

However, the 1924-1927 average prices (i.e., the highest for 1921-1929) used (same as those used for commutation of tithe) were only somewhat relevant up to mid-1929. Table 3.3 shows the tremendous drop in net return as based on mid-1930 prices with £P 2 for tenants and £P 6.6 for owner-cultivators. This is based on the cultivation of village-owned land only.

For total average net income, which includes the cultivation of land not owned by the villages and income from rent, hired labor within the village, transport, and labor outside the villages, the committee reached a figure of £P 27.5³⁷ per family (the committee did not distinguish between tenant and owner-cultivator families) based on the average 1924-1927 prices, which more or less prevailed up to mid-1929. For prices prevailing in mid-1930, the committee reached a figure of £P 16.5³⁸ per family.

As for debt, the committee estimated an average of £P 27 per family with an annual interest of £P 8, or about 30 percent. Thus, through mid-1929, the annual income was about the same as the cost of living, or alternatively, the total debt per family. Thus, in mid-1930, the net family income of £P 16.5 covered only 63 percent of its living expenses. Under such circumstances, the debt could only accumulate and the only recourse for many peasants was the sale of their land. The result of the situation for the peasants was described by Simpson as follows, "It is no exaggeration to state that the fellah population as a class is hopelessly

³⁷Ibid., 23.

³⁸Ibid., 44.