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lend itself to quantitative analysis. And yet, there is no doubt, every detail rings true. Even as case studies, their range and depth would qualify the book as a significant contribution to the literature on the process of social change and economic development. Above all, it is a delightfully readable book, which can be said of not many, perhaps more erudite, books on the subject.

M. L. DANTWALA

*Farm Surpluses : U.S. Burden or World Asset ?*, Murray R. Benedict and Elizabeth K. Bauer, Division of Agricultural Sciences, University of California, Berkeley, U.S.A., 1960. Pp. 232. \$ 3.50.

The book is addressed primarily to the U.S. public and explains very lucidly, the nature of the problem of the U.S. farm surpluses and also the nature of the various solutions suggested. The authors observe in their Foreword : "The people of the United States are understandably concerned about the persistent and seemingly insoluble problem of heavy excess stocks of U.S. farm products in a world that is pictured as suffering from chronic shortages of food. To many, it seems obvious that both of these problems could be solved by an enlightened policy of sharing our abundance with the needy people of other countries; or alternatively, that we should cease to produce more farm product than can be used at home or exported in normal ways." The book is designed to assemble the main facts relating to this problem together with a clear statement of the laws and policies pertaining to it. After stating in an introductory chapter, what they call the 'Paradox of U.S. surpluses and World Deficits' the authors give in two subsequent chapters, a factual account of the U.S. exports of farm products during the earlier period upto World War II and during the War and after. The account includes normal exports as well as exports through special programmes. In Chapter Four, there is a full account of the current (1960) stocks of farm products, commodity-wise. In three subsequent chapters are explained and discussed the several programmes and policies designed to resolve the problem. In a final chapter the authors have brought together the several issues of policy. They are discussed under major headings such as : Production Adjustment, The Role of Tariff Reductions and Free Trade, Export of Capital, Disaster Relief, and the Problem of Relations with other Exporting Nations. The discussion demonstrates how complicated a process it is even to share an abundance. In a final section, the authors indicate certain changes needed in emphasis and procedure of the several programmes. The foremost of their suggestion is that the programme should be authorized and laid out on a longer-term basis. Altogether, it is an extremely balanced and lucid statement of the problem. Though it is addressed primarily to the U.S. reader, there is no need to emphasize its interest to the Indian reader.

V. M. DANDEKAR

*Land and Labour in India*, Daniel and Alice Thorner, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1962. Pp. 227. Rs. 16.00.

This is a collection of writings on India by Thorners during nearly a decade of their stay in this country. There are in all 15 articles grouped under three

major headings: Land and Labour, Trends and Censuses and Sample Surveys. The first of the four articles listed under Land and Labour is titled 'The Agrarian Problem in India Today'. It is the text of a paper given at the XXV International Congress of Orientalists, held in Moscow, 1960 and is a loose piece of writing. In the first half, it seeks to demonstrate, by stray reporting on the operation of the U.P. Zamindari Abolition Act of 1950, that land reform in India has failed. The main reason for this, apparently, is that the land reform legislation was defectively conceived and that in particular, the term 'personal cultivation' was not properly defined. Then there are random notes on other developments among which is noted that a transition has occurred in Indian agriculture from a 'force of hired labourers who predominantly were unfree to men who today are free'. Finally, there is a cursory discussion regarding the use of the terms 'capitalism' or 'feudalism' in an analysis of the Indian agrarian situation. Altogether, the paper does little credit to the scholarship of its authors. The least they could do was to give it a more modest title.

The second article "The Weak and the Strong on the Sardar Canal" is an extract from a paper originally prepared in August 1957, for the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi, after a 2500 mile tour in central Uttar Pradesh. It is a study of the distributive system of the Sardar Canal. Several points are made which deserve further careful study. For instance, the authors mention 'The Sardar system has undertaken to serve a very large area. Water has been promised, in effect, to too many districts, to too many fields and to too many cultivators.' It is not clear whether this is merely an impression which the authors gathered during their extensive tour or is a judgment based on firmer grounds. They also point out that the responsibility of maintaining the ultimate field channels rests with the cultivators and that this affects adversely the maintenance of these channels and by inference the maintenance of the entire system of distributaries. Finally, or in fact initially, because that is where the authors begin, they observe: 'Throughout the Sardar system it is the general rule that the strong, the powerful, the well-connected, dominate the use of irrigation water. They get water first and they tend to take as much of it as they please. Only after they are satisfied, do they permit the mass of ordinary, the unimportant, petty cultivators to have access to it.' Apparently, as the authors point out, the Irrigation Act provides a procedure designed to assure a proper turn-by-turn use of canal water. But the weak, for fear of the strong, do not resort to it. These observations emphasize the need to undertake similar, but less extensive or more intensive, studies on other irrigation systems in the country.

The other two articles in this group, 'Employer-Labourer Relationships in Agriculture' and 'Agrarian Regions' in fact belong to the last group. The first of these puts forward a classification of agricultural labourers in India into seven broad classes—four of which comprise what might be called free labour and three what might be called un-free labour. As the authors point out, without such a distinction, 'we cannot proceed to a realistic analysis of the market for agricultural labour in India'. This article first appeared in April-June, 1957 issue of this *Journal*. Presumably between then and 1960, when Thorner prepared their paper for the International Congress in Moscow, they came in possession of a classification of agricultural labourers in India along some such lines, for without it they could not have observed: "By and large the force of hired

labourers in Indian agriculture is now made up of free men." The other article, 'Agrarian Region' puts forward a scheme of agrarian regions comprising 20 major regions and 40 divisions. It is a well-thought out scheme based on seven criteria listed in the article though one would want to know the statistical procedure, if any was employed, of obtaining 20 major regions and 40 divisions on the basis of seven criteria. Without such a procedure, the scheme could be no more than somebody's judgment against somebody else's judgment.

The second group of articles grouped under the heading 'Trends' contain three substantial articles all reproduced from foreign sources. The Indian reader will therefore find them useful in one place. The first of these on 'Emergence of an Indian Economy, 1760-1960' was published in No. 4 of the series on India in *The Encyclopedia Americana*. It is a historical review useful to a foreign student. An Indian reader might not find it of great interest. The second article "De-Industrialization" in India, 1881-1931 was prepared for the First International Conference in Economic History, Stockholm, 1960. On the basis of the census data for 1881 and 1931, it concludes: "If, indeed, a major shift from industry to agriculture ever occurred during British rule in India, it might have happened some time between 1815 and 1880" and further: "It is indeed a remarkable phenomenon, and one worthy of further investigation, that agricultural production was reported as virtually constant, and the industrial structure of the economy as practically stationary, during a half century when India's population rose by nearly one hundred million." The phenomenon is certainly worthy of further examination.

The article on 'Long-Term Trends in Output' is reprinted from *Economic Growth: Brazil, India, Japan* edited by Simon Kuznets and others. It gives an excellent historical review of national income estimates in India and concludes: "In default of precise data, recent writers on Indian economic development have put forward two different opinions. Some hold that in the twentieth century per capita income has been rising; others, that it has not been rising. There is a third logical possibility, that per capita income has been declining. Until knowledge of India's economy and its evolution comes to rest on a more solid foundation, it would seem premature to rule out this third possibility."

Of the remaining two articles in this group, 'Ploughing the Plan Under' is the scathing criticism of the report of the Agricultural Production Team sponsored by the Ford Foundation which first appeared in the July 1959 issue of the *Economic Weekly*. The other article 'Elusive Agricultural Output Figures' which also appeared originally in the *Economic Weekly* (January 1960), is a critical examination of the agricultural production series published by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Though the criticism was almost out of date by the time it was published, it offers an illustration of the critical examination to which Thorner's always subjected data before using.

More extensive illustrations of the same critical attitude are available in the last group of six articles brought together under 'Censuses and Sample Surveys'. They assess critically four important bodies of statistical data: the Population Census of 1951, the Census of Landholdings, the Agricultural Labour Enquiry and the Rural Credit Survey. The first two articles on the Census find fault

with the economic classification employed by the Census. The first of these, 'Agrarian Revolution by Census Redefinition' has a valid point that in view of the nature of the data collected in a census, the interpretation to be put on them should be somewhat more tentative than appearing in the 1951 census Report. It concludes: "If India's land problem is to be resolved, it will require more than census redefinition" though the authors often give the impression that at least one important reason why India's land problem was not resolved was bad definitions. The second article 'Economic Concepts in the Census of India' concludes: "The serious difficulties encountered in the course of enumeration and the unsatisfactory nature of the data as finally presented stem from the fact that the basic economic categories employed in the Census of 1951 were not framed to suit the characteristic conditions of life in contemporary India." This might be so, though one wonders whether one could meet, within the limits of a census, all the nice points which Thorners make. The third article "The Fate of the Census of Landholdings" laments the fate of that census. The article on Agricultural Labour Enquiry concludes in a characteristic, though hackneyed, fashion: "These surveys may indeed prove valuable to other countries if they serve as an object lesson in how *not* to conduct agrarian enquiries." The article on the Rural Credit Survey concludes that "viewed as a scientific enquiry, the Rural Credit Survey must be deemed deficient in every major respect."

It is all along a record of unrelieved criticism and on reading through one begins to wonder as to what would satisfy Thorners. For instance, with regard to the RCS, they observe: "The most manifest of the sins of the RCS was in regard to the number and the length of their schedules and questionnaires. If the blank schedules etc. were all to be bound together between one set of covers, they would fill 100 pages of an ordinary octavo size volume." At the same time there are several aspects of their criticism which could only be met by enlarging the size and scope of these schedules and questionnaires. Thorners note "The method of field work upon which the RCS relied almost exclusively was that of oral interview" and "The RCS invited large errors of response" on several counts. For instance they note: "In the first place, debt is a painful subject not likely to be discussed easily or candidly with any one, let alone casual strangers carrying formidable questionnaires." Quite true. But Thorners also accuse the RCS because "on the supply side, the Committee's targets for the collection of quantitative data were extra-ordinarily modest." The criticism runs as follows: "Moneylenders, traders, and agriculturists with liquid resources were well-known to be the chief suppliers of credit in the countryside. So far as concerns the last group, the peasants who lent money, the Committee in drawing up their schedules for rural families, refrained from asking them how much they had lent or were lending. In explaining this, the Committee declared that they could not hope to get reliable replies. They expected that these agriculturists would refuse to disclose what they lent. When we turn to the only questionnaire drawn up for professional moneylenders, we find that here as well the Committee did *not* include questions asking the moneylenders how many loans they had outstanding or what was the total amount of credit they had extended. Nor were these questions put in the questionnaire for traders in agricultural commodities. Even at the outset the Committee seem to have abandoned the hope that they could obtain quantitative data on the 'supply' side from the persons in the best position to know, i.e., the principal suppliers themselves."

Much of such criticism is of course the result of a genuine ignorance regarding the mechanics of large-scale sample surveys and the limitations within which they were organized and executed. The criticism also often suffers because of a sincerity of purpose marred by a lack of sense of proportion. But this was not all. Unfortunately, there are also instances of a failure to adhere to the standards of objective criticism. For instance, because for certain reasons of operational convenience of field work, which were not difficult to understand, the RCS defined a sampling frame comprising of all cultivators and proposed to canvass what was called the farm business schedule, Thorners accuse the RCS of regarding every peasant a business entrepreneur. Thorners surely knew what they were doing. Their final verdict on the RCS, emphasized in the Postscript, was: "The Rural Credit Survey failed to make a scientific contribution because in every important aspect it was moulded by the predetermined policy favoured by the Committee." This might be true. But one suspects that Thorners' criticism of the same also failed to make a scientific contribution because in many important respects it was moulded by the requirements of a brief they were holding.

One admires nevertheless the energy and purpose which Thorners brought to bear and the amount of hard work they put into every bit of their writing. In India, they enjoyed a wide circle of readers and many of them would treasure this collection of their writings though, with one notable exception, there is probably not much that would stand a second reading. The one exception is of course the celebrated article "Ploughing the Plan Under". Apart from providing an excellent illustration of the energy and vehemence with which Thorners characteristically attacked, it also offers evidence that they did not altogether lack a sense of humour. In this devastating review of the report of the Ford Team, Thorners compare the Ford Team with a Bullock Team, for instance, and finding nothing to choose between, conclude: "Under the guise of an assessment of problems of food production by a panel of experts, we find a judgement against industrialization in India by a bench of amateurs." Altogether, the article is a superb specimen of the performance of a bull (or a pair of them ?) in a china shop.

V. M. DANDEKAR

*Survey of Capital and Credit in Agricultural Co-operative Societies in Great Britain*, William Morgan, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1960. Pp. xii + 143. 15s.

Great Britain has experienced a rapid development of agricultural and horticultural co-operation since the war and a continuing need for capital to finance it. The present survey inquires into the sources and uses of capital of these Societies and their adequacy to meet the Societies' own development and the legitimate credit needs of their members. The report falls into two parts: The first surveys the supply and use of capital in the agricultural co-operative movement between 1950 and 1958. The second part consists of short studies of selected societies with particular reference to their capital and development problems.

The important findings of this survey are as follows: The turnover of the British agricultural co-operatives has increased since 1950 by 0.5 per cent a year at constant 1950 prices and by 10 per cent at current prices. The growth in the