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BOOK REVIEWS

The Socio-Economic Structure of the Indian Village—Surveys of Villages in Gujarat and West Bengal, Tadashi Fukutake, Tsutomu Ouchi and Chie Nakane, The Institute of Asian Economic Affairs, Tokyo, Japan, 1964. Pp. 174.

The Indian village studies carried out in recent years have been restricted, almost exclusively, either to the narrow areas of social anthropology and ethnology or are exclusively concerned with the measurement of economic categories like income, employment and savings. A few village studies, notably by the Agro-Economic Research Centres, have tried to blend the two aspects together, though with scant success. It is unfortunate, because the change which is being witnessed in the rural side is all-pervasive and encompasses the social as well as economic aspects of rural life. It is in this context that the comprehensive study of two groups of villages, in Gujarat and in West Bengal, by a team of Japanese scholars has a significance of its own.

The authors of this study stayed in the country for nearly two months, of which one month was spent in actual residence in the villages. In spite of their short stay the study in no way gives an impression of a hurried or casual survey. It suggests an extensive study of the source-material and an intensive probing during the stay in the villages by the authors.

The village agglomerations in Gujarat were selected near the city of Baroda, while those in West Bengal were in the vicinity of Bolpur. The material collected for this study has been presented in three sections, the village economy, family and kinship and, village organisation. More or less the same pattern is followed in presenting the material for Gujarat as well as West Bengal villages.

While discussing the village economy, the authors have laid great stress on the occupational structure. The picture presented is a static one which, probably, was unavoidable in view of the limited time at the disposal of the authors. The occupational structure of a village undoubtedly reveals many important characteristics of the village society. However, until and unless a probe is made to see how the existing occupational structure has emerged, the study, from the point of view of change, will have only a limited value. For instance, the authors' suggestion that the absence of a large number of non-agricultural workers does not mean that the process of urbanization has been retarded, is unexceptionable. Yet, it will be difficult to surmise from the data whether the swelling in the ranks of agriculturists is more due to the decay in the handicrafts or due to the compulsion on the erstwhile absentee landlords to take up the plough or due to climbing up of some of the share-croppers and tenants to the group of land proprietors. Besides, if the occupational structure is to be taken as an index of change it will have to be supplemented by a rigorous study of immigration and migration of population of various occupational groups. The authors were probably wise in not estimating the income of the household during the course of their short stay in the village. One feels, however, that a detailed study of crop pattern in the various size-groups of holdings could have been quite revealing.

The authors' discussion of the family and social institutions is really the most rewarding. It is for the first time, to my knowledge, that an effort is made to see

not only the different variants of family—rather than group them in one or two broad classifications—but also to seek the economic rationale of these variants as domestic units as well as proprietary groups. The importance of laws of inheritance in shaping the contours of family organisation is studied with great care and insight.

As was to be expected, in their section on village organisation the authors have laid great stress on caste. Here again, instead of making sweeping generalisations the authors have gone into the details of the relationship of individual family with the caste group to which it belongs. This study provides confirmation to a hypothesis that caste in its generalised sense is more a notional category. In day-to-day life groups of varying size and differing cohesion substitute the generalised institution of a caste. The more important from the point of view of economic relationships is the patrilineal group, *Kutumb*. For some other social purposes, including the necessity to satisfy the conditions of endogamy, a group of closely meshed *gotras* is more important. Even for satisfying the sense of belonging to a sub-caste, probably, provides a better shelter than the caste. These differences in group affinities, sometimes subtle at other times quite obvious, are more important for a study of change and its manifestation.

The authors could not bestow the same care in the study of formal village institutions including Panchayat. The description to the functioning of the Panchayat, specially in the West Bengal villages, is rather superficial. On the other hand, the discussion of the leadership pattern in the Gujarat villages and the process by which the present leadership has emerged successful is indeed very carefully brought out. The impact of other village institutions, official as well as non-official, goes practically unevaluated. This is rather sad, because in the country a plethora of institutions have come into existence and the life in the villages is deeply touched by the activities, if not the very existence, of these institutions.

In the end, a word is in order on the grim foreboding expressed by the authors at the conclusion of their study. The authors feel that the present stagnant conditions of the villages are not likely to change because so far no force of change, internal or external, has touched the submerged sections which constitute the bulk of rural society. Amongst these lower sections the authors seem to be particularly, and rightly, distressed by the deplorable conditions of the untouchables. One feels, however, that precisely at this juncture the authors have permitted their commendable humanism to be substituted for the method of detailed enquiry. Even if one were not to take recourse to the findings of other surveys, their own studies also hardly warrant the conclusions which have been arrived at by Prof. Fukutake and his colleagues. For instance, in the agglomeration of Samiala in Gujarat, out of 228 households there are only 2 households of *Bhangis*. Of these two, one is having a small land holding, while the second supplements its income from non-agricultural labour. There is a ground to believe that untouchables have become more foot-loose and they constitute a bulk of the migrants to cities where they have not to suffer the deprivation, economic and social, to the same extent as in their remote village places. The salutary impact of this migration is felt by those who stay behind. Their economic condition, in any case, appears to be tolerably better as compared to some other lower castes especially the artisan

castes. The point which this reviewer wishes to emphasise is that though there cannot be any apology for the conditions of untouchability as it prevails in Indian society, it will be a mistake to consider untouchability, in its ritualistic manifestation, as *the* indicator of a stagnant or a repressive society.

All told the authors have given enough food for thought to the students of Indian rural social structure and have more than amply justified their assignment.

V. S. VYAS

Producers' Response to Changes in Prices and Marketing Policies—A Case Study of Sugarcane and Paddy in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, S. C. Gupta and A. Majid, Agricultural Economics Research Centre, University of Delhi, Delhi, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1965. Pp. viii + 79. Rs. 12.00.

The question of farmers' response to changing prices of their produce in an under-developed economy has proved a fascinating subject of enquiry for research workers. The present study is an exploration in the same field. It was undertaken by the Agro-Economic Research Centre of the Delhi University at the instance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. It is a case study in the sense that it concerns itself with sugarcane and paddy, and that too for only one district, namely, Deoria in Eastern U.P.

The book consists of seven chapters. Chapter III deals with the main subject of enquiry and hence constitutes the crux of the study. Chapters IV to VI present the findings of a survey of 100 farmers of Deoria district, undertaken by the authors primarily to assess the extent of differentials in production costs and returns for the two crops under investigation. Chapter VII summarises the main conclusions of the study.

It seems that the authors have not devoted careful attention to the precise formulation of their hypothesis. While studying the relationship between area and price, they relate a given year's acreage with the previous year's price on the tacit assumption that farmers' price expectations at sowing time are primarily determined by the price realised from the last year's harvest. While this may be a good hypothesis to work with, this is not the only way prices enter into farmers' decision making. Anyway, for a crop like sugarcane this is not a very meaningful hypothesis for the following reasons. For the period under study, *i.e.*, 1949-50 to 1961-62, up to 1953-54 the guaranteed minimum price of sugarcane was announced a little before the harvesting time and from 1953-54 onwards it has always been announced one year in advance, *i.e.*, well before sowing time for sugarcane. Thus, the relevant sugarcane prices for verifying the cane growers' response would be the guaranteed prices announced at sowing time, or previous year's price if cane price was not announced well in advance of sowing time. Consequently, the findings of this study pertaining to farmers' response to changing price conditions suffers from this serious drawback.

Again, sugarcane is a crop which is used for manufacture of three products, *i.e.*, sugar, gur and *khandsari*. Consequently, it becomes essential to study area

response not only in relation to sugarcane price offered by the sugar factories, *i.e.*, the guaranteed price fixed by the Government, but also the price realised from its conversion into *gur* and *khandsari*. The present study has ignored *gur* and *khandsari* prices on the strength of an observation of rather doubtful validity. The authors state "As much as 85.2 per cent of the total output of sugarcane in 1961-62 was, therefore, supplied to the mills in the area, and only the remaining proportion was utilised for other purposes" (p. 11). It is not indicated how this percentage has been worked out. Surely, it would be inappropriate to arrive at this percentage with the help of a sample survey of 100 farm households only. Moreover, the high percentage of cane sold to the mills in 1961-62 season, when farmers' willingness to sell cane to the sugar mills was very high because *gur* and *khandsari* prices were crashing due to abundant sugar supplies in the country, does not mean that *gur* and *khandsari* accounted for a small proportion of cane output in the remaining years of the period under study.

As for the methodology of this study, the authors' attempt to assess the farmers' response in the short run by removing trend element from time series of relative areas and prices of the two crops with the help of link relatives is questionable. When one is studying one year's relative acreage against the expected relative price, one is surely concerned with the farmers' response in the short period and nothing else.

Any study pertaining to farmers' response to cane prices will be incomplete unless changes in *gur* and *khandsari* prices are also duly taken into account. This can be best done by a multiple regression approach rather than the simple ratio method as used in the study under review. The multiple regression approach has the additional advantage that one can not only introduce price variable with more than one year's lag, but also isolate the influence of other factors on area. For example, for a crop like sugarcane, in which ratooning practice is very common in view of the considerable savings in seed costs and land preparation costs, this year's acreage will also be determined to some extent by acreage sown last year. Unless an integrated approach is adopted in such studies, one cannot say anything definite and precise about farmers' responsiveness to changing price situations.

The main contribution of the study lies in the survey data which will be found useful by many research workers in their own studies. The reviewer would wish to make only one observation about the analysis of this data by the authors. Since sugarcane is a one-year crop and paddy is a half-year crop, the high returns from sugarcane compared to paddy (5 to 7 times depending upon whether imputed value of family labour is taken into account or not) as revealed in this study are misleading. It is to be hoped that the authors' incorrect remarks—"the prevalent prices of other agricultural products are *not* taken into account while fixing the (cane) prices (p. 52)"—are not based on this finding.

B. D. DHAWAN

Adjustments and Economic Planning in Canadian Agriculture, Peter Harsany, Academic Publishing Co., Montreal, 1964. Pp. 116. \$3.50.

This study on 'Adjustments and Economic Planning in Canadian Agriculture' was originally presented as a discussion paper and later published as what may

perhaps be called a monograph. The subject-matter of the study is discussed in six chapters. The basic objective of the study, as stated by the author at the end of the first chapter, is "to examine.....those adjustments that.....are necessary to the agricultural system, considering their effects on the whole Canadian economy and their consequent benefits to the nation as a whole, not merely to its agricultural population."

The first two chapters are devoted to an examination and analysis of the present position of the agricultural sector in Canadian economy, making a comparison with other industries in Canada as well as through some international comparisons. In conclusion, it is stated that prosperity in Canada is in integrate correlation with the prosperity of her agricultural industry. In Chapter III, which forms the largest single chapter of this treatise, Dr. Harsany analyses the Canadian agricultural industry and examines a multitude of factors such as the distribution of the use of productive land, consumption of chemical fertilizers, crop rotations, yield rates, extent of tractorisation, estimated net income per acre of principal field crops, manpower needs of agriculture, etc. He also examines in some detail the agricultural productivity, economic, social, and political aspects of the overwhelming wheat production in Canada.

Various studies made on the outlook of the Canadian agricultural developments are examined in Chapter IV. These studies contain such projections (for the years ending 1970, 1980 or 2000) as population changes; consumption and/or export requirements of principal field crops, dairy products, meat, eggs, etc.; increase in yields; disposable income; resource requirements for producing the required quantities of the various agricultural products; impact of mechanisation; drop in labour force and its effect on the migration from farms; and the like. The common characteristics of these studies are to forecast the probable course of the Canadian agricultural production based on domestic and export demand expectations. Chapter V deals with the conditioning factors of economic planning in Canadian agriculture. Human factor as a determinant in economic planning is stressed and it is observed that Canadian farmers' readiness to accept progress with regard to suggested changes in production system is guarantee for the success of an economic plan. Besides, he states that to carry out a well prepared and methodically elaborated economic plan in Canada, only well co-ordinated subsidising and aggressive international marketing activity accompanied by other constructive policy measures is needed. Some difficulties towards the suggested adjustments in short-run planning are recognised by the author. It is pointed out that intentionally or not, there is a strong influence at the present time to keep farmers in the wheat business; the general attitude is to let the farmer produce in whatever way he can if he is efficient, and if he is inefficient he should go out of business even if it means leaving the land uncultivated; and that if the yields are too low, so much better: the lesser the problem in marketing. To this tendency he gives the term "suicide policy" of the Canadian agriculture. From the viewpoint of a long-run economic plan for the Canadian agriculture, keeping in view the national interest and the expected world demand for agricultural products, he suggests to produce with the highest possible efficiency a maximum quantity of salable goods, without exceeding the rational level of production costs. He emphasises to take into consideration not only the increasing population but also the increasing purchasing power of the population as the income elasticity of

demand for food in under-developed countries is high; changing dietary requirements of the developed and semi-developed countries with which it is suggested to concentrate on food trade (assuming that the U.S.A. would continue to take care of the under-developed countries); the trend of the increasing demand for food of animal origin which grows with income; the price level of livestock products which with industrialisation and economic growth is rising faster than the price of field crops, especially the price of grain; and the importance of increased pulse production (field peas, field beans, etc.) in their planning.

In the last chapter, Dr. Harsany has suggested a production pattern to be attained by the year 2000. He states that an economic plan for Canadian agriculture must fulfil two criteria: it must achieve a transition of the producing system in accordance with the increased adjustments; and it must meet and profit from the increasing international demand for agricultural products. The goal for a gradual increase in production through extension of acreage and pushing the yields up is emphasised. A well elaborated regional programming is proposed to assure the best location for each individual production, thereby increasing productivity. It is observed that adjustments in the production programme, use of chemical fertilizers, technical development such as mechanisation, and irrigation will increase efficiency and yields to a great extent, stressing that with relation to such improvement measures the question of remunerativeness has to be kept in mind.

The principles and suggested adjustments for field crops, livestock and livestock products, and the agricultural unemployment situation are elaborated. Detailed statistical information is also furnished on the distribution of virgin land to be brought under cultivation; use of total farm land; acreage, yields and production of individual field crops; number of different kinds of livestock; and the manpower needs of the Canadian agriculture planned for the year 2000.

To accomplish this plan, the author calls for a well organised government subsidising policy, nation-wide surveys and research as well as thorough educational and extension programme. He states that the distribution of the plan will have to be elaborated as efficiently as possible with respect to regional areas concerned and the time element involved. A thorough survey of regional production patterns is desired with the aim of increasing production efficiency to the fullest extent within the frame of the planned transition.

This brief study would be known for the fact that in less than 60 pages of the running text (excluding tables, figures, etc.), the author has quoted from as many as 66 references. This shows not only his concern possibly for examining all the existing literature, but also his patience and keen interest in the problem, and Dr. Harsany has to be complimented for the same. However, it would have been worth the time and trouble to discuss some of the important resource inputs like chemical fertilizers, irrigation, mechanisation, etc., as factors contributing to higher yields throwing light on the expected extent of their individual contribution in increasing yields of individual field crops. Besides, some details on the nature and scope of the suggested nation-and region-wide surveys, research, and the educational and extension programmes, if provided, would have added much to its utility.

In conclusion, those concerned with the planning of agricultural development in Canada will find the study informative as well as useful. But, there is nothing in the study by way of methodology and procedures adopted for planning that may interest the students of agricultural planning and those who are connected with agricultural planning in other countries.

B. L. AGRAWAL

Seasons and Prices—The Role of the Weather in English Agricultural History, E. L. Jones, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1964. Pp. 193. 28s.

From the title of the book one may expect the contents to centre around the change of prices of different agricultural commodities in different seasons and the role played by weather in such a change. But, if one realises that the expected study is an ambitious one and involves not only time but human labour and proper data, there may not be much disappointment in store. Whatever little remains is also wiped out when the author's aim in writing the book is known. The author, realising the limitations of time and other problems inherent in such a study, says : “. . . what I have attempted, therefore, is a sketch of the impact which the weather has had on English agriculture, mainly during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, intended for the general reader and therefore without statistical exercises or reconstructions of the weather patterns of the past for their intrinsic interest.”

If one goes through the book, keeping the above in view, he is satisfied to the extent of the knowledge which possibly can be had from a progressive farmer. There is neither narration nor analysis. However, there is other side of the hedge also. Chapter 7 on “Sheep Production,” chapter 10 on “Combatting The Weather” and Part IV of the book are somewhat informative and interesting. Elaboration and streamlining of these three (Chapters 7 and 10 and Part IV) would have been of more use and interest to the reader as well as research worker. If at all it was necessary to retain something from the rest of the book, it would have been a good idea to link it up with these three.

B. MURALIDHARA RAO

The Papaloapan Project—Agricultural Development in the Mexican Tropics, Thomas T. Poleman, Food Research Institute, Stanford University, Stanford University Press, California, U.S.A., 1964. Pp. xiv + 167. \$ 4.50.

Inhospitable terrain and unfavourable climate afforded (in 1950) a mere ten per cent of Mexico's geographical area to crop-agriculture and of this ten per cent only a little more than half was actually cropped. Thus, though relatively sparsely populated, Mexico's per capita cultivated land amounted to only 0.4 hectare. The rate of population growth increased from 1.89 per cent per annum in the early 'thirties to 2.81 during 1948-52. (The estimate for 1956-60 puts the rate of increase at 3.41 per cent). Hence the quest for more land and a thrust into what are called the 'humid tropics' of which the Papaloapan river basin forms a part.

The Papaloapan Commission was created in 1947 and was invested with authority to undertake a wide variety of functions on the lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Poleman relates the sixteen years' chequered career of the Project which has now all but ended in a whimper—" . . . the project has been in abeyance since 1961 with virtually all new investment suspended . . . "

In a crucial way the fortunes of the Project have depended on the undulations of the political life of Mexico. There were three radical policy revisions—in 1952, in 1957 and again in 1959, which synchronised with changes in Government. During the first ten years the project was at least financially well supported although subjected once to a marked revision of goals. But then it fell out of official favour—Poleman does not tell why—and now is engaged in works of maintenance only. Part of the failure is explained by dual authority. The Commission was a multipurpose organisation but had no powers of enforcement over the officials of other governmental departments working within its jurisdiction; they in turn resented the proliferation of the Commission's activities and suspected it of empire-building. The full ramifications of the bureaucratic rivalry have not been related by the author but could very well be imagined. So in the final phase the wings of the Commission were clipped one by one and most activities transferred back to the concerned Ministries. Yet on balance not a little of the blame will attach to the Commission itself which handled a number of activities in an inept and amateurish way. Insufficient pre-planning marked many of its ventures. In its flood-control works and road-building programme the Commission had a striking measure of success but where the human element was involved, as for instance, in agricultural and resettlement operations, its procedures left much to be desired.

The author opens with a neat presentation of Mexico's agricultural problem and surroundings. The next two chapters deal with the background of the humid tropics and the river basin. The remainder of the book, which is slightly less than half, then addresses itself to the Project and the lessons to be derived from its history.

The account which Poleman has presented could have been far more detailed and penetrating, but he was handicapped by paucity of published data and records—and this is no less a comment on the Commission's attitude towards basic work.

S. H. DESHPANDE

Capital, Saving and Credit in Peasant Societies—Studies from Asia, Oceania, The Caribbean and Middle America, Raymond Firth and B. S. Yamey (Eds.), George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1964. Pp. 399. 45s.

Though much has been written on various aspects of agriculture in under-developed economies, there is no general theory evolved as yet which can explain this phenomenon of under-development in all its facets. Numerous concepts and notions were developed, became instantly popular but had to be discarded in course of time or were accepted as only tentative explanations of the behaviour patterns of such economies. Important among them are concepts and notions

of marginal productivity of labour being zero or of the demonstration effect of conspicuous consumption in under-developed countries leading to low propensity to save resulting in perpetuation of low levels of income. The former has now been ably exposed by eminent author like Prof. T. W. Shultz and the latter has found a challenge in the refined notions of Bauer and Yamey regarding "aspiration effect." These are but a few examples of untested notions that have gripped the economic thinking on under-developed economies for quite a considerable time.

A precise formulation of the theory of under-development presupposes a precise specification of economic and non-economic constraints and forces peculiar to under-developed economies and also a precise postulation of the pattern of their inter-relationship. In this matter anthropologists, who have tended to concentrate on studies of small societies, have a lot to offer and the inter-disciplinary collaboration between the economists and the anthropologists is full of promise for building or refining economic theoretical superstructure.

This book which has been organised and edited jointly by an anthropologist and an economist and which brings together materials relating to a number of peasant societies, varying widely both geographically and also in terms of types of social and economic structures, is a welcome addition that fills the gap between these two disciplines of thought. It contains as many as 17 essays on the problem of capital, credit and savings in various peasant societies in Asia, Oceania, the Caribbean and Middle America. They have different institutions, different social frames, different customs and sometimes even different social values. Even then an underlying current that runs through all of them may suggest a unity in diversity of the behaviour patterns.

Raymond Firth, the co-editor of this book puts forth a viewpoint from economic anthropology in his essay on 'Capital, Saving and Credit in Peasant Societies.' According to him in these communities, contrary to general belief, patterns of consumption do not operate as a simple negative to the propensity to save : they have strong positive sanctions and these sanctions are of a social as well as an individual order. Besides, obedience to the social dictates of customs does not inhibit rational calculations. Describing the social custom of building up stocks of goods with a view to transferring them to needy persons and so earning social prestige thereby, e.g., *Potlatch* among North-West Coast Indians, the author emphasises that even these transfers are a stimulant to further production. So there are many powerful elements in the incentive pattern of capital accumulation.

A case study of Rossel Island, a little non-monetary community in the South-Western Pacific by Lorraine Baric describes and analyses a situation in which the will to economise, the desire to maximise advantage individually and economic calculations can be directed willy-nilly into a complicated and largely stagnant economic system.

A study by Fredrik Barth presents a summary analysis of some aspects of the pastoral nomad economy of the Basseri tribe of Fars, South Persia. Their subsistence is based on assets of two main kinds, domesticated animals and grazing rights. Herding and management techniques are such that with every increase in

capital, the rate of increase in income decreases. The author shows how these characteristics of capital and labour requirements determine the family development cycle, bring about social homogeneity within camps and common saving and consumption patterns.

Describing "Capital, Saving and Credit in a Malay Peasant Economy," M. G. Swift is impressed by the soundness of this economy and by its ability to give a standard of living to those depending on it which compared very favourably with other Asian peasant economies. However, according to him, this well-being is probably temporary unless rapid and far-reaching steps are taken to increase the stock of capital in view of continuous population increases. A noticeable feature of this economy is absence of peasant indebtedness and of the exploitation of peasantry through credit relations. This can be probably ascribed to a characteristic of rubber production that requires only inexpensive working capital.

Another interesting study is by C. S. Belshaw on "Institutions of Capital Formation and Distribution" among Fijian people of the Sigatoka River Valley and adjacent coastal areas in the administrative province of Nadroga and Navosa. The primary pursuit in the area is agriculture, which may be described summarily as highly diversified and largely cash-oriented. No family, even in the remote mountainous region lives entirely on the products of subsistence agriculture. Labour is becoming expensive and scarce in this economy. Most of the capital assets are privately owned, though such personally owned productive equipment is supplemented by a few control pools held by co-operative organisations, e.g., in case of tractors. However, the techniques and processes available to a Fijian in his task of capital formation are on one hand diverse and highly experimental and on the other incomplete and inadequate. It is due to this that the stock of capital has reached a particular point, but has gone so far and no further.

These are but a few of the essays that are included in the book. All the essays furnish a wealth of information on various aspects of the peasant economies. There are references or observations in various studies on the peasant economies suggesting long-term stability in the values of such economic variables as the prices of particular goods or services, or the rate of interest in particular classes of transactions. It seems as if for long periods particular prices, wage rates or rates of interest have remained unchanged despite other changes in the peasant economies at large. These are all the issues that suggest a poser to the economists and the illustrative material provided by the anthropologists would be of great help in their quest for theoretical formulation of under-development.

(MRS.) TARA SHUKLA

Agricultural Labour in Four Indian Villages, V. S. Vyas (Ed.), Agro-Economic Research Centre for Gujarat & Rajasthan, Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth, Vallabh Vidyanagar, District Kaira (Gujarat), 1964. Pp. 122.

This small book covers four case studies of agricultural labour conditions in four villages and summary observations on them by the editor. Three of these villages are in different parts of Gujarat and one in Rajasthan, representing broadly Shekhavati region of the State. Publication of this book as the third in the series of Sardar Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth research studies, was made possible by the grant given by the University Grants Commission.

These four studies reveal interesting features of the labour situation. They describe and analyse agricultural labour population, their wage rates and terms of employment, as also their levels of living. The studies have mainly relied on the data collected during the village surveys conducted by the Agro-Economic Research Centre for Gujarat and Rajasthan. If these surveys had been directed entirely and purposively for the study of agricultural labour, these would have had probably a different orientation. In that case, agricultural labour as a factor in the agricultural industry carried out under different conditions of inputs, facilities and development impact, would have probably received greater analytical treatment. The editor, Dr. Vyas has had this awareness. His summary observations and in particular the attempt made to examine the factors determining the demand for wage-paid labour and the factors determining the wage rates in agriculture, are interesting contributions in that direction.

These summary observations give the most of what these case studies have to supply by way of contribution to the understanding of the economic conditions of agricultural labourers and their social and cultural aspects. Dr. Vyas has observed that the wage rates of agricultural workers depend more on the income of the cultivators than on any other factor. In Ankodia, cultivators have higher income because of a very high proportion of gross cropped area under tobacco. The wage rates are also higher here than in any of the three villages. In Afawa village, with Halis forming the majority of households, the income of the cultivator is almost as high as in Ankodia. But the wage rates are very much lower. This is mainly because of the social conditions of the agricultural labour market in the village. The individual case studies do not supply data on the income of the cultivators. But the data on expenditure shows that the gap in the expenditure of the agricultural labour family and that of the cultivator, is wider in Afawa and Ankodia villages than in the other two villages.

As has been mentioned in the 'Introduction,' the four case studies have been prepared on the basis of a common outline. As a result none has an individual personality of its own. Printing and proof-reading errors in them are irritating. In a few places the statements and figures given, do not tally. One observation repeated in each case study is not substantiated by facts. It is about agricultural labour supplied by the families who take it as their subsidiary occupation. The studies observe that agricultural labour contributes a small proportion of total income of these families and, therefore, the contribution of these families to the total labour supply is not significant. But their number and days of employment as agricultural labourers are significant. There is another similar observation that there is a marked reluctance on the part of the cultivators having large-size holdings to do physical labour and this is claimed to have been borne out by a table which shows the number of economically active persons per hectare. Obviously, the number of family labour per hectare would decline with the increase in the size of holdings; this does not establish the conclusion drawn.

The book supplies good information on economic conditions of agricultural labour in four villages in different tracts. The summary observations by Dr. Vyas make an excellent analysis of the situation obtaining in the four different villages. The individual case studies are, however, weak in this respect.

W. B. DONDE