

## INTRODUCTION.

Agriculture throughout the world is passing through one of those periods of depression to which the Industry is periodically subject, and Trinidad Planters will agree that Cacao farming is no exception to the general condition. The Survey instigated by Professor Shephard has had as its object the examination of the various factors which attend the success or failure of the Industry, with a view to finding possible remedies or, at least, to point out lines of action which will enable the Industry to regain its feet in the shortest possible time. Over-production is undoubtedly the cause of the general depression. The remarkable rise in exports of Cacao from the Gold Coast within recent years has threatened the security of producers of superior grades. Two lines of action are thus open to the Trinidad planter;- he can allow his Estate to lapse into West African standards of cultivation, but even then his production costs would almost certainly be higher, or, he can maintain or even improve on his present high grade produce, believing rightly that a market will always exist for superior quality. But a premium exists at present for his superior grades and so does the depression. Better prices he may hope for, but he can never afford to sit and wait till that happy day comes along. By more efficient marketing he may secure a greater return to himself, but a more hopeful line is to reduce the cost of production. More economic production may result from a curtailed expenditure per acre where capital and labour are not applied to unprofitable operations and when the dose actually applied is distributed in the proper proportions. To what degree of intensity is Cacao farmed in the Island?

Can the Planter, by cultural operations, reduce his cost per bag through obtaining a higher yield per unit of area? This latter possibility it is now proposed to study with the help of data collected from 171 representative farms. This has been briefly discussed. In addition to this, a combination of the natural peculiarities of an individual case, exercises a very strong influence on both