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THE UNECONOMIC CULTIVATOR

by

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(The size of holdings is a perennial theme of agricultural economics. It is firmly believed that the small size of holdings is one of the principal causes of the inefficiency of our agriculture. But we may do well to remember that according to 1942-43 statistics, 74% of the cultivated land in Bombay Province was held in acre-groups of more than 15 acres. It is also easy to see that as far as efficiency is concerned, what matters is not the size groups in which land is 'held' but those in which it is actually cultivated. All those who own land do not cultivate it; they may cultivate only a portion of the land held by them and some small owners may take on lease additional land for cultivation. Thus from ownership to cultivation is a big change which may give rise to significant economic and social questions. We would, for example, want to know: (I) Is the unit of cultivation larger than the unit of holding (ownership)? (II) Does the small owner prefer to (a) cultivate his own land and take more land on lease or (b) does he prefer to lease out his land to a tenant? (III) What percentage of tenants have their own lands? The above is not a full list of questions arising out of change from ownership to cultivation, but it is sufficient to indicate that such a study has many points of interest.

Though as pointed out above, a large percentage of the land is held in units which are, comparatively speaking, not so small, a large percentage of cultivators cultivate land in units of less than 5 acres. The problem, therefore, is not so much of uneconomic cultivation as that of uneconomic cultivators. A study of their antecedents, nature and extent of their employment and their resources, and the impact of all this on agriculture would be of immense value. It will help us to understand the real nature of the problem of pressure of population on land. It would be useful to know to what extent each of the following factors adds to the ranks of the uneconomic cultivator: (a) Law of inheritance, (b) Unremunerative nature of agriculture, which causes the down-slide on the agricultural ladder, (c) Decay of handicrafts and village industries. A correct analysis of the above will enable us to devise economic measures for the transfer of "surplus" population to non-agricultural pursuits.

One of the important items of agrarian reform is the abolition of the absentee landholder and the imposition of a maximum limit to the ownership of land. Who are these absentee landholders in the ryotwari areas? Are their holdings big or small? Is land holding their principal source of income? Do the owners of large holdings cultivate at least a portion of their land or are they a class of pure rentiers? If we can have

information on questions like these, schemes of reforms can be more intelligently and less painfully executed.

Then there is the question of the economic holding and consolidation of fragments. The state of actual cultivation—as distinct from the manner in which land is held—the extent of tenancy and rights of tenants and extent of fragmentation, would be very germane to the schemes of consolidation and creation of economic holdings.

Though the information collected during this enquiry does not throw light on all the questions raised above, it will, we hope, enable a better appraisal of many of them. It was only after the enquiry was completed and the results were being analysed and correlated that the possibilities of their significance became clearer to us. If the results of this enquiry prove even partially useful in understanding the complicated nature of the problem a more comprehensive enquiry can be planned later.

For the purpose of this enquiry the dry region of Poona District was selected for field study. The investigation covered in all eleven villages: five from Indapur Taluka, four from Dhond Taluka and two from Bhimthadi Taluka. In part I, we have studied the Government quinquennial statement of holdings along with a statement of actual cultivation. The extent of fragmentation and the mode of cultivation i.e. the nature of the cultivator's interests in land, are also studied in this part. In part II, we have discussed the resources of persons who cultivate less than five acres—the uneconomic cultivators and their principal and subsidiary occupations.

The results embodied in the paper relate to an enquiry undertaken by the Maharashtra Unit of the Agricultural Economics Section of the University School of Economics and Sociology in the academic year 1947-48. Our thanks are due to all Government officers and cultivators who helped us in this enquiry. We are also indebted to Mr. H. N. Iyer, demonstrator, Department of Statistics, University of Bombay, for his kind assistance in preparing correlation table on page 26A.)

I

HOLDERS AND CULTIVATORS

The size of holdings of agricultural land in India is proverbially small. And there has been a perceptible tendency towards a continuous decrease in this size during the last few decades. To this the Province of Bombay is not an exception. Between 1922 and 1942, the average size of holding in Bombay Province has decreased from 13.17 acres to 11.58. This decrease in the average size of holding is due to an increase in the total number of holders without a proportional increase in the total land held. The average size of holding given above is, however, deceptive as it lumps together the small and the big holders. The Quinquennial Statement of Holdings issued by the Government classifies holdings according to their size and on closer enquiry we find that in the year 1942, 50% of holders in the Province of Bombay held or owned land below five acres. This Statement also attempts to give a 'fair general view' of the agricultural practice as all the holders are classified into three classes, A, B and C.

I. The Holders and Cultivators in the Villages

In this enquiry, eleven villages in the dry region of Poona District were surveyed. But it was found that area under holdings and area

under cultivation were comparable in case of only eight villages. A statement of holdings for only eight villages is therefore given in this section. In subsequent discussions, the data of all the eleven villages is utilised.*

The following table of holdings in eight villages is given in the usual form in which the Statement of Holdings is published quinquennially in the Land Revenue Administration Reports, with the exception that the division of land into Khalsa and Inam is not observed.

Table No. 1

Acre Groups	"A" (Holders who are owner cultivators.)		"B" (Holders who employ agricultural labour and direct & supervise agricultural operations.)		"C" (Holders who are only rent receivers.)	
	Persons.	Area in Acres	Persons.	Area in Acres	Persons.	Area in Acres
0—5	365	1,157	1	2	161	513
5—15	411	3,580	..	..	119	1,044
15—25	173	2,718	2	37	75	1,121
25—100	121	4,761	..	..	37	1,125
100—500	9	1,569	..	..	2	320
Total ..	1,079	13,785	3	39	394	4,123

Before we proceed to interpret the different figures, it is necessary to know how the above table is compiled by the Revenue Department. A short description of the three classes, A, B and C has been already given above. But a complete description of the classes has been given thus :—

"A"—Cultivating with his own hands, whether he employs additional labour to assist or not;

"B"—Not cultivating. personally but supervising hired labour even though sometimes he may take some part in some of the operations;

"C"—Letting to tenants and receiving rent under any of the four modes...."

This classification of holders in A, B and C superseded the old classification into agriculturists and non-agriculturists in 1926. The old classification was very rough and ill-defined for the obvious reason that many

* In this connection, it may be noted that the statements of holdings for the year 1947 were supplied to us by the Mamlatdars of the talukas concerned. And the data of area under actual cultivation was collected personally from the village Forms 7-12 in the months of April and May 1948.

holders were both. The present classification is based on the area of land in each holding which is used by the holder in a certain way. The classification of a holder depends on the way in which he uses the greater part of his land. If a holder has most of the land under "B", and quite a large area under "A", and "A" together with "C" exceeds "B", then, according to the rules, he must be classed under "B" and go as solely "B" holder. Thus the holder is posted with all his area under the class in which most of his holding falls. The difficulty arises when a holder has equal areas of land in all the three classes. In such a case there is still no rule for his classification.*

From the explanation on how the above table is compiled, it will become obvious that the area shown against the three classes, if not properly understood, would prove misleading. The table shows how the land is held in different acre-groups. And from the classification of holders into three classes, we know how many of them are owner-cultivators of the most of their land and how many rent most of their land to tenants. But nothing more definite can be known from this table. All that we can say with certainty is that atleast one-third of the land in each of the classes is used in the way described by the respective classes. Because, we must note that a holder who has fifteen acres of land, if he cultivates 6 acres himself (in class "A"), cultivates 4 acres with the help of hired labour (in class "B") and rents the last 5 acres to a tenant (in class "C"), then according to rules he is placed in "A" class of holders and all his land comes under that class.

The deceptive nature of this classification has led many students of agricultural economics to believe that the total area in class "A" and "B" is the owner-cultivated land and the area in class "C" is the land cultivated by the tenants. The Land Revenue Administration Reports, which publish these statements of holdings quinquennially, do not clarify the method of their compilation. This clarification is found only in the Manual of Revenue Accounts.

The table of holdings, with its A, B and C classification, therefore, does not help us to understand the state of actual cultivation of land. The author of the Manual of Revenue Accounts knew the limitations of these statistics. "The writer of the manual has always advised against this attempt to class the holders since it is deceptive, but has recommended that land alone should be classed upon the unimpeachable basis of V.F. VII B."* The author recommends V. F. VII B. with its six modes of cultivation as an unimpeachable basis for the classifi-

* H. G. H. Anderson : "Manual of Revenue Accounts" pp. 170 and 340.

cation of land. We have undertaken a study of the modes of cultivation a little later. Here, it will suffice to recognise the fact that the statement of holdings which is published in the Land Revenue Administration Reports does not reflect accurately the method of cultivation.

The table of holdings, however, gives a very useful information on the ownership of land.. It gives the number of holders in different acre-groups and the land held by them. But in order to get this idea of ownership of land, it is not necessary to divide the holders in the three classes. The following table gives the percentage of holders and the percentage of land held by them in each acre-group. In this connection, it is to be remembered that ownership of land is a matter of not much significance. The vital matter is as to who cultivates it. In the following table, therefore, the comparative figures of holdings and of cultivation are given.

Table No. 2

Acre-Groups	HOLDERS			CULTIVATORS		
	% holders.	% Land Held.	Average land held (in acres)	% Cultivators	% Land Cultivated.	Average land cultivated (in acres)
0—5	35.7	9.3	3.2	32.3	4.3	2.3
5—15	35.9	25.8	8.7	32.1	18.5	9.9
15—25	16.9	21.6	15.5	14.5	16.9	20.0
25—100	10.7	32.8	37.3	20.4	53.5	45.1
100—500	0.7	10.5	171.7	0.8	6.7	150.5
Total Number	1476	17,947 (acres)	12.6	1,041	17,865 (acres)	17.2

The figures about the holdings show how the land is unequitably owned. While there are nearly 36% holders who own 9% land, at the other extreme 11% own as-much-as 43% land. The table also shows that as-many-as 71% holders own very small area on an average. In actual cultivation, however, the condition as far as the small acre-groups are concerned improves slightly in as-much-as instead of 71% holders 64% cultivators are found in the smaller acre-groups below 15. However, cultivators in the small acre-groups command only 23% of the area as against the holders in this category having 35% of the lands. In actual cultivation, land moves from the smaller acre-groups to the bigger acre-group of 25—100.

The above table also shows that the total number of holders (1476) is larger than the number of cultivators (1041). Thus the average area per cultivator is 17.2 acres as against 12.6 acres per holder.

This fact that the unit of cultivation is larger than the unit of holding means that there are fewer tenant cultivators than land holders who do not personally cultivate land. The tendency similar to the above table, i.e. the number of cultivators being less than the number of holders, was also observed in two regional surveys in Gujarat.* The Royal Commission on Agriculture writing on sub-division and fragmentation of land in cultivation, however, made a contrary observation to one that is evident in the above table. "Here we are speaking of those who cultivate only, irrespective of the nature of the interest in the land they till; in number they exceed the number of right holders as there are generally more cultivators with no permanent rights than permanent right holders who do not cultivate. The result is that sub-division is more pronounced among cultivators." †

Another significant fact that will be noted from the above table is that 54% of total land is cultivated in the acre-group of 25-100. There are 11% of holders who hold 33% of land in this acre-group. But in regard to cultivation, it is found that there are 20% cultivators in this acre-group who cultivate 54% of land. Thus in this acre-group the number of persons, the area and the average area are all greater for cultivators than those for holders. In all the other acre-groups the proportion of cultivated land to the total is less than that of land held.

II. Actual Cultivation

It was observed earlier that as far as production is concerned what matters is not in what size groups the land is held but those in which it is actually cultivated. But the knowledge of the distribution of land in different size groups of cultivation alone is not sufficient. The fragmentation of cultivated land and the mode under which the land is cultivated are other two important aspects, which would further help us to understand the nature of actual cultivation. In the following pages, the study of these aspects is undertaken on the basis of statistics collected relating to 11 villages. The information on all these aspects from the 11 villages was collected from the village Forms 7-12. A list of actual cultivators for each village was prepared and the total area cultivated, the fragments thereof, the mode of cultivation of each fragment and the assessment, were noted on a separate slip of paper for each cultivator. The information in all covers 1,823 cultivators and 41,321 acres of land.

* Mukhtyar G. C. "Life And Labour in a South Gujarat Village."
* Shukla J. B.: "Life And Labour In a Gujarat Taluka."
† Report, p. 133.

In connection with the size of cultivation of land, the note on "The Size of Agricultural Holdings and the extent of Fragmentation in Bombay Province" by V. V. Divatia in the Bulletin of Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of Bombay, may be mentioned. The Bulletin of April 1948 analyses the data pertaining to the Deccan region covering seven districts. The data was collected in accordance with the established principles of stratified random sampling. The analysis is available district-wise. In the District of Poona, 24 villages i.e. 2.1% of the total were selected from 12 talukas. The information was supplied by 4,681 cultivators cultivating 76,085 acres of land in these 24 villages. The results based on the statistics given in this note do not differ substantially from those of our enquiry.

(a) Size Groups In Cultivation

The following table gives the land under cultivation in different size-groups.

Table No. 3

Acre groups	% cultivators	%Area cultivated	% Assessement.
0—5	24.5	2.6	4.3
5—15	29.5	13.0	16.1
15—25	17.0	14.9	16.5
25—100	26.8	55.0	51.4
100—500	2.2	14.5	11.7
Total	100	100	100

It was already mentioned earlier that the above statistics relate to 11 villages of dry region of Poona District. In this region even 15 acres of land cannot maintain a family of five members at a reasonable standard of living. According to Capt. Mohite's report on "Co-operative Farming in Bombay Province", 30 acres of dry land are required to form an economic holding in the three talukas of Indapur, Dhond and Bhimthadi, from which our samples are drawn. If the standard of 30 acres is adopted or for that matter 25 acres, it will be seen from the above table that 71% of cultivators cultivating 30.5%of total land have uneconomic units. The remaining 29% of cultivators cultivate nearly 70% of land in units of more than 25 acres. Thus it becomes quite evident that the problem in these villages is not so much of uneconomic cultivation as nearly 70% of total land is cultivated in economic units, as it certainly is of uneconomic cultivators as there are 71% of cultivators who cultivate land in uneconomic units.

The number of uneconomic cultivators is so large—71% of total cultivators—that it is in itself a problem of considerable significance.

It means that 71% of cultivators live a life of insecurity and sub-marginal existence. These cultivators are always in search of other work, either agricultural or non-agricultural, which in many cases provides them with the major part of their annual income. In productive efficiency, therefore, not much can be expected of them. Keatinge has rightly observed that "the efficiency of a man's work depends partly on the man himself and partly on the conditions under which he performs it." In the case of the majority of these cultivators, both these factors undermine the efficiency of their work Firstly, the uncertain and scarce rains make agriculture a gamble, and secondly, the small size of the unit under cultivation makes it unattractive.

Here, it will be interesting to note the average size of cultivation of the different acre-groups. For all the 11 villages the average size of cultivation is 23 acres. But for the 71% of the cultivators, the average size of cultivation is 9.6 acres. And the average size of cultivation for the 54% of cultivators is only 6.5 acres. Thus the average size of the unit of cultivation points out two facts of importance. Firstly, the average size of the unit of cultivation for all the cultivators is uneconomic if 25-30 acres are required to form an economic unit. And secondly, it will be noted that the average for all the cultivators is very deceptive. While the average size of the unit of cultivation can be fairly large for a given cultivable area and a given number of cultivators, the distribution of this area between cultivators can be for the better or for worse, for a small or a large number of given cultivators. It will be seen from the table that the distribution of land between cultivators is for the better in case of 29% of the cultivators and it is for the worse for 71% of the cultivators.

29% of the cultivators in whose case the distribution of land is for the better, cultivate between themselves 70% of land. Subject to fragmentation this 70% of land may be considered as cultivated in economic units if an area of 25 or over is taken as an economic unit for agricultural operations.

We may briefly comment here upon the subject of economic holding. From the economic point of view, the lower limit of the size of holding is determined by the necessity of continuous use of labour and other resources, and the upper limit by the capacity of the farmer to supervise the enterprise. In the first place it is maintained that the size of holding should be adjusted in such a way as to provide sufficient and ample employment to the cultivator and his family throughout the year. In other words, an area that would produce an optimum return under given conditions can be put down as the economic unit. A second cri-

terion of an ideal holding is that it should be so adjusted as to enable an average family of cultivators to have a decent standard of living throughout the year. The third basis of an economic holding is that agriculture should be so organised as to make it economical to its maximum limit, i.e. the size of a holding should be so adjusted as to produce the maximum amount of proportionate yield compared with the amount of labour and capital put in such activities. The third criterion of an economic unit cannot be thought of unless both industry and agriculture are organised according to a plan, so as to produce the maximum amount of proportionate yield. What is generally understood by an economic unit, however, is the area which would enable an average family of a farmer to have a decent standard of living throughout the year. It is much easier to determine an economic unit of cultivation which provides maintenance to the cultivator and his family, than an unit that would bring an optimum return to the resources of labour and capital of the cultivator. Thirty acres of dry land is considered an economic unit in this part of the Poona Dist. according to this criterion.

(b) Fragmentation of Cultivated Holdings

It was observed earlier that nearly 70% of land is cultivated in economic units. But the advantages of fairly big areas for cultivation are lost by the excessive fragmentation. If the fragments are few and big enough in area, they are an advantnage to the operator. Such fragments make it possible for the operator to undertake cultivation of different crops according to the soil and irrigation facilities available. In this way the fragments serve as a security against the uncertainty of rains and total crop failures. But the fragmentation that is found in these villages is so excessive that it is a positive obstacle to efficient and economic cultivation. There are 1814 cultivators in the villages, who cultivate 41,321 acres of land. This area of 41,321 acres is broken up into 6,974 fragments. Thus on an average, there are four fragments per cultivated holding and the average size of a fragment is 6 acres. The following table shows the relation between the cultivated holdings and their fragments.

Table No. 4

	ACRE GROUPS				
	0—5	5—15	15—25	25—100	100—500
Average size of cultivation (in acres)	2.4	10.0	19.8	46.6	150.5
Average No. of Fragments ..	1.9	2.7	3.6	6.3	11.2
Average Area per Fragment. (in acres) ..	1.2	3.7	5.6	7.3	13.5

It will be seen from the above table that the average number of fragments per cultivator increases with the increase in the size of cultivated holding. Whereas a cultivator in the first acre-group of 0-5 cultivates his land in two fragments, a cultivator in the last acre-group of 100-500 cultivates his land split up into eleven separate fragments. Thus what seems to have been gained in the size is lost in the number of fragments that comprise the unit of cultivation.

The unit of operation or the area per fragment is 1.2 acres for the cultivators below five acres. For the last acre-group this area per fragment is 13.5 acres. In this way, the unit of cultivation in this last acre group of 100-500 acres is eleven times the average size of a fragment in that acre-group. It is not difficult to comprehend the hardships, inconvenience and waste of energy and money that these fragments entail to the cultivator who has his land in 6 to 11 fragments scattered at long distances. The result is that in the gross yield per acre the cultivator in the bigger acre-groups is not better off than the small and uneconomic cultivator. We would very naturally expect a larger gross yield per acre on a bigger area if the fragments are in one compact block or in two or three blocks. It would then be possible for the cultivator to use better seeds, manure and implements perhaps at the same total cost. The fragmentation of land makes such an advantage impossible. In the present inquiry the cultivation of bigger acre-groups stated that the per acre yields on their lands were not larger than the yields of the cultivators in the lower acre-groups. However, the cultivator in the bigger acre-groups was better off in the net return per acre i.e. the difference between the gross yield and the cost, than the cultivator of uneconomic acre-groups.

The table giving the frequency of distribution of fragments on page 25, would throw some additional light on the nature of fragmentation. It will be seen from the table, that the maximum number of fragments in a cultivated holding is 61. There is only one such case in the total of 1814 holdings. 36.5 per cent of the total cultivators have all their cultivated area in one block. But only 11% of these cultivators have their cultivated holdings of more than 25 acres. Most of the cultivators who have all their cultivated area in one block belong to the two acre-groups below 15 acres. Thus it may be noted that 38.3% of cultivators who have all their cultivated holdings in one block belong to the first acre-group of 0-5. Similar percentages for other acre-groups are 36.2 for 5-15 acre-group; 14.6 for 15-25 acre-group and 10.8 for 25-100 acre-group.

From the above analysis of the frequency distribution of fragments, it is evident that only 4% of the total cultivators have their cultivated

holding in one block which varies from 25 to 100 acres in size. The average size of the cultivated holding is 47 acres. The rest of the cultivators i.e. 96%, cultivate their lands either in fragments or, if in one block it is less than 25 acres.

Here, we may take note of another important fact viz. assessment. The average assessment per acre is 10 annas for the first acre-group of 0-5. The average assessment for other acre-groups is 8, 7, 6 and 5 annas respectively. The land in the bigger acre-groups is less fertile and hence the assessment is less than that of the smaller acre-groups. Sometimes large areas of land in the bigger acre-groups are not cultivated at all. Such lands grow grass or nothing at all. These lands though cultivable are assessed at a lower rate. Thus we observe that the average assessment per acre decreases as the area of the unit under cultivation increases. The bigger cultivated holdings, therefore, do not necessarily mean proportoinately bigger total yield as it is likely to be taken for granted.

(c) The Mode of Cultivation

So far we studied two aspects of the cultivation of land. Firstly, we observed how the cultivated holdings are distributed in the different acre-groups. Then we studied the phenomenon of the fragmentation of the cultivated holdings. But the observations on these two aspects do not show the nature of the cultivator's interest in the land that he tills. The cultivator's right in the land that he cultivates largely determines his income. The relationship of the cultivator with his land and his method of cultivation will be understood from the classification of the cultivated holdings in the different modes of cultivation. There are in all six modes of cultivation. The village form VII-B gives the distribution of land according to these modes. The Manual of Revenue Accounts describes there modes as follows:

Mode 1: Cultivated by the higher holder himself and with his own hands; sometimes assisted by hired labour.

Mode 2: Cultivated wholly by hired labour employed by the occupant (highest holder) or his agent, but supervised personally and regularly by him.

The rest of the Modes relate to lands under cultivation by tenants; these lands may be cultivated by tenants paying rent either in cash (Mode 3) or as a share of the crop (Mode 4) or a fixed quantity of produce (Mode 5) or in service, or again, involving some mixture of the foregoing forms of rent (Mode 6).*

* "Manual Of Revenue Accounts" p. 108.

There are two ways in which the information on the modes of cultivation can be arranged so as to make it intelligible in all its details. Firstly, we shall divide the total land according to different modes of cultivation. In this way, we shall be able to know how much of the total land is owner-cultivated and how much is cultivated under different systems of tenancy. But we must also know about the persons who cultivate this land. For this purpose, we shall divide the cultivators into owner-cultivators, cultivators who employ hired labour for cultivation, tenants and owner-cum-tenant cultivators. The method followed so far of giving information according to different acre-groups would be retained while dealing with the several modes of cultivation.

The following table gives the percentage area in different modes for the different acre-groups.

Table No. 5

Acre Group	Mode 1	Mode 2	Mode 3	Mode 4	Total
0—5	82	2	2	14	100
5—15	82	1	5	12	100
15—25	70	1	8	21	100
25—100	71	0.2	6	23	100
100—500	72	1	7	20	100
Total ..	72.4	0.5	6.4	20.7	100

The above table has been compiled from the summary table of the modes of cultivation which is given on page 26. It shows that the bulk of the area is cultivated under mode 1, i.e. by the owners of the land themselves. Modes 1 and 2 which indicate ownership farming in one form or another, cover 73 per cent of the cultivated area. The remaining 27% is cultivated by tenants. It will be noticed that in the two modes of cultivation practised by the tenants, the mode of crop-share is more prevalent. 78% of the land under tenancy is cultivated under the fourth mode of crop-share. In the first acre-group, the area cultivated by the owners themselves is the largest (84%). The rest of this area in this acre-group (16%) is cultivated under tenancy. As we proceed with the bigger acre-group of 5-15 and above, we observe that the area cultivated by owners decreases and the area cultivated under tenancy increases gradually. In the two acre-groups of 15-25 and 25-100, 29% of the area in each of them is under tenancy. In the last acre-group of 100-500, there is a slight increase in the proportion of land cultivated by the owners (73%), and a corresponding decrease in the percentage land under tenancy (27%).

Thus the above table shows that cultivation by owners predominates in all the acre-groups. But in the smaller acre-groups the owner-

cultivated land is comparatively more than the same in the bigger acre-groups. Correspondingly, land under tenancy is comparatively greater in the bigger acre-groups than the same in the smaller acre-groups.

We may now proceed to know something about the persons who cultivate the land. In the above table, we classified cultivated lands under different modes of cultivation. But it is not possible to divide the cultivators in such water-tight compartments. A cultivator may be cultivating his land under more than one mode. It is for this reason that the cultivators are divided into owner-cultivators, cultivators who employ hired labour for cultivation, tenants and owner-cum-tenant cultivators. The following table gives the distribution of cultivators in different modes and acre-groups.

Table No. 6

Percentage Cultivators In Different Modes

Acre-Groups	Mode 1. (Owner-cultivators.)	Mode 2. (Owner-cultivators who employ hired labour.)	Mode 3 & 4 (Tenants)	Mixed Modes (Owner-cum-tenant-cultivators.)	Total.
0—5	81	1	12	6	100
5—15	75	1	12	12	100
15—25	61	1	17	21	100
25—100	50	..	9	41	100
100—500	25	..	..	75	100
Total ..	66	1	12	21	100

It will be seen that 67% cultivators own all the land they cultivate. 12% of the cultivators are tenants. Further, land of 21% of the cultivators is partly owned and partly taken on lease. It will be also noted that in the first acre-group, the percentage of owner-cultivators is the highest (81%). As we proceed with other acre-groups of 5-15 onwards, it will be found that the percentage of owner-cultivators decreases gradually. The percentage of tenants is highest in the 15-25 acre-group, namely, 17%. Similarly, the proportion of owner-cum-tenant cultivators is the largest in the last acre-group of 100-500, namely 75%. Another thing that becomes obvious from these figures is that in the bigger acre-groups there is a tendency among cultivators to supplement one's own land with the land taken on lease. The percentage of owner-cum-tenant cultivators increases gradually from the acre-group of 15-25 onwards, showing a proportion of 75% in the last acre-group of 100-500.

Thus we examined the modes of cultivation from two points of view. Firstly, we studied how the land in each acre-group is distributed as between different modes. Secondly, we observed how many of the cultivators in each acre-group are owner-cultivators, tenant-culti-

vators and owner-cum-tenant cultivators. But it is also necessary to know the significance of these two aspects to each acre-group. Thus, for example, we must know how much of the total land in Mode 1, falls in the first acre-group. Similarly, we must know how many of the owner-cultivators, tenants, etc. are to be found in the different acre-groups. For this purpose, we should find out the percentage share of each of the acre-groups in land in the different modes and in the different categories of cultivators. The summary table of Modes, on page 26 gives these percentages. It will be seen from this table that 63% of owner-cultivators are found in the groups below fifteen acres. Similarly, 54% of tenants are in these two acre-groups. Another fact that this table brings out is that 52% of owner-cum-tenant cultivators are found in the acre-group of 25-100. The Table also shows that 7,442 acres or 18% of the total area is cultivated by owner-cum-tenant cultivators in modes 3 and 4. This means that 18 out of 27 or 67% of area which is under tenancy is taken on lease by owner-cum-tenant cultivators.

The owner-cum-tenant cultivators are an important group. As observed earlier, they are to be found in greater strength in the bigger acre-groups. For example, 60% of the owner-cum-tenant cultivators are in the acre-group of 25-100 and 100-500. 55% of the total land cultivated by owner-cum-tenant cultivators is owned by them. The rest is taken on lease. Of the land taken on lease by owner-cum-tenant cultivators, 86% is absorbed by the two acre-groups of 25-100 and 100-500: 64% by the former and 22% by the latter acre-group.

In connection with the last acre-group of 100-500, it must be noted that though there is land under tenancy in this group, there is not a single cultivator who is exclusively a tenant in this case. However, this is not surprising. Agricultural operations on a big area such as 100-500 acres require agricultural equipment which only well-to-do cultivators can keep or purchase. And as the cultivation on such an area is remunerative, the cultivators in this group generally command funds which they can utilize for purchasing land. Hence we do not find in this group any cultivator who does not own some land.

The group of owner-cum-tenant cultivators yields some interesting observations. As mentioned earlier, this group consists of cultivators who supplement there own land with others' land taken on lease. We might therefore expect to find small holders in this group of cultivators, who by virtue of large area taken on lease are placed in bigger acre-groups in actual cultivation. But contrary to this expectation we find that relatively larger areas are taken on lease by those who own larger

areas. It seems that lessors tend to give their land on hire to cultivators who own some land and larger the area of land owned, the larger is the area offered on lease. This happens because lessors always desire to be assured of the regular payment of rent.

The owner-cum-tenant cultivators are men of some property. Hence they can be better relied upon for the payment of rent than the cultivators who have no land of their own. Thus we find that 18% of land is taken on lease by owner-cum-tenant cultivators as against 9% of land taken on lease by 'pure' tenants.

A correlation table of land owned and land taken on lease by the group of owner-cum-tenant cultivators is given on page 26-A. The co-efficient of correlation found for the two variables of the table is +.25. The fact that larger areas of land are taken on lease by owners of relatively larger areas of land would also become clear from the following table.

Owner-cum-Tenant Cultivators

Table No. 7

Acre-Group	Average Land Owned (In Acres)	Average Land Taken on Lease (In Acres)
0—5	1.7	1.6
5—15	6.0	4.3
15—25	9.0	11.0
25—100	25.0	23.9
100—500	103.0	54.2
Total ..	23.6	19.3

It is true that the above table showing averages of land owned and land taken on lease by each of the five acre-groups, does not correctly show the correlation between the two variables. It is possible that the existence of many extreme instances where the bulk of the cultivated holding is either owned or leased, are evened out when the averages are struck and hence we do not get a realistic picture. But if it was such a case we would not have found any correlation between the two variables or in other words the correlation would have been zero. The correlation+.25, though not very significant does not point to any such conclusion. Neither does the co-efficient of correlation show that smaller holders take relatively larger areas on lease; for, in that case,

the co-efficient of correlation would have been negative. The correlation table on page 26A, aptly brings out these observations on owner-cum-tenant cultivators. These facts have significance because they throw light on (1) the distribution of the major part (67%) of the land taken by tenants for cultivation and (2) the unsuccessful attempt of small holders to add to their cultivated holding by others' land taken on lease.

So far, we studied three aspects of actual cultivation of land under the sub-headings of (1) Size Groups of Cultivation (2) Fragmentation of the Cultivated-Holdings and (3) Mode Of Cultivation. Leaving aside the observations on fragmentation where it was found out that the fragments increase in number as the area under cultivation expands, in the other two aspects the acre-group of 25-100 stands out very prominently. This acre-group has the largest percentage of the cultivated area viz. 55%. It has the largest area under tenancy 1905 acres under 'pure' tenancy and 4766 acres held on tenancy by the owner-cum-tenant cultivators. Thus 60% of the total land under tenancy is in this acre-group. The acre-group has the smallest number of pure tenants (45 or 21%) and the largest number of owner-cum-tenant cultivators (199 or 52%).

The fact that most of the land, whether owner-cultivated or tenant cultivated, falls in this acre-group is as should be expected. This is an acre-group where the average area is big enough for a cultivator to maintain himself and his family adequately. Therefore all the successful cultivators are found in this acre-group. Among these successful cultivators, a large number comprises owner-cum-cultivators. Thus we find that these 27% of the total cultivators cultivate between themselves 55% of land; the rest of the cultivators as they are more in number than the land can adequately accommodate, are segregated in the uneconomic acre-groups, excepting ofcourse, a small number of cultivators who are found in the 100-500 acre-group. On the basis of these facts, it may be roughly estimated that the land can be given for cultivation in economic units to nearly 50% of the present strength of cultivators. The remaining 50% of cultivators who are today found on land may be considered as redundant as the land cannot accommodate them.

Frequency Distribution of Fragments

(Summary table of 11 villages)

1 Number of Frag-ments	2 Cultivated Holdings in Acre-Groups. 0—5 Cultivated	3 5—15	4 15—25	5 25—100	6 100—500 Holdings	7 Total Holdings (Total of 2 to 6)	8 Percent-age. Holdings	9 Total Frag-ments. (1×7)
1	254	240	97	72	a..	663	36.5	663
2	101	120	64	63	..	348	19.2	696
3	40	55	48	56	1	200	11.0	600
4	16	27	25	47	1	116	6.4	464
5	16	18	18	42	2	96	5.3	480
6	5	18	11	36	4	74	4.1	444
7	6	10	10	25	4	55	3.0	385
8	5	16	8	21	4	54	3.0	432
9	2	8	4	22	2	38	2.1	342
10	1	6	6	14	2	29	1.6	290
11		5	4	10	..	19		209
12	..	1	2	12	3	18		216
13	..	2	4	17	1	24		312
14	..	2	2	9	2	15		210
15	..	..	..	12	3	15		225
16	..	..	3	3	3	9		144
17	..	1	..	7	3	11		187
18	..	1	..	3	2	6		108
19	..	1	..	7	1	9	7.8	171
20	..	..	..	2	1	3		60
21	..	..	1	2	1	4		84
22	..	..	..	2	..	2		44
24	..	..	..	1	..	1		24
26	..	..	..	1	..	1		26
28	..	..	1	..	..	1		28
34	..	..	..	1	..	1		34
35	..	..	..	1	..	1		35
61	..	..	..	1	..	1		61
Total of Cultivators	446	531	308	489	40	1814	100.0	6974
Area Per Fragment (In Acres) ..	1.2	3.7	5.6	7.3	18.5	..	..	(Total fragments.)

Actual Cultivation In Different Modes

(Summary table of 11 villages)

	Mode 1				Mode 2				Mode 3				Mode 4				Mixed Modes 1, 2, 3 & 4.									
Acre-groups.	Cultivators	% cultivators	Area in Acres	% Area	Cultivators	% cultivators	Area in acres	% Area.	Cultivators.	% Cultivator	Area in Acres.	% Area.	Cultivators	% Cultivators	Area in acres.	% Area.	Cultivators	% Cultivators	Mode 1 Area in acres	Mode 2 Area in acres	% Area in Modes 1 & 2.	Mode 3 Area in acres.	Mode 4 Area in acres.	% Area in Modes 3 & 4.	Total area in Mixed Modes	% of Total Area.
0—5	362	30	827	4	6	50	20	22	7	12	18	2	48	30	109	4	25	6	43	1	..	..	39	1	83	..
5—15	405	33	4,002	19	4	33	34	37	18	32	202	18	44	28	424	16	66	17	388	4	4	84	203	4	679	5
15—25	188	15	3,671	17	2	17	37	41	19	33	381	34	35	22	707	27	66	17	618	..	7	134	589	10	1,341	9
25—100	244	20	11,036	53	..	..	..	..	13	23	506	46	32	20	1,399	53	199	52	5,009	48	55	906	3,860	64	9,823	53
100—500	10	2	1,265	7		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	8	3,077	53	34	416	1,211	21	4,757	33
Total	1,209	100	18,801	100	12	100	91	100	57	100	1,107	100	159	100	2,639	100	386	100	9,135	106	100	1,540	5,902	100	16,683	100

II

THE UNECONOMIC CULTIVATOR

In the first part of this paper, it was observed that the more important problem of the region under study is that of the uneconomic cultivator rather than of uneconomic cultivation. It was noted that as large as 71% of the total cultivators cultivate holdings of less than 25 acres. And in this dry region of Poona District, 25-30 acres of land are required to form an economic unit. The cultivated holding of each of these 71% of cultivators is so small (9.6 acres on an average) that it does not provide him with the necessary means of existence. Each of the remaining 29% cultivators possesses an economic holding. Together these 29% cultivators cultivate 70% of the total land. But the unit of cultivation or the unit of agricultural operation remains small because of fragmentation of land. Fragmentation is carried to such an absurd limit that in the case of economic cultivators, the fragments vary from 6 to 11 on an average and are generally scattered all over the village.

It is evident from the large number of uneconomic cutlivators, that the study of their conditions should attract attention. Firstly, their large number is itself a fact of importance as they all have to lead a life of submarginal existence. Secondly, they have a very low productive efficiency. Most of them do not possess the necessary agricultural resources and cultivation of land for them at best becomes only a part-time employment. It is obvious that they cannot be expected to show any efficiency in production. They are cultivators, just because they cannot be anything else.

Cultivators Of 0-5 Acres Of Land

Our study in this part concerns the cultivators of 0-5 acre-group. In the dry region of Poona District in which the villages surveyed by us are located, cultivators below five acres can be considered as positively uneconomic by any reasonable standard.

It was mentioned in the first part that information about holders is obtainable from the Statement of Holdings. A consolidated table of holders and of cultivators is given on page 13 table No. 2. The table shows that in this acre-group there are 527 or 36% holders who hold or own 1672 acres or 9% of land. But when the change occurs from holding to cultivation there remain only 336 or 32% of cultivators who cultivate 772 acres or 4% of land. Out of these 336 cultivators, 262 are cultivators of their own land; 5 of them cultivate their own land with

the help of hired labourer, 47 are pure tenants and 22 are owner-cum-tenant cultivators. Thus while 50% of the holders in this group remain in it as cultivators, the other 50% fall out either by leasing out their small holdings (37%) or by supplementing them with others' land taken on lease (13%). The net effect of all this is that the land given on lease rather than retained for cultivation is so large that inspite of the little addition of land made to this acre-group by tenants and owner-cum-tenant cultivators, the reduction in the area of land is greater than the proportionate reduction in the number of people. This explains why the average area under cultivation is smaller (2.3 acres) than the average area under holding (3.2 acres). It is only in this acre-group of 0-5 that the average area under cultivation is smaller than the average area under holding. In the rest of the acre-groups or for all the cultivators as a whole, the average area under cultivation is greater than the average area under holding.

It is noted above that the average under cultivation in this acre-group is 2.3 acres. This small area is also not always in one compact block. On an average, there are two fragments of the cultivated holding. However 38% of the cultivated holdings in this group are composed of compact blocks, though fragments varying from 6 to 10 are not rare.

The table No. 5 on page 20 shows that 84% of land in this acre-group is cultivated by the owners and 16% by tenants. And the table No. 6 on page 21 shows that 81% of cultivators are owner-cultivators i.e. those who own land and cultivate the same with their own labour. In this acre-group besides these owner-cultivators, there are 1% owner-cultivators who employ hired labour, 12% tenants and 6% owner-cum-tenant cultivators.

In the total of cultivators of all the acre-groups, 30% of owner-cultivators, 50% of owner cultivators who employ hired labour, 25% of tenants and 6% of owner-cum-tenant cultivators belong to the acre-group of 0-5. It is significant that out of 12 cultivators in mode 2, 6 belong to the acre-group of 0-5. These are the cultivators who after leasing out the rest of their land, choose to cultivate small pieces of *bagayat* lands as cultivation of small area of *bagayat* land is more fruitful and secure.

The position of uneconomic cultivators below five acres in the total of all cultivators, as described above, does not give complete idea of their condition. For this, a detailed study of the conditions of these cultivators is necessary. We know that cultivation of small plots is an uneconomic enterprise. It yields such a meagre income that the least misfortune deprives the cultivator of his farm. Owing to the small size of the holdings and the insecurity of income thereupon, these holders are

not considered creditworthy and, as a result, they have to pay exorbitant rates of interest for agricultural capital that they borrow. The real fact of the situation, however, is that most of the uneconomic cultivators have no other choice but to keep on cultivating the small pieces of land. Inspite of the disproportionate labour and costs that are required to operate a small farm, the land is a definite source of employment and means of livelihood to the cultivator. As long as the income on land is in cereals that he daily consumes, however meagre that income may be, the cultivator is not prepared to forgo the same and leave cultivation in the absence of any other secure employment.

We would now, therefore, study the conditions of the cultivators in the acre-group 0-5 in greater details. Our observations are based on the first-hand data relating to 100 farmers collected on the basis of a schedule. Eighty of these schedules relate to small cultivators below 5 acres, while the remaining 20 pertain to big farmers. This was done to make a comparative study of these classes.

Lack of Resources

From the point of view of production, the most significant point is whether the operator—be he owner or tenant—has the necessary skill and the resources to entitle him to be called a cultivator. It is true that to possess the necessary implements and to maintain the draught cattle, one requires a certain income which a cultivator of an uneconomic unit cannot command from his land. But that does not justify a tolerant attitude to the existence of a large number of uneconomic holders in our agriculture who continue to till land without the necessary resources. If the cultivator has to pursue agriculture as a business, he must have the necessary resources. Without that he cannot cultivate the land efficiently. The following table shows the resources of the cultivators in the acre-group 0-5.

Agricultural Implements		Bullocks	
Cultivators possessing all implements including iron plough	0	Cultivators possessing 2 or more bullocks	19
Cultivators possessing minor implements	22	Cultivators possessing one bullock only	7
Cultivators possessing no implements at all	58	Cultivators possessing no bullocks at all	54
TOTAL CULTIVATORS	80		80

It will be seen from the above table that 58 (or 72%) of the 80 cultivators do not possess any implements, and 54 (or 68%) of them do not possess any bullocks. 48 or 60% of the cultivators have neither implements nor bullocks.

Principal And Subsidiary Occupations

The fact observed above that the cultivators do not possess the resources required for the occupation that they pursue, calls for an inquiry into the various sources of income of these cultivators. For, it cannot be expected that these cultivators depend only on agriculture for their maintenance. Firstly, they do not cultivate an economic unit, and secondly, they do not possess the resources to devote entirely to agriculture. All the cultivators, therefore, search for one job or the other that would supplement their income from land. Sometimes, the cultivator earns more from his subsidiary occupation than what he earns from his land. Thus it is difficult to say which is the principal and which is the subsidiary occupation of these people.

In analysing the collected data on occupation, we have, therefore, regarded the cultivators who possess a pair of bullocks or those who take a subjective interest in agriculture for a larger part of the year as having agriculture for their principal occupation. The owners of the bullocks of this acre-group who do not have enough work on their own lands, work with their bullocks on others' land for wages. Though they thus receive wages for their services, the work they do is on the basis of co-operation and the subjective character of the operations is not lost. Similarly the cultivators who for the major part of the year work on the land of their relatives for a return mutually decided upon, maintain a subjective interest in the agricultural operations they undertake. Both these types of cultivators can rightly be called agriculturists.

The criteria described above determine whether agriculture is the main occupation of the cultivator. The main occupation of the remaining cultivators in this group is determined by two ways. Firstly, if a cultivator earns a major part of his income from any one particular occupation then, that occupation is his principal occupation and the others are his subsidiary callings. Where such estimates of income are not possible, the principal occupation is determined on the basis of the number of days that a person is employed in it.

In the following table, the horizontal columns represent the principal occupations and the vertical columns represent the subsidiary occupations. A distinction is made in the table between rural labour and agricultural labour. By rural labour is meant any rural work that is available in the village. The work of the people who are prepared to undertake any work that is available in the village including agricultural labour, has been described as rural labour. By agricultural labour is meant any work that is connected with agricultural operations.

In the non-rural callings, occupation such as station coolie are included. Occupation of a Marwari shop-keeper is also covered by non-rural occupation. One more fact to be noted is that only two of the more important occupations of each cultivator are taken into consideration. Sometimes a cultivator has more than one subsidiary occupation. Such cases occur when the traditional occupation is the second subsidiary occupation of the cultivator. The traditional occupation may neither be the principal nor the first subsidiary occupation. It may not also give any substantial income to the cultivator. Nevertheless it is pursued merely because the cultivator's forefathers also followed it and because it gives him a little "baluta" every year.

Principal and Subsidiary Occupations

Principal Occupations	Subsidiary Occupation.							Total
	Agriculture	Traditional Occupation	Rural Labour	Agricultural Labour.	Trade or business	Non-Rural Occupations	Income from other sources	
Agriculture	2	6	4	9	2	..	2	25
Traditional Occupation	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Rural Labour..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	30
Agriculture Labour	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Trade or Business	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
on-Rural Occupation	12	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Income from Other Sources ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1*	1
Total ..	56	6	4	9	2	..	3	80

It will be seen from the table that 25 out of 80 cultivators have agriculture as their principal occupation in the sense already described above. There are 54 cultivators who have agriculture only as a subsidiary occupation in the sense that they have not the necessary implements and/or bullocks which are required for agricultural operations. They work on their land only for a few months in the year. Besides, these cultivators derive the major part of their income from other pursuits which may therefore be considered their principal occupations.

The same figures reveal that there are only 2 cultivators out of 80 who work on their lands all the year round. The lands of these cultivators are bagayat (Motasthal) under sugarcane and that is the reason why even such a small acreage below five acres provides employment to them for the whole year. It will be seen from the table that 6 people whose principal occupation is agriculture, have their traditional or hereditary subsidiary occupations. At one time their traditional or

* Invalid who is supported by his nephew.

hereditary occupations were their principal occupations. But gradually as the village economy deteriorated, these artisans were forced to abandon their callings and to take to agriculture as the principal occupation, although hereditary occupations were not totally abandoned. There are 9 cultivators whose principal occupation is agriculture and whose subsidiary occupation is agricultural labour. These cultivators have the necessary implements and the draught cattle. They along with their bullocks work on other cultivators' lands, sometimes on the basis of co-operation and sometimes for wages, retaining, at the same time, a subjective interest in cultivation.

54 cultivators have a principal occupation other than agriculture. Seven out of these fifty-four cultivators pursue their traditional occupations as principal occupations. The practice of the artisans who keep a subsidiary interest in agriculture, dates back to the days of village self-sufficiency when the artisan class owned land and cultivated the same with the help of hired labour. But in recent years, there is a tendency among the artisans to leave their declining hereditary occupations and to take to agriculture. We have already seen that six cultivators who still maintain their touch with the traditional occupations have taken to agriculture as the principal occupation. Their hereditary occupations have now become their subsidiary occupations. Even in the case of seven cultivators referred to above who still pursue their traditional occupations as the principal occupations, the level of their skill of the crafts is more or less the same as it was in the days of village self-sufficiency. If in the near future their industries are not re-organised and accommodated in the present rural structure, they might go the way of the six other artisans.

The remaining 47 out of 54 cultivators, who though belong to the original agricultural stratum of village population, are no more agriculturists as judged by the criterion of principal occupation. They have been deprived of their principal occupation though they unsuccessfully stick on to it. Today their hereditary occupation of agriculture has become their subsidiary occupation. 15 out of these 47 cultivators have succeeded in getting some occupation or the other which gives them work for the whole year. For twelve of them, work is available outside the village and the remaining three have taken to some trade or business such as selling of eggs, etc., which has a rural complexion. However, the people who have thus succeeded in getting permanent work have not completely divorced themselves from agriculture.

Thirty cultivators have rural labour and two have agricultural labour as their principal occupations. Agriculture for them is only

subsidiary. The difference between these 30 cultivators who have rural labour as the principal occupation and the other two who have agricultural labour as the principal occupation is that the latter are certain of getting field work all the year round while the 30 cultivators are not so certain about it. For these thirty cultivators there is no fixed employment. Nor do they derive any definite income from their occupation of rural labour. These cultivators are always in search of work in the village and they work as and when they find out a job.

These people and the landless workers are the main labour force which is available for agricultural and other work in the village. In this connection it may be worthwhile noting that the agricultural and rural labour force is provided from two different sources. Firstly, there are landless labourers and cultivators who have tiny holdings, both of whom look upon agricultural or rural labour as the principal source of income. Secondly, there are other classes in the rural population such as artisans and other uneconomic cultivators who look upon rural and agricultural labour as the subsidiary occupation. In these conditions, the supply of rural or agricultural labour is generally more than the demand for it. This excess of supply over demand is reflected in the low income of this class of workers. We may therefore presume that life for these 30 cultivators might be precarious. They have no certainty of work and the work they get is usually poorly paid.

We have now acquainted ourselves with the real nature of the problem of uneconomic cultivators. It was observed that these cultivators are resourceless and that agriculture provides them with only a part-time employment. These are the people for whom measures must be devised to transfer them to non-agricultural pursuits. Or, in the schemes of land reform, they should be provided with economic holdings.

Caste and Occupation

In the villages, castes generally indicate the occupations of the people. There are some castes whose hereditary occupation is agriculture. Other castes indicate non-agricultural pursuits such as trade, handicrafts etc. Under a self-sufficient village economy, the arrangement of caste-structure according to occupations, served a very useful purpose. But the cash nexus completely destroyed the social and economic harmony of the self-contained village. As a result, the castes ceased to strictly represent occupations as they used to.

In the villages that we surveyed, out of 80 cultivators who belong to the acre-group of 0-5, 31 were Marathas. Mahar cultivators were the

second largest group numbering 14. The third largest group of cultivators were the artisans. There were in all 23 cultivators who belonged to different artisan castes. Of the remaining, seven were shepherds and 5 gardeners.

Out of 80 cultivators, 21 were village "balutedars". These "balutedars" render services to the villagers in return for the grain that the villagers give them at the harvest time. Out of the 23 artisan cultivators, only 16 still had link with one craft or the other. Even from these 16, only 7 pursue the traditional occupation as their principle occupation, while the rest take to it as a subsidiary occupation. Most of the Mahar cultivators are village servants who cultivate Inam Lands given to them by the Government for their customary services to the State. The Inam lands given to them are usually more than 5 acres. These lands cannot be sold, though they can be divided among the heirs. It is this sub-division that has brought them to the lowest of the acre-groups.

Work And Income From Occupations.

We have noted earlier the different occupations that are pursued by the cultivators in the 0-5 acre-group. A brief description of the nature of employment and income of these occupations will not be out of place here.

Agriculture

The agricultural operations in the dry region of Poona begin from the month of April when the ploughing of the land begins. In this region jowar is the principal crop and bajri is grown only if there are enough early rains. The ploughing of land for jowar is done every alternate year. After a few showers the land is harrowed three times during the months of June and July. Sowing of jowar is done towards the middle of September. Weeding, etc. is over by the month of October and the crop of jowar is ready for harvest during November-December.

We have seen that 48 out of 80 cultivators do not possess either bullocks or the implements. The agricultural operations on the lands of these cultivators afford employment only during the harvest. When Jowar is ready for reaping, the interest of these cultivators in the agricultural operations is roused with the prospect of getting two or three bags of jowar. The earlier agricultural operations on the land of these cultivators are done by hired labour or on the basis of co-operation

which requires the cultivator to work on the land of another cultivator who gives him his bullocks and implements to plough and harrow the land. During the period when the cultivator does not work on his land, he works on the lands of other cultivators or does some other job. It is not possible to estimate the number of days the cultivator works on the land of other cultivators or on any other work in the village. But it may be said that for 2 or 3 months, he works on his own land during the harvest time and for some time before, during watching. Unlike these cultivators, where the crop-share is the system of tenancy the cultivators get the bullocks and implements from the owner-farmers. These cultivators work for a little longer period on their own lands than the cultivators who do not possess either bullocks or implements.

It was mentioned earlier that many cultivators put through most of the agricultural operations by hired labour. For getting the land ploughed the cultivator pays from 7 to 12 rupees per day. This payment is made for 2 men and 6 bullocks working for one day. It generally takes 1½ days to plough one acre of land. The charges for harrowing and sowing the land are from Rs. 3 to 4 per day. We had an occasion to note that one cultivator who cultivated one acre and 28 gunthas of land paid Rs. 20/- for ploughing, harrowing and sowing. Two other cultivators who cultivated 4 acres and 9 gunthas and 4 acres and 28 gunthas paid Rs. 100/- each on these counts.

Unlike cultivators who do not own bullocks, the cultivators who own bullocks carry out all the agricultural operations themselves. Thus they work from 4 to 5 months on their lands in a year. When they are not employed on their lands they work with their bullocks on the lands of other cultivators. For this work they receive wages. One man with two bullocks is paid two to three rupees per day. When he works only as an agricultural labourer, he is paid Re. 1/- per day. The daily wage of a female agricultural labourer, however, is As. 8 to 10.

Village Industries.

(1) *Rope-making :* This industry is largely in the hands of *Mangs.* The fibres of Ghayal, a wild tree of this region, is the raw material in use. The *Mangs* supply ropes of different types required by the agriculturists. The payment is partly in cash and partly in 'baluta'. This industry has now outstepped the village boundaries. An auctioneer from the Taluka head-quarters purchases all these wild trees in an auction and the *Mangs* are employed to manufacture all kinds of ropes. The *Mang* gets 1/3rd of the produce as wages and leaves the other

2/3rds to the auctioneer. The *Mang* sells his part of the produce on the market day.

(2) *Lime Burning:* The *Lonari* community prepares this white caustic substance by burning certain kinds of rock which are found in the nearby forest. It is the traditional occupation of this community. However it is not regular industry and does not give work for all the year. During the monsoon the work is stopped and the *Lonari* devotes his attention to agricultural operations. Whenever the *Lonari* works at this industry he spends Rs. 2/- a week on fuel and is able to sell lime worth four rupees during the same period.

3. *Shoe-making:* The *Chambhar* community pursues this occupation which is traditional with them. The *Chambhar* possesses primitive implements and sells his articles mostly in the village. A few of them have succeeded in establishing shops outside their own villages. They do minor repairs for the villagers for which they are paid 'baluta" at the time of harvest. Only the new articles that they prepare are sold for cash to the villagers. A pair of shoes is sold at Rs. 7/- and "champals" used by women at Rs. 3/-.

4. *Carpenter:* The *Sutar* community of the village pursues this occupation. The *Sutar* uses a crude equipment for his craft and repairs the implements of the agriculturists. For this service of his, he receives "baluta" at the time of harvest. The *Sutar* does not work outside the village.

5. *Black-smith.* The *Lohar* community prepares small iron implements and renders some service to the agriculturists, for which he receives baluta at the same time of harvest. The minor implements such as sickle, axe, etc., that the *Lohar* prepares are sold in the village. For fixing iron rings round the cart-wheels, the *Lohar* charges Rs. 3/-. Like other artisans his implements are crude and primitive.

Indebtedness.

Indebtedness is a chronic disease of the rural community. Debts are incurred by the cultivators almost at exhorbitant rates of interest to meet their short-term credit requirements. The cultivators are not in a position to command the financial requirements of agriculture at lower rates of interest. Bad seasons, the heavy cost of the finance, the uneconomic nature of farming, and wrong use of credit result in the accumulation of the debts.

Information on the extent of indebtedness is very difficult to get as the cultivators are generally shy of revealing their indebtedness.

It is also to be remembered that a cultivator cannot separate his indebtedness arising out of the normal requirements of his industry from that due to deficit family budget. This is so because for most of the cultivators agriculture is not a business but a way of life.

In the individual cases of the acre-group of 0-5, for which we collected information, it was found that 31 out of 80 cultivators are indebted to the extent of Rs. 4,886. The average debt amounts to Rs. 157. Information about the purpose of debt, interest rates and the agencies of credit is given in the following tables.

Indebtedness

(a) Purpose of debt.

The Purpose for which the debt was raised.	*Number of cultivators indebted*	*Total amount of debt raised for the purpose.*	
Purchasing bullocks	4	605	
Agricultural Short-Term Finance ..	5	500	
Digging a well	1	300	41%
For purchasing implements of the artisans	2	600	
For Releasing Mortgaged Land ..	1	116	
Marriage	3	800	
Home Expenses	13	1,465	46%
For Purposes More Than One ..	2	500	

(b) Interest Rates.

Interest Rate (Per Cent Per Annum)	Number of Cultivators Paying the Interest Rate	Amount of Debt Raised at the Interest Rate	
150	1	200	
40	1	400	
37½	7	841	67%
24	5	1,616	
18¾	1	200	
10	5	500	
6	4	835	
Interest Free	7	294	

(c) Credit Agencies.

3	cultivators	indebted	to Government (Tagai Loan)
5	,,	,,	,, Co-operative Society.
1	,,	,,	,, Relative.
19	,,	,,	,, Farmers in the same village.
1	,,	,,	,, Sowkar.
1	,,	,,	,, Pathan.
1	,,	,,	,, Agencies more than one.
31			

It will be seen from these tables that 46% of the total debt was raised for "unproductive" purposes; 30% for meeting family expenses and 16% for marriages. Only 41% of total debt is raised for productive purposes. Debts to the extent of 30% for family expenses are significant. Thirteen out of 31 cultivators are indebtedness in this way. The unremunerative nature of the work of these cultivators is so obvious that they are required to raise loans to meet their family expenditure. For these cultivators there seems to be no other escape from the debt except that of selling their lands to the creditors. It is in this way that the down-slide of these cultivators on the agricultural ladder to the ranks of landless proletariat takes place.

The tables on indebtedness also show that 67% of the total debt is raised at exhorbitant rates of interest, varying from 18¾ to 150 percent per annum. 15 out of the 31 cultivators who have debts pay such exhorbitant interest rates on their borrowings. The remaining 16 cultivators pay reasonable rates of interest. Seven out of these 16 cultivators do not pay any interest at all. They raised their debt in small amounts from many farmers. But the major part of the debts is raised at a very high rate of interest. This is so because these cultivators do not have a stable economic position and cannot command credit. The only alternative for them in these conditions is to promise to pay a very high rate of interest.

That these cultivators are not creditworthy is indicated by the fact that only 8 out of 31 cultivators succeed in getting credit from the Government or the Co-operative Society. And most of the remaining cultivators i.e. 19, secure credit from farmer-sowkars. In this connection it is worthwhile to note that wherever there are co-operative societies such as in the villages of Vahkari and Roti of the Dhond taluka, only the bigger cultivators are their members. It is only at Bhigwan in Indapur Taluka and Anjangaon in Bhimthadi Taluka that the cultivators in the 0-5 acre-group are members of the co-operative societies. At Bhigwan there are 46 cultivators in the acre-group 0-5, but only 3 are members of the co-operative society. At Anjangaon there are 34 cultivators in this acre-group but only two are members of the co-operative society. These five cultivators between them are indebted to the extent of Rs. 500/- to the two co-operative societies. That the cultivators in this acre-group are not members of the co-operative society is as may be expected. They are not credit-worthy and even if they prove their credit worthiness, they get inadequate credit. The utility of the credit is not in its possibility to get the same at a reasonable rate of interest. It is in its productive nature. If the use of credit does not make any difference to the economic conditions of the cultivator, then

in spite of the favourable rate of interest, it is a burden and not a relief to the cultivator.

Standard of living.

The standard of living is a comprehensive term which includes in its connotation such things as the intake of food and its quality, comforts and luxuries, dwelling place, utensils and other things of daily requirements. In this connection, it is also necessary to take into account ornaments and other costly things used and preserved by the family.

The dwelling place of all the cultivators of this acre-group is owned by themselves except in cases of widows who stay with their fathers or with their brothers-in-law. It is built of mud with a flat roof overhead, which is locally known as 'malwadi'. It has no windows and the entrance is very low. Just in front of the house are accommodated all the domestic animals of the family; there is also a small place which is used as a sitting place. There is darkness inside the house and all the belongings of the cultivators are arranged in the corners. Often, the house has only one room, one corner of which is used as a kitchen, while the other space is used for sitting and sleeping. In the corner intended to serve as kitchen, earthen pots are seen arranged, with the smaller pots on top of the bigger ones. There are generally two such vertical rows of pots. Very few copper or brass vessels are seen in the kitchen. A small kerosene lamp is also seen in a small inlet made in the wall. There is generally one wooden or iron trunk, mostly broken, in which some clothes and some unessentials are kept. On entering the cultivator's house one or two empty gunny bags are spread on the floor to receive guests. On the gunny cloth, the members of the cultivator's family repose at night. Every house has one or two thin quilts made of torn clothes. These quilts protect the cultivator's family against winter.

The clothing of the cultivator is one good shirt, one torn shirt, one dhoti in good condition, one torn dhoti and a turban. The same is the case with women's clothing. When there are two women in the house, there is only one sari in good condition, while there are two torn saries one for each. Both men and women use some kind of foot-wear, but it is used very sparingly.

There are no luxuries or comforts for these cultivators except that every one of them spends an anna or two every day on smoke or tobacco. Once in a year the cultivator attends the village fair in his own village or in the near by village. On this occasion every family spends

from 2 to 5 rupees. It is on this day that the cultivator makes the purchases of his yearly clothing and other necessities.

The cultivator begins his day with a cup of tea, generally without milk, except where the cultivator has a cow or a goat of his own. He takes meals twice a day, in which the principal cereal consumed is jowar. Rice and wheat are consumed on festivals. If he keeps any poultry, protective food taken is eggs when these could not be sold on the market day. Sometimes, vegetables are purchased on the market day from the money realised from the sales of eggs or hens. Mutton is used at the most once in a month. Along with the bread made of jowar the cultivator consumes *tur dal* almost every day. When there is no *tur dal* in the house, chilly powder with a little salt serves as a substitute. The supply of *tur dal* in the house depends on the casual income earned by the cultivator. The greater part of the regular cash income is spent on purchasing jowar as the produce raised on one's land is not sufficient for the annual requirements of the family.

Comparison with bigger acre-groups.

In order to facilitate comparison of the class of cultivators of 0-5 acre-group with the bigger cultivators, information about 16 cultivators of higher acre-groups was collected. This sample cannot in any way be said to represent all the cultivators falling in the larger acre-groups. The comparison would therefore be defective in many respects. However, certain features common to all the cultivators have only been taken for comparison.

It was found that all the sixteen cultivators possess all the minor implements and the draught cattle. Three of the cultivators even own iron ploughs. The resourcefulness of these cultivators is in complete contrast with that of the most of the cultivators of the acre-group 0-5. There are two cultivators out of sixteen who employ farm servants to attend to the agricultural operations. None of these sixteen cultivators finds it necessary to depend on any subsidiary occupation to supplement his income from land. Still, however, two cultivators make small incomes from carting.

These cultivators, have large houses, brass and copper utensils, mattresses and blankets. With regard to clothing, these cultivators are better off, though to an outsider not much difference is noticeable. They have more than one turban and some have a silken turban which they use on the days of village fairs, festivals etc.

Conclusion.

We may here recapitulate the salient features of the agricultural pattern detailed in the earlier pages. While considering the quinquennial Statement of Holdings which is published in the Land Revenue Administration Reports, it was observed that these statistics show how land is owned in different size-groups. It was noted that 71% of holders hold land below 15 acres and account for 35% of the total cultivated area. However, from the point of view of production, what is importtant is not the owned-holding, but the cultivated holding. In this respect the Statement, insipte of its classification of holders into three classes viz. A. B. and C, is of no useful purpose. On the contrary, the arrangement is very deceptive. This classification is based on the way in which the holder uses the greater part of his holding. The author of the Manual of Revenue Accounts, acknowledges the deceptive nature of this classification and gives a note of warning that for the purposes of classification of land in actual cultivation, the unimpeachable basis of the classification of land into six modes of cultivation should be taken into account. The village Form VII B which classifies land in this way into six modes of cultivation gives the total land as grouped under different modes of cultivation. This however, is not quite satisfactory as it does not show in what acre-groups the land is actually cultivated.

In order to know the actual cultivation of land in different size-groups, a table was prepared from the Village Form 7-12. This table of cultivators is compared with the similar consolidated table of holders on page 13. In this comparative table it was observed that when the change occurs from ownership to cultivation, the average unit becomes bigger. Whereas, the average land per owner-holder is 13 acres, the average land per actual cultivator is 17 acres. There are two other significant changes which take place in this transfer of land from ownership to cultivation. Firstly, as far as cultivation in larger units is concerned, the change is for the better. The land is transferred from small acre-groups to bigger ones in cultivation. Whereas 35% of land is held in the first two acres-groups, the land cultivated in these two acre-groups is only 23%. The other change that is observed is that as much as 54% of land is cultivated in the acre-group of 25-100. In the tables of holdings, the land held in this acre-group is 33%. The tables of cultivation on pages 13 and 15 show that in this region, the real problem is not uneconomic cultivation but that of uneconomic cultivators. It is seen in the table on page 15 that 70% of land is cultivated in economic units, while 71% cultivators are uneconomic cultivators. With the 70% of land which is cultivated in economic units, the serious impediment to efficient production is the fragmentation of land. The

fragments on an average increase in number as the size of cultivation unit increases. Thus, whereas on an average there are two fragments in the acre-group 0-5, there are as many as eleven fragments on an average in the acre-group 100-500. These fragments are generally scattered all over the village. Because of fragmentation, the cultivators who have economic units to cultivate do not derive any advantage of higher yields per acre. Though there are economies in the total expenditure on cultivation in bigger acre-groups, the average out-put per acre on the land of the big and the small cultivator is more or less the same.

The table of frequency of distribution of fragments on page 25 further reveals to us the peculiarities of fragmentation of land. It shows that only 4% of the cultivators who have all their cultivated holdings in one block, belong to the acre-group 25-100. The rest of the cultivators i.e. 96% of the cultivators cultivate their lands either in fragments more than one, or if in one block, the block of cultivated land is less than 25 acres. In the disadvantages of bigger acre-groups one more should be indicated. The more the land under cultivation, the greater the chances of its being less fertile or remaining uncultivated. This phenomenon is revealed in the lesser average assessment per acre in the larger acre-group than in the smaller ones. The land is assessed at a lower rate because it is less fertile or is left uncultivated for one reason or the other.

The observations made so far relate to cultivators irrespective of their interest in the land they cultivate. The nature of interest of the cultivator in the land he cultivates is also important. Whether the cultivator is owner or a tenant has much to do with his income. The income of the cultivator determines in a large measure the efficiency of his cultivation. Information on the interest of the cultivator in the land that he cultivates, is obtainable from the classification of cultivated land in six modes of cultivation. Like the data on actual cultivation of land, that on the modes of cultivation is arranged according to different size groups.

In connection with the mode of cultivation of land, it was observed that most of the cultivators (67%) cultivate their own land. Besides these cultivators there are 21% owner-cum-tenant cultivators. Purely tenant farmers are only 12%. The owner-cum-tenant cultivators form an interesting group. These cultivators cultivate their own land and supplement it with others' taken on lease. The total land taken on lease by these cultivators is larger than the total land taken on lease by pure tenants. Thus we find that 67% of land under tenancy is cultivated by owner-cum-tenant cultivators. And among them, the two

bigger acre-groups of 25-100 and 100-500, absorb between themselves most of the land under tenancy. Also the majority of the owner-cum-tenant-cultivators are to be found in these two acre-groups.

It is noteworthy in this connection that the lessors give their land to cultivators who own some land. And among the people who own land, the owners of larger areas are given larger areas on lease. Thus the pure tenants do not get much land from the lessors. The effect of this is that whereas the owner-cum-tenant cultivators are found mostly in the two big acre-groups, the pure tenants are found segregated in the smaller acre-groups. As many as 54% of tenants are in the first two uneconomic acre-groups.

In all these observations so far made on cultivators of different acre-groups, it was found that the acre-group of 25-100 stands out prominently from the rest. This is the acre-group in which most of the land either owner-cultivated or tenant-cultivated is found. In this acre-group 50% of the cultivators cultivate their own land, 9% are pure tenants and 41% are owner-cum-tenant cultivators. Generally all the successful cultivators are found in this acre-group.

In the second part of the paper, the real nature of the problem of uneconomic cultivator is studied. The observations on the economic conditions of the cultivators are based on the study of individual cases. Cultivators of the acre-group 0-5 only are selected, because they can be considered as positively uneconomic by any reasonable standard. As far as the statistical data are concerned, the notable features of this acre-group are as follows:

(1) In the change from ownership to cultivation, the average area under cultivation decreases from 3.2 to 2.3 acres. This feature is in contrast with the rest of the acre-groups where the average area under cultivation has invariably increased with the only exception of the acre-group of 100-500;

(2) Most of the cultivated holdings in this acre-group are cultivated by the owners themselves.

(3) Tenants form a small percentage in the total of cultivators in the acre-group. Yet 25% of the total of tenants belong to this acre-group.

(4) Majority of the cultivators who cultivate their lands with hired labour (in mode 2) are cultivators of this acre-group.

(5) There are very few cultivators in this acre-group who take additional land on lease.

In the study of individual cases of cultivators which belonged to both the small and big acre-groups, it was found that in contrast with the cultivators of bigger acre-groups, the cultivators in the acre-group 0-5 are resourceless. They have neither the necessary implements nor the draught cattle to carry agricultural operations efficiently. In this acre-group of 0-5, agriculture provides only a part-time employment to the cultivator. The principal occupation of the majority of them is other than agriculture. The disintegration of the village economy is also revealed by this acre-group since it is in this acre-group that many artisans and "vatandar" *Mahars* are found as cultivators.

The condition of the cultivators of the acre-group 0-5 is worst. The small size of their cultivated holdings leaves for them so small a profit that the least misfortune causes the farms to vanish. The small size of cultivated holding also means meagre security and hence a higher rate of interest for the capital that the cultivator borrows. Thus we noticed that 67% of the total debt of these culivators was raised at an exhorbitant rate of interest varying from 18¾ to 150 per cent per annum. The statutory regulation of the money lender's transactions has produced no effect as far as the credit raised by these cultivators is concerned. These cultivators are generally not members of the co-operative credit societies. They are either not credit-worthy or if they are, they do not get credit to the amount they need to improve their condition.

Under these conditions, the only source for raising loans is the farmer-sowkar who charges very high rates of interest. The credit in most of the cases is raised to meet the deficit family budget and very rarely for purposes of making improvements in their economic conditions. It was seen that 46% of the total debt is raised for unproductive purposes, which is a permanent burden to the cultivator, firstly because of his unstable economic conditions in which payment of any debt is not possible and secondly because of its heavy rate of interest. This burden more often leads the cultivator to sell his small holding, leaving him the only alternative to join the ranks of landless labourers.

Thus the whole structure of the agricultural economy presents a gradual process in the down-slide of cultivators to the ranks of landless proletariat. On the one hand, as observed from the quinquennial statements of holdings, the land is being sub-divided and the number of small holders is continually increasing and on the other hand, small holders who continue to cultivate their lands tend to lose the same as cultivation is uneconomic.

There are more than one causes which compel the small cultivator to lose his land in this way. The uncertainty of rain, lack of adequate

finance and other assistance, incapacity to hold on in periods of depression, all these lead him to the only end viz. sell land. In the absence of any attractive employment the cultivator does not leave agriculture for good. He sells his land fragment by fragment, thus trying to stick on faithfully to his only occupation in spite of its uneconomic nature. A similar down-slide to the ranks of the agricultural proletariat is visible in the case of artisans who were once very useful villagers. In the case of artisans, the down-slide is from the occupation of the artisans to the occupation of cultivation of small holdings and along with other small cultivators to the ranks of the landless proletariat.

The above summary of the results of our investigation shows the principal causes that make efficient production impossible. Firstly fragmentation of land is a great impediment for efficient production. Secondly, even if the land were to be distributed in economic units to cultivators, there would be many cultivators to whom land for cultivation cannot be supplied. In our study of the data on cultivators, we noted that there was land just enough for half the number of cultivators. In the schemes of agricultural reforms these two features of our agricultural economy should not be lost sight of. So far, the Government of Bombay has passed two legislative Acts to ensure efficient production. The Tenancy Act and its recent amendment—the Bombay Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act 1948, which provides protection to the tenant and confers on him a right to purchase the land he is cultivating at a reasonable price if such protected tenant does not own more than fifty acres of land and by purchasing the holding the land belonging to the landlord is not reduced to less than fifty acres. As the act itself puts it: "The right of the protected tenant..... to purchase from his landlord the land held by him as a protected tenant shall be subject to all the following conditions specified in clause (a) or (b), as the case may be, and in clause (c) :—

(a) if the protected tenant does not hold any arable land, as an owner, the purchase of the land by him shall be limited to the extent of fifty acres of arable land;

(b) if the protected tenant holds any arable land, as an owner, the purchase of the land by him shall be limited to such area as will be sufficient to make up the area of the land owned by him to the extent of fifty acres of arable land; and

(c) the total area of the arable land remaining in the ownership of the landlord after the purchase of the land or any portion thereof by the protected tenant is not less than fifty acres :

> Provided that where the land to be purchased is of the ownership of an undivided Hindu family which consists of more than one branch the total area of the arable land remaining in the ownership of the said family, after the purchase of the land or any portion thereof by the protected tenant, shall not be less than fifty acres per branch of the said family subject to the maximum of the total area of two hundred acres, irrespective of the fact that the number of the branches of such family are more than four.*

The other legislation is the Bombay Prevention of Fragmentation and Consolidation of Holdings Act. The first part of this Act provides for the determination of a standard area of land. After such standard area is determined any plot less than the standard will be considered as a fragment. Transfer of any such fragment will be disallowed unless such transfer results in consolidation. In the second part of the Act a scheme of consolidation is envisaged which would provide for compensation if the allotted holding is of less market value than the original holding. "..... If all the owners affected by such a scheme agree to enter into possession of the holdings allotted to them thereunder, Consolidation officer may allow them to enter into such possession forthwith." If they do not agree, the Consolidation Officer "..... shall, if necessary, put them in possession of holdings to which they are so entitled, and for doing so, may in the prescribed manner evict any person from any land."

It is true that the provisions of the Tenancy Act give protection to the tenants so far as cultivation of land is concerned. But this protection would have import only if the area cultivated by the protected tenant formed on economic unit. In so far as the region that we studied is concerned we found that most of the tenants belong to the smaller acre-groups. The protection given to them under the law would enable them to cultivate the land permanently; but that does not afford any solution to either their resourcelessness or the part-time employment that the land gives to them. The new amendment of the Act would also affect only a few tenants. The amendment presupposes that the protected tenant would have sufficient resources to purchase land from the landlord. In most cases the tenant would not have the necessary capital to buy land. Only in rare cases it would be possible for a few well-to-do tenants of bigger acre-groups or a few owner-cum-tenant cultivators to purchase land in this way.

In so far as the Bombay Prevention of Fragmentation and Consolidation of Holdings Act is concerned, all the cultivators with economic

* Bombay Act No. LXVII of 1948, p. 14.

cultivated holdings—29% cultivators who cultivate 70% of land in the region that we studied—would be benefited because their fragments would be brought together. But as the Act does not either propose to evict the small cultivators or supplement their lands with the lands taken from those who have a surplus, the small cultivators would continue to cultivate their lands as inefficiently as before. The provision of a standard area in this Act does not mean an economic holding. The Home and Revenue Minister, Sjt. Morarji Desai, while speaking in the Legislative Assembly, made these points clear in the following words: ".... the definition of the standard area is the minimum area that can be cultivated profitably as a separate block, not as a separate holding." "..... In *kyari* and *bagayat* lands the area will have to be fixed somewhere about an acre, whereas in *jirayat* lands the area may have to be fixed somewhere about five acres or so.* "As the Bill stands, no fragment holder will be ousted; they will be allowed to remain. What is intended is to prevent future fragmentation and to take over fragments when the owner comes out to sell them. So there is no compulsion unless the holder wants to sell his land."[1] Thus, this act would prevent further fragmentation and would facilitate their consolidation. This measure, however, does not touch the problem of uneconomic cultivators.

For the solution of the problem of the uneconomic cultivators, the first necessity is to distribute land to these cultivators from those who have larger than the economic units. In this connection, it is encouraging to note that the Home and Revenue Minister has recognised this necessity: "..... However I would say that the Government will be prepared to consider the suggestion of turning these fragments into standard areas by supplementing them from lands taken from those who hold surplus areas."[2] But this is only a partial recognition of the necessity. We must here remember that the standard area as defined by the Home and Revenue Minister is not an area which is sufficient for a cultivator to maintain himself and his family in a fair standard of living. We must also know as to how and when the Government intends to bring about this distribution of land, for, the rehabilitation of our agriculture is an urgent necessity.

Another necessity of the rural economy is that our large scale and rural and small scale industries must be developed so as to absorb the surplus agricultural population. We had seen that if the land is distributed in economic units to cultivators, there would be many who would

* Bombay Legislative Assembly Debates ; Official Report, 12th, Feb. 1947 ; pp. 125, 126.

1. Op. cit., 14th Feb. 1947; p. 267.
2. Op. cit., 12th Feb. 1947; p. 267.

not get any land to cultivate. These surplus cultivators most of whom would be artisans, must be rehabilitated on small and large scale industries. The reorganisation of village industries in the context of general economic development would give enough work and income to the village artisans who in the present deteriorating state of their crafts and arts look upon agriculture as their last resort.

Thus from the point of view of reorganising our agriculture what is more important is to concentrate our attention on uneconomic cultivators. If a successful solution to their problem is sought out, the new setting of agricultural organisation would have potentialities of such a growth that with the application of scientific methods to agriculture, the twin aim of greater production and contented rural population can be realised.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

by

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[This paper embodies the results of a study of Land Records of 10 villages of the Kaira District in Gujarat, carried out by the Gujarat Division of the Agricultural Economics Section of the University School of Economics and Sociology, Bombay, in 1946-47. Its publication prior to the World Agricultural Census proposed to be conducted in 1950 under the auspices of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations' Organization will, it is hoped, focus attention on the reorganization of our agricultural statistics and the collection of the right type of data under the census. Our thanks are due to the various Government Departments and officials and social workers for their valuable co-operation and help in the work of the Enquiry.]

HISTORY

Agricultural statistics of Gujarat have no separate history of their own. Their origin and evolution have been linked up with that of the Bombay Province. The compilation of Agricultural Statistics in Bombay began with the settlement of land revenue. It was the Moghul King Shah Jehan who introduced, for the first time in the year 1637