

CHAPTER VIII

MISCELLANEOUS OCCUPATIONS

106. Introductory

In the Census of 1901 it was found that 77·7 per cent of the population of the district (as then constituted) were dependent on agriculture. "Practically all the castes have some connection or other with land, but approved members of the Hindu social system, such as Brahmans, Kultas, Telis and Malis, form a full half of the tenantry and hold much more than half the land. Of the others, at least half are semi-aboriginals, such as Savaras, or, as they are called locally, Saharas, who have settled down to steady agriculture, but most of the Bhinjhals, Khonds, Gonds, Gaudas, and Kisans still exhibit aboriginal propensities". The number of field labourers, whether ordinary day labourers or farm servants, was large, representing nearly a quarter of those supported by agriculture. The proportion of women among them was also very marked, 60,000 women being returned as field labourers as compared with 18,000 men.

The industrial classes were neither numerous nor important, with the exception of weavers, such as Koshtas, Bhulias, and Gandas and workers in metal, such as Lohars, Kharuras, Kansaris, and Sonars. There were also a few artisan classes, such as shoe-makers, leather-makers, and carpenters. According to O'Malley, "Shoes are but little used, because the sandiness of the soil obviates the need of them, and also because religious sentiment is strong; the uses to which leather may be put by the agriculturists are consequently few. Practically all hides are exported in a raw state, and the shoes worn by the well-to-do are imported".

The wholesale grain-dealers were local Brahmans, Cutchi, Muhammedans, and Marwaris, who purchased grain and sold imported cotton thread, salt, tobacco, kerosene, and cloth. The Cutchi trader was a temporary visitor, coming at harvest time to buy from the cultivators and leaving the district in the spring. His capital was usually small, and he was content with quick returns and small profits. Many Cutchis, however, settled permanently at Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Sohela, and Padmapur and like the Marwaris carried on trade throughout the year. The number of settled Marwari traders in Sambalpur town, Jharsuguda, Bargarh and larger villages, also increased from 1,223 to 2,867 between 1891 and 1901.

In the Census of 1921, it was ascertained that 77·11 per cent of the population of the district were supported by agriculture. The number of field labourers, whether ordinary day labourers or farm servants and

¹Bengal District Gazetteer—Sambalpur—L.S.S.O'Malley (1909)

their dependants, was large, amounting to 1,90,010, which was nearly one-third of the total number of 625,056, supported by agriculture. The number of female field labourers was 60,134 and of male labourers 67,082.

Towards 1932 the Cutchi traders were gradually ousted by the Marwaris, who acquired a predominant position in the grain, and cloth market. Even in the trade of minor forest produce in which they held almost a monopoly, the Cutchis felt the competition of the Marwaris who were attracted by the profits to be made in the *Kendu* leaf trade. The mahua, lac, and myrobalan trade was still largely carried on by Cutchi Muhammedans.

At the Census of 1951 it was found that 79.21 per cent of the population of the district were supported by agriculture. The rest 20.79 per cent derived their sustenance from non-agricultural profession as shown below. 9.11 per cent from production other than cultivation, 1.94 per cent from commerce, 0.55 per cent from transport, and 9.19 per cent from other services and miscellaneous sources.

The broad livelihood categories—agricultural and non-agricultural have been divided into four sub-classes each. Table A, given below shows that the number of persons deriving their principal means of livelihood from agricultural and non-agricultural sectors. It also shows the distribution of persons economically active, inactive and semi-active.

TABLE A

Livelihood Classes and Sub-Classes (1951 Census)

Classes and Sub-Classes	Total	Self-supporting persons	Non-earning dependants	Earning dependants
<i>Agricultural Classes</i> ..	1,031,128	331,230	529,107	170,791
1. Cultivators of land wholly or mainly owned and their dependants.	779,240	237,595	423,289	118,356
2. Cultivation of land wholly or mainly un-owned and their dependants.	56,235	17,093	27,192	11,990

Classes and Sub-Classes	Total	Self-supporting persons	Non-earning dependants	Earning dependants
3. Cultivating labourers and their dependants.	185,627	72,206	73,848	39,573
4. Non-cultivating owners of land, agricultural rent receivers and their dependants.	10,026	4,336	4,778	912
<i>Non-Agricultural Classes</i>	270,676	105,436	127,021	28,219
1. Production (other than cultivation).	118,566	43,708	54,460	20,398
2. Commerce ..	25,354	9,552	13,471	2,331
3. Transport ..	7,148	2,365	4,383	400
4. Other services and miscellaneous sources.	119,608	49,811	54,707	15,090

The Census of 1961 revealed that of the total population of 1,508,686 as many as 578,992 are mainly dependant on agriculture. This figure includes both cultivators and agricultural labourer. They constitute 29.6 per cent and 8.8 per cent of the total population.

Out of total population 4,796 persons (or 0.03 per cent) are working in mining, quarrying, livestock, forestry, fishing, plantation, orchards and allied activities. At household industry there are 73,847 persons (or 4.9 per cent). In manufacturing other than household industry the number of persons are 8,349 (or 0.05 per cent). In construction 3,641 persons (or 0.02 per cent), in trade and commerce 10,243 persons (or 0.07 per cent), in transport, storage and communications 4,059 persons (or 0.03 per cent) and in other services 105,494 persons (or 7.0 per cent) are working in the district. Besides, there are 719,265 persons (or 47.7 per cent) of the total population who are economically passive having no income of their own and are entirely dependant on other resources. Children, full-time students, old-men, rentiers, women, beggars, and vagrants mostly constitute this class. Owing to the fact that the definition of a 'worker' in 1961 differs from that adopted in previous Censuses,

it is not possible to compare the 1961 figures, with that of the previous census figures. However, in general the percentage of workers in 1951 Census and 1961 Census are 31.3 and 54.1, respectively.

The district has a few big industries, viz., Orient Paper Mills, Belpahar Refractories, Indian Aluminium, Hira Cement Project, Hira Cable Factories, Bhaskar Textile Mills and others. The number of workers employed in these industries are about 10,000. The district is famous throughout India and even abroad for handloom fabrics. It is an indigenous industry. During 1966-67, there were 96 Weavers' Co-operative Societies consisting of 14,426 members. Among minor industries mention may be made of bamboo work and basket making, carpentry, and toy-making. Drums are prepared by Ghasias, which the Kols use largely for their dances. Glass bangles were made in several villages, but the industry was on a very small scale and it could not flourish.

Different occupations in the district are discussed in the following pages.

107. Public Administration

(i) UNION GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

Most of the Union Government employees are of Post and Telegraphs, Railways and Central Excise Departments. These employees of the Union Government receive higher pay compared with the employees of the State Government. They are bound by the same service conditions which are common throughout India. According to 1961 Census, there were 657 persons who were administrators and executive officials of the Central Government.

(ii) STATE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

The State Government employees enjoy the amenities and privileges which are shared by their co-workers in other districts of the State.

Many of the State Government employees belong to different departments, such as; Forest, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Revenue and Excise, Police, Mining and Industry. The clerical staff in different offices are known as ministerial officers. There is an organisation of the clerical staff called Ministerial Officers' Association. This Association is the district branch of an all-Orissa organisation of the same name.

According to 1961 Census, there were 1,596 persons who were administrators and executive officials of the State Government.

iii) LOCAL-SELF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

There are four types of Local-Self Government bodies in this district. They have been discussed broadly in Chapter XIV.

They are:—

- (1) Municipality, (2) Zilla Parishad, (3) Panchayat Samitis,
- (4) Grama Panchayats.

These local bodies deal with various development works. Facilities of Provident Fund, Leave, etc., are open to the employees.

According to 1961 Census, there were 877 persons who were administrators and executive officials of the local bodies.

108. Legal Practice

Most of the lawyers are stationed at Sambalpur and Bargarh which are two important towns of the district. Advocates are allowed to appear in both Civil and Criminal Courts. The petition-writers write petitions, applications, statements, etc., on behalf of litigants and charge them according to rate fixed by Courts.

According to 1961 Census, there were 234 persons who were following this profession.

109. Medical Practice

Detailed discussion regarding Medical and Health Services is given in Chapter XVI. Persons following medical professions are gradually increasing in number. There are a few private medical practitioners in Urban areas, specially at Sambalpur, Burla, and Bargarh. There were 151 male and 51 female allopathic doctors as known from the 1961 Census. Besides, there were 91 Ayurvedic, and 75 Homeopathic Doctors. There were 111 nurses and nursing attendants.

Lady Health Visitors are posted in the Primary Health Centres attached to the Community Development Blocks. There are 34 Lady Health Visitors in the district. They visit patients within their jurisdiction, render aid and advice before and after child birth and conduct simple delivery cases.

The Pharmacists give medicines as prescribed by the doctors. The experienced Pharmacists also earn through private practice. There were 180 Pharmacists in 1961. Most of them are Government employees or retired persons.

110. Teachers

There has been a considerable increase in the number of persons engaged in Educational service during the past few years. This is due to the increasing provision of educational facilities through Seva Shram, Schools, Colleges, University and different institutions. More attention is now paid to technical education. Besides, it is found that more and more females are entering the teaching profession. According to 1961

Census, there were 4,225 male and 211 female teachers, out of whom 2,835 male and 119 female were in Middle and Primary Schools. There were 219 teachers teaching at different colleges.

111. Men of Arts, Letters, and Science

Different types of persons are included under this broad category. They are musicians, singers, dancers, actors, authors, editors, journalists, architects, engineers, surveyors, artists and social scientists. The following table gives the number of persons, following different avocation of this class, as principal means of livelihood.

Number of persons engaged in Arts, Letters, and Science.

(1961 Census)

Name of occupation	Male	Female	Urban Areas	
			Male	Female
Architects, engineers and surveyors.	292	..	218	..
Social Scientists ..	192	5	192	5
Authors ..	66	1	49	1
Editors, Journalist and related workers.	46	1	46	1
Painters, Decorators and commercial artists.	79	..	79	..
Actors and related workers ..	2
Musicians ..	14	..	4	..
Dancers ..	118	6	13	..

112. Fishermen

The fishermen, known as 'Tiar' or 'Dhibara' catch fish in rivers and tanks, by using different types of fishing implements. There were 2,091 persons in 1961 who were following this occupation.

113. Drivers

The chauffeurs drive motor cars as paid employee. There are also a few taxis plying in the district. The bus drivers drive omnibus to transport passengers from place to place. The truck drivers are transporting goods from place to place over long distances. There are 2,056 truck drivers, 102 bus drivers, and 206 taxi drivers in 1970,

There were 1,030 cycle rickshaw pullers in 1961 plying rickshaws on hire or as paid employees for carrying passengers and transporting light goods to short distances. They are working mostly in urban areas like Sambalpur, Burla, Bargarh, and Jharsuguda.

Besides, there are a few persons who are plying carts drawn by animals. There are a few boat-men who are carrying passenger and goods through waterways. The number of railway engine drivers in 1961 was 20 only.

114. Tailors

A number of persons in urban areas are following this occupation and consequently many tailoring firms are being established in Sambalpur, Burla, Bargarh, and Jharsuguda. The occupation provide whole time employment throughout the year. During the marriage and festive occasions tailors have a profitable business each earning from Rs. 15/- to Rs. 30 per day.

There were 2,064 persons in 1961 working in this occupation.

115. Cobblers

The cobblers or Mochis recondition old, worn out or defective foot-wear to make them serviceable. They perform other repairing jobs such as attaching heels and toe cleafs, stitching ripped seams, patching holes and shining shoes. The experienced cobblers make complete footwear like chappals, sandals, and half shoes.

The value of business done daily varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 according to the nature of work. There were 1,118 persons who were earning their livelihood in 1961 by this occupation.

116. Blacksmiths

Iron smelting and the manufacture of iron articles are chiefly done by Loharas. They are found chiefly in Borasambar, Laira, Paharsirgira, and Rampur. The village Blacksmiths manufacture agricultural implements such as plough shares. A few smiths are also able to manufacture, in fairly tempered metal, the firmly curved hatchet which was once the battle-axe of this country. The articles now commonly made are the hoe, and the spoons and strainers used in cooking rice. According to 1961 Census, there were 3,775 persons who followed this occupation for their livelihood.

117. Brass and Bell-metals

There are a number of Kansari families in Sambalpur town work only in bell-metals. Kansaris are also found at Tukra, Remenda, Barpali, Bijepur, and Katapalli. Besides Kansaris, Kharuras also

work in bell-metal and the articles most commonly turned out are *lotas*, bowls, basins, plates, saucers, drinking-mugs, water-cans, lamp-stands and pipes, besides the curious boat-shaped anklets worn by many women. The number of bell-metal workers in the district is not known.

118. Gold and Silver-Smiths

Jewellery of gold and silver are made by the local caste of Sonars. The articles most commonly made which is to be seen on the necks even of cooly women, is the *Khagada* a band of silver lying flat on the bosom and encircling the neck as a thick round wire. Other common articles of silver are the bangles, armlets, and anklets worn by women. The usual gold ornaments are armlets, necklets, nose-buttons, ear-rings for the lobe and tip of the ear, and finger-rings. The customers mostly give silver and gold bullion to the goldsmiths who prepare the ornament to get their wages. In a few cases, some local trader places orders with the gold-smiths and pay wages for the work done, the bullion being supplied by the trader concerned. On an average a goldsmith receives about twelve annas to a rupee a day as his remuneration and the annual income of a family from this source varies between Rs. 150 to Rs. 350. According to 1961 Census, there were 2,344 persons.

119. Stone Carving

Carving in stone is the hereditary function of a caste known as Sansias. The caste has two subdivisions, the Beharia and the Khandait Oriya. The former still practise carving, but the craft has been given up by the latter, who are said to have been formerly soldiers in the Raja's army. The stone generally used for carving small images is a black stone resembling marble or a green stone like jade, but a fine red sandstone called *dalima* is used for larger figures. The stone mostly used is quarried at Sason and is well adapted for chiselling. According to 1961 Census, there were 166 persons who were stone-cutters, tone carvers, and stone-dressers.

120. Potters

The potters are known as *Kumbharas* by caste. The potters shape and form articles of different varieties from clay by moulding in centre of flat wheel.

According to 1961 Census, there were 4,453 persons who were working as potters and brick-layers.

121. Biri Makers

Several small *Biri* factories have sprung up in the district for the manufacture of *Biris*. This industry has been fostered by the development of the trade in *Kendu* leaf, which is extensively used in *Biri* manufacture. The *Biri*-makers make *Biris* by hand by cutting the leaves into

pieces according to appropriate size. Then they put the filling tobacco and roll it with fingers to make *Biri* of desired shape and size. The sized *Biris* are tied into bundles and labels are pasted over. According to 1961 Census, 7,445 persons were engaged in this occupation.

122. Weavers

Bhulia, Kustha, and Ganda are the three main castes of weavers. The Gandas belonged to the Scheduled Caste. Their techniques are rather crude and the products coarse. The Bhulia is a skilled weaver and produces superior quality cotton fabrics. Both the Ganda and the Bhulia, however, work in cotton yarn. Sambalpur has also a traditional reputation for its tussar-silk products and kusthas specialize in this. A few years ago, tussar-silk cocoons used to be reared. This is no longer the case. Now-a-days, cocoons have to be imported from Chaibasa in Bihar and Raipur in Madhya Pradesh. The consequent difficulties are forcing the Kustha to weave cotton fabrics. Villages like Barpali, Tora and Remunda are traditional centres of handloom weaving. Most of the weavers have their looms in their homes and also market their own product. The weavers produce sarees and other fabrics of magnificent designs. They can exhibit considerable taste in colour and variety of pattern and even the coarsest cloths are woven with a dainty border. The Bhulias, who make the best of the Sambalpur cotton cloths have been less affected by the competition of machine-made cloth than the Gandas, who weave a cheaper and coarser cloth. The Bhulia works for the well-to-do and though his customers appreciate the lower price and the lighter texture of the machine-made stuff, they buy the better and dearer article because it wears much longer, keeps its colour and is in the end cheaper. Now various weavers' Co-operative Societies have been organised and the sarees are in much demand. According to 1961 Census, there were 28,258 persons engaged in this occupation who were either weavers, spinners, or dyers.

123. Hair-Cutters

There are a few hair cutting saloons in the urban areas as there is a tendency among the barbers, in the recent years, to have fixed establishments in some important locality. Most of the shops are small establishments each engaging 1—4 persons. Only in a few saloons outside workers are employed. But even in such saloons the owners work side by side with their employees.

The services of village barbers are mostly traditional. They move from street to street to attend the calls. The Oriya Bhandari caste people pursue the occupation. In ceremonies like *upanayan* and marriages and even in funerals the presence and services of a barber are essential.

According to 1961 Census, there were 1,200 persons engaged in this occupation.

124. Washermen

The washermen can be divided into two classes those who carry on the work of washing, cleaning and ironing of clothes at home and those who have shops of their own in the bazar area. In the town areas the number of laundries are on the increase. The services of a washerman like that of a barber are traditional specially in rural areas.

According to 1961 Census, there were 4,477 persons who were engaged in laundry service.

125. Domestic Servants

Cooks, water-carriers, door-keepers, watchmen and other indoor servants are included in this class. These persons are mainly employed by institutions or by rich and well-to-do people. The cooks are paid in cash and food. The domestic servants are mostly women. They clean utensils, wash clothss, sweep floors and take care of babies.

By 1961 Census, there were 1,667 persons who were earning their livelihood by this occupation.

126. Murhi (Puffed) and Chura (Beaten Rice) Makers

Making puffed rice (Murhi) and beaten rice (Chura) is a traditional occupation of the Keuta community. Mostly female members of the family are engaged in the business. Apart from Keutas, singlewomen, widows and others quite often do this work to earn a living. This business requires no capital. The net income is about 3 annas per seer of puffed rice, or about $4\frac{1}{2}$ annas per rupee worth of produce. The number of persons engaged in this occupation is not known.

127. Bamboo Basket Weavers

Bamboo basket-making is done by persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, like Sahara, Bedhara or Turi castes. They manufacture household and agricultural requirements, like baskets crude bamboo umbrella, etc. They get an average annual net income of Rs. 100 or so per family. Most families also do repair work for various households and are paid in cash as well as in kind. Sometime they also get food for the day. According to 1961 Census, there were 7,744 persons working in this occupation.