

February 18th, 1936

My dear Balmukand,

Thank you for your letter of January 23rd, and for the questionnaire enclosed.

I think this enquiry has been quite excellently designed, and congratulate you most heartily on the form in which it has been drawn out. The detailed economic data will, doubtless, be of great value for a number of purposes beyond my original suggestion of a study of the relation between fertility and economic status. For this study the final judgment given in Part 2, No. 11 will be of principal importance. It is a difficult question how far it is desirable to ~~go~~ behind the synthetic judgment of the enumerator as set out in that question. I should, for my own part, be inclined to accept the enumerator's judgment always in respect of the relative affluence of the families with whom he is concerned, but should scrutinise the returns of different enumerators, with a view to making sure that no large differences existed between them in the classification used. This is to say, I should take out the percentages in classes A, B, C and D for the whole enquiry, and where

where any particular enumerator gives considerably different percentages, compare the economic data in parts 2 and 3 for individual families with those similarly classified by an enumerator, or group of enumerators giving the average proportion. If such a scrutiny reveals, for example, that any one enumerator has put into A an appreciable number of families which, as judged objectively from the detailed returns, would, by more representative enumerators, be placed in B; then I should not hesitate to move up so many of the least indigent families into class B as would approximately equalise the proportions. I hope, however, that you may find that different workers have used these classes sufficiently comparatively for their opinion to be taken as final.

I suppose it will be necessary, though it is bound to be troublesome and inconvenient, to subdivide some or all these classes in occupational categories, e.g. Class D might, I suppose, contain landlords, traders, and a few exceptionally prosperous peasants. Class A, perhaps, may be partly labourers, neither owning nor cultivating land of their own, as well as poor and indebted peasants. In making such sub-divisions, I feel you must be guided by your knowledge and that which the enumerators have collected, so as to make the most natural subdivisions compatible with having a number of

families in each subdivision made.

On the difficult question of the measurement of fertility, it is, I imagine, <sup>well</sup> possible to construct a table of birthrates by age for each, or indeed for any, of the economic subdivisions used. What you will have from the schedules will be the ages of a number of men, approximate, perhaps, but classifiable in 5-year groups, and the corresponding numbers of living children and of all children born to them, using all men for your enquiry, whether married or unmarried, between the ages of 20 and 60. I should be inclined to draw up for each economic subdivision a curve showing the average number of children by age, using for fitting nothing more complicated than a parabola of the second degree, the aim being here to obtain expected values at, for example, ages 35, 45 and 55; these for both living children and for total children. I believe such expectations would be not too inaccurate and would be comparable as between different economic classes, and if such a difference exists as in England, that the poorer class have children somewhat earlier than the more affluent, <sup>though</sup> ~~that~~ with a slightly higher death rate, consistent differences might appear between the comparisons at age 35 and those at age 55. Possibly, on the other hand, the comparisons obtained from the three standard ages would be concordant,

and would thus supply stronger evidence for any association with economic status that may be found.

Yours sincerely,