the average rate of wages during the period 1915-20 rose abnormally high to three and a half annas per day. From that time onwards wages have constantly been rising. The floods of 1924 and 1925 have swept away a large number of villages, situated in the low-lying alluvial land along the banks of the Ganges, and the district has suffered loss in men, money and cattle alike. Consequently we notice that the average rate of wages in the district now is five annas per day, and in flood-stricken areas labourers are paid even higher rates.

From the brief sketch given above of the events of past years, it is quite evident that the main factor in bringing about a rise in agricultural wages has been the shortage of labour on the fields. This has in its turn been due to flood, famine and epidemic, or, to city-ward drift, emigration to the army or similar causes. When the produce from the land is scarce, prices are bound to go high hence wages rise.

From such a promising outlook for the wages of the agricultural labourers, one may undoubtedly conclude that the condition of the labourers has constantly been improving, and that they are much better off now than about fifty years back. Before we come to any such conclusion we ought, however, to trace the stages of the movement of prices of the various food grains, an item which, as we shall see in the next chapter, occupies a prominent place in the budget of the labourers. The Unao District, has in the person of Sir C. A. Elliot, I.C.S., a historian of its own, but unfortunately he gives no

account of any of the economic factors of this kind in his famous compilation, the *Chronicles of Oonao*, (1862). Government records have also failed to provide any reliable statistics on the retail prices of the various agricultural produce, and the only statement available on the matter is one which has been tabulated by Mr. Moreland, I.C.S., in his *Final report of the settlement of Land Revenue in Unao District* (1896). He has dealt with the subject at great length, and has come to the conclusion that, in the absence of any reliable information, a more accurate record might be found in the average of prices for the four surrounding districts of Lucknow, Cawnpore, Hardoi and Rai Bareli. He opines that the proximity of Cawnpore and the Ganges only influenced prices after the annexation, and that provision could be made for the difference by taking the average of two rural (Hardoi and Rai Bareli) and two urban (Lucknow and Cawnpore) districts. He has thus been able to obtain the following table of average prices since 1861 of the four staples, wheat, barley, rice and juar, which occupy nearly fourfifths of the total cultivated area in the district :—

Prices of Food Grains in Seers per Rupee

Years	Wheat	Barley	Rice	Juar
1861	22·09	28·93	16·30	26·16
1862	29·33	37·16	16·54	37·33
1863	28·49	40·85	19·16	34·91
1864	20·42	29·15	14·25	21·06
1865	16·65	23·57	13·20	20·44
1866	15·18	21·50	12·59	23·32
1867	18·33	24·95	14·52	25·60
1868	19·78	30·13	15·87	27·48
1869	12·31	17·68	11·14	16·75
1870	16·93	24·44	13·39	22·94
1871	24·60	33·79	17·08	28·40
1872	18·02	23·36	14·41	23·08
1873	16·38	21·63	13·71	20·94
1874	17·53	22·43	14·41	21·75
1875	24·79	33·20	19·40	32·26

Years	Wheat	Barley	Rice	Juar
1876	27.76	41.59	18.37	42.25
1877	16.96	24.91	12.97	26.52
1878	13.51	18.26	8.60	16.04
1879	14.57	21.56	12.40	20.71
1880	18.10	27.20	15.23	25.52
1881	18.07	26.99	14.79	27.00
1882	18.09	26.29	15.31	26.44
1883	18.55	27.93	14.22	28.16
1884	21.89	30.25	13.44	30.18
1885	22.80	32.32	15.63	33.25
1886	19.71	29.87	15.05	23.15
1887	16.02	22.22	14.05	21.80
1888	15.89	20.60	13.66	17.31
1889	16.55	22.06	13.01	21.43
1890	15.63	19.95	13.03	18.78
1891	14.60	18.77	12.54	16.14
1892	14.34	21.28	12.83	23.31
1893	15.69	23.12	13.72	21.50
1894	17.37	20.81	15.75	25.19

It is quite true that this table in the absence of any reliable statistics gives only an approximate idea. As a matter of fact, it does not give any real insight into the prices that have ruled the village market in the district during these years. For instance, we may take into consideration the years 1876-78, which have already been described as a period of severe famine. It is beyond possibility that during these years of most severe famine, which affected nearly twenty millions of people of the U.P. and the Punjab alone, and which has been treated as 'the most greivous national calamity in the whole history of British India', the price of wheat, should have ranged at the usual rate of 17 seers or $13\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee, as if those years were scarcely anything more than normal ones.

The following rates have, however, been collected and tabulated from the old papers of the family of a Thakur resident of Rau Village in the Unao Tehsil. These were found on stray pieces of papers but have been arranged

FIELDS AND FARMERS IN OUDH

date-wise in the following table and may safely be relied upon :—

Rates of Food Grains and Ghee per Rupee
(One seer = 16 *chhataks* = 2.057 lbs.)

Sambat	Corresponding year in A.D.	Wheat	Bejhar	Maize	Matra	Ghee
Kuar Sudi 5,		seers	seers	seers	seers	s. c.
1934 ...	1877 ...	7	8	9	10	1 0
1935 ...	1878-79 ...	7	8	9	10	1 0
1936 ...	1879-80 ...	22	32	39	37	1 10
1937 ...	1880-81 ...	21	30	40	42	1 12
1938 ...	1881-82 ...	19	33	38	40	1 8
1939 ...	1882-83 ...	20	35	37	41	1 8
1940 ...	1883-84 ...	20	37	38	42	1 7½
1941 ...	1884-85 ...	20½	36	38½	...	1 8
1942 ...	1885-86 ...	No bargains this year				
1943 ...	1886-87 ...	20½	35	40	38	1 5
1944 ...	1887-88 ...	20½	32	37	...	1 2
1945 ...	1888-89 ...	18	32	37	39	1 1
1946 ...	1889-90 ...	No bargains this year				
1947 ...	1890-91 ...	18½	33	36	38	1 1
1948 ...	1891-92 ...	18½	34	36½	38	1 2
1949 ...	1892-93 ...	18	36	37	39	1 3
1950 ...	1893-94 ...	20½	39	39	40	1 3
1951 ...	1894-95 ...	18	40	39½	38	1 4
1952 ...	1895-96 ...	18	39½	41	39	1 4



The following statistics, regarding the retail prices of the most important food grains, have been deduced for the remaining period from the weekly and fortnightly returns of the four tehsils in the district :—

Average Rates of Food Grains in Seers and Chhataks per Rupee

Year	Wheat	Barley	Common rice	Gram	Juar	Bajra	Maize
	s. c.	s. c.	s. c.	s. c.	s. c.	s. c.	s. c.
* 1896	11 0	13 1	10 3	13 12	12 11	12 9	15 14
* 1897	9 9	11 12	8 13	9 0	12 2	11 2	12 11
* 1898	14 6	21 14	11 15	16 6	21 11	19 5	23 5
* 1899	14 10	18 9	12 14	17 13	18 11	16 5	21 1
* 1900	11 14	14 14	10 8	12 15	14 7	11 14	17 11
* 1901	12 12	17 12	11 9	16 13	21 3	19 17	23 12
* 1902	14 10	19 9	11 9	20 3	20 8	18 6	24 4
* 1903	15 14	21 5	11 3	19 9	20 14	20 0	24 9
1904	18 0	27 1	12 4	21 5	24 13	23 6	29 2
1905	12 7	17 6	12 0	15 12	17 11	16 0	20 0
1906	11 13	15 0	9 15	14 0	14 7	14 5	15 0
1907	10 9	14 11	8 6	13 13	16 11	16 11	16 14
1908	8 9	12 3	7 8	8 10	10 13	7 14	12 7
1909	9 7	15 12	9 7	12 1	16 11	16 3	16 15
1910	12 0	19 4	9 8	17 7	17 11	17 3	22 4
1911	13 8	21 3	9 0	18 6	19 10	18 3	24 5
1912	12 12	17 8	8 8	18 5	18 14	16 10	20 7
1913	11 3	15 10	8 7	15 13	15 12	15 6	16 12
1914	9 0	11 5	7 11	9 11	9 0	11 13	13 6
1915	8 5	11 12	7 13	11 1	10 13	9 11	12 14
1916	10 0	14 6	8 3	11 7	11 11	13 7	16 4
1917	9 10	15 0	9 2	15 9	14 0	13 2	18 4
1918	7 8	10 10	6 8	14 8	10 4	8 9	11 4
1919	5 8	7 4	5 8	5 5	7 0	6 2	7 6
1920	6 8	9 6	4 9	7 8	9 11	9 11	8 12
1921	5 0	6 9	5 8	6 7	6 5	7 4	8 8
1922	6 5	9 11	5 9	9 0	9 12	8 13	10 2
1923	8 2	13 2	5 13	15 12	13 15	13 10	16 1
1924	8 0	13 11	6 2	15 4	17 6	14 7	14 15
1925	7 1	10 2	5 10	11 2	9 5	9 14	10 12

* Figures available for Unao Tehsil only and quoted from Panna Lal, *Rent-Rate Report of Tehsil Unao, 1926.*

Wheat and maize are the only food grains common to both these tables, and we can make use of them in comparing the prices that have ranged in the district during these years. Juar, bajra and maize are generally consumed by the agricultural classes, and the slightest variation in their prices affects their standard of living considerably, and turns the scale of their budgets against them. It is quite obvious that the prices have risen considerably, but to what extent they have risen and in what way they have affected the agricultural labourer in the village, yet remain to be seen. It has been asserted by not a few, that the agricultural labourers are much better off to-day than about half a century ago, but we find a number of field labourers, who complain day and night about their lot in agriculture, and whose only ambition is, to be either masters of bigger plots of land or to drift to some big industrial centre, from where they might send to their village homes instalments of money orders out of their monthly earnings. They cannot, of course, picture the dangers of social and moral deterioration in the insanitary and overcrowded *bustees*, or the strain of monotonous and tiresome work demanded of them in the factories. However, let us sift the material at our disposal and attempt to ascertain the real economic position of the agricultural labourer.

The year 1879 was marked by a very prosperous season after the great famine period of 1876-78, and the following year assumed its normal aspect as regards agricultural produce in the district. We might therefore assume the year 1880 to be standard, in order to compare the average rise in prices and wages during the succeeding years. Professor Myles¹ too, after much consideration, selected the average prices in the decennium 1873-82 to be the base for comparing food prices in the Punjab during the period 1861-1920. From his table of average annual prices, we find that the average price of wheat in the given decennium very closely approximates its price level in 1880 and 1881. This

¹ W. H. Myles, 'Sixty Years of Punjab Food Prices, 1861-1920,' *Indian Journal of Economics*, July 1925.



Further strengthens our position in assuming the year 1880 as normal in our case too. The following table is an attempt to show the percentages of increase in the rise in prices of wheat and maize, and also the wages of the agricultural labourers during the period after 1880 :—

Period	Wheat : approximate price in Rs. per maund			Maize : approximate price in Rs. per maund			Wheat : percentage of increase in prices over 1880	Maize : percentage of increase in prices over 1880	Percentage of increase in wages
	RS	A	P	RS	A	P	Per cent	Per cent	Per cent
1880 ...	1	14	6	1	0	0
1881-87 ...	2	0	0	1	1	0	4·92	6·25	...
1888-95 ...	2	2	7	1	1	0	12·04	6·25	...
1896-1900 ...	2	4	6	2	3	4	72·13	120·83	25
1901-4 ...	3	4	9	2	3	11	36·89	124·81	50
1905 ...	3	3	6	2	0	0	68·90	100·00	
1906 ...	3	6	3	2	10	8	77·93	166·66	
1907 ...	3	12	5	2	6	0	96·88	137·50	
1908 ...	4	10	9	3	3	6	106·21	221·87	
1909 ...	4	3	10	2	5	9	122·50	135·94	100
1910 ...	3	5	4	1	12	9	74·95	79·69	
1911 ...	2	15	6	1	10	4	55·78	64·58	
1912 ...	3	2	3	1	15	3	64·80	95·31	
1913 ...	3	9	3	2	6	3	85·31	139·06	
1914 ...	4	7	1	3	0	0	133·19	200·00	250
1915 ...	4	12	3	3	1	9	141·91	210·94	
1916 ...	4	0	0	2	7	5	106·64	146·35	
1917 ...	4	2	9	2	3	1	118·95	119·27	
1918 ...	5	5	4	3	8	10	227·24	255·21	
1919 ...	7	4	4	5	6	9	322·86	442·19	400
1920 ...	6	2	6	4	9	2	223·13	357·29	
1921 ...	7	3	0	4	11	3	280·55	370·31	
1922 ...	6	5	5	3	15	3	232·69	295·31	
1923 ...	4	14	9	2	1	7	158·30	109·89	
1924 ...	5	0	0	2	10	10	158·50	167·71	400
1925 ...	5	10	9	3	11	6	250·19	271·87	

This comparison can be better judged by a graph representation. The accompanying graph will show clearly how the condition of those labourers who get their wages in money payments, has improved

during the past years. It further explains why old customary payments in kind, are undergoing a rapid but silent transformation and are being replaced gradually by money economy. The labourers too prefer to get their wages in money if the food grains are sold at cheaper rates in the market. The slightest rise tempts them to demand payments in kind rather than in cash. But with a scarcity of grain in the market, the labourers feel themselves better placed if their services are remunerated in their old traditional measures of *mutthas*, *pulas* or baskets-full, for they cannot buy equal amounts of corn for the same money in the periods of scarcity as in the seasons of prosperity. On the other hand, the rise in the prices of agricultural produce has led the zemindars to sell their out-turn in the market, and they prefer to pay wages in cash. Since it is they who decide the nature of payment to be made, we find that cash wages are gradually replacing payments in kind.

But the main problem centres round the question as to why, in the face of such improvements in the condition of agricultural labourers, the farmers and the landholders still complain of the scarcity of labour during the busy seasons of the year. The fact is that inspite of the migratory tendency of the more enlightened among the agricultural labourers, and the various onslaughts of war, famine and disease, the agricultural population has multiplied itself enormously after each calamity, and the number of such field labourers is hardly less at the present moment than it was ever before.¹ What the villagers need is not a more abundant supply of labour for agriculture, but the art and science of utilizing the

¹ The census figures show a slight decrease in the number of 'farm servants and field-labourers.' This may be explained, however, by the fact that a number of whole-time labourers have changed their occupation and become part-time labourers. It is a common knowledge among the census officers that a considerably large number of field labourers state their occupation to be *kheti kisan* (cultivation), however minute may be their holdings and their engagement in it extending over scarcely one-third of their annual working year.



present labour successfully and advantageously. The labourer finds no pleasure in working on another's field, and ever aspires to possess a plot of his own to cultivate. Though it gradually becomes more and more onerous to work at a farm on account of the soil being continually robbed of its fertility, the land-hunger is now greater in the people than it was ever in the past. A labourer wants to work on another's field merely to supplement his income from the farm. It is interesting to notice, that during the last ten years even *dhobis*, *faqirs* and *nais* of Siras Chehri and *Bhat*, *Sunar*, *Bhujwa*, *Halwai*, and *Kahars* of Jhalotar and Nivai villages have managed to secure one or more small plots each. The result has been a further sub-division of land into small holdings, and an addition to the ranks of unskilled labourers of those peasants who could no longer continue to live on the small proceeds of their smaller-sized farms, and had therefore to supplement them by working on another's field. The part-time agricultural labourer, too, has not improved his lot in any way. He is without staying power, and spends his energies ruthlessly over his all-too-small holding, which leaves little profits to him under the present circumstances. He is a small peasant proprietor as well as a part-time agricultural labourer. The increase in the number of the cultivating owners and tenants has, in the absence of improved agricultural methods, resulted in a gradually diminishing return to an ever-increasing amount of labour and capital. And when famines visit the land, the smallholder, ever hard-pressed, is compelled to leave the village in order to find employment in the mills and factories at Cawnpore.

About forty-five years ago grain was very cheap and a labourer could buy sufficient grain for an anna, which would suffice his family for a day's meal. Though cash wages have now risen considerably, the price of food grains and of other necessities of life too has risen, thus, in fact, diminishing the purchasing power of the rupee itself. On the other hand, a part-time labourer works on wages merely to the extent of his spare hours, and engages himself on his own farm for most



of the period. He, now in fact, is a small tenant-farmer himself, and has therefore considerably less time to give to other people. Thus, in reality, the numerical strength of the labour population has remained the same, while the amount of net work done by them for wages has grown considerably less, and consequently the zemindar class feels the so-called scarcity of labour.

Labour is not scarce for all, but only for those who want everything to be done by the labourers, and think it beneath their dignity to work with the plough themselves, or whose caste prejudices stand in the way of their undertaking such work. Labour is quite sufficient in the village but is ill-employed in its task.

The problem of prices and wages in agriculture has a direct effect upon the production and distribution of agricultural wealth. In the absence of any restraining influence upon the growing tendencies of the agricultural labourers to help in the further multiplication of the already existing large number of holdings in order to satiate their land hunger, the constantly diminishing size of landholdings is bound to have an adverse effect upon the average agricultural produce of the land. Labour and capital which could better have been utilized in more intensive and scientific agriculture are, relatively speaking, inefficiently employed. The cost of production in agriculture has thus continually been rising, leaving the small landholder only a bare profit. The agricultural labourer in the end neither remains an efficient whole-time labourer nor occupies a position of a self-sufficient landholder, but moves helplessly to and fro, from alternate prosperity to destitution.



CHAPTER V

THE LABOURER'S BUDGET

CAUTION and suspicion guard well the household secrets of the villagers, and one has to fight illiteracy and personal idiosyncrasy before he can get an insight into their exact financial position. Almost all the agricultural labourers who were examined in the district were found to be illiterate, and not even one kept accounts. All information regarding their financial aspect had, therefore, to be based upon their oral statements. But the whole material has been sifted by cross-examination and personal observations, and the conclusions arrived at may safely be relied upon.

The items of income of an agricultural labourer vary according to the factors that govern the remuneration of his labour. The number of wholtime, i.e. landless labourers is not very large in this district, owing to the close proximity of such a big industrial city as Cawnpore and, further, on account of a tendency among the labourers themselves to acquire small bits of land as soon as their means and opportunities permit.

The total income of a landless labourer consists mainly of his own and his family's wages earned during the course of a year. An average family of agricultural labourers in this district generally includes a man, his wife, two children and one or two dependents. One child is often too young to supplement the income of his family, and the old dependents happen to be either his father, his mother or both. The cash wages of a man being five annas a day on an average, and that of a woman and a child three and one and a half annas per day respectively, we would expect the total income of a family to be nine and half annas per day. But agriculture is an industry which does not provide work for the labourer all the year round in its present stage. Full two and a half months during the summer and rainy seasons, and nearly one and a half months during the winter, are periods of practically no work for the labourer. After these four months when there are no field operations

to be undertaken, we find that only eight months are left at the disposal of the family to earn wages in agriculture. For the rest of the period the male members of the family engage themselves outside the village in work like white-washing and cleaning houses, carrying bricks and lime, mudplastering, road repairing, etc. Some of the labourers may either engage themselves in domestic services, or live upon similar subsidiary occupations. Some of the enterprising labourers even go to work in the mills and factories at Cawnpore during the day time, but return home for the night. A few families even migrate for the whole period of the slack season and come back to the fields when agricultural work begins again.

To take a concrete example, let us consider the budget of a Chamar family. Mohna, who was found working on a small field near Jhalotar, was a man of about thirty years of age and had a wife, a son aged thirteen and two younger daughters. He had no land to cultivate, and was living mainly upon his own wages and those of his wife supplemented by small sums which the boy could earn. The following is a rough estimate of the income and expenditure of his family during the year 1924-25 :—

Family Budget of Mohna Chamar for 1924-25

INCOME

Items	Labourer	Daily wages			Period of engagement	Total earnings	Percentage of total income
		RS	A	P		RS	per cent
1. Ploughing ...	Man	0	5	0	1½ month	15	10
2. Weeding ..	Woman	0	3	6	3 months	22	15
3. Weeding ...	Boy	0	1	6	2 months	6	4
4. Irrigation ...	Man	0	5	0	2 months	20	13



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Items	Labourer	Daily wages	Period of engagement	Total earnings	Percentage of total income
		RS A P		RS	per cent
5. Reaping ...	Man and woman	Grains weighing about 4 maunds in all	1 month	18	12
6. Miscellaneous labour in villages (i.e. well digging, etc.)	Man, woman and boy	Wages in cash and kind.	1 month	6	4
7. Miscellaneous work undertaken outside the village.	Man	0 7 0	2 months	25	17
8. Do. ...	Boy	0 3 0	1 month	6	4
9. Sale of dung-cakes.	...	...	...	7	5
10. Bone-picking ...	Woman and boy	...	...	5	3
11. Income from dead-cattle skin.	...	...	...	12	8
Total ...	...	...	...	142	100

EXPENDITURE

Items	Money spent	Percentage of total expenditure
	Rs	per cent
1. Food	90	63
2. Clothing	13	9
3. Salt and spices	6	4
4. Light	3	2
5. Tobacco	3	2
6. Festivities and social functions	25	14
7. Miscellaneous (i.e. medicines, going to fairs, etc.)	4	3
8. Daru (liquor)	5	3
Total	144	100

From the above statement we find that Mohna made a clear saving of Rs. 6 which he disbursed, as he confessed, in purchasing a pair of bracelets worth Rs. 4 and a *thali* (brass-plate) costing Rs. 1-14-0. Both these items ought not be included in the regular heads of expenditure, but should be treated as family investments. Though ornaments may satisfy the natural desire of a village housewife, and utensils may relieve the temporary requirements of a kitchen, both are usually hypothecated to a money-lender to meet occasional family stress.

The case is quite different with a family of part-time labourers who cultivate one or more plots of their own. A labourer does not sell the whole produce of his field, but keeps a portion of it for the consumption of his family. In order to make a correct estimate of his annual income, the total value of the agricultural produce has been calculated at the village market rate prevalent during the season. The total value of the food grains consumed by the family, out of its total produce, is also similarly computed to show the percentage on the different items of expenditure.

The following is an approximate account of the annual income and expenditure of a Lodh family consisting of



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Lai, a man of about thirty, his wife, and a child aged two and a half years. He cultivated three bighas of land on rent from Chandika Singh, a zemindar of Rau and had another three bighas on *batai* system. The estimated total income and expenditure for the year 1924-25 has been tabulated as follows :—

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
Items	Receipts	Percent age to total income	Items	Expenditure	Percentage to total expenditure.
		p. c.			p. c.
1. Wheat ...	15	81	1. Food ...	60	50
2. Makai ...	8		2. Spices ...	2	2
3. Urd ...	5		3. Salt ...	1	
4. Paddy ...	6		4. Oil (linseed) for cooking food, light etc.	3	3
5. Kapas (cotton).	12	12	5. Kerosine oil.	1	4
6. Gram ...	40		6. Festivities.	5	
7. Arhar ...	8		7. Rent for land.	16	13
8. Work on neighbouring fields.	13	7	8. Seed ...	8	7
9. Subsidiary occupations in the village.	8		9. Weeding ...	2	4
			10. Irrigation ...	3	
			11. Tobacco ...	3	2
			12. Clothing ...	8	7
			13. Re-payment of old debts.	10	8
Total ...	115	100	Total ...	122	100

The above figures show an excess of expenditure of Rs. 7, and the Lodh had actually borrowed Rs. 8 for food from the zemindar Mahajan only a fortnight before. The expenses of this family were especially low, in view of the fact that no expenditure was incurred on account of house repairs or any such ceremony as marriage, birth, etc., in the year under review. The depreciation in the value of implements and cattle-plough also has not been

taken into consideration. On the other hand, the income of the family in this particular year was a little less than in normal years, because a part of the Rabi crop was destroyed last year by some plant disease, and no *zaid* crop was raised and sold.

The implements and accessories used in agriculture are a necessity to an agriculturist, and howsoever simple and crude, they involve some expenditure whenever they have to be purchased or repaired. A landless labourer seldom possesses any implements of his own, except those which are very simple and cheap like a sickle and a scraper, and is generally provided for them by the employer himself. A part-time labourer, on the other hand, has to equip himself with a set of his own to cultivate his own farm. These implements, though very simple in construction, and cheap in value, do still need the services of a village mechanic or a carpenter to get them repaired or replaced. Thus, a landholding labourer has to tax his resources occasionally, in order to get his old tools repaired or purchase new ones. A list of such implements that are commonly used by an agriculturist in this district, may fairly be represented by the following table and their annual depreciation calculated accordingly :—

Name	Equivalent vernacular name	Utility	Approx. price	Period of duration	Annual depreciation
			RS A	Years	RS A P
1. Plough ...	<i>Hal</i> ...	Ploughs land.	4 0	2	2 0 0
2. Yoke ...	<i>Jua</i> ...	...	2 0	3	0 10 6
3. Clod-crusher.	<i>Pateila</i> ...	Levels the field after sowing.	1 8	2	0 12 0
4. Harrow ...	<i>Surraon.</i>	Pulverises the soil and clears out the weeds.	2 0	2	1 0 0
5. Spade ...	<i>Phaora</i> ...	Digging ...	1 4	4	0 5 0
6. Hoe ...	<i>Kudali</i> ...	Ordinary hoeing.	0 8	4	0 2 0



Name	Equivalent vernacular name	Utility	Approx. price	Period of duration	Annual depreciation
			RS A P	Years	RS A P
7. Mallet ...	<i>Dholna...</i>	A heavy club used for breaking the larger clods of earth preparatory to <i>surraon</i> .	0 8		0 2 0
8. Sickle ...	<i>Hainsia.</i>	Cutting the crop and grass.	0 4	5	0 0 9
9. Chopper...	<i>Gandasa</i>	Chopping fodder.	0 12	3	0 4 0
10. Scraper ...	<i>Khurpi.</i>	Hoeing ...	0 6	3	0 2 0
11. Panchugar.	...	A wooden handle to turn straw, while threshing corn.	0 6	4	0 1 6
12. Mussakka.	...	To cover the mouths of animals when threshing corn.	0 3	1	0 3 0
13. Water bucket.	<i>Pur or charas.</i>	To draw water from the well.	6 0	2½	2 6 6
14. Water basket.	<i>Benrhi ...</i>	To raise water from a lower level.	0 12	2	0 6 0
15. Rope ...	<i>Bariyal.</i>	...	4 0	3	1 5 3
16. Pulley ...	<i>Girri ...</i>	...	2 0	8	0 4 0
Total ...			26 7	...	10 0 6

An average landholding labourer has therefore to meet a liability of Rs. 10-0-6 nearly for the annual depreciation in the value of his implements and accessories.¹

As regards the items of social ceremonies like marriages, births and deaths, these do not involve regular annual expenditure. Deaths do not obey the laws of the balance-sheet of family income and expenditure. A death (or a prolonged sickness) is simply ruinous to a family of agricultural labourers, for it means considerable expenditure both before and after. A labourer has no means left, after a hand-to-mouth living, to make provision for either sickness or old age, and the family has therefore to borrow money from the mahajan if a member is attacked with a fell disease or meets with serious accident. Except in years of epidemic or of great scarcity, a death usually occurs once in every ten years in a family. At the demise of some aged member in the family, it has to feed its *biradrai* (community) and a few *pandits* and thus the whole function costs Rs. 20 nearly. Similarly a small feast to the *Biradari* and some *inam* (reward) to the *kamins* on the occasion of the first-born child, cost at least Rs. 10, while the succeeding births involve an expenditure of not less than Rs. 6. From an economic point of view, the birth of a child means a curse to the family of indebted labourers, but unfortunately the multiplication of children is greater among them than in any other class of people. They usually find an addition to their family every second or third year. Thus if we make an equal distribution of the total amount of expenditure, spent on these two functions over a number of normal years with their usual quota of births and deaths, we arrive at an annual average of Rs. 7 approximately.

A marriage ceremony is the greatest drain on the purse of a field labourer. Custom and tradition demand a feast to the *Biradari*, the gift of a few ornaments to the bride and *inams* to the Kamins. Though a family

¹ Mr. Girwar Sahai Saksena calculates the value of such depreciation met with by a cultivator in Bakhshi-ka-talab village at Rs. 9-8-9.



invests annually something in ornaments, it has still to borrow a considerable amount to meet various other requirements for the occasion. A daughter's marriage generally costs Rs. 125 on an average, and that of a son not less than Rs. 75. In view of the fact that a labourer's family has usually to perform a marriage every fifth or sixth year, we may reckon the annual outlay at an approximate figure of Rs. 20.

It is thus quite clear that the real expenditure of a labourer's family is much greater than what has been shown in the foregoing statements. The financial position of the two classes of labourers therefore, may fairly be represented by the following table, which indicates the average percentages of their respective annual income and expenditure under main heads:—

Landless Labourers

Income	Percentage	Expenditure.	Percentage
	Per cent		Per cent
1. Wages from work on the field ...	59	1. Food ..	63
2. Subsidiary occupations.	41	2. Clothing ...	9
		3. Tobacco ...	2
		4. Festivities and social functions. ...	15
		5. Ornaments or any other kind of investment ...	5
		6. Other expenses.	6
Total ...	100	Total ...	100

Small Landholding Labourers

Income	Percentage	Expenditure	Percentage
	Per cent		Per cent
1. Produce from the field.	75	1. Food ...	50
2. Wages from work on the field.	10	2. Rent ...	10
3. Subsidiary occupations.	5	3. Expenditure on the farm (i.e. seed, wages for weeding, irrigation, etc. hire or purchase of cattle, depreciation, etc.)	14
4. Debts ...	10	4. Tobacco ...	2
		5. Clothing ...	6
		6. Re-payment of old debts.	8
		7. Festivities and social functions.	10
Total ...	100	Total ...	100

The preceding figures would be incomplete without an explanation. We cannot form a correct estimate of the standard of living of a labourer's family, without going into details of each of the above items on the expenditure side.

To begin with, food grains form one of the most important items of expenditure in a family of agricultural labourers. The most common food grains consumed by them are juar, bajra, barley, gram and rice. Wheat



which is grown by the small landholders, is sold for paying the rents and the money-lender's debt. The landless labourers on the other hand do not differentiate between the different kinds of grain, but consume whatever they get as their wages in kind. Pulse is also grown by them on the farms, while the young plants of *sarson* and gram serve the purpose of green vegetables.

The item of tobacco deserves special notice on account of its great popularity among the village people. The field labourer has become so much accustomed to it, that he has begun to consider it as a necessary article of consumption in daily life. A *chilam* goes round to every individual who either attends a caste gathering or joins a *choupal* meeting. The usual way of entertaining a guest by a villager is to invite him to the family *hookka*. Women and children may also at times be seen sharing a smoke from the *chilam*.

Considering the amount of earnings of a labourer's family, the percentage of expenditure on the item of clothing may appear to be too meagre for a family of five members. But the fact is that the total amount spent is only barely sufficient to cover a family, which can hardly manage to save anything more out of its inadequate income for this purpose. The whole stock of his provision consists of a small loin cloth, a jacket and a turban cloth for the man, a *lhenga* and a *dupatta* for the woman, something for the child, and perhaps in some cases a common *lihaf* for the whole family to protect it from extreme cold. This is made of a coarse kind of *khaddar* or *garhha* the roughness and durability of which just suit the purpose. Some of the landless labourers have, however, developed a taste for mill-made cloth and have introduced it in the villages.

We may, therefore, conclude that a family of landless labourers, though living a hand-to-mouth existence, is yet much better off than a family of part-time landholding labourers. It does not generally feel the necessity of borrowing money from the village Mahajan in normal years, but, at the same time, has no substantial sum left to invest in any form of cottage industry. In the village the resources of the labourer are just sufficient

to meet his day-to-day needs. When he goes to the city to employ himself in the slack season of agriculture, his chief difficulty is that his family cannot indefinitely wait for its bare necessities. The system of monthly payment of wages in the mills and factories is a handicap to him. He, therefore, takes recourse to borrowing to supply his wants, and pays back an amount of money as interest to the moneylender or the shopkeeper which would otherwise have gone to constitute his savings. On the other hand, a land-holding labourer is saddled with an ever-increasing burden of debt. He repays interest every now and then, but can afford to repay a part of the principal only in a favourable year. He can seldom raise a crop without an advance from the Mahajan for the purchase of seed, implements or a pair of bullocks, and even, if he has raised one, he has very little left after meeting all his liabilities to feed his family for a couple of months. It is quite usual to find a labourer standing at the door of the village Mahajan, demanding a fresh instalment of loan to clear off his rent dues. Can we still wonder at his abject poverty and chronic indebtedness, and expect a better standard of living while his balance sheet is never clean?



CHAPTER VI

POVERTY AND INDEBTEDNESS

WE have already seen that the mainstay of the agricultural labourer is land, for a large majority of them are petty landholders and small cultivators. On the other hand, there are very few whole-time landless labourers in this district who depend mainly upon agriculture for their livelihood. Some of them go and find work in the mills and factories at Cawnpore, and return home during the busy season of agriculture. In the case of those who live far away in the interior, this periodical change of occupation is not possible. The equilibrium of the labourer's family life is not only disturbed either by some prolonged period of ravaging disease, or a series of calamitous years harmful to agriculture and industry, but often by his improvident habits, involving considerable expenditure in marriages and social functions. In fact, a whole-time labourer, as such, does not become overwhelmed with poverty and indebtedness, for, he borrows seldom and clears up his debts, if any, out of his daily earnings. But, a close scrutiny into the condition of part-time labourers, cultivating their small holdings for a portion of the year, and earning wages during relatively idle agricultural months, does certainly reveal a state of distressing poverty and invites the attention of economists and statesmen alike. As an economist has put it, 'The cultivator is born in debt, increases his debt throughout his life and dies more hopelessly in debt than ever.' The condition of landowning labourers cannot be better described than this. Throughout the length and breadth of the district, there can seldom be found a member of that class not encumbered with debt, and free from the clutches of the moneylender. Instances are not rare in the district where a labourer scarcely remembers the forefathers who contracted the debt, and whose legacy he has been compelled to inherit.

Whatever be the causes, there can be no doubt that a large portion of the present debt has descended through generations, and is hereditary. The practice of borrowing from the Mahajan is too old among the cultivators. The money-lender has well served the purpose of a bank in the old constitution of our village economy. It has long been a common practice among the village people to carry on transactions with the village money-lender—who is in our case either a Bania Mahajan or a zemindar—and take advances from him for seed, bullocks or food as necessity arises on promise of repayment in kind at the time of the next harvest. The borrower is bound to be honest in his dealings for fear of increase in the total outstandings against him, but the money-lender has ever been very shrewd in judging the future prospects of his repayments, and the risk that he entails in advancing the loan. Such considerations could possibly justify his demand for high rates of interest, but the greed of larger profits has led him not only to make the rates of interest usurious, but to take recourse to the compounding of interest, and the complication and falsification of accounts. The burden rapidly increases to such an extent that the labourers find it almost impossible to extricate themselves out of it. No sooner does a cultivator find his crop ready for harvest than the Mahajan appears, and the peasant has immediately to deliver the major portion of his total produce to the moneylender and has to borrow again for his future necessities. Seldom does a cultivator not hypothecate his crop prior to its raising in order to get an instalment of loan for his agricultural or domestic provision.

The rate of interest charged by the moneylender varies with the need and credit of the borrower, and and the period for which the loan is required. The ordinary cultivators have usually to pay from two pice to one anna per rupee per month, which means from 37½ per cent to 75 per cent per annum. The rate may sometimes go even to 150 per cent per annum. Compound interest upon a borrowed sum is calculated after the expiry of a fixed period, if the money is not repaid by that time. To add further to the difficulties of the



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indebted cultivator, the Mahajan, by lending money to him, not only profits by the usurious rates of interest, but also tries to share, in various ways, in the profits earned by the cultivator through hard toil on the field. Often does the money-lender visit the place of his *karajdar* (debtor) to renew his *tagada*, and often does he tax the courtesy of the cultivator in terms of all kinds of seasonal produce which he dare not deny. He has to submit meekly to all the subsidiary demands of the Mahajan, in view of the obligations of the debt which he has contracted from him. Another mode of lending money is known as the *Ugahi* system, under which a cultivator borrows money in multiples of Rs. 10 each, and has to repay Re. 1 for every such multiple at the end of each month for one year. Thus he has to pay back Rs. 12 for every Rs. 10 borrowed in the course of a year. It is to be noted that the first instalment of that payment is deducted from Rs. 10 while advancing. The borrower thus actually receives Rs. 9 only, instead of Rs. 10 which he borrows, and has to pay back Rs. 12 in the course of the next eleven months. A debt may also be contracted in kind instead of in money. The most common way is to take corn from the moneylender for seed, etc., at a rate usually much higher than prevalent in the market. The money is repaid to the moneylender in its *sawaya* (one and a quarter times), or *deorhha* (one and a half times) at the harvest time in terms of crop at a rate usually much lower than the market rate. Often, the Mahajan credits grain at a seer a rupee more, and debits it at as much less than the market rate. A borrower thus loses on both the occasions, i.e. when he borrows money and when he repays it. The corn thus received is again stocked by the moneylender to be lent out next season. The cultivator is thus deprived of the profits of stocking the produce which, owing to the cultivator's poverty goes to the moneylender.

Such a state of affairs is incompatible with efficient agriculture, and means despair and exasperation to the cultivator. It is simply amazing to find, that in spite of all such hardships, a cultivator still works hard on his field day in and day out, with little hope or rest in

life. The course of circumstances has developed in him a belief in fate, and a quality of 'stubborn endurance' so indispensable to him in agriculture. At the close of an agricultural operation a small cultivator has often no capital left, either to purchase seed for the next crop or to have a pair of bullocks to cultivate his land. No less harassing to the cultivator is his inability to understand the accounts kept by the Mahajan. The *khata* of the moneylender contains records so complex and intricate, that even an educated layman, unacquainted with his system of keeping accounts, can scarcely make anything out of it. Even when a debtor has picked up some knowledge about the vernacular figures and letters, he dare not question the decision of that august person, the Mahajan, who calculates his total outstandings at one glance through his *khata*, and pronounces the final judgment inexorably from his *gaddi*.

The observance of social customs such as marriages, births and deaths on an improvident scale, also swell considerably the roll of the cultivator's obligations. He does not possess any capital of his own for these purposes, but has either to hypothecate the ornaments of his family or borrow from the village Mahajan. The shortsighted cultivator counts upon his future income, and borrows on the security of the same. The Mahajan does not want to squeeze out of him everything, but wishes to make as much as possible hence lends money to the extent of the cultivator's full *haisiyat*. The cultivator spends this amount quite extravagantly, and increases his liability with little chance of clearing up the whole debt. He has become so much accustomed to borrowing, that any increased amount of credit, in terms of the rise in the value of his land, gives him an additional stimulus to borrow to the extent of his entire capacity.

But, to the misfortune of the cultivator, the matter does not rest there. He feels the pinch of his necessity so acutely, that he goes to borrow from more than one Mahajan. It is a common practice among them to borrow from one moneylender in order to repay their debts to another. But the borrower takes precaution not to disclose this secret to his new creditor for fear of a



fresh loan being refused. It is not an easy task to ascertain the number of creditors that a cultivator is indebted to. Any attempt to gauge the extent of indebtedness among the landowning labourers, will involve a very searching enquiry through the district. Investigations were, however, made on this matter in the Sirs Chehri village, and it was revealed that about 87 per cent of the field labourers were indebted to a number of moneylenders residing in and outside the village. More than 25 per cent were very deeply indebted, and no less than 32 per cent had transactions with more than one moneylender.

The needs of a cultivator are manifold and so the objects for which he requires loans are multifarious. The following classification of the objects for which the Primary Co-operative Societies in the district advanced loans to its members during the year 1922-23, gives a fair idea of the most common necessities of a cultivator that compel him to borrow :—

Object				Amount advanced	Percentage to total amount
				RS A P	
1. Cattle ...	...	...	...	17,338 12 0	34½
2. Old debts ...	...	...	...	14,531 4 0	29
3. Seed ...	...	...	...	9,906 8 0	20
4. Rent ...	...	...	...	4,604 11 6	9
5. Trade ...	...	...	...	1,346 0 0	2½
6. Marriage ...	...	...	...	820 0 0	1½
7. Irrigation ...	...	...	...	564 8 0	1
8. Other needs of cultivation ...	...	...	...	449 4 6	1
9. Well ...	...	...	...	235 0 0	½
10. Manure ...	...	...	...	115 0 0	¼
11. Fodder ...	...	...	...	117 8 0	¼
12. House-repairing ...	...	...	...	105 0 0	¼
13. Maintenance ...	...	...	...	33 0 0	} ¼
14. Weeding ...	...	...	...	30 0 0	
Total ...	...	...	...	50,196 8 0	100

Besides these requirements, some of the agricultural labourers need also some capital to maintain in proper



repairs their cottages, and to finance the small industries in which they engage themselves in periods of agricultural idleness. The village moneylender provides for such requirements of the labourers on his own terms, and naturally the small landholding labourer is at a disadvantage.

The exactions of the moneylender do not fully represent the factors, contributing to the poverty of the agricultural labourer. The recurring nature of agricultural calamities in various forms, render him quite helpless in spite of all his industry, perseverance, experience and other virtues. Sometimes the rains are inopportune, and at others they are deficient. The crop too is at every stage liable to be washed off by floods or damaged by the gerui and Lakhi insects, or destroyed by the occasional ravages of locusts. Thus the position of a landholding labourer is rendered quite uncertain. He may be at any time dispossessed of his usual means of livelihood, and may have ultimately to fall back either upon his borrowing capacity, or the prospect of employment in the neighbouring city of Cawnpore.

A sifting enquiry into the systems of land tenure prevalent in this district, amply demonstrates their adverse effects upon the economic condition of the small landholders. The most common form of land tenure, in the Unao District, is the single and joint zamindari which nearly covers more than half the total area. Next in order, comes the Pattidari system of the copartners, occupying about one-fourth of the total area. The Taluqdari estates, though somewhat less in area, are not on this account in any way less important. Villages under the Bhaichara system are few in number and almost all comprise the Mohan Tehsil. Thus, we see that in the major portion of the district, the work of collecting the Government revenue is in the hands of a class of intermediaries, popularly known as the zemindars or the taluqdars. They think themselves responsible only to the Government for paying up its dues regularly, and treat the tenants in their own way. In addition to what they are reasonably entitled to, as compensation for their own services, they make dis-



proportionate demands upon the purse of the struggling cultivators. The long train of tenants and sub-tenants, holding land under a zemindar or taluqdar, remains entirely at his mercy. This time-honoured system of collecting land revenue, has proved very oppressive and exacting to the small landholders. It is neither efficient nor economical. In tracts where the joint zemindari system has disintegrated into the Pattidari system, the landholding labourer is much better off and shows considerable improvement in his economic condition. The parganas of Auras, Mohan and Ajgain are striking examples in this respect. Under the taluqdari system too, the landholding labourers are hardly at an advantage. Though these estates are somewhat better managed, and the cesses levied in some other parts of Oudh for the purchase of motor cars, elephants or horses are not to be found here, the *Nazars* and *Bhents* of small amounts are freely asked by the taluqdars on various ceremonial occasions. Contributions for *melas*, etc., are also exacted to a considerable extent by the zemindars in some parts of the district. Heavy surplus, after the deduction of a nominal amount of expenses, goes to fill up the pockets of the zemindars. Another important factor, to be noted in this connection, is the concealment of rent practised by the zemindars. It generally takes two forms: The rent is either shown in the Patwari's register at a much smaller amount than what is actually realized from the cultivators in any particular year, or a portion of the rent is realized in advance in a lump sum at the time of letting the land or renewing the lease, and is not given out to the Patwari when he takes down the total annual rent. In some cases, rents are regularly enhanced after every seven or ten years, and the total amount of enhancement is collected in advance, either in cash or partly in cash and partly in pro-notes. The *Patta* given out is recorded according to the previous rent, and thus the Pa wari's register does not show the actual enhancement.

The intensity of the problem is further increased by the indifferent attitude of the landlords. The zemindars and taluqdars only care to realize exorbitant rates from



the poor tenants, and squander money in wasteful expenditure simply to parade the magnificence of their princely existence. They do not concern themselves in the least with the poverty, ignorance and helplessness of their raiyats, and sadly neglect the possibilities of agricultural improvements and the raiyats' prosperity.

The misery of the small landholder has, however, been much relieved by the advancement of the *taqavi* loans to the cultivators by the Government. But such loans have not found favour with the people, save for the purposes of affecting improvements in land, or meeting the needs of the poor in times of agricultural distress. *Taqavi* loans have also not been very popular on account of the high-handedness, at the time of advancement, of the intermediaries in the persons of the Patwari, the kanoongo, the Revenue clerk and the Tahsil Chaprasi whom the ignorant cultivator has to propitiate with illegal gratifications to the extent of something like 10 per cent. Besides the humiliation which he has to undergo in obtaining this amount, he has to wait long for the much-desired *taqavi*. He seldom knows when to ask for it; the amount given is sometimes too inadequate. Thus he has to seek ultimate relief in the Mahajan. The door of the moneylender is within easy reach, and he gladly pays a higher rate of interest rather than be a victim to the oppressive and more regular demands made by the Government officials for repayments.

The introduction of the co-operative movement came as a boon to the indebted population of this district. The first credit society was established on co-operative lines at Miyanganj in April 1906. A district bank, resembling in organization a mixed type of Luzzati and Raiffeisen systems in its infancy, was also established six months later at Unao, and small credit societies sprang up on the old Patti system. Each society extended its operations to some forty villages and even more, and had its connections with not less than 2,000 members. The area of every such society was parcelled out into Patties, in which it had full control without any supervision from the district bank, and the result was a reckless waste by the society in lending money for objectionable



and even immoral purposes. The total number of such societies reached 216 in 1914. But the enthusiasm soon passed away like a gust of wind. Societies situated at great distances had to be closed down, and the more hopeful ones were re-organized village-wise into independent rural societies. Such societies have served their purpose well. Most of the members come from the class of small landholding labourers who need them the most.

The very existence of the movement, inspite of all sorts of epidemics, floods and other agricultural calamities recurring year after year and counteracting all benefits accruing to the indebted population, shows the extent to which it has taken root in the district. Though the utility of the co-operative movement to the agricultural classes in general, and the labourers in particular can never be denied, it cannot be gainsaid that it has received a clear setback in this district. Initial mistakes have come to be realized in course of time. In complete ignorance of the cardinal principles of co-operation, bad and doubtful characters were freely admitted to the membership of the societies, and when bad debts accumulated to large amounts owing to dishonest dealings of its members and lack of supervision, most of the societies had to be closed down. Ruthless and injudicious enforcement of unlimited liability upon the most affluent and sometimes innocent victims, for the tricks of the more clever members, had the baneful effect of striking terror into the minds of the general public. The recent misappropriation of a large amount of money in the district bank has further helped to perpetuate the lack of faith and confidence in the movement, and unfortunately legacies are being made directing the beneficiaries to keep away from the societies. The present numbers of societies in Unao, Hasanganj and Purwa Tehsils are 67, 39 and 19 respectively. Central Banks are situated in Purwa, Safipur, and Unao Tehsils with a district bank at the head-quarters; which is hardly sufficient for such a big agricultural district as Unao. It is clear that there is a great field for improvement in this direction. Steps ought to be taken to impart co-operative education to the villagers, in order to bring home to them the necessity

and advantages of the co-operative movement. Cash holds sovereignty everywhere. Without adequate capital, the art of agriculture will dwindle to nothing and the cottage industries will languish. The spirit of co-operation still lingers within the souls of the village people. It only needs to be brought into action. They already hold waste-lands, water-rights and townships in common in the parganas of Ajgain and elsewhere, and there seems to be no reason why they cannot hold personal credit in common, to eradicate the evil of indebtedness from amongst themselves. The economic condition of the agricultural labourers is thus deplorable. A great majority of them are overburdened with debts, some of which are irredeemable in the life-time of a single generation. The distressing effect of the present indebtedness is that the labourer is condemned to a life of penury and semi-slavery.

CHAPTER VII

SUBSIDIARY OCCUPATIONS

THE inadequacy of the small holding as a means of family livelihood, coupled with a large amount of agricultural idleness, renders it inevitable for the agricultural labourers to seek their fortune elsewhere, when work is deficient on the fields. The most characteristic feature of such non-agricultural pursuits is the labourer's devotion only to those occupations which might be compatible with his caste and tradition. The Nais and the Kahars find easy recognition among the class of domestic servants in the village and outside, while the Purohit, Darzi, Sunar, Lohar, Barhai, etc., take to their own callings and the Faqirs go out for alms. Conservatism and pride stand in the way of the higher castes taking up occupations involving manual labour. These, therefore, waste their leisure hours, or go out carting to the city at the most. One of the many supplementary occupations which engage the agricultural labourers in villages is cotton weaving—a cottage industry. Cotton is ginned, spun and woven with the old type of crude appliances, but progress has been made towards the use of fly-shuttle looms. The industry is chiefly in the hands of the weaving class of Julahas and Koris, but other castes also find employment in mere secondary works. Hand-ginning will continue to be a domestic employment for the village women as long as the village weaver consumes cotton grown and spun locally. On the other hand, warp-laying and bobbin-winding will have to be done mostly by the women and children of the same and the neighbouring villages, while sizing is done by the weavers themselves through mutual arrangement. The chief centres of weaving industry now left in the district are Bangermaw, Miyanganj and Hyderabad, but it was only a few decades ago when the muslin of Bangermaw and Mohan was valued by the courtiers of the Nawabs of Oudh. The old skill is now nowhere to be

found, and the industry seems to be dying for want of capital and encouragement. The unhealthy competition with the produce of the mills and factories situated just so close at Cawnpore, has ousted the industry from its original position, and now the only manufactures left consist of coarse *garha*, *jora*, *doria*, *tapti*, *lungi* and twill. The yarn used both for the warp and the weft is generally hand-spun, and is provided by the Kurmi women of the neighbourhood. Mill yarn has also become popular, but with a few weavers only. A small weavers' factory was started during the non-co-operation days at Bangermaw, but it now engages only a few paid weavers, warp layers and bobbin-winders. It is, however, obvious that the success of the movement cannot be ensured until determined effort is made to reorganize the whole industry on a new basis of mutual co-operation among the weavers themselves, in order to effect improvements in the methods of production and secure markets for their produce. The sale of the weavers' goods is at present restricted to either their own villages, or a few bi-weekly *bazaars* held in the neighbouring localities. A weaver, therefore, is compelled to offer all his produce, which he cannot dispose off locally, to some wholesale dealer at a very low price. According to Mr. Champa Ram Misra,¹ a whole-time weaver can still earn from twelve annas to fourteen annas a day if he can find a ready sale for his total out-turn. If the entire industry is reorganized on a co-operative basis, and a stimulus given to the producers by introducing improved designs, it will improve a great deal the condition of the professional weavers who are leaving their traditional occupation. These are now throwing in their lot with the agricultural labourers, and entering into their field of competition for land and labour alike. If we seek to promote the cause of the weavers as a class, by making improvements in the art of weaving, which is their primary occupation, it will at least leave the agricultural labourers alone to make a living out of the land. The increasing amount of pros-

¹ Ghoshal, *Report of the Industrial Survey of the Unao District*, 1923.



perity among the weavers will bring in its train an adequate supply of subsidiary work like warp-laying, hand-ginning and bobbin-winding to a number of field labourers during their periods of relative leisure in agriculture.

Another industry of lesser importance is that of weaving ordinary blankets locally known as *kamlis*. Wool is gathered by the Gadarias, and the women sort it, card it and spin it out on the charkha, to be woven by their husbands when freed from labour on the field. Their ordinary loom produces a foot wide *pattis* of a very coarse kind varying in length from four to six feet. About four or five pieces are then sewn together to form a *kamli*. The industry is of a self-sufficing nature, as the product is not sold to any outsider but is used generally by the family itself.

A more important occupation of a certain section of village people, is to be found in the preparation of metal utensils which are a prime necessity of every household. Whereas brass utensils are manufactured in Bhagwantnagar by the hammering process, the old method of moulding from *kaskut*, an alloy, still continues in Newalganj, Moradabad, Settulgunj and Badarkha. The work of moulding, melting, pouring, turning and filing is generally done by the members of either a Lodh or a Thathera family, but labourers have still to be engaged for turning the lathe. There are many small manufacturers who are carrying on the business independently as a cottage industry, but they have to remain mostly under the control of the dealers who supply raw material to them, and buy up the finished product at a nominal price. They have to meet with keen competition at the hands of the bigger manufacturers, who command sufficient capital and organization for the sale and purchase of the material. The net profit accruing to a small manufacturer may, in the present circumstances, be roughly estimated at ten or twelve annas a day, but only when the producer provides his own capital and finds a ready sale for his total out-turn. It will be well to organize this industry on a co-operative basis, to make it profitable enough for the craftsmen.



proper to keep them from participating with the agricultural labourers in their work, and thus sharing their profits accruing from the field. Though it has become easier for a city pedlar to frequent the remotest corners of the rural areas in a district, either during periodical bazaars or at other times, no improved types of utensils, either of aluminium pattern or Moradabad design, have yet weighed profitably in the estimation of a village housewife, who still prefers the odd and heavy type designed by the village Thathera, which lasts for several generations in spite of all the rough uses to which it is subjected. This industry has a well established footing in several rural areas, and it provides a certain amount of subsidiary work for a number of agricultural labourers during their leisure hours, while the professionals do the main part of the business.

Woodwork and carving does not seem to have developed to any appreciable extent in this district. The usual productions of a village carpenter are ploughs, carts, doors and boxes. Though the work is carried on throughout the district, doors and boxes are designed at a few places only. There is a regular competition among the manufacturers to display their skill and art in the annual fairs at Takia and Bidyadhar. But the art itself seems to be in its infancy, as there has never been any special training of these artizans in drawing and modelling, with the result that any innovation in the style involves a considerable loss in material. The hinges, locks, joints and glue-work in use are generally of the most common and primitive type, and consequently the product lacks a great deal in finish. Fortunately, there is no prejudice among the higher castes to follow this calling and, therefore, the industry seems to have fair chances of development and become a profitable cottage industry. The people have shown great aptitude in acquiring the much-needed dexterity and skill in wood-carving, as is exemplified by the display of fine types of doors, *laherus* and boxes at the Takia and Bidyadhar fairs. It will be well to direct the energies of small manufacturers towards the preparation of new and fine designs of picture frames, which are much in demand in



the neighbouring cities of Lucknow and Cawnpore. *Seenk*-work and basket making are other offshoots of a similar type of cottage industries, fine specimens of which are still manufactured by the women workers of the village. All such art needs encouragement and exhibition, so that it may be properly utilized in the promotion of small handicrafts and cottage industries. The District Exhibition which is held at the head-quarters, should become a permanent annual affair on a wider scale, where exhibits of all sorts of handicrafts should be invited from every part of the district. The prizes awarded to the manufacturers should not take into cognizance their skill merely, but also the price for which it is offered for sale. The economy in production must be taken into consideration to promote the progress of the industry on sound business lines. The exhibition authorities must patronize the art by purchasing articles of special dexterity, and exhibiting the same at local museums that may be established at the centres of each particular industry in the district. The producers can only then profit by the exhibition of such articles, and not simply by a few days annual show at the Head-quarters. The small handicrafts and cottage industries have a great future before them, if the leisure hours of the agricultural labourers can be usefully employed in their promotion.

Another subsidiary occupation employing some of the agricultural labourers is leather tanning and the preparation of leather articles by *chamars*. *Mochis* and *chamars* are not very large in number in any particular area, but they are quite evenly distributed in the district according to the needs of the rural population. They tan leather by means of *babul* bark and prepare *desi* shoes, *bhishti's* bags (*mashag*), water-buckets (*pur*), straps for yokes and other articles of general necessity required by the villagers. Extra skins are collected, and made over to the *Vyaparis* of Lucknow and Cawnpore whenever they visit the place. The industry is run on very uneconomical lines at present, and the principal defect in the industry seems due to the producers overliming, short-tanning, under-currying and using of old

and primitive types of tools and appliances. Improvements can be effected and durability in the articles introduced, if small tanning schools be set up in selected areas where Chamars are found in considerable numbers. To supplement the hide and skin industry, a bone-mill has been started at Magarwara which has encouraged bone-gathering among the Chamars. They collect bones from the outskirts of the villages, and deposit them near the railway stations whence they are loaded to Magwara by rail. Chamar boys and women find useful employment in picking up bones in their spare hours, while adult males find work in the mill at all times.

The saltpetre industry had seen very prosperous days a few decades ago when many refineries were existent in the district, but the only crude works now left are at Munshiganj, Miyanganj, Dakari and Mohan. The trade is mostly in the hands of the Loniya, who manufacture crude saltpetre under a license from the Salt Department. The nitrous deposit is scraped together with earth from the neighbourhood of old inhabited sites, and is filtered through a formation of straw and brush-wood by pouring water over the collection. The filtered liquid is boiled in iron pans, leaving behind a brown coloured powder which proves to be a mixture of crude saltpetre and common salt, along with a few other impurities. After paying a royalty of about Re. 1-1-0 per village to the zemindar, or giving about one-third of this total produce to the Mahajan if he takes lease of the zemindar's villages, a Loniya sells his produce to the local agents of outside refineries at the rate of Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 per maund. The work is usually carried on during four months preceding the rainy season, and the average profit accruing to a family works up to something like Rs. 5 per month. Reh too, which covers nearly 1,445 acres of Usar land, most of it lying in the Hasanganj tehsil, engages a part of the agricultural labour, but as reh is only utilized by the Dhobis in this district, the collection of this chemical is very much restricted. If the manufacture of caustic soda is undertaken in the neighbourhood by any capitalist under expert supervision, the agricultural labour will be usefully employed in



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pare hours in the collection of reh which abounds in plenty in Oudh, and has proved very detrimental to the interests of agriculture.

Oil-pressing is another cottage industry which is chiefly practised by the village *telis*. They work with their old wooden bullock-driven *kolhu*, and press out oil generally from the mustard seed. The labour is chiefly supplied by the family itself. A *тели* sells oil as well as its by-product, the oil-cake, and if he can dispose of the whole of his produce he is remunerated to an extent of a rupee or so. Other subsidiary occupations that are open to an agricultural labourer in the district, may be enumerated as kankar-excavation, road-building, employment in the brick-kilns and lime-mills and similar other engagement in the city. Fuel-gathering, *Pattal* making (widespread *dhak* leaves joined together), dung-cake selling, pottery, fan-making from palm leaves, etc., are other occupations of minor importance which engage small sections of people everywhere, and provide them with work in the idle hours of agriculture.

It will be quite obvious from the above account, that the distribution of subsidiary occupations among the agricultural labourers is chiefly governed by caste, and that caste plays a very important part in finding openings for a labourer when he is freed from his seasonal work on the field. Though most of the cottage industries, i.e. weaving, cloth-printing, wood-working, manufacture of saltpetre and hardware, etc., have lost their bright days, they still linger within the closed doors of an ancient rural organization, and cannot be stamped out altogether by an unhealthy competition from outside. Their decline has adversely affected the economic position of both classes of people, the agriculturist as well as the non-agriculturist. The former class does not find useful employment during idle periods in agriculture, while amongst the latter, the traditional aptitude for artistic and skilled industries is being lost gradually, on account of which they seek to throw in their lot with the agriculturist class to take part in their already limited profits on the land. The revival of the cottage industries and small handicrafts will not only help the

agricultural labourer in supplementing his meagre income from the field, and utilizing his spare hours, but also place the non-agriculturist in a much better position financially, and thus help to divert his energies from agricultural to non-agricultural pursuits. The pressure on land in that case will be greatly reduced, and the agricultural labourers will improve their economic position. There is a rich endowment of hereditary skill and dexterity, which needs to be utilized in the resuscitation of the village industries. Labour is sufficient, time is plentiful and skill is not wanting, but what the villager lacks are business methods and proper organization.

GLOSSARY OF VERNACULAR TERMS

- Aghan* = Ninth month of the Hindu year.
Ahir = A caste of Hindus carrying on dairy farming.
Arhar = A pulse.
Asarhh = Fourth month of the Hindu year.
Baisakh = Second month of the Hindu year.
Bajra = Spiked millet.
Barhai = Carpenter.
Bari = A subcaste of Hindus carrying on menial work.
Batai = A system of cultivating land on a copartnership basis ; usually a system of grain rent.
Bazar = Village market.
Behna = A Mohammedan caste.
Bejhar or Bijhra = A mixture of barley and gram or barley and peas.
Bhadon = Sixth month of the Hindu year.
Bhaichara = A system of dividing landed property equally among brothers.
Bhangi = Scavenger.
Bhent = A present.
Bhur = Sandy soil.
Bhusa = Chopped straw.
Bigha = Five-eighth of an acre.
Biradiri = Community.
Chadar = An outer covering for the body worn by Indian ladies.
Chaina = Grain of an inferior type.



- Chait* or *Chaitra* = First month of the Hindu year.
Chamar = A caste among Hindus of a lower grade.
Chamarin = Wife of a Chamar.
Chaukidar = Watchman.
Chhatank = One-sixteenth of a Seer.
Chilam = An earthen smoking-pipe.
Dabi = Indian measure in bundles of harvested crop.
Dai = An Indian village midwife.
Darzi = Tailor.
Dastoori or *dasturi* = Due ; rights ; customary payments.
Desi = Manufactured locally.
Deorhha = One and a half times.
Dewli = Earthen *chiraghs*.
Dhenkuli = Lever-lift for raising water, commonly used
in villages.
Dheri = A heap or pile.
Dhobi = Washerman.
Doria = A type of cloth manufactured in the Unao
District.
Dumat = A soil made up of sand and clay.
Dupatta = Same as *chadar*.
Ek-tokri-naj = A small basket-full of grain ; a small
village measure.
Gadarias = A Hindu caste following the occupation of a
shepherd, i.e. rearing of sheep, etc.
Gaddi = A class of people who follow the occupation
of dairy-farming ; also a caste.
Garhha = A type of *desi* cloth prepared by village
weavers ; sometimes equivalent to Khaddar.
Ghara = An earthen jar.
Githra = Grain mixed with stalks of the plant itself.
Goind = A kind of soil situated in the vicinity of a village
site.
Gurh = Unrefined and uncrystallized brown sugar.
Haisiyat = Status.
Hal = Plough.
Haq = Due ; right.
Hooka = An Indian smoking-pipe with a bowl of water at
the base, through which the smoke is drawn.
Inam = A tip or *bakhshish*.
Jaith = Third month of the Hindu year.

Teora = Customary payments.

Tijman = A patron, rather a client.

Jora = A type of *desi* cloth.

Juar = Large millet.

Julaha = Weaver.

Jutai = Ploughing.

Kachcha = Made up of unbaked bricks.

Kachhi = A caste of Hindus following the occupation of fruit-gardening.

Kahar = A Hindu caste commonly known as water-carrier, but generally performs the work of cleaning utensils; he is generally a domestic servant.

Kamin = Village servant.

Kamli = A small blanket of a coarse kind.

Kapas = Unginned cotton.

Karajdar = Debtor.

Kaskut = An alloy of bronze and brass.

Katik or *Kartik* = Eighth month of the Hindu year.

Katni = Harvesting.

Khadir = A lowlying plain by the side of a river.

Khaddar = A kind of course cloth generally prepared by a village weaver.

Khalihan = A husking yard; a threshing floor.

Kharif = Autumn harvest.

Khata = An account book of a village Mahajan.

Kolhu = A crude type of oil pressing machine, generally made of wood.

Kora = Whip.

Kori = A Hindu caste that generally follows a weaver's profession.

Kuar = Seventh month of the Hindu year.

Kumhar = Potter.

Kurmi = A caste among Hindu cultivators.

Kurta = A typical kind of loose shirt worn by village people.

Laoni = Perquisites.

Lhenga = A loose garment worn by Indian ladies below the waist.

Lihaf = Quilt.

Lipa-hesi = White-washing and plastering.



- Loah* = A Hindu caste carrying on agricultural work.
Lohar = Blacksmith.
Loni = Same as *laoni*.
Lota = Jug.
Lungi = A short *dhoti*.
Lunias = A Hindu caste engaged in collecting salt-petre, reh, etc.
Magh = Eleventh month of the Hindu year.
Mahajan = Money-lender.
Mai = Clod-crusher.
Mali = Gardener.
Mallah = Boatman.
Manihar = A Mohammedan caste whose main occupation is to sell bangles.
Mashag = Water-bag.
Matka = A big earthen jar.
Mattra = Big pea.
Matiyar = A kind of clay soil.
Mazdoori = Wages.
Mela = Fair.
Moth = A pulse (*Phaseolus aconitifolius*)
Muafi = Rent free.
Mung = A pulse (*Phaseolus Mungo*).
Muttha = A small bundle of harvested crop.
Nai = Barber.
Nain = Barber's wife.
Nazar = A present.
Neg = Customary payments.
Nikoni = Weeding.
Oosar = A barren waste.
Palki = A palanquin.
Pan = Betel leaf.
Panseri = A local measure equal to two and one-fourth seers.
Parja = Village servants.
Pataila = Clod crusher.
Patta = Agreement between landlord and tenant; a lease.
Patwari = Village accountant.
Phalgun = Twelfth month of the Hindi year.
Phaora = Spade.
Pula = A small bundle of harvested crop.



- Pur* = Water bucket.
Purohit = A Hindu priest.
Poos = Tenth month of the Hindu year.
Pyjama = Loose trousers.
Rab = A condensed and crystallised juice of sugarcane.
Rabi = Spring harvest.
Ras = Sugarcane juice.
Ras = Heap of grain.
Sanai = Hemp.
Sarson = Mustard.
Sathi = A term used for rice crop which is harvested after sixty days; *Sath* is a vernacular term for sixty.
Sattu = Flour of parched wheat and gram or barley and gram. It is generally taken along with sugar and water mixed.
Savaya = One and a quarter times.
Sawan = Fifth month of the Hindu year.
Sila = Remnant of a harvested crop lying in the fields; glean.
Surraon = Harrow.
Tagada = Demand for repayment of debts.
Tamakoo = Tobacco.
Tamboli or Barai = Betel-seller; Hindu castes.
Tapti = A kind of cloth manufactured locally.
Than = A full piece of cloth.
Thathera = A caste among Hindu carrying on the trade of brass utensils.
Til = *Sesamum borocana*.
Toraiya = Scavenger.
Tyohari = Festival gifts given in terms of bread to the lower class of village functionaries.
Ugahi = A peculiar system of lending money; system of equated instalments.
Ukh or Unkh = An inferior type of sugarcane.
Urd = A kind of pulse.
Usai = To separate chaff from corn.
Usar = Barren waste.
Vyapari = A trader.