

CHAPTER VIII.

ECONOMIC TRENDS.

INTRODUCTORY.

Price level, wage structure, and employment position at any time explain the material condition of any place and these features when comparatively analysed for different times indicate the economic trends. A review of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, about the material condition of the people, set against the present may give an idea of the economic trends prevalent in the district.

Mr. Skrine, while investigating the material condition of the lower orders in Bengal in 1891-92, recorded the following general opinion on this point. He assigned the highest place in the scale of prosperity in the Patna Division to Champaran and observed :—

“Champaran to the north is the best of all. The soil is more fertile than that of the neighbouring tracts, there is still a reserve of land available for cultivation and the population is as yet only 520 to a square mile”. He was mainly impressed by the density of the population, for he prefaces his remarks with the following statement :—

“The material condition of the lower classes of the Patna Division varies inversely with the pressure of the population on the soil.”

Mr. Skrine was not exceptional in his opinion of the degree of prosperity that Champaran enjoyed. Mr. Henry, the then Collector, in his general administration report of 1883-84 and Mr. Worsley in his annual report for 1886-87, corroborated Mr. Skrine's conclusion. But in the opinion of Mr. C. J. Stevenson-Moore, Settlement Officer (1892-1899), “the optimistic views of the high degree of prosperity of Champaran”, as referred to above, “receive a most emphatic contradiction from the fact that, given a failure of rice crop, Champaran is the first district to succumb to distress”. He further observes that “In view of its acute susceptibility to famine, general statements of its internal prosperity are either valueless or misleading. Where a district with land plentiful and population sparse has one-third of its people compelled to eke out a living by labour, that district can lay no claim to general prosperity. Where that district has in addition $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of its *rai-yati* land transferred by sale and 1 per cent mortgaged, or a total of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent thus alienated in the 10 years, with 40 per cent of the transferees belonging to the class of professional money-lenders, its claim to this condition becomes still further diminished”.

Mr. Stevenson-Moore also quotes Mr. D. J. Macpherson, mentioning that “this condition of things is not alleviated by the

existence of any arts or industries affording a diversity of occupation and bringing wealth into the district. The only non-agricultural manufacture for export is saltpetre and it affords support only to about 6,400 persons, who have to supplement their earning by working as labourers. There are only three towns with a population of over 5,000 and between them they represent only 2.3 per cent of the population of the district..... The prosperity of the whole population may therefore be said to be entirely dependent on the condition of the crops, and consequently in the long run on so uncertain an element as weather”.

The following observations may be made on the position indicated by the quotations above :—

- (i) The district was alarmingly susceptible to famine;
- (ii) one-third of the population were labourers;
- (iii) there was no major bye-industry;
- (iv) 2.3 per cent of the population were urban;
- (v) crops were the gamble of weather; and
- (vi) major portion of the land was concentrated in hands of a few.

However, the daily life that is prevalent at the present time either in towns or villages, in the district, has somewhat perceptibly changed for the better. Some of the factors that have brought about the changes are the planned and careful handling of the agricultural and industrial problems by the people as well as the Government, the spread of education, libraries and the press, improvement of communication, etc. Another social factor is a slow integration of some of the communities, particularly in the villages. There has been a change in the social values of castes and communities. Occupations do no longer follow the castes. The previous commonly accepted gradation of the caste-structure socially has also changed. Decentralisation of administration and the policy to uplift the rural life have partially shifted the importance of the urban areas to the rural sector. The villages have now definitely been put on the administrative map.

A discussion of features like comparative statements of prices, wages, employment position, total population and total production as well as the average production figures per acre of important cereals, indebtedness, average holdings per family, subsistence holding, holdings above and below subsistence level, livelihood pattern, shift towards industry from agriculture and *vice versa*, etc., will give the picture of the economic system as at present.

PRICES.

In his Statistical Account of Champaran (1877) W. W. Hunter discusses the prices of this district. He mentions that “the average cost of the best rice in 1872-73 was 12 seers per rupee, common rice 22 seers per rupee; wheat 17 seers per rupee; barley 31 seers

per rupee; gram 24 seers per rupee; maize $31\frac{1}{4}$ seers per rupee. The highest price reached in the famine of 1866 was $6\frac{3}{4}$ seers per rupee. About the time of Permanent Settlement, common rice sold at 75 seers per rupee; wheat $85\frac{1}{2}$ seers per rupee; *janera* 135 seers per rupee. Distilled liquor sells at from 8 to 12 annas per quart bottle; indigo at about Rs. 220 per factory maund".

In comparison to the above set of prices, the figures for the years 1956 to 1958 are given and their averages calculated and compared. Conclusions based on them may leave out certain basic realities, at least they shall ignore the imprint of ephemeral irruptions in the economic set up, e.g., of occasional depressions or inflations, etc. However, they will indicate some of the obvious economic trends. The current position will be all the more clear, when price relatives showing levels of retail prices in relation to their corresponding levels in 1948, with figures from 1950-1957, are analysed. This has been done in another section.

Statement showing the prices of essential foodgrains per maund for the years 1956-1958.

1		Rice.		Wheat.		Barley.	Maize.
		Medium.	Coarse.	White.	Red.		
		2	3	4	5	6	7
		Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
		1956 June.					
Motihari	..	19.50	18.50	17.50	15.10	10.00	13.50
Bettiah	..	20.50	19.50	17.50	14.50	9.25	..
		1956 May.					
Motihari	..	19.00	18.00	16.00	14.00	..	10.00
Bettiah	..	20.00	19.00	17.00	14.00	9.00	9.50
		1956 February.					
Motihari	..	17.50	16.50	17.00	16.00	9.50	12.50
Bettiah	..	16.50	15.00	17.00	15.00	9.00	12.00
		1956 November.					
Motihari	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bettiah	..	20.50	19.00	16.00	15.00	9.50	14.00
		1957 June.					
Motihari	..	23.25	22.25	19.00	16.00	12.50	N.A.
Bettiah	..	24.50	23.75	20.00	18.50	13.00	N.A.
		1958 October (November prices near about the same).					
Motihari	..	27.00	25.00	N.A.	N.A.	19.00	15.00
Bettiah	..	22.00	21.00	22.00	N.A.	20.00	16.50
		1958 December.					
Motihari	..	24.00	22.00	N.A.	N.A.	19.50	15.00
Bettiah	..	17.00	17.00	N.A.	N.A.	17.00	15.00

The table above shows that since Hunter wrote the price of rice has increased approximately by 12 times, of wheat and barley

by 8 times and maize by 13 times. In this period the population has multiplied, the production has increased and the wages have gone up. These factors studied with the increased set of prices will indicate the economy of the district. In this connection it may be mentioned that since near about 1947 the prices seem to have been tied up to the same level. The end of the Second Great War in May, 1945, brought about a certain stability but the circumstances worked against the renewal of the previous price-level. The year 1943 had brought in a sudden rise in the prices, e.g., the medium quality of rice which sold at Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 per maund shot up to be sold at Rs. 23 in the month of July, 1943. Then there was a downward tendency and gradually by the year 1946 the price was moving from Rs. 13 to Rs. 18 per maund. By the end of 1947 the price began to rise and is since somewhat near about Rs. 25. So that one remarkable feature comes to light in the trend of prices specially of rice, that it was below Rs. 10 before the year 1943, sought an equilibrium below Rs. 20 up to the year 1947 and had not moved much below Rs. 20. This feature will have to be kept in view when the real wages and earnings of the people are calculated. If there has been a sufficient income to acquire the amenities at the prevailing prices, and if these amenities are comparatively more than those of the period compared, the trend of the economic system is towards progress and prosperity, and *vice versa*.

WAGES.

About wages, Hunter mentions in his *Statistical Account of Champaran* (1877) that "the Collector returned the following rates of wages, etc., as prevailing in the year 1870 :—

Imported day labourer, Rs. 3 per month; day labourers, 2 annas per day; agricultural labourers, 1 anna 2 pies per day; hire of a plough per day, $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas; contract rate for earthwork, Rs. 2-8-0 per 1,000 cubic feet; where the earth has to be thrown some distance, Rs. 3 per 1,000 cubic feet; blacksmith, 2 annas per day; carpenters, the same; weavers, 5 pies per yard of cloth woven; brick-makers, Rs. 250 to Rs. 300 per 1,00,000 bricks; masons, $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 annas per day; thatchers, 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per day; washermen 3, 4 and 5 annas per score of clothes; barbers, from 4 to 8 annas per month; tailors, 3 annas per day; jewellers, 2 annas per tola manufactured for silver work and 8 annas for gold; sawyers, $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per day; rope-makers, 2 annas per day; herdsman, 2 to 4 annas per head of cattle; tinmen, 1 anna for each article; oilmen, 3 annas per day; grain parchers, 1 pie for each 4 seers; peons and grass cutters, Rs. 3 per month; boatmen, 3 annas per day, carters, Rs. 4 per month; burnishers, $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per day, chamars, $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per day.

"Wages are said to have risen slightly of late years. The average rate at present for unskilled labour is $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{3}{4}$ annas per day of ten hours; male adults getting $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas, boys and women 1 anna. In addition a meal of parched barley or rice is commonly given in the middle of the day, which brings the wages up to from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{3}{4}$ annas. A plough is usually hired for two annas per day which includes the hire of two bullocks and one man. The cattle only work from morning to noon and the driver receives some maize for his breakfast. In the month of *Kartik*, when the demand is great, the daily rate paid for a plough rises to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas. During the rice harvest, the reapers are paid in kind, receiving two out of every sixteen bundles reaped, with an occasional bundle thrown in. The mode of remuneration is so much more advantageous to the labourers, that it is difficult to induce them to accept any money wages during harvest time".

Although Hunter has not mentioned payment of ordinary wages in kind, yet this system of payment was prevalent in his time. A portion of the agricultural wages is still paid in kind. The period of payment varies—it may be hourly, daily, weekly, monthly or even yearly. Wages also differ from one region to another due to various reasons, such as local custom (a main ruling factor), cost of living, supply and demand, the nature of work, the caste of the worker and so on. Briefly it may be said that the present wages in the Bettiah subdivision are about 20 per cent higher than in the Motihari Sadar subdivision. Workers are paid in kind at present (1958) according to the following rates :—

BETTIAH SUBDIVISION.

In standard maund, seer and chhatak.

Males—3 seers and 8 chhataks for one working day.

Females—3 seers for one working day.

Children—2 seers for one working day.

Besides wages, *halwahas* (ploughmen) are given 6 chhataks of *sattu* as *pani-piyai* (breakfast).

MOTIHARI SUBDIVISION.

Males—2 seers and 12 chhataks per day.

Females—2 seers and 4 chhataks per day.

Children—1 seer and 8 chhataks per day.

Ploughmen are given *sattu* (powdered gram) also as in Bettiah. Wages in kind specially for agricultural operations have almost remained the same since so many decades back, at least since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It may be said that wages in kind are rigid and hardly change with the passing of time.

WAGES IN CASH.

The average rates in 1958 for men, women and children in different agricultural operations in the district are as follows :—

In urban areas the wage rates run thus :—

(i) Unskilled labour—

Male—Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 1-8-0 per day.

Female—Re. 0-14-0 to Re. 1 per day.

Children—Re. 0-12-0 to Re. 0-14-0 per day.

(ii) Skilled labour—

Male—Rs. 2 to Rs. 3-8-0 per day.

Female—

Children—Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 2 per day.

Wage rate in cash show an upward tendency during the last 30 years, which is apparent through comparison of the tables below with that of above.

Depression Period (1929–1934).

(i) Unskilled labour—

Male—2 annas 6 pies daily.

Female—2 annas daily.

Children—1 anna daily.

(ii) Skilled labour—

Male—4 annas daily.

Female—

Children—2 annas to 3 annas daily.

Pre-War Period (1935 to 1939).

(i) Unskilled labour—

Male—4 annas per day.

Female—2 annas 6 pies per day.

Children—2 annas per day.

(ii) Skilled labour—

Male—8 annas to 10 annas per day.

Female—

Children—4 annas to 6 annas per day.

In the year 1943.

(i) Unskilled labour—

Male—10 annas per day.

Female—7 annas per day.

Children—5 annas per day.

(ii) Skilled labour—

Male—14 annas to Rs. 1-4-0 per day.

Female—

Children—8 annas to 12 annas per day.

Though wage rates have risen, the rise has not been commensurate with the increase in the cost of living. The value of the important articles of foodgrains consumed by the labourers has increased considerably more than the value of the labour, which will be taken up further in the section on the standard of living.

EMPLOYMENT POSITION.

Although the economy of the district of Champaran is almost entirely agricultural, it is necessary to find out how the population has been apportioned to occupation. Thereby the percentage of the agriculturists in the broad sense of the term, whether owning cultivators, non-owning cultivators, pure labourers or otherwise will be appreciated with reference to the groups other than these. In the Census Report of 1891 which is also quoted in the Survey and Settlement Report, 1892-1899, the population is apportioned according to occupation as follows :—

(a) Agriculture	..	..	13,23,125
(b) Professions	..	..	4,077
(c) Commercial	..	..	25,988
(d) Artisans	..	..	1,29,222
(e) Pastoral	..	..	2,634
(f) Hunting and Fishing	..	..	8,971
(g) Service	..	..	2,51,467
(h) Unproductive Groups	..	..	17,165
			17,62,649

The Survey and Settlement Report (1892-1899), observes on the above table as follows :—

"Agriculture thus accounts for 72 per cent of the population. The details do not bear investigation, as only 2,628 of these dependent on agriculture are shown as labourers, which must be incorrect; and for the reason already stated, 72 per cent is sure to be as under-estimate. There are no indigenous industries of any importance, and no large towns in the district. I should, therefore, take the proportion of population, dependant on agriculture at nothing less than 85 per cent. And the Report classifies the total population as mentioned below :—

			Per cent.
Pure cultivators	..	..	57
Pure cultivators with other professions	..	..	7
Cultivating labourers	..	..	21
Landless labourers	..	..	9
Miscellaneous	..	..	6 "

The Report of Survey and Settlement Operations during 1913-1919 mentions at page 3 that the census of 1911 disclosed

19,08,385 persons as the total population of the district in which 17,28,902 persons or 90 per cent were shown as engaged in agriculture.

A census table of 1951 dealing with the occupational structure of the district population quoted from the *District Census Hand-Book for Champaran* (1956) has been given in the Chapter on "Other Social Services". The figures in that table show the following trend :—

- (a) That agriculture not only predominates in the economic set-up of the district, but employs more now. It covered about 72 per cent by 1891, 85 per cent by 1911 and 94 per cent by 1951. Analysing the figures of 1951 census the Bihar Report at page 160 mentions that "the proportion of non-agricultural population to the total population is the highest in the South Bihar Plain (19.7 per cent), the Chotanagpur Plateau Division comes next (15.2 per cent) and the North Bihar Plain last (9.6 per cent). There is no district in the South Bihar Plain where the proportion of the non-agricultural population falls below 16.8 per cent. In the district of North Bihar Plain, this proportion varies between 6.2 per cent to 13.3 per cent, Champaran and Saharsa having the lowest proportion of non-agricultural population".
- (b) That as regards categories of non-agricultural occupations, the Census Report, 1951, mentions that "in the North Bihar Plain, 0.79 million persons or 48.5 per cent of the non-agricultural population derive their livelihood from service and miscellaneous occupations, 28.8 per cent from commerce, 21.4 per cent from production other than cultivation and 4.2 per cent from transport". So that, about 50 per cent of the non-agricultural population of the district derives their livelihood from service and miscellaneous occupations.

The Census of India (1951), Report for Bihar further observes that "the proportion of self-supporting persons is highest in the Chotanagpur Plateau Division (36.8 per cent) there being but little difference between the North Bihar Plain (26.8 per cent) and the South Bihar Plain (26.2 per cent) in this respect. The proportion of earning dependants is 5.3 per cent in South Bihar Plain, 4 per cent in the North Bihar Plain and 2.9 per cent in the Chotanagpur Plateau". The percentages of the North Bihar Plain, which can, if anything, be an over estimate with regard to the district of Champaran.

As mentioned before 50 per cent of the non-agricultural population live on the services and miscellaneous occupation. It would not be out of place here to discuss the scope of this sector of employment as at present.

Champan is industrially very backward. The only important industry of the district is the sugar industry. There are nine sugar factories employing about 10,000 persons. In addition there are near about 79 rice and oil mills. Another important cottage industry is that of button making, concentrated mostly in Mehsi area and gives employment to a few hundred persons.

EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE.

With the close of the war, an Employment Information Bureau was set-up in 1946, under the administrative control of the District Magistrate and the technical control of the Sub-Regional Employment Exchange under the Government of India, Ministry of Labour, with a view to re-settling the ex-servicemen in civil jobs. After the partition of the country in 1947, the services of the Employment Information Bureau were thrown open to the displaced persons. Finally the services of the Bureau were thrown open to all categories of employment seekers. The Employment Information Bureau was raised to the status of a full-fledged District Employment Exchange.

Since November, 1956, the administrative control of the Employment Exchange has been transferred to the State Government and is administered by the Labour Department. For administrative purposes, the District Employment Exchange is responsible to the State Director of National Employment Service, through the Sub-Regional Employment Officer at Muzaffarpur. A table below will give an idea of the functions of the District Employment Exchange, Motihari :—

Year.		Registration.	Vacancies notified total.	Vacancies filled total.
1953		4,136	2,205	2,076
1954		5,433	2,328	1,767
1955		3,106	533	399
1956		863	242	169
1957		1,502	261	110

The figures are not encouraging and show that the Employment Exchange is not being properly utilised. The considerably decreasing figures of registration, vacancies notified and filled, indicate apathy of the employer to notify vacancies, apathy of the jobless to resort to the Exchange, the want of employment and probably not much success in bringing the unemployed and the employer together. These figures also indicate the limited scope of the industrial sector or in the public services and may be unawareness of the public due to want of information regarding the scope of the Employment Exchange.

TOTAL POPULATION AND TOTAL PRODUCTION.

The table below explains the relation between the total population and total production of the district as an influence on the standard of living. The figures of 1891 in the table are as per Mr. Macpherson's "*Final report on the last famine of 1896-97*" and quoted in the *Survey and Settlement Report* :—

TABLE.

Year.	Total population.	No. of persons per sq. mile.	Percentage of non-earning dependants.	Total production under all the crops (excluding industrial output (in mds.).	Average yield per acre (approximate figures in mds.).	Total cropped net sown area (in acres).	Average per head of cropped area.	Total area of the district (in acres).
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1891	18,59,465	527	..	1,85,77,714	Rabi 8 Bhadai 10 Aghani 12	14,47,668	0.78	20,77,735
1911	19,08,385	540	..	..	Rabi 5 Bhadai 9 Aghani 15	14,29,859	0.75	20,77,735
1951	25,15,343	708	70 (approx.).	93,15,000	Rabi 5 Bhadai 12 Aghani 12	15,43,000	0.61	22,64,000

Before an analysis of the table above is made, it would be better to quote some of the observations made in the *Census Report of India* (1951) for Bihar and the *Survey and Settlement Reports* (1892-1899 and 1913-1919), in this connection which are as follows :—

The Census Report of India (Bihar 1951) discusses the trend of population in reference to the attracting or distracting capacity of the district with its natural resources. It mentions that "between 1872-1890, the population of Champaran increased by 19.5 per cent. This is attributable mainly to immigration and better enumeration. In the following decade, there was a severe famine in 1897 and also persistent unhealthiness and the population fell by 3.7 per cent but the next decade (1901-1910) again showed a large increase which is

attributable chiefly to improvement in public health and economic conditions, though immigration had practically stopped by this time. Owing mainly to ravages from cholera and influenza, the rate of growth fell to 1.7 per cent during 1911–1920. The population increased rapidly during the succeeding two decades. In the last decade, however, the decennial rate of growth has fallen to 4.8 per cent., the marked fall being due to the ravages of cholera and small-pox and increase in emigration”.

The Survey and Settlement Report of 1913–1919 mentions that “the population of the district made remarkable recovery between 1901 and 1911, in which period it shows the largest proportional increase of the North Bihar districts, just as in 1901 it showed the greatest proportional decrease. It does not appear that there has been any very conspicuous improvement in public health in the decade 1901–1911, though the general impression is that climate has gradually improved”.

“Again it will be seen that there has been a decrease in the cultivated area since the last settlement. It is difficult to attribute this to climate or public health, as the decrease has been most marked in thanas Motihari, Kesaria and Govindganj, which are not particularly conspicuous for bad climate or epidemics”.

“The chief economic features of the period (1913–1919), beyond a general rise in prices, are the decline of indigo manufacture, the expansion of the sugar industry, and the increase of trade with the outside world”.

The period discussed under the last Survey and Settlement Operation (1913–1919), marks out the taking up of trade and commerce by the increasing number of persons, a downward acreage under cultivation, and a general rise of prices.

The Survey and Settlement Report (1892–1899) calculates the gross value of produce on net cropped area, and mentions that “the total value of agricultural produce of the district therefore works out at Rs. 3,52,68, Rs. 908-4-6, that is to Rs. 24-5-9 per acre on the net cropped area”.

Some observations on the figures of 1891 and 1951 from the table quoted above would be appropriate. The total population in 1951 is seen increased by about 32.7 per cent, whereas the total cropped area, only by about 10 per cent and the total production decrease by about 50 per cent. The percentages calculated as such, although do not appear to be so very factual because a slight difference in the trend of output per acre, as seen in the column of average output per acre, means a fall only in proportion to the difference in the acreage under cultivation plus some difference in the average outturn per acre, which in combination should not result in so low a total outturn figure. This, however, does show

a definite downward trend in the agricultural produce. The density per square mile has increased by about 11.9 per cent. Lastly there is the considerable, rather alarming percentage of the total non-earning dependants in this district. This is partially associated with the hollowness of the employment capacity of the district, the prevalence of the old joint family system, a ruling feature of the agricultural and not of the industrial economy.

To have a fuller view of the total production, the industrial production of the district could be looked into. The industrial sector of the district comprises mainly of the sugar industry with only 9 sugar factories employing about 10,000 persons, rice and oil milling industry with about 79 mills having a labour force of some hundreds of persons only and some other minor ones like button manufacturing, cane and bamboo wares, leather and leather products, iron foundries, etc. From these items again the raw materials of the sugar industries, i.e., sugarcane and of the rice and oil milling industry the rice and paddy, etc., have been accounted for in the agricultural production. So the net production in the industrial sector would come to quite a small figure in this district, being the difference between the cost of raw material and the price obtained for the finished products, plus some other kinds of products from other sources of production named above.

A certain percentage of earnings of the people in the district, comes through the trade and commerce operations and another percentage through miscellaneous occupation and services, but these together with the industrial resources described above, account for only an employment of 6 per cent or even somewhat less of the total population, which show how far these types of earnings, can weigh upon the total production figure of the district and can add to the per capita income as such.

INDEBTEDNESS AMONG THE PEOPLE.

Although this aspect has been discussed in the chapter "Banking, Trade and Commerce", it would be useful to mention that the indebtedness of the people on the average ranges between Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per capita as per Report given by the Banking Inquiry Committee, 1929, and Rs. 175 per family as per estimate made by the Principal, Munshi Singh College, on a random enquiry basis. The indebtedness has a chronic nature and the vicious spiral to the average family of low income group almost knows no end. The people of Champaran district are notorious for their improvident nature. It has to be realised that agricultural economy by itself can never remove the indebtedness. There must be a mixed economy, a more rational utilisation of existing resources, discovery of more resources, utilisation of forest and water potentiality of the district, etc.

AVERAGE HOLDING OF LAND PER HEAD OR PER FAMILY
AND THE SUBSISTENCE HOLDING.

In his *Survey and Settlement Report* (1892-1899) Mr. C. J. Stevenson-Moore, mentions at page 129, that "all things considered, the average area held by a cultivating family in each thana can be taken to be as follows :—

				Acres.
Bagaha	..	..	..	7
Shikarpur	..	..	..	7
Bettiah	..	..	..	5
Bettiah Subdivision	..	..	..	6
Adapur	..	..	..	5
Dhaka	..	..	..	4.5
Motihari	..	..	..	5.0
Govindganj	..	..	..	5.0
Kessaria	..	..	..	4.0
Madhuban	..	..	..	3.5
Sadar Subdivision	..	..	..	4

"As expected, non-occupancy *raiyat* occupy a larger proportion of area and a greater number of holdings in Bettiah subdivision than in Sadar. The average size of a non-occupancy holding is everywhere very small, 2 acres in the Bettiah subdivision and 1.8 in Sadar."

The Survey and Settlement Operations Report (1913-1919) is silent about the average size of the holding per family, because it mentions that "the area of holdings are much more important, but unfortunately the present system of statistics does not give an accurate account of the facts..... Under the present system, figures are compiled for *khatians*, which do not necessarily, or in fact, represent complete holdings".

The Census of India (1951) *Report (Bihar)* mentions that whereas "for the State of Bihar, as a whole, the average size of holdings works out to 3.43 acres on the basis of the data collected during the sample survey of 1952, the corresponding figures for the three natural divisions are: (i) North Bihar Plain (in which is included the district of Champaran), 2.04 acres; (ii) South Bihar Plain, 2.77 acres and (iii) Chotanagpur Plateau, 6.41 acres".

A more elaborate analysis of the size of holdings has been given in the table below, whose data relating to agricultural holdings by size are based on a sample survey carried out by the Department of Agricultural Statistics in April, 1952, at the request of the Superintendent of Census Operations, Bihar. In all 199 villages were selected, one in each Agricultural Statistics Circle, and 13,687

holdings were surveyed. The size of the sample was approximately 0.25 per cent :—

Distribution of 1,000 Agricultural Holdings.

Up to 0.50 acre	281
Exceeding 0.50 acre and up to 1 acre	172
Exceeding 1 acre and up to 2 acres	216
Exceeding 2 acres and up to 3 acres	103
Exceeding 3 acres and up to 4 acres	59
Exceeding 4 acres and up to 5 acres	49
Exceeding 5 acres and up to 10 acres	78
Exceeding 10 acres and up to 15 acres	22
Exceeding 15 acres and up to 30 acres	16
Exceeding 30 acres and up to 50 acres	4
50 acres and above	..
Total number of holdings	1,000

The above table shows that 28.1 per cent of the one thousand holding under reference, was found below or up to half an acre and out of the total 77.2 per cent was below or up to 3 acres. The holdings of 4 acres and above account for only 16.9 per cent of the total, which all show the extent of fragmentation and the insignificant percentage of even subsistence holdings with the farmers. Holdings ranging between 15 to 30 acres cover only 1.6 per cent of the total number of 1,000 holdings surveyed on random selection basis.

SUBSISTENCE HOLDING.

Mr. C. J. Stevenson-Moore has expressed his opinion in his *Report on Survey and Settlement Operations in 1892-1899* on the subsistence holding as follows :—"An average cultivator's family requires, as I have said, Rs. 75 per annum to live on. (Procedure of calculation as such is given in the table below.) Therefore the subsistence holding, by which I mean a holding sufficient to support an average family in fair comfort, ought to be 3.7 acres or allowing for the portion necessarily left uncultivated, say 4 acres. Though this size is the district average, I think a distinction is required between the Bettiah and Sadar subdivisions. In the former the *bhadai* and *rabi* crops are inferior and some of the paddy land is not very productive. On the other hand, it is not given the same labour. All things considered, it is safest to take the subsistence holding in Bettiah at 5 acres and in the southern subdivision, where crops are more varied and secure, and profitable markets more accessible, at 3½ acres".

About the procedure of calculation, he writes that "the last census figures work out an average of six souls per occupied house or family in the district which consists of (avoiding fraction) two males, two females and two children. They ought to live on Rs. 77 a year as worked out below :—

Table showing subsistence living requirements.

				(1892 prices).	Expendi- ture.	(1959 prices).	Expendi- ture.
				Md. sr. ch. Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. nP.	Rs. nP.
1. Grains, cheaper kind, 6 persons	at $\frac{1}{2}$ sr.	$-4\frac{1}{2}$ srs. per day	$\times 365=41$	2 8 at 1 6 0 per md.	56 7 3 and at	19.00	780.19
2. Vegetables, ditto	at 2 ch.	-12 ch. per day	$\times 365=$	6 33 12 at 0 4 0 per md.	1 11 3 and at	9.00	65.68
3. Salt, ditto	at $\frac{1}{2}$ ch.	$-\frac{1}{2}$ ch. per day	$\times 365=$	0 17 $1\frac{1}{2}$ at 4 0 0 per md.	1 11 3 and at	8.00	3.38
4. Oil, ditto	at $\frac{1}{2}$ ch.	$-\frac{1}{2}$ ch. per day	$\times 365=$	0 17 $1\frac{1}{2}$ at 9 0 0 per md.	3 13 6 and at	80.00	33.75
5. Spices, ditto	at $\frac{1}{2}$ ch.	$-\frac{1}{2}$ ch. per day	$\times 365=$	0 17 $1\frac{1}{2}$ at 6 0 0 per md.	2 7 6 and at	35.00	14.75
6. Tobacco, ditto	at 4 as.	per month, or Rs. 3 per year	..	..	3 0 0 and at	2.00	24.00
7. Four dhotis for two males	at 10 as.	each for one year	..	..	2 8 0 and at	4.00 per piece.	16.00
8. Four saris for two females	at 14 as.	each for one year	..	..	3 8 0 and at	4.50 per piece.	18.00
9. Four small dhotis for two children	at 4 as.	each for one year	..	..	1 0 0 and at	2.00 per piece.	8.00
10. Extra expenses	..	..	..	..	0 8 0 and at	8 times more.	4.00
				Total	76 10 9	Total	967.75
				(as per 1892 prices).		(as per 1959 prices.)	

The calculation of cost of living as per current (1959) prices has been based on the observations as follows :—

- (i) Grains' (cheaper kind) prices have been extracted from the averages of rice and maize prices in currency, because these are the cereals mostly consumed here in this district;
- (ii) Vegetables' price has been set at the average of the prices of potatoes and brinjals in main;
- (iii) Tobacco and such other miscellaneous expenses have been set at nearly eight times the quotation of the year 1892, on ratio which synchronises with the price relatives of the different periods under consideration.

In this connection it would not be out of place to mention here that the Central Statistical Organisation's preliminary estimate of national income of India for the year 1957-58 is Rs. 10,830 crores at 1948-49 prices. The revised estimate of national income for 1956-57 is Rs. 11,000 crores at 1948-49 prices.

Expressed at current prices the national income stood at Rs. 11,360 crores in 1957-58 and Rs. 11,310 crores in 1956-57 or Rs. 1,380 crores and Rs. 1,330 crores higher than the 1955-56 level. The per capita income at current prices correspondingly rose from Rs. 260.6 in 1955-56 to Rs. 291.5 in 1956-57 and Rs. 289.1 in 1957-58. The larger increase at current prices than at constant prices was due to price changes.

LIVELIHOOD PATTERN AND SHIFT TOWARDS INDUSTRY FROM AGRICULTURE OR VICE VERSA.

A broad classification of livelihood pattern, has been indicated in the section 'Employment Position' and also in the chapter on 'Other Social Services'.

Out of a total population of 37.52 millions in the State of Bihar, no less than 33.99 millions or 91 per cent of the total rural population are agriculturists, and 97 per cent of the agricultural population lives in rural areas. The only agricultural class of whom the percentages in the rural population is lower than in general population is of those persons who are non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent receivers and their dependants. Only 9.4 per cent of the rural population derive their principal means of livelihood from non-agricultural sources and of these 40 per cent are accounted for by persons deriving their principal means of livelihood from services and miscellaneous occupations.

In the North Bihar Plain (which includes Champaran district), 92.4 per cent of the rural population are dependent for their livelihood on agriculture and only 7.6 per cent on non-agricultural means of livelihood. The following statement shows the percentage

of rural population of the North Bihar Plain under each livelihood class :—

Livelihood class I (owners of land mainly owned and dependants).	49.5
Livelihood class II (owners of land mainly un-owned and dependants).	11.9
Livelihood class III (cultivating labourers and their dependants).	30.5
Livelihood class IV (non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent-receiver and their dependants).	0.5
Livelihood class V (production other than cultivation).	1.8
Livelihood class VI (Commerce)	2.1
Livelihood class VII (Transport)	0.2
Livelihood class VIII (other services and miscellaneous).	3.4

The table above, besides showing an overwhelming majority of rural population dependent on agriculture, points out that among the other occupations, the miscellaneous and other services accommodate nearly half the persons who derive their livelihood from non-Agricultural occupations. So that the production other than cultivation, trade and commerce, transport, etc., account for only a fringe of the whole employment organisation, indicating insignificant industrial (small-scale or cottage industries) growth.

The following table shows the livelihood pattern of the urban population of the North Bihar Plains :—

Number per 10,000 under

Livelihood Class I (owners of land mainly owned, and dependants).	1,525
Livelihood Class II (owners of land mainly un-owned and dependants).	262
Livelihood Class III (cultivating labourers and dependants).	1,375
Livelihood Class IV (non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent-receivers and their dependants).	180
Livelihood Class V (production other than cultivation).	1,027
Livelihood Class VI (Commerce)	2,086
Livelihood Class VII (Transport)	471
Livelihood Class VIII (Other services and miscellaneous).	3,074

There are two reasons for the comparatively high production of agriculturists in the urban population of the North Bihar Plain.

First, with a few exceptions, its towns have grown on account of their importance as headquarters of the district or subdivisional administration, and not as the result of the growth of trade and industry. Second, the list of towns here includes quite a few places which are really overgrown villages or large village marts. The proportion of persons dependent on agriculture among the urban population in Champaran is 36.2 per cent as against North Monghyr's 49.9 per cent and Saran's 43.4 per cent. In Champaran, the agricultural classes outnumber the non-agricultural classes in five towns, namely, Sugauli Bazar, Shikarpur Bazar, Bagaha, Chanpatia Bazar and Kesaria Bazar. Moreover, one feature in the table above has to be noted which indicates that the persons engaged in services are 30.74 per cent of the total under analysis as against of production other than cultivation 10.27 per cent, commerce 20.86 per cent and transport 4.71, which again like the table of rural population, point at scanty progress and development of the industrial sector of the district.

INTRODUCTION AND TERMINATION OF PARTIAL OR TOTAL RATIONING IN THE DISTRICT COMMODITIES RATIONED.

This feature also shows an important economic trend. Champaran has always fed Saran and other districts. The World War II, brought in its wake certain food problems, which required careful distribution of the total output of cereals everywhere. The distribution of food was designed to give primary importance to the military requirements of the country. This is expected when a war is on. This feature naturally created conditions of scarcity for the public. This led to the introduction of 'rationing system'. This system aimed at providing a certain quantity of cereals per head, not according as the needs may be, but according to the stocks at hand. This was applied to the urban areas more than in the rural areas.

So far as this district is concerned, the total rationing in its strict form has never been introduced. But attempts have been made to have a planned distribution of cereals whenever necessary. The bad harvests in the years due to droughts and floods or other reasons have made it incumbent on authorities to have a planned and careful distribution of rice, wheat, etc.

In the year 1947 and a few years before, the procurement of grains and its distribution was in conformity with the process as briefly noted below, from the procurement scheme, 1947-48 (*kharij* crop), according to the directive in D.O. no. 28259-P.O., Government of Bihar, Supply and Price Control Department, addressed to all Commissioners of Divisions and copies forwarded to all the District Magistrates.

Procurement by Direct Purchases.

The local officers were instructed to make direct purchases of rice in selected rice producing areas, like Manbhum Sadar,*

* Manbhum Sadar has since been transferred to West Bengal excepting a few thanas. (P. C. R. C.)

Dhalbhum Subdivision, Shahabad, Purnea, Madhubani, Champaran, Gaya, Banka and Santhal Parganas. The purchase was to be made at prices to be prescribed by the Government from time to time. The District Supply Officer was to fix the price levy—

- (a) The levy was operative throughout the province of Bihar. A broad classification under the heads "canal irrigation" and "lands other than canal irrigated" was adopted in North and South Bihar. The gross produce of the canal irrigated land were assessed at 12 maunds and of the other land at 8 maunds per acre.
- (b) The levy-list was to be framed carefully by officials but was to be recast in lump or in detail on the suggestion of a committee of non-officials. Special attention was to be given to correct assessment in marginal cases.
- (c) For failure to comply with the demand notices, action was to be taken on the biggest producers of the locality and working downwards. There was the provision under section 12 of the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Act, 1946 (Act XXIV of 1946), which empowered summary trials of cases arising out of breaches of orders issued in pursuance of the Act.
- (d) The time-table prescribed for the working of the Levy order was strictly adhered to, and attempts were made to procure the maximum quantity possible in the first two or three months by all methods, viz., Levy, monopoly, and direct purchases.

Distribution.—Storage and storage charges, purchasing agents' commission, milling or handpounding charges, transportation costs, administration expenses, etc., were taken into consideration while fixing a price at which the commodities were to be supplied by the Government. An administrative charge at 4 annas per maund was to be levied on stocks of fine rice supplied to collieries, railways, and other employers of labour.

Government commitments were to be reduced to the minimum, which meant that—

- (i) all rural supplies were to be stopped except to Government servants drawing a salary of Rs. 150 or less per month. Besides no other foodgrains were to be distributed in the rural area except in the case of established scarcity; and
- (ii) in urban areas also there was to be no general distribution to persons whose income was less than Rs. 150 per month. Rations became limited to the actual number of dependants only. Sugar mills were allowed a high priority as they were declared to be a public utility concern by the Government and were to get supplies from 1st December, 1947.

By the end of the year 1947, the Government of Bihar in agreement with the Government of India accepted the policy of progressive decontrol with a view to giving up all commitments for procurement and distribution of foodgrains by the end of 1948, and the working patterns of the whole system were attuned as such. To stagger the process of rationing, a start was to be made by cutting of 'A' ration card-holders after due notice followed by overall cut in daily ration leading to a total stoppage.

By the end of the year 1948 and afterwards, large employers of labour and essential industries were to be supplied with foodgrains for the consumption of their labourers and their dependants if desired by them, as was the system before decontrol was adopted in the last year.

The *kharif* year 1950 started under unusual and particularly unfavourable conditions, which called for great vigilance on the part of the local officers. Stringent measures had to be taken to avoid the very unfavourable period. An increased food distribution had to be arranged for both by increased imports and internal procurement, stopping exports of food, saving grain and general relief measures including distribution of loans.

The maximum possible quantity of the paddy crops grown within the district had to be procured during the year by several methods referred to above.

The purchase of Nepal paddy and rice by other foodgrain dealers was allowed but export outside the district was regulated by permits issued by the local District Magistrates or the District Supply Officers.

The basic procurement prices were to be the same as the previous year, i.e., Rs. 8 per maund for paddy and Rs. 13-4-0 per maund for coarse rice and Rs. 14-4-0 per maund for medium rice and Rs. 14 per maund for wheat. The only difference in the year 1950 was that the basic price was payable at village site. In addition cartage at the rate of 1 anna per maund per mile to the nearest purchasing centre was allowed to the cultivators.

Distribution.—In view of the scarcity conditions that were apprehended due to the failure of the autumn and winter crop and the uncertain prospects of *rabi* crop, distribution was made on the basis of ration cards. The urban areas were immediately covered by the scheme. Distribution in rural areas was also carefully planned. Estimates of loss of grain and degree of scarcity and probable assistance needed for affected pockets were worked out. Lists of all persons in need of foodgrains being supplied, were prepared and they were given ration cards indicating the number of adults and children. Fair price shops at convenient centres were opened. The quantity of ration varied from 10 ounces to 12 ounces per head per day with 4 ounces in addition for heavy manual

workers and half of each for the children was to be fixed from time to time by the District Officers considering the stock in hand.

The system of fair price shops has almost come to stay. They go slow when there are good crops and available at reasonable price. They shoot up whenever there is scarcity. The brief report which follows, for the years 1957 and 1958, will indicate the organisation, function and service offered by the Fair Price Shops, and throws a considerable light on the present economic trends. The report has been compiled from the Weekly Scarcity Report in Form IX of the Bihar Famine and Flood Relief Code, for the district of Champaran for the week ending the 25th June, 1958, and also for the week ending 26th June, 1957.

In the year 1958 (June), the scarcity was caused due to low yield of *bhadai* and *aghani*. *Bhadai* was damaged due to flood and *aghani* due to drought. The distress had increased due to want of rains in the month of May, and in the first fortnight of the month of June as a result of which, summer crops and paddy seedlings dried up.

Parts of almost all the 25 police-stations were affected. The extent of distress is shown by the following table :—

Affected area.

Subdivision.	Total area in sq. miles.	Area affected in sq. miles.	Total population.	Population affected.
1	2	3	4	5
Sadar	1,528	765	14,45,378	9,44,000
Bettiah	1,997	1,210	11,00,000	8,06,000 (Including dis- placed per- sons).

Supply of grains through Fair Price Shops or Ration Shops was arranged as follows :—

(i) Number of Fair Price Shops functioning including the numbers opened during the week under report for sale of food-grains—

Sadar	439
Bettiah	338
District Total	777

(ii) Population served by these Fair Price Shops 26,63,000

(iii) Quantity in maunds of grains issued during the period from stockists' godowns and gratuitous distribution to the indigents—

1	Off-take during the week.		Progressive total of the off-take since 1st April 1957.	
	Rice.	Wheat.	Rice.	Wheat.
	2	3	4	5
		Mds.	Mds.	Mds.
Bettiah	Nil	21,264 (including 2,001 mds. gratuitous relief).	226	4,30,841
Bettiah	Nil	17,421 (including 1,723 mds. gratuitous relief).	365	3,43,188
District—Total ..	Nil	38,685	591	7,74,029

The reason for the low off-take of wheat during the week in both the subdivisions, was inadequacy of stock. However, in the year 1957-58, 2,07,166 Family Ration Cards were issued and distributed up-to-date to so many families in the Sadar subdivision and 89,000 covering so many families in the Bettiah subdivision.

Names of Anchals or Blocks.				No. of Fair Price Shops.	Off-take in maunds.
Motihari	..	..	..	40	1,310
Turkaulia	..	..	..	25	2,148
Sugauli	..	..	..	16	2,016 (Harsidih included).
Ramgarwa	..	..	..	29	4,200
Raxaul	..	..	..	28	3,225
Adapur	..	..	..	19	920
Narkatia	..	..	..	16	886
Ghorasahan	..	..	..	25	1,110
Dhaka	..	..	..	20	953 (Dhaka police-station).
Chiraiya	..	..	..	15	..
Patahi	..	..	..	15	339
Pakri Dayal	..	..	..	16	390
Madhuban	..	..	..	20	600
Mehsi	..	..	..	13	640
Chakia	..	..	..	23	1,317 (Kalyanpur included).
Kalyanpur	..	..	..	32	..
Kesaria	..	..	..	20	480
Areraj	..	..	..	35	780
Harsidih	..	..	..	18	
Paharpur	..	..	..	15	
Total	..	..	..	404	21,314

Bettiah Subdivision.

Names of Anchals or Blocks.				No. of Fair Price Shops functioning.	Off-take in maunds.
Majhaulia	..	..	..	41	616
Bettiah	..	..	..	51	3,177
Nautan	..	..	..	20	1,476 (Nautan police-station).
Bairiya	..	..	..	22	..
Chanpatia	..	..	..	28	..
Sikta	..	..	..	16	..
Mainatand	..	..	..	7	..
Gaunaha	..	..	..	19	..
Shikarpur	..	..	..	14	..
Ramnagar	..	..	..	17	..
Jogapatti	..	..	..	26	2,819
Lauriya	..	..	..	14	2,201 (Lauriya police-station).
Bagaha	..	..	..	39	2,371
Sidhao	..	..	..	25	1,243
Dhanaha I	..	..	..	23	..
Dhanaha II	..	..	..	16	..
Thakaraha	..	..	..	..	883
Total				378	14,786

Supply of grain through Fair Price Shops and Ration Shops—

(i) Number of Fair Price Shops functioning (including the number opened during the period under report)—

Opened. Functioning.

Sadar	..	..	19	159
Bettiah	..	..	1	143

(ii) Quarterly of maunds of grains issued during the period from stockists' godowns and progressive totals of off-take from the 1st April, 1957—

				Off-take during the week.		Progressive total since 1st April 1957.	
				Rice.	Wheat.	Rice.	Wheat.
1	2	3	4	5			
					Mds.	Mds.	Mds.
Sadar	..	..	..	..	Nil	1,345	112
Bettiah	..	..	..	..	Nil	2,129	140
							11,601
							18,624

So that the statements above show that whereas the number of Fair Price Shops in the whole district was 320 only in the year 1957, this rose to 827 in the year 1958, an increase of 153.7 per cent. Besides the off-take during the week in the year 1958, of wheat was 38,685 maunds, as against 3,474 maunds only in the year 1957, indicating a tremendous increase here also, which all point out to the growing prominence of the Fair Price Shops in the district. But side by side this state of affairs hints at the cautious move of the Government to regulate price in the deficient economy of the district.

PRICE AND WAGE INDEXES CONCERNING THE PERIOD 1939—1957
CURRENT ECONOMIC TRENDS.

The discussion above, has tried to give a picture of the economic trends, drawn from a long range. There are also particular trends, the short term, year to year variations either way, good or bad in the economic field. So that an analysis of prices and wages, the main determinants of the economic trends, since the year 1939, which will be able to indicate some of the smaller features but highly suggestive. The year 1939, has been chosen, inasmuch as, this year, with the beginning of the Second Great World War had caught up the economic system in its vertex, and led it through different phases. The severe depression of the year 1929, had reached its bottom, and rather the economy was enjoying a breathing space, when the military requirements initiated a boom period and the prices began to rise.

The following table gives the prices of rice (medium), wheat and gram (per maund), from the year 1941, the year in which the efforts to face the War began bearing fruits and the prices, wages, etc., were affected :—

					Medium rice.	Wheat.	Gram.
June—					Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1941	..	..	..	..	5 10 6	..	3 5 6
1942	..	..	..	..	6 8 0	..	4 3 0
1943	..	..	..	..	26 8 0	18 0 0	14 0 0
1944	..	..	..	..	13 8 0	14 8 0	10 0 0
1945	..	..	..	..	16 0 0	11 8 0	8 8 0
1946	..	..	..	..	14 0 0	14 0 0	11 8 0
1947	..	..	..	..	11 13 0	11 13 0	15 0 0
1948	..	..	..	..	24 0 0	27 0 0	16 0 0
1949	..	..	..	..	25 8 0	24 0 0	14 0 0
1950	..	..	..	..	27 8 0	26 0 0	20 0 0

					Medium rice.	Wheat.	Gram.
October.—					Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1951	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1952	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1953	..	..	..	..	27 0 0	20 0 0	..
1954	..	..	..	..	16 0 0	..	..
1955	..	..	..	..	17 8 0	14 4 0	..
1956	..	..	..	..	19 0 0	17 8 0	..
1957	..	..	..	..	24 0 0	18 4 0	..
1958	..	..	..	..	27 0 0	..	..
April, 1959	..	..	..	..	26 8 0	26 0 0	..

An analysis of the table shows that the price of the rice and gram had taken to rising, suddenly increasing by 471.1 per cent and 433.9 per cent in the year 1943. Afterwards a fall has been recorded rather considerably, but the prices again settled in the year 1950 at a price slightly higher than that of the year 1943. It appears from the statement that the economic system of the district has become such that the prices seem to have a tendency of settling at a figure even higher than that of the year 1943, somewhat at five times more than that. In this connection the table below showing working class index number for Muzaffarpur, may also be taken to represent facts about Champaran.

WORKING CLASS CONSUMER PRICE INDEX NUMBER TAKEN FROM
THE DIRECTORATE OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS, BIHAR.

Base : Year ending July, 1939—100.

Year.				
1952	..	..	..	509
1953	..	..	..	479
1954	..	..	..	423
1955	..	..	..	401

The Price Index above hints at a level of prices, getting lower but the year afterwards, of which the calculation as such has not

been made is not at all encouraging. The common man of the district is very much worried over the rising prices of foodgrains and other essential commodities of daily use. In the middle of January, 1959, the coarse rice was being sold at the rate of Rs. 18 per maund, medium at the rate of Rs. 20 per maund and the fine at the rate of Rs. 25 per maund which rose to Rs. 21, Rs. 24 and Rs. 27 per maund, respectively, in the month of February, 1959. But the price of coarse rice has gone up to Rs. 23 per maund, medium to Rs. 26 per maund and the fine to Rs. 30 to Rs. 38 per maund. Similar is the condition of the prices of other foodgrains, viz., gram is sold at the rate of Rs. 20 to Rs. 27 per maund, maize at the rate of Rs. 27 to Rs. 30 per maund, *kerao* at the rate of Rs. 30 to Rs. 32, *matar* at the rate of Rs. 30, wheat in the open market at the rate of Rs. 26 per maund, *rahar dal* at the rate of Rs. 38 and *masur dal* at the rate of Rs. 36 per maund. No doubt the price of wheat supplied through the Government Fair Price Shops is at the rate of Rs. 14-14-0 and of the rice at the rate of Rs. 20 nearly per maund, but the quota supplied at present has been reduced by half and the rice is not well consumable and the dealers do not lift it.

Besides these commodities, there is also a marked rise in the prices of spices of common use and kerosene oil.

It is difficult to find out the causes of this spiral rising of prices. The general opinion somewhat is that the paddy procurement scheme of the Government has proved to be a cause of this high price. Farmers have become unwilling to part with their produce at the low price the Government have fixed for paddy and rice, and on the other hand the rice mill owners have closed their mills due to the Government order that they would have to supply 50 per cent of their pounded rice to the Government. This quota has now been cut to 25 per cent but the mill owners have not yet responded. Unfortunately there is not much of public co-operation to work out the well-thought-out schemes.

Another cause of the rising prices is reported to be the 50 per cent cut in the supply of wheat of the original quota to the Government Fair Price Shops. It is also said by a section of farmers that paddy crop during the last harvest was not so bumper as imagined by the authorities. The yield was no doubt good in comparison to a few years in the past.

Some of these thoughts are no doubt stray and there has not been a proper appraisal of the working of the rationing scheme. But these thoughts underline the extreme sensitiveness of the economy of the district as mentioned even in the Survey and Settlement Report (1892-1899).

WAGES.

As regards wages the following statements are of considerable importance :—

Statements showing average daily wages paid to agricultural labourers in Champaran during the years 1953–1955.

Skilled Labourers.

Carpenter.			Blacksmith.			Cobblers.		
1953.	1954.	1955.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1953.	1954.	1955.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
3 6 2	2 6 6	2 7 9	3 6 2	2 6 6	2 7 9	3 6 2	2 6 6	2 7 9

Field Labourers.

Men.			Women.			Children.		
1953.	1954.	1955.	1953.	1954.	1955.	1953.	1954.	1955.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1 8 6	1 10 4	1 7 4	1 8 6	1 6 8	1 7 0	1 3 8	1 2 2	1 2 0

Other Agricultural Labourers.

1 14 2 1 10 1 1 7 4 1 8 6 1 6 7 1 7 0 1 3 8 1 2 2 1 2 0

Herdsman.

1 8 6 1 10 1 1 7 4

The statements above giving the wages of different class of labourers, may well be taken to represent the current average too, because there has been no appreciable change as such. However, the trend of the rates paid, will get ample light from the table below which presents a proportionate picture of payment, taken from the Report on Agricultural Wages in India, Vol. II.

Average rates of wages for various types of payments according to nature of agricultural operation.

Agricultural operations and year of ploughing.	Without perquisites.			With perquisites.		
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.	Rs. a. p.
1938-39	0 2 8	..	..	0 4 0	..	0 2 6
1949-50	0 13 8	..	0 12 0	0 3 10	..	0 14 0

The statements above although record considerably varied figures of nominal wages yet the real wages have shown the static condition, so this does not require more comments. However, one thing has been noticeable that the price changes have told upon the wages where they are strictly confined to cash, because the proportion of increase in the wages always lags behind the proportion of the rise in prices, and as a result the real wages, when calculated through cash payment is lower than that actually paid in the kind rate.

Regarding wages the following paragraph is in R. E. Swanzy's revised District Gazetteer :—

“The wages of skilled labour have risen very considerably in the last fifty or sixty years. The following table will show the rise in daily wages since 1870 :—

Trades.	1870.	1906.	1931.
1	2	3	4
Carpenter	2 annas	4—5 annas	10—12 annas
Mason	2½—3½ annas	3½—4 annas	6—8 annas
Blacksmith	2 annas	3—4 annas	8—12 annas

The wages of unskilled labour have not risen so much. In 1874-75 the daily wages for coolies and agricultural labour were 2½ annas for a man, 1½ annas for a woman and 1 anna for a boy. They now are 3 to 6 annas for a man, 3 annas for a woman and about 1½ to 2 annas for a boy. The wages of agricultural labourers are often paid in kind, and are now 6 *kutch*a seers of grain per day per adult. Also in villages, blacksmiths, carpenters, barbers, watchmen, washermen are sometimes paid in kind.”

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS.

Agriculture, Industries, Trade and Commerce, Transport and Communication, the major sector of employment, still leave a fringe of population unaccounted for who find employment in miscellaneous occupations, like Public Administration, learned professions, domestic and personal services, etc. The number of persons in the miscellaneous occupations, although occupy a very small percentage in the employment structure have an important bearing on the society and the administration. They form the intelligentsia and are the cream of the middle class which is the backbone of the district. They are the unacknowledged leaders of the society. The bulk of them are urban dwellers as the chances of getting suitable employments in the rural areas are lesser. The table below as per

census of 1951 gives the number of persons employed by the State Government, Union Government and Municipalities :—

Employees of the State Government.

Employees of the State Government.	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
RURAL.								
Motihari Revenue Thana (excluding Motihari, Lau- thaha and Sugauli towns).	48	..	..	..	48	..	..	..
Adapur Revenue Thana (excluding Raxaul town).	34	..	..	..	34	..	..	..
Patahi police-station ..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Kessaria Revenue Thana (excluding Kessaria town).	68	..	..	..	68	..	..	..
Jogpatti, Sikta and Chain- patia police-stations (ex- cluding Chainpatia town).	12	..	..	..	12	..	..	..
Bagaha Revenue Thana (excluding Bagaha town).	10	..	..	..	10	..	..	..
TOTAL—RURAL ..	173	..	..	..	173	..	..	..
URBAN.								
All towns of Champaran district (Motihari, Lau- thaha, Sugauli, Raxaul, Chakia, Kessaria, Bettiah, Chainpatia, Shikarpur and Bagaha).	237	7	..	..	237	7	..	..
TOTAL—URBAN ..	237	7	..	..	237	7	..	..
DISTRICT TOTAL ..	410	7	..	..	410	7	..	..

Employees of the Union Government.

Employees of the Union Government.	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
RURAL.								
Bettiah, Majhulia and Nautan police-stations (excluding Bettiah town).	3	..	..	..	3	..	..	..
Ramnagar and Lauria police-stations.	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Bagaha Revenue Thana (excluding Bagaha town).	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
TOTAL—RURAL ..	6	..	..	..	6	..	..	..
URBAN.								
All towns of Champaran district (as mentioned above).	206	4	..	..	206	4	..	..
TOTAL—URBAN ..	206	4	..	..	206	4	..	..
DISTRICT TOTAL ..	212	4	..	..	212	4	..	..

Employees of Municipalities and Local Boards.

Employees of the Municipalities and Local Boards.	Total.		Employers.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
RURAL.								
Adapur Revenue Thana (excluding Raxaul town).	6	1	..	..	6	1	..	..
Patahi police-station ..	33	2	..	..	33	2	..	..
Jogpatti, Sikta and Chainpatia (excluding Chainpatia town).	10	..	..	..	10	..	..	..
Bagaha Revenue Thana (excluding Bagaha town).	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
TOTAL—RURAL ..	49	4	..	..	49	4	..	..
URBAN.								
All towns of the district as above.	23	4	..	..	23	4	..	..
TOTAL—URBAN ..	23	4	..	..	23	4	..	..
DISTRICT TOTAL ..	72	8	..	..	72	8	..	..

These figures of 1951 must have gone a big change by now (1959). The abolition of *zamindari*, extension of the National Extension Service Blocks and Community Development Projects must have increased the population in the Government services several times.

The amenities include provision of living quarters (which is inadequate), free or controlled medical help for self and family members, monetary advances under certain circumstances, etc. The State does not provide anywhere free education for the children but in the competition for getting admission in educational institutions the wards of Government servants may get somewhat preferential treatment.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' WELFARE OR SOCIAL ORGANISATION.

As regards the public employees' welfare or social organisation, there is only one worth mentioning and that is District Ministerial Officers' Association.

The executives of this Association could not show records as to when it was founded. It was, however, in existence in 1928. In 1937, an annual conference was held at Motihari, in which about 200 delegates from other districts of Bihar participated.

In the past, the highest Ministerial Officers, such as Office Superintendent and Sheristadar, used to be elected as the President, but since 1957 there has been a change and outsiders who are interested are also elected.

The Association has its own bye-laws and is guided by a set of model rules adopted by the Bihar Ministerial Officers' Conference at Bhagalpur in the year 1945. It elects an Executive Committee to run the business of this Association from year to year.

The members of the Association number at present 575. Every assistant working in the offices of any department, under the State Government stationed in the district could become its member on payment of a monthly subscription of annas four (twenty-five *naiye paise*). Membership ceases automatically on retirement or termination of service.

The Association has been able to build a small building for the purpose of Club-cum-Library with the help of 50 per cent contribution from the National Extension Service Block fund.

LEARNED PROFESSIONS.

It is unfortunate that even fairly approximate number of the persons who follow learned professions like teaching, medical practice, legal practice, etc., is not available. The *District Census Hand-Book*, 1951, does not appear to give correct data as the system of grouping of the literates is not meant to indicate the number of persons following learned professions. In the text of Education and

Culture the figures of the educational institutions at various stages have been indicated. In the Second Five-Year Plan more basic schools are being opened and the number of teachers is multiplying. The number of persons following the profession of teaching has been indicated to be 219 in the *District Census Hand-Book* based on 1951 census. This appears to be an under-statement since the Plans are being worked out after the census of 1951 was taken and this number should not be taken as an indicator. According to the *District Census Hand-Book* the total number of doctors in the district is 35 only. This number is also a clear under-estimate. Doctors will include not only allopathic practitioners but also at least qualified homeopaths, *vaidyas* and *hakims*. Owing to the expansion of the National Extension Service Blocks and Community Development Blocks the number of doctors in the rural areas must have multiplied. Unfortunately, it is not that all the qualified allopaths are members of the District Branch of the State Medical Association. A report in 1958 gave the number of the members of the three Branches in the district of the State Medical Association as 85. This number does not appear to include many of the doctors who have settled down in the rural areas, doctors in the Mission hospitals and District Board doctors. Similarly the figure of 31 as lawyers in the district in the *District Census Hand-Book* based on 1951 census is clearly under-stated. In the towns of Motihari and Bettiah where there are courts the number of practising lawyers is much larger. It is also doubtful if this number has included the Mukhtears who are still practising at these two places. Similarly there are (civil, mechanical and electrical) engineers, veterinary doctors, technically qualified builders, plumbers, sanitary engineers, etc., who do not appear to have been properly categorised in the last census.

Although we do not have a correct estimate, it would be ambitious to put the figure of the men following learned professions at more than a few thousands and certainly below five thousand. Their number is small when the total population of the district is taken into account. The role that they fill in is extremely important and as mentioned before it is they who form a considerable part of the educated middle class. They form the leaders of the society and each one of them is indirectly upgrading some illiterate or uneducated persons.

Persons following the professions have been very hardly hit by the spiral rise of prices. The basic pay of the teachers has not altered widely and many of the basic school and primary school teachers probably draw a lower salary than the class IV Government employees like orderlies, peons, office *chaukidars*, drivers, etc. In order to make the two ends meet the teachers as a class have taken to private coaching which unfortunately in some cases leads to a sense of complacency amounting to unfairness. The recent innovation of personal appraisal of students in the schools

has encouraged this attitude. Another source of income for the teachers is examiner's fees. That leads to a craze to get more papers and possibly the standard of examination has been lowered. The basic problem of a teacher is to supplement his meagre income from the school or college and in this attempt he loses the vital touch which he ought to keep up with the students. He cannot probably be blamed for what he does as it is necessary to keep the pot boiling. Special problems before the doctors are multifarious. A doctor in Government service has an advantage over his colleagues who are not. There is a certain income for him known as the chair practice for granting certificates of illness and fitness or age for injuries. The Government doctors are still allowed private practice and since the pay is deliberately kept slightly lower than the Government servant of similar cadre elsewhere they are more bent on getting larger private practice. Research is practically absent among the doctors in this district. The incidence of goitre is peculiar for the district and the interest of the doctors is in getting goitre patients but not finding the reasons for goitre in this district. As long as Government doctors are not put on a non-practising basis the evil cannot be cured. The competition before the non-Government doctors is keen. They do not possess the proper background or equipments for very specialised line of treatment. There is no spirit of research among them and it is not possible for them to carry on any research which means expenditure and no practice. The result is that about all of them are general practitioners. Another special problem is the want of proper pharmacies and pharmacists in the rural areas. A doctor can only prescribe medicines. The dearth of proper pharmacies and pharmacists has been further accentuated by the recent ban on import of foreign drugs. It is also difficult to get a proper surgeon for serious cases among the non-Government doctors. The higher prices have affected the practice of non-Government doctors and it is likely to go down further with the development of the rural medical centres in connection with the National Extension Service Block or Community Development Block. The young doctors in these Blocks have also taken a gloomy view of their prospects. Most of them are allergic to stay in rural conditions and complain of want of facilities for work other than that of a general physician. It is, however, expected that the initial difficulties of the doctor at these Blocks will be removed.

The most hard hit of the learned professions are the lawyers. The accredited leaders of the society, the lawyers now find themselves in great difficulties because of the changed circumstances. The abolition of *zamindaris*, the rapid extension of the *panchayat* courts and the diminishing paying capacity of the litigants are their problems. It is true that some special departments like the Commercial Taxes Department, Income-tax Department, etc., are becoming important and may offer a fresh avenue for the lawyers. But that can absorb only a handful of them. The relationship of

the Bench and the Bar is also another problem. The Champaran Bar has always co-operated with the Bench and has maintained their own dignity.

Arts, Letters and Journalism.

A district like Champaran cannot possibly have in the present circumstances a good scope for professionals in arts, letters and journalism. The newspapers that are published within the district have a very small circulation and usually a one-man show. There are a few correspondents to journals and newspapers published elsewhere. The very few men of letters within the district are men who follow some other learned professions. There are very few men depending for the livelihood as a practising artist or a professional writer. The relevant figures according to 1951 census are as follows :—

Occupation.	Total.		Employees.		Independent workers.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Arts, letters and journalism.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RURAL.						
Patahi police-station	16	..	16	..	..	..
TOTAL—RURAL ..	16	..	16	..	..	..
URBAN.						
All towns of Champaran district (Motihari, Lauthaha, Sugauli, Raxaul, Chakia, Kessariya, Bettiah, Chanpatia, Shikarpur and Bagaha).	114	18	35	18	79	..
TOTAL—URBAN ..	114	18	35	18	79	..
DISTRICT TOTAL ..	130	18	51	18	79	..

Religious, charitable and welfare services.—Priests were once held in high esteem among respective religious communities and they enjoyed both social and economic securities. Many of them were full time professionals and some at least earned a lot. But their number is fast dwindling and only in the temples and mosques a few whole-timers are found. Their obligatory presence and guidance during marriage and *sradh* ceremonies also are on the wane. The persons engaged in social and welfare services are also not large and their number including that of professional religious persons available from the *District Census Hand-Book of Champaran, 1951*, does not give a correct position. The total number of persons engaged in religious, charitable and welfare services in the census of 1951 was 1,063 out of which 878 were males and 185 females.

With their turning to the activities other than spiritual and loss of learning they have naturally lost much of their hold on the public. The spread of education also has allayed the previous popular faith in them.

Domestic and personal services.—The personnel under domestic and personal services will include domestic servants, washermen, barbers, tailors, etc. It is not possible to get the number of domestic servants in the district. Their population according to the *District Census Hand-Book* is as follows :—

Domestic servants	1,637*
Tailors	Not available.
Barbers and Beauty Shop employees ..	866
Washermen	1,299

It is not possible to come to their correct figures as there is a good deal of interchange of services among them. A domestic servant thrown out of employment will probably take to the profession of a barber if he is a barber by caste and knows the technique. The general trend now is to take up personal services in institutions like *chaprasis*, peons or office *chaukidars*. Sweepers who should be categorised under domestic servants change their profession far too often. The figures of the different categories of domestic and personal services appear to be an under-statement in some cases and over-statement in others. The detailed figures given in the *District Census Hand-Book* mention that in the rural areas barbers and beauty shop owners come to 470 males and 113 females. This clearly appears to be an under-statement. Every sizeable village or at least two such villages will surely give employment to one barber. In the rural areas there are hardly any beauty shop owners which appears to be an ambitious and poetic description of a hair cutting saloon. The total employment of barbers and beauty shop owners in the urban areas are shown to be 225 males and 28 females. This appears to be more accurate. The total rural employment in laundries and laundry services are 832 males and 239 females while those for urban sector are 230 males and 20 females.

The general economic condition of the men categorised under domestic and personal services is comparatively much better than that of an educated man who unfortunately is in the lower income group. A sweeper's family consisting of husband and wife, two adult children and one minor child aged about 10 years means that everyone of them earns as a sweeper if the family is in town. Their standard of life has not gone up while their earnings have gone up sky-high. A domestic servant who belongs to the occupational caste where domestic service is common will earn himself and his wife

* Superintendent of Census Operations admits: "This is an error of classification which was detected at the final checking but it was then too late to rectify it." Page 101, *District Census Hand-Book of Champaran*, 1951.

will also earn probably more than the husband by working at several places. An average barber in the urban areas does not earn anything less than Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 a day. The same remarks made about the sweepers would also apply to the washermen where every adult member and a minor child of near about 10 years earn on their own. As a matter of fact, to such classes a child is a financial asset and it is doubtful if family planning could quickly be spread amongst them.

Their general economic condition is rather imbalanced in the social structure to which they belong. It is this income much larger than what they probably need has led to a sense of indiscipline, an excess of drinking, smoking and immoral habits. The domestic servants, barbers, washermen, tailors, etc., have not yet got separate well-organised unions. But a beginning has been made by the washermen who now dictate that they will not iron their clothes on a particular date and would not serve below a fixed rate. Such movements are more confined to the urban areas which absorb the bulk of personnel under the categories of domestic and personal services.

The encouragement in the formation of labour organisations comes from the fact mentioned before that their scale of wages has gone up very high. The present average rate of daily wages of some of such men are given below as against noted by W. W. Hunter in 1870 :—

	1870.	1958.
Washermen	.. 3, 4, 5 annas per score of clothes.	Rs. 8 to 10 per hundred of clothes.
Barbers	.. 4 to 8 annas per month.	Rs. 3 to 4 per month.
Tailors	.. 3 annas per day	.. Rs. 3 to 4 per day.
Oilmen	.. 3 annas per day	..
Peons and grass-cutters.	Rs. 3 per month	.. Rs. 40 to 50 per month.
Chamars	.. 2½ annas per day	.. Rs. 2 per day.

It may be mentioned here that besides earning their wages the State Government have given them certain facilities regarding education and other welfares as many of them belong to Scheduled Castes and *Harijans*.