

Book Reviews

E. W. BOVILL, *English Country Life 1780-1830*. Oxford University Press, 1962. xii+266 pp., illus. 30s.

This book is an enjoyable introduction to the flavour of fifty years of country house and sporting life. It has been produced and illustrated with the restrained elegance we have come to expect from university publishing houses. It is crammed with anecdote and detail, Mr Bovill's selection of which is surer than his treatment of themes. And precisely because the book offers no serious analysis it may be taken as a useful test case of the sort of rural history which nowadays seeps down to the man in the street, or at least the man in the public library.

Mr Bovill borrows his propositions about agriculture from contemporary didactic writings and later textbooks, never from recent journal articles or monographs. The outcome is a rigid, old-fashioned account of agricultural change. Until the late eighteenth century, he asserts, the greater part of English farmland was open field, "cultivated under an archaic and profitless system to which all were compelled to conform," which "prohibited" individual enterprise and forbade change "of any kind." In short, "progress was impossible," and the fertility of most common fields had been exhausted. Outside the open fields lay "seemingly limitless wastes," but legal and customary rights made their cultivation "equally impossible." Only Parliamentary enclosure could smash this vicious system, but the heavy cost of enclosure was to have "disastrous" and "dire" social consequences, for the open-field system while it "closed the door to progressive agriculture" had at least the merit of giving "every" countryman a livelihood and perquisites from his share in the land. Mr Bovill is the complete 'pessimist'. In the towns, he claims, the industrial revolution resulted in an unspeakably horrid existence at subsistence pay for the workers; in the country enclosure (once it had broken the grip of the

open-field system) caused "most of the troubles."

After this unhappy sketch of the economic background Mr Bovill hurries on to indulge his personal delight in the history of gardening, planting, field sports, coaching, and tales about servants. On these topics he is entertaining, and to pass on to them after a preliminary look at the agricultural economy is reasonable enough in a book of this kind. As Professor Clapham observed, foundations exist to carry better things. Unfortunately, the foundations here are antique and unsafe. Furthermore, Mr Bovill is afflicted with that range of sentimental attitudes which have given rural history an unenviable reputation as comic or suspect. He deplores towns, he believes fox-hunting is a democratic national sport, he thinks that character not wealth still commands esteem in rural England (an oversimplification which even his evidence from the past damages), he assumes that his readers have servant trouble, he uses phrases like "simple country people," and he laments the ousting of coaches by the railways as "a grievous loss." Surely it is possible to love the countryside and its past without this whimsical involvement, and to combine with affection a passion for the serious study of rural society and the agricultural economy?

E. L. JONES

MARY LOBEL (ed.), *A History of the County of Oxford*. Vol. VII, Dorchester and Thame Hundreds. Published for the Institute of Historical Research by Oxford University Press, 1962. xxviii+248 pp. £6 6s.

This volume covers 21,860 acres in 247 pages but costs as much as Volume VI of the Victoria History of Oxfordshire, published only three years ago, which covered 59,520 acres in 388 pages. By far the longest article is that devoted to Thame, and this is the outstanding contribution to a volume of uniformly good quality. Appetites are whetted near the beginning by the attempt of Nicholas IV's provisor to take

the prebend of Thame by force in 1293; and they are not subsequently disappointed. The division between *Trade and Industry* and *Agrarian History* is well handled, except perhaps for some awkward repetition of information from tax assessments. It is impossible to say how old was the emphasis on meadow and pasture which shows itself clearly at Thame by the end of the fifteenth century; the preponderance of this kind of land in the farm sold by Thomas Elys in 1311 suggests that it was quite old, though not strong enough to bring about depopulation until the sixteenth century. With such good grazing available it is only surprising that open-field husbandry could act as a brake on conversion from arable to pasture down to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In the Middle Ages Thame belonged to the see of Lincoln. A survey of the bishop's lands made in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, now in the possession of the Queen's College, Oxford, covers his estates here and in five other parishes described in this volume—Chislehampton, Dorchester, Burcot, Drayton St Leonard, and Stadhampton. An imperfect guide to the real world of the thirteenth-century peasant—it is hard, for example, to believe in the ten resilient virgaters who stayed the course at Chislehampton between the making of the survey and the Hundred Rolls—this document is nevertheless of great interest, not least for the carrying services which it records. By contrast, evidence relating to the economic and social history of these parishes in the later Middle Ages is disappointingly thin; little is known about farming practice and the layout of the fields before the sixteenth century. At Chislehampton, Dorchester, and Stadhampton enclosure was well advanced by the end of the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century both Dorchester and Stadhampton could boast experimental farmers; of particular interest is Thomas Smith's description of farming in Stadhampton in 1793. The description of Burcot's economic and social history contains much useful information, but the lines of the narrative do not stand out very clearly here in

the chronological setting which is a broad requirement of the *V.C.H.* The most interesting man in Burcot's history was Hugh le Frankelyn, who claimed in 1279 that his ancestors had been free sokemen serving the king for forty days in war with coat of mail, lance, and helmet; the bishops of Lincoln had withdrawn this service. Four men at Drayton St Leonard and one at Stadhampton made a similar claim.

Of the other parishes described in this volume, South Stoke and Great Milton deserve mention for their treatment of economic and social history. South Stoke, divided by the Icknield Way into riverside Stoke and upland Woodcote, might be used as a textbook illustration of the effect of woodland on agrarian and social development, for medieval Woodcote, once a clearing in the woods, was a village of mainly free tenures, light labour services, and early enclosure. The topographical description of the parish is excellent. The statement that Eynsham Abbey's demesne "in 1269 was said to consist of 12 virgates; in 1279 of 8 or 9 virgates" is perhaps a little rash, for the sources measure the demesne in carucates and hides, and the size of the virgate at South Stoke—fifteen acres—raises a suspicion that there may have been more than four to the hide. The point is important: if the demesne consisted of only twelve virgates in 1269, it was to be nearly doubled in the next hundred years. The article includes useful information about manorial leases from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Nothing is said—and presumably nothing known—about fines in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but the records of Christ Church, Oxford, the post-Reformation lords of the manor, furnish details of fines for renewals of leases between 1669 and 1831.

The map of Great Milton before enclosure is the only map in this volume which has been printed from an unsatisfactory block. Little is known of open-field agriculture here before the end of the fifteenth century. By then sheep-farming was prominent and enclosure had begun. Details are given of the numbers of sheep kept on the commons and pasture of

Great Milton by some yeomen and gentry of this and other parishes. Amercements for overburdening the commons should perhaps be interpreted differently in different parishes. Four families found at Great Milton in the fifteenth century were still there in the eighteenth century. More unusually, woad was cultivated on the prebendal manor in the seventeenth century. It must always be difficult to divide the history of a parish between the sections traditional in a *V.C.H.* article, but it is hard to see why most of the material in the last two paragraphs of the *Economic and Social History* of Great Milton was not put later, with *Schools and Charities*.

The temptation to offer advice is powerfully present to every reviewer of the *Victoria Histories*, and some of the advice, if followed, might weaken the History's position as a standard work of reference by making it too sensitive to the merely passing fashions of historical scholarship. The History holds its position by virtue of the sheer weight of its learning, well exemplified in the present volume. One could wish that there might be more reflection on some of the problems posed by the facts—for example, the reality underlying the medieval tenemental pattern—but this is to ask for a few extra pages, not for a different kind of History.

B. F. HARVEY

SUSAN REYNOLDS (ed.), *A History of the County of Middlesex*, Vol. III (*The Victoria History of the Counties of England*). Oxford University Press, 1962. xx+326 pp.; 37 illustrations, 7 maps. Index to Vols. II and III. £7 7s.

The *V.C.H.*, even among English institutions, is unique. In what other series could the gap between the first two published volumes run to fifty-one years, and those be the second and third, while it is still not known how many there are to be in the complete design? The greater part of Vol. II consisted of general articles; these were not satisfactory at the time the volume came out in 1911, and now they can be seen to be quite inadequate, especially in the economic chapters. It will be

a measure of the success of the present editorial team how far the promised Vol. I proves to remedy the shortcomings of the general articles in Vol. II without professing to do so.

The volume just published is the result of local enthusiasm prevailing on all twenty-six borough and district authorities in the county and the London County Council (but not the Middlesex County Council) to share the cost of writing it—an arrangement which, with respect, is not the same as that in Wiltshire, which is infelicitously stated in an editorial to have furnished the prototype; there are significant differences, at any rate to Middlesex eyes. It contains topographical descriptions of the second part of Spelthorne hundred (Shepperton to Teddington), the whole of Isleworth, and the first part of Elthorne (Cowley to Harlington). It thus covers most of the places within the area lying in the great loop of the Thames from Staines to Isleworth, an area full of interest to the agricultural historian. In the days of Elizabeth I the northern edge of this district was celebrated by John Norden as supplying the finest wheat—the manchet for the royal table; but the principal interest of Middlesex in this connection lies in specialized crops, especially soft fruits and the king of apples, Cox's Orange Pippin, first raised in the garden of a retired brewer at Colnbrook End, near Stanwell, about 1830. The soil of southern Middlesex is "one of the finest and most easily worked market-garden soils in this or any other country," according to the 1948 report of the Waters Committee on Sand and Gravel (of all things!). And what do we grow on it now? An airport, and things like that.

Broadly, the agricultural story is that of change from arable farming to meadow, especially on the clay belt—at Greenford in 1810 a survey of the demesne recommended that future leases should be drawn to prevent return to arable because that could lessen the value of the estate. Farther south, on the gravels of the Thames plain, things were not very prosperous when William Cobbett was observing the road from Richmond to Chert-

sey Bridge in 1822. "All Middlesex is *ugly*," he wrote; "the soil is a gravel at bottom with a black loam at top near the Thames; further back it is a sort of spewy gravel." He added of the labourers that they looked to be "about half *Saint Giles's*: dirty, and have every appearance of drinking gin." After Cobbett's day, the loam was found to be excellent for market gardening, by R. D. Blackmore (of *Lorna Doone*) for example, at Teddington, and the gravel for building and road construction. The parish-by-parish story, with its maddening gaps and silences—at Teddington "after this time [the 1360's] nothing is known about the tenants' farming and very little about the community at all" until the nineteenth century—is deftly told, and the date, often surprisingly late, at which agriculture ceased to be the principal occupation of the places is carefully ascertained. The main interest of the story lies outside its territorial limit, in the development of London as a specialized market, first for hay and then for market produce (and for bricks and gravel), and in its final overflow, the bursting of the great wen, which has not yet completely submerged Cobbett's spewy gravel or the scene described by Matthew Arnold on his way to Laleham: "the great road thro' the flat, drained Middlesex plain, with its single standing pollarded elms."

MICHAEL ROBBINS

C. STELLA DAVIES, *The Agricultural History of Cheshire, 1750-1850*. Chetham Society, Third Series, x, 1960. xii+230 pp. 35s.

In the past the Chetham Society has published many more volumes bearing on the agrarian history of Lancashire than of Cheshire. This volume helps to redress the balance, but suffers from the fact that it deals only with the short period 1750-1850, and since the earlier centuries are shrouded in mystery, this book lacks the long perspective so necessary for a proper evaluation of the significance of this period. A knowledge of developments in at least the two previous centuries would have prompted certain questions, and thus helped Dr Davies to look at

her material differently, and perhaps draw more telling conclusions from it. For example, in the Tudor period, the economy and structure of society in the forests were distinct from those of the rest of Cheshire. It would have been useful to examine them separately in the eighteenth century and see if and how these differences were perpetuated. The large numbers of sheep in Macclesfield Forest in the eighteenth century were not, as Dr Davies suggests, the result of the improvement of pastures by liming after the Restoration, but were already a speciality in the sixteenth century. If it is true, as she says, that "the herbage would have been of little value without the application of some alkaline agent," then another question must be asked. How did these populous forest communities succeed in getting a living?

Dr Davies has gathered much detailed information from local sources on many aspects of rural life, but it is not arranged in a way that reveals its full significance. Facts and comment on the economic fortunes of Cheshire farmers during this fickle century are scattered, when they should have been marshalled to form one of the most important chapters in the book. And some of the unifying themes that are used to bring diverse material together are oddly chosen. Dairy farming does not foster a spirit of co-operation among farmers, as Dr Davies points out, but she chooses co-operation in the community as a theme, and illustrates it with remarks on benefit societies, cattle plague, and tithe. Some impression emerges of the relatively mild impact of depression after the Napoleonic war upon this county of small dairy farmers, employing relatively little day labour. As Sir John Sinclair observed at the time, and Mr Fletcher, writing of a kindred county, Lancashire, has since underlined, "grazing farms are different." The appendices include extracts from a number of original documents together with useful tables of statistics, some drawn from the censuses, and some constructed by Dr Davies from the land tax returns.

JOAN THIRSK

H. C. PAWSON, *A Survey of the Agriculture of Northumberland*. County Agricultural Survey No. 3. Royal Agricultural Society of England, London, 1961. 25s.

The Royal Agricultural Society has since its early days recorded the state of agriculture in the counties of England. At one time prize essays were published in the journal: later, descriptions of the farming in the county which happened to be acting as host to the Royal Show appeared year by year. This work has been continued in recent years by separate publications devoted to individual counties. Three have already appeared and the first two, on the agriculture of Kent and Sussex respectively, were noticed in Vol. IX of this REVIEW. The third, on Northumberland, written by Professor H. C. Pawson, is the subject of these notes.

The aim of the series is to survey the contemporary agriculture of those counties which it includes, and to describe developments during the present century. Those surveys which have already been published fulfil the first part of the assignment very satisfactorily, but they all show the difficulty which they have experienced in interpreting the second. This originates largely in the difficulty of developing the story on a county, as distinct from a national, basis, in the twentieth century when so many of the factors which have influenced the development of farming are common to the whole country.

Another difficulty originates paradoxically in the fact that the county units are often too large for statistics of crops and stock for the whole county to have much value unless they are broken down into their farming districts. Garrad realized this, and he illustrated his descriptions of the individual districts of Kent by groupings of the appropriate parish statistics. For Northumberland, no such breakdown has been attempted, although the tables, and particularly the graphs which show the trend in the county acreages and livestock numbers over the period from 1870 to 1956, would have been much more valuable if they had been given for each of the districts described in the text. (It is to be hoped that the

Statistics Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture, on whose good offices the provision of this material depends, will not find that modern methods of recording it make its extraction in the future less feasible than in the past, for there is no doubt that with the passing years its value increases.)

The absence of official statistics in the Northumberland survey is a smaller loss than it might have been because of the considerable span of years over which Prof. Pawson has been acquainted with the farming of the county. As a result, the war and post-war years have been described with the authority of one who was on the spot when the events themselves occurred, and a bibliography shows that there is ample literature for reference on that part of the present century which the memory of even an Emeritus Professor cannot be expected to cover. The material exists, therefore, for a survey of each of the farming districts, and of each of the classes of livestock. These are all described, along with the natural features of the county, its farm equipment, rents and labour force, markets, agricultural education and research, forestry, and the changes which have occurred in the present century.

Northumberland is noted for its herd of wild white cattle at Chillingham, and Prof. Pawson gives a fascinating account of its history and characteristics. The county is also known for its high proportion of large farms; 13.3 per cent exceeded 300 acres in 1956 compared with 3.7 per cent in England and Wales. That Northumberland is a county of relatively large farms is also implied in the selection of those described in the survey, for nearly all of them exceeded 300 acres. But it is disappointing that no attempt is made to explain how Northumberland came to be a county of large farms after having been outstanding for the small size of its farms in Tudor times and later. Indeed, when the author declares (p. 198) that agriculture changed more in the first half of the twentieth century than in the previous 2,000 years, one may wonder whether he is including structural or only technical changes in his statement.

In other parts of his survey, what he says would carry more weight if he had gone into a little detail to explain his points. For instance, he states that the smaller labour force which farmers nowadays employ compared with sixty years ago makes it more difficult to catch up with the work lost in an abnormal season (p. 41): yet it is generally agreed that with the replacement of horses by tractors and the other ways of mechanizing which have occurred on farms in the last twenty years, most farmers are less handicapped in a late season now than they used to be.

On p. 49 we read that the farmers in the Berwick, Belford, and Bamburgh district still reap much of their own corn with the binder, yet nine pages later we are told that the combine harvester is almost universal in the northern area of the county.

On p. 120 the difficulties of becoming attested in Northumberland are attributed largely to the number of Irish store cattle which are imported. But in some parts of the county home-bred store cattle are sold for finishing in the Midlands and South (p. 88). A comparison of their numbers to the numbers of imported stores would have helped the reader to assess what possibilities may exist for improving the chances of attestation by making the county more self-sufficient in its livestock.

The author takes many Northumberland farmers to task for being less generous in the use of fertilizers on grassland than he would like them to be (p. 199). Yet when he attributes their slow progress in this matter to the poor prices of fat cattle in the inter-war years, and says that it is no good producing more and better grass if it does not increase profits, surely no one could have defended more adequately than he has done himself their reluctance to use manures.

Finally he claims that the greatest change in farming in the present century is the increasing influence of the State "for better or for worse, so far mainly for better" (p. 206). (Does he intend us to believe that the State's influence is the cause of "the greatest revolution farming has undergone for 2,000 years"?)

But on p. 201 he suspects a more sinister influence, for he suggests that the State's policy of manipulating prices is the reason why so many farmers express fears for the future.

The reader of this book will have his knowledge of Northumberland farming considerably enriched, even though he may be disappointed that there is not more discussion on the problems of the farmers.

W. HARWOOD LONG

JEROME BLUM, *Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton University Press, 1961. x+656pp. £5. This volume traces "the history of the lords and peasants, and of the relationships between them, from the time when large private land-ownership first established itself on Russian soil, to the abolition of serfdom a thousand years later." The author himself also points out that the economic importance of agriculture in the period covered and the attention paid to general economic development make the book "a study in the economic history of Russia. . . But it is also meant to be a study in the history of human freedom." Mr Blum has certainly tackled a vast and important problem in trying to trace agrarian relationships for a thousand years in an area as huge as Russia. In carrying out this tremendous task he has made a great quantity of information accessible to those with no Russian. It is, however, sometimes difficult to see how complete is the evidence adduced; more tables might help to highlight the gaps in our own knowledge. Nevertheless, this is a very welcome addition to the all too brief list of works in English on Russian agrarian history, particularly since Russian history has been predominantly agrarian history almost till the present day.

Inevitably, such a book affords many opportunities to differ from the author's views, especially since for much of the period evidence is relatively meagre. In some cases, for instance as regards the reasons for the economic decline of Kiev before the Mongol invasions or the movements of population from the Kiev area after the invasions, Mr Blum

seems to have dismissed or ignored recent work; and throughout his book he uses little or no modern archaeological and ethnographic evidence. At times even documentary evidence seems to be a little forced. Blum sees the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries as a period of economic and political decline of considerable intensity. Probably no one would argue against the decline, only about its intensity. He adduces as his most plentiful evidence the references to *pustoshi* "by which was meant abandoned lands." But the reference Blum cites defines them, I believe more accurately, as "empty lands—unpopulated, uncultivated (both with fields, and also with woods and other appurtenances)." A careful analysis would have to be made before mention of such wastes, which included outfields, etc., could be interpreted as abandoned lands.

Reliance predominantly on documentary sources probably accounts for a failure to appreciate adequately the technical evidence. The *sokha* is glossed as a "primitive plow" (it is actually a bifurcated ard), and although Blum correctly pointed out that it was "well suited for the shallow soil of the North" on p. 23, by p. 339 he refers to it as of inefficient design and a poor tool at best. It seems highly probable, though, that the general use of the *sokha*, which remained common till the 1920's, not only hindered Russian colonization of the steppes, but also meant that, contrary to Blum's opinion, it was easier to come by a living in the forest (p. 95).

In the sections dealing with the last century and a half of serfdom, over a half of the whole book, the variation in attitudes of serf owners in various areas to the question of the abolition of serfdom are surveyed. There are a number of illuminating thumbnail sketches of various individuals, lords, and also peasants, who, although serfs or of serf origin, were able to become merchants and factory-owners. It is, of course, much more difficult to find evidence to illustrate the run-of-the-mill peasant; but Mr Blum throughout the book seems little concerned to attempt to counterbalance the bias imparted by reliance almost exclusively on written sources for the

history of a society which was very largely illiterate. The peasants and their views in fact are greatly under-represented in this book, and this can only in part be ascribed to limitations of evidence. This, combined with Mr Blum's concern with freedom, leads, I believe, to a certain bias in presentation, since the freedom with which he is concerned is that centred on the individual, which arose, and is still largely limited to, western Europe. In Russia and other parts of eastern Europe, however, political and social life is, as it has long been, centred on the group or community. However difficult it may be for us at this remove to see inside the Russian peasant commune, we must make the attempt or Russian history will remain, as for Sir Bernard Pares, "the history of an underworld."

R. E. F. SMITH

HAROLD W. BRACE, *History of Seed Crushing in Great Britain*. Land Books, 1960. 172 pp. 30s.

It is surprising that the seed-crushing industry, the handmaid of agriculture, has waited so long for its history to be written. But the waiting has been worth while, for the author of this book is a unique expert—an amateur historian and a professional oil miller.

The history of the industry from the eighteenth century onwards is well documented and Mr Brace tells an ample tale, dealing authoritatively (and intelligibly for the layman) with the various methods and machines used for seed-crushing, and the geographical expansion of the industry. Originally it was concentrated in eastern England where much of the seed was grown. Later it spread to places scattered all over the kingdom. But now that the bulk of the seed is imported from abroad, the industry is centred upon the coastal ports.

The most tantalizing part of the book is the first chapter, in which Mr Brace sets down all he has been able to discover about coleseed growing and seed-crushing before 1700. The story is brief and perplexing in many ways, and should persuade the historian to concentrate his efforts upon finding more evidence.

It is difficult to believe that farmers' inventories of the sixteenth century will not tell us more about the growing of seeds. The first reference Mr Brace has found to oil-making comes from Crowle in Lincolnshire in 1381, and the second from the will of an oil miller in Hull in 1525. Official references to oil-milling are more numerous in Elizabeth's reign, when the Crown tried to encourage it for the benefit of the clothiers, who were paying high prices for foreign oil. But even here there is nothing to show where the oil was being milled. Then suddenly in the 1590's rapeseed appears as a crop and an export. It was being shipped to Zealand in 1593, and the reviewer has found a reference to ten combs of rapeseed in the possession of a farmer living at Terrington St Clement in the Norfolk fens in September 1599. The port books of Boston and Colchester sprout a number of entries concerning the export of oilseed and oilcake in the early seventeenth century. If exports could be undertaken in the early Stuart period, when did the industry begin to expand, and what seeds were used? The answers to these two questions at the moment are purely speculative. Mr Brace has views on the second problem. He believes that as hemp and flax were used for weaving, and as rape yields the largest percentage of oil, the latter was used for seed-crushing from the beginning. But if this is so, why have no references as yet been found to the crop before the last years of the sixteenth century, in contrast to the numerous references to hemp and flax? Mr Brace is sceptical of the view sometimes put forward that coleseed was introduced by the Dutch drainers, but Mr Fussell's article on the crop, which Mr Brace may not know ('History of Rape or Cole', *Nature*, CLXXVI, July 1955), produces weighty evidence to suggest that its introduction may well have been due to the Dutch, though not necessarily the drainers. It is true that rape first appears as a large-scale crop in the newly drained fenlands in the early seventeenth century, but Dutch immigrants were filtering into England for some decades before, and they were thoroughly familiar with the crop at home. Even

though cole was an indigenous plant on the sea shores, some foreign stimulus to the field cultivation of the crop seems likely. But again we are driven to speculate. In view of Mr Brace's precise documentation of the later period, it is time we made a better job of the early history of seed-crushing.

JOAN THIRSK

MICHAEL CHISHOLM, *Rural Settlement and Land Use: An Essay in Location*. Hutchinson's University Library, London, 1962. 208 pp. 12s. 6d.

A few years ago the American economist Walter Isard made the charge that in most works on economic theory the "analysis is confined to a wonderland of no spatial dimensions. The factor of space is repudiated, everything within the economy is in effect compressed to a point and all spatial resistance disappears." The criticism is aimed, in the main, at Anglo-Saxon economists and, in fact, it is rare to find a work on location theory written by an Englishman. The field has long been the preserve of continental European writers (notably Weber, Losch, and Christaller) though considerable interest in the subject is beginning to appear in the United States. Unfortunately, too, most of the writings are inaccessible to all but the specialist owing to their being couched in complex mathematical terms. Mr Chisholm's book, written primarily for the student and eschewing all mathematics apart from elementary arithmetic and three simple graphs, is therefore to be welcomed. It is true that he confines himself only to the study of rural land use and settlement patterns, but within the limits set for the writer of an introductory text, he succeeds in putting across most of the appropriate principles of location theory, and more importantly, he illustrates the abstract theory with a wealth of real-world examples.

Primarily the aim of the work is to show how distance, and its associated costs of movement, exert an influence on land-use patterns. The analysis is centred on the theoretical work of the early nineteenth-century German writer J. H. von Thunen,

whose ideas of the concentric zoning of cropping patterns around a settlement are well known. The chapter explaining the basic Thunen theory, unfortunately, is somewhat rushed. The whole analysis hinges on the troublesome concept of economic rent—a feature of economic theory which, in the reviewer's opinion, needs to be spelled out in considerable detail if it is to be understood. It is in the succeeding chapters on the application of the theory to real situations that Mr Chisholm excels. Application at the farmstead and village levels and to the region and the world is thoroughly pursued. One must commend the writer's diligence in tracing examples from a wide diversity of sources and from many countries. The agricultural historian is likely to obtain much food for thought from these sections of the book.

However, it is one thing to show how land-use patterns are arranged around a given settlement—it is quite another matter to show how a settlement *pattern* is generated. In fact most settlements are located as the result of industrial considerations and agriculture adapts itself to the supply of major urban areas. Rural areas, however, have their own complex patterns of settlement and communications, whose genesis must be explained. This is the object of three of Mr Chisholm's nine chapters (VI to VIII inclusive). Here, unfortunately, the writer appears to be less confident in his treatment. Many interesting points are made and the documentation, once more, is comprehensive. The basic theory, however, is less well developed and its application is disjointed. It must be remembered, nevertheless, that Mr Chisholm has chosen to study a most complex field which has long been a source of worry and perplexity to location theorists. The final chapter, on technical changes in transport facilities and their likely effects on land-use patterns, is excellent.

The dust jacket states that the argument ranges across the field of Geography, Agricultural Economics, Economic History, and Planning. One is left with the impression that experts in each of these disciplines would profit from reading Chisholm's book—and that

each would come away with a desire for more in the same vein. A textbook which makes a genuine addition to knowledge is a rare event.

G. H. PETERS

ROSALIND MITCHISON, *Agricultural Sir John, The Life of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, 1754-1835*. G. Bles, 1961. x+292 pp. 35s.

Although Sir John Sinclair's name is so widely known, curiously little has till now been written about him. What there is was for the most part inspired by himself—the autobiographical introduction to the two volumes of his Correspondence, the biographical memoir by his son, Archdeacon Sinclair, and, based on this, a memoir published in W. and R. Chambers's Repository of Instructive and Amusing Tracts. In these he appears as a great man dedicated to useful works and devoted to the public good, indefatigable and unsparing of himself in the causes for which he worked—a truly exemplary figure.

Mrs Mitchison's book is the first to assess Sir John through other than his own or his family's eyes, and as she does so the bright Victorian image clouds a little. His virtues remain as above, but his faults appear too. His intellect was essentially pedestrian, he had no great clarity of thought, he lacked humour, he could be something of a bore, and the enthusiasm that never knew when to stop gave him a special capacity for putting his foot in it. But for these faults, he might have achieved in Britain as a whole the stature he achieved in Caithness, where, in pursuance of his ideals, and aided by his influence and wealth as principal landowner, he planted extensively, introduced better breeds of cattle and sheep, improved communications, established villages and industries, rebuilt Thurso, fostered the herring-fishing, brought wide expanses of land under cultivation, abolished the runrig system and with it feudal services and charges, and generally raised the standard of living of his tenants.

Here alone, Sinclair could have made his name. As a member of Parliament, this was the sort of thing he aimed at doing for Britain as a whole, and his concern for the economic

well-being of the country was the guiding factor in most of his work and writing. At a time when agriculture was the basis of the nation's way of life, even of its class structure, this was naturally the subject with which he busied himself most, though he was willing to write at length on any subject, naval, military, legal, literary, medical, or what have you. It was no mean achievement to be described abroad as "le premier agronome de l'Europe."

Today he is best known as the name behind the first Statistical Account of Scotland, and, through the Board of Agriculture, of which he was founder and president, the County Agricultural Surveys. These amount to 122 volumes. The collection of information at parish and county level, and its analysis, were seen as the first steps towards informed government action, and in this Sir John was ahead of his time. It may be as well that his main task was editing, not writing, them, since of the 370 publications for which he is said to have been personally responsible, only one or two are much known today. His virtue lay not in his writing, but in his ability to initiate a project and see it through to the end. It is a tribute to his enterprise that the Third Statistical Account is now in process of publication. The Accounts supply invaluable check-points for students of local history in Scotland, at the late eighteenth, mid-nineteenth, and mid-twentieth centuries. With these, supplemented by the County Agricultural Surveys, nearly every parish in Scotland has its economic, agricultural, and to some extent social history ready to hand over the last 200 years. Scotland has thus more reason to be grateful to Sir John than has England, where his efforts to carry out a statistical survey were quashed, though he did, of course, succeed better there with County Surveys in the face of considerable difficulties. These Surveys are as valuable as the Statistical Account for providing present-day agricultural historians with source-material.

Mrs Mitchison does not quite do his Agricultural Surveys justice, but otherwise she has produced an excellent book, combining, on the one hand, good biography, showing Sir

John as a product of his environment and as a man with faults as well as virtues, and, on the other hand, good history, throwing a great deal of light on the politics and local electioneering of the time. It is a book for which there has been a long-standing need.

ALEXANDER FENTON

V. GAFFNEY, *The Lordship of Strathavon: Tomintoul under the Gordons*. Third Spalding Club, 1960. 328 pp. No price stated.

This careful and scholarly study in the agricultural and social history of north-east Scotland follows in the tradition of works by I. F. Grant and H. Hamilton. The strath of the River Avon and its tributaries, roughly corresponding to the large Banffshire parish of Kirkmichael, identifies the geographical area of Dr Gaffney's work; the Gordon Castle papers provide his main manuscript source. Selected extracts from these papers make up slightly less than half the volume; the rest is a detailed account by Dr Gaffney of various aspects of life in Strathavon in the eighteenth century and earlier.

With most of the land above one thousand feet and much considerably higher, Strathavon's major contribution to the agricultural economy of the region in the eighteenth century was its summer grazings. Dr Gaffney devotes a chapter to describing the shealings, the disputes about them, and the land improvements attempted. His account is revealing and readable, although one wonders if he sympathizes too much with the view that summer in the hills was a Highland jamboree. Lowland accounts of Highlanders spending much of their time lazing in the sun, or in the whisky house, are perhaps a little biased—or hopefully envious.

The founding of the village of Tomintoul—now a familiar name from snow-blocked road reports—is the subject of another chapter. In eighteenth-century Scotland many landowners tried to establish village communities to encourage the weaving and linen industries. This was a major motive in developing Tomintoul, which, it was hoped, would eventually become an important centre of

Highland industry. The first feu duties in the village were charged in 1779, but progress was slow and fifteen years later the *Old Statistical Account* recorded 37 families in Tomin-toul and not a single manufacture to employ them. By this time the landowners had certainly abandoned their efforts to encourage flax-raising in Strathavon.

Competition between deer, sheep, and cattle is discussed at some length by Dr Gaffney, who also devotes a special chapter to recruitment. Authentic accounts of the methods used to enlist Highlanders are already numerous; the Strathavon story reveals some of the disruptive economic effects as well as the human problems involved.

The final and longest chapter, on landholding, covers many topics, including land measures, changing forms of tenure, and the methods, conditions, and level of rental payment.

This study will undoubtedly contribute towards a general economic history of Scotland, the need for which has been frequently declared in recent years. Perhaps Dr Gaffney might have set out more deliberately to select, emphasize, and summarize those aspects of Strathavon's economy which would be most relevant to such a history. The fear of generalization and all its dangers can produce an episodic approach which classification alone does little to remedy.

GEORGE HOUSTON

MARGARET KIDDLE, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria, 1834-1890*. Melbourne University Press, 1961. xviii+574 pp. (London: Cambridge University Press.)

The Australian colonies in the nineteenth century were not, for all their radicalism, of an unequivocally democratic cast. The "real" Australia—the Australia, say, of Lawson, where "they call no biped lord or sir, And touch their hat to no man!"—emerged out of the conscious and systematic destruction of a transplanted old-world class system, out of the constitutional defeat of the pseudo-aristocracy of the 'Shepherd Kings'. This conflict,

this persistent, pragmatic transformation of an inherited culture towards a profoundly egalitarian national ethos constituted the central strand in Australia's socio-political evolution during the nineteenth century. It has received less attention than it deserves.

Thus we owe much to Miss Margaret Kiddle for helping to redress the balance. She illuminates the squatter society, and the assault launched against it, in a way that even S. H. Roberts's important study could not do. This is a misleadingly unpretentious book. Dominated by no Grand Thesis, Miss Kiddle's approach is dictated by a simple interest in the lives of the men who settled and civilized the south-west of Victoria—that "tall, swift-moving, laughing crowd, superb on horseback" (p. ix). These limitations of scope may seem severe; but this region, though relatively small, was a focal point of Australian development; these people, representative of many others. The writer is justified in claiming that "The story of the Western District is in many ways that of Eastern Australia in microcosm." Further, by thus confining herself she exploits an assiduous eye for detail, mustering an enormous amount of empirical support, much of which is newly culled from contemporary records. Throughout, the treatment is remarkably comprehensive, thoughtful, and judicious. Miss Kiddle teaches us a great deal about Australian history. This is a very good book indeed.

Sustained settlement in Victoria was begun (after the fashion of the country) in defiance of authority, by land-hungry Vandiemonians in the 'thirties. Fighting climate, natives, and disease—not to mention regulations—they and the (predominantly Scottish) immigrants who joined them built in two decades a unique pastoral society of large holdings and a hybrid culture. Their success rested upon adaptability, and they quickly developed distinctively Australian characteristics. Yet the re-establishment of the familiar social rigidities of home appealed strongly to these squatters who, troubled by the dubious legality of their position, sought security in the *status quo*; and the very strength which they sought thus to

protect assured the success of their efforts. But it could be only a temporary success. With gold, in the 'fifties, and the 'New People' who swelled the population sevenfold in a decade, came an unprecedented threat, reflected not only in numbers but in a new political awareness. These were the days of Social Justice; these the people who could resist Wentworth's call for "a British, not a Yankee constitution." The 'sixties brought concerted legislative attempts to break the land monopoly. Closing ranks and largely negating those attempts, the squatters could still see in the 'seventies and 'eighties qualities of a Golden Age; but "the glow which suffuses this period is one of twilight." The victory of the levellers was by then assured.

With its wealth of data (copiously documented) on such matters as prevailing wage rates, prices, rents, land holdings, techniques of selection, and problems of agriculture, this study will have great value to historians of all shades. For those who hope to understand Australia it is indispensable. Miss Kiddle has, one hopes, opened a new phase in Australian historiography; but she wrote in a race with premature death, and will not see it flower.

L. MCGREGOR

R. B. KELLEY, *Principles and Methods of Animal Breeding*. Angus and Robertson, 3rd edition, 1960. viii+358 pp. 42s.

Kelley is to Australia what Hagedoorn and Nichols are to Britain, the current classic on animal genetics. And, like them, he is consistently reprinting. This edition is the third of his *Principles and Methods of Animal Breeding*, excluding two straight reprints. His success has come because he has deliberately fallen between the two schools of laboratory scientist and practical breeder; and fallen upon his feet. This book serves both admirably; although I fear that neither will find out what Bakewell, the Collings, and Bates, and the Scottish men, were really about in fundamental terms. He takes the conventional histories of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century livestock improvement, retells them in much detail, but never reaches the analysis which he,

as one of the handful of English-writing geneticists competent to make it, could offer. That, despite our current great advances in genetic understanding and the science of blood grouping, has still to come.

This is of minor relevance to the practical animal breeder, even though a major disappointment to the agricultural historian. But to the man who wants to know what livestock breeding is all about this book is probably the best, clearest, and simplest guide in English today: more wide-ranging than Nichols in that Kelley makes greater use of American research results, and Beltsville and other centres in the States are in most branches of stock improvement some years ahead of British research stations; and free from the controversy which has surrounded many of Hagedoorn's views. It is not always easy stuff for the layman, but he who perseveres will discover all he needs to know about population genetics, genotypes, artificial insemination, and right through to progeny and performance testing.

R. TROW-SMITH

STAFFAN HELMFRID, *Östergötland—"Västansång." Studien über die ältere Agrarlandschaft und ihre Genese*. Communications of the Geographical Institute, Stockholm University, no. 140, 1962. 278 pp.

Continental historians and geographers are far better informed on the work of their European colleagues in the field of agrarian studies than are English scholars. Hence, although this book has a relatively narrow local theme, its value is greatly enhanced by constant reference to similar problems in Europe as a whole, and to the relevant literature from other European countries, particularly from Germany (where Dr Helmfrid first made contact with scholars working on landscape history, and was thus prompted to embark on this study), from Denmark, and, to a lesser extent, England and Eastern Europe. If English scholars would give up the notion that their agrarian history is a case apart from that of the rest of Europe, they would benefit greatly from the lively discussions that are in progress

on the subject of field systems, settlement patterns, and the causes of agrarian change.

This book is concerned with the making of the landscape of the plain of Östergötland, formerly known as Västansång, in east-central Sweden. Östergötland consists of three belts of territory, a strip of forest and mountain in the north, a plain in the centre, and another strip of wood and mountain in the south. Dr Helmfrid concentrates attention on the central plain, which is one of Sweden's most fertile farming areas, and is called a granary of the kingdom. It was also an area of early settlement. A rich collection of maps for the mid-seventeenth century allows the author to make a detailed analysis of the economy of the plain at that time. The importance of cereal production emerges clearly in the relatively high proportion of land devoted to arable. In the western half of Östergötland, where cereal production for the market developed earlier than in the eastern half (eastern Östergötland gave somewhat more attention to cattle production in the mid-seventeenth century, though it was still a cereal-exporting area), between 20 and 30 per cent of the parish area on average was given over to the plough, compared with 10–15 per cent in other parts of Sweden. In consequence, the grazing in some places was insufficient for the feeding of the stock, some parishes had no common pastures left, hay had to be bought in, and some stock sent away at certain seasons into the forest regions. Cereal production in the region was facilitated between the mid-thirteenth and later-fourteenth centuries by the growth of Skänninges, a trading port of the Hanse, and in the fifteenth century by the growth of Vadstena, which supplanted it.

In view of this attention to cereal production (mainly barley and, to a lesser extent, rye), it is surprising to find that a two-course rotation of crops prevailed in the common fields of the region. Dr Helmfrid makes some interesting observations on its virtues over the three-course. It was regarded locally in the mid-eighteenth century as a much superior system, the three-course being fit only

for more primitive forest areas; the communities of the plain which changed from a two- to a three-course were regarded as taking a backward step. In view of this evidence, Dr Helmfrid suggests that the value of the two-course rotation lay in the ample pasturage which it afforded in the fallow year—a suggestion that has already been made to explain the prevalence of the two-course rotation in some fertile regions of England—and his argument is the more convincing for Östergötland since parts of the fallow fields were frequently sown with peas.

This description of the landscape and economy of the Östergötland plain about 1640 is followed by a discussion of its origins, and deals with the place-name evidence; the archaeological finds from prehistoric settlements; the problem of continuity between prehistoric sites and historic settlements (the majority, i.e. 76 per cent, of prehistoric cemeteries lie within the boundaries of settlements possessing pre-Christian place-names, and 73 per cent lie within 300 metres of an old village nucleus); the patterns of Viking and medieval settlement; the effect of the *solskifte* (the systematic rearrangement of intermingled lands which was carried out in east central Sweden from the thirteenth century onwards); the desertion of sites in the later Middle Ages, most of which were re-occupied between 1540 and 1640; and crop rotations and their origin. On this last subject, Dr Helmfrid is inclined to accept the suggestion of Göransson that the two-course rotation, superseding an irregular, or continuous-cropping system, was introduced into Sweden from England some time during the period 800–1060, when contact between the two countries was close. But more interesting still is Dr Helmfrid's conviction that the discipline of regulated crop rotations was inseparably associated with the growth of the village community, just as the abandonment of strict cropping regulations accompanied its decline. It is worth noting that the English evidence also tends to support this view, inasmuch as the tightest discipline in the cultivation of common fields is found in the larger nucleated

villages of the arable regions, whereas laxer rules were characteristic of the more loosely organized common-field settlements in the pastoral regions, and these lapsed without much opposition to permit easy enclosure.

The book concludes with a summary of the significance of the Swedish evidence when seen against the European background. Dr Helmfrid resumes his discussion of the *solskifte* and their origin, and while accepting the evidence of *solskifte* in England, concludes that the examples found so far are too few to support the notion that they too were imported into Sweden from England. As for the origin of nucleated villages with common fields, Dr Helmfrid summarizes, and himself accepts, the view of modern German scholars that the highly organized village communities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whose lands were mapped in the volumes of Meitzen, were the result of long, slow development, and did not start in this form. Village communities and communal farming, they believe, superseded single farmsteads, and were brought into existence by the rise of population, land scarcity, and the need for more intensive cultivation. Although at least one English scholar, and possibly more, would disagree with this as a generalization explaining the origin of all English and Welsh villages and common fields, it is probably the correct explanation for at least some of them.

The book ends with a bibliography of articles and books on the history of the landscape and agrarian economy by over two hundred writers. It is a sad comment on the comparative isolation of English scholars that a fair proportion of these publications do not exist in any English library.

JOAN THIRSK

Hatfield and its People. Book 9. Farming Yesterday and Today. Hatfield W.E.A., c/o Mrs Barbara Hutton, 2 Vigors Croft, Hatfield. 1962. 50 pp. 2s. 6d.

The Hatfield branch of the W.E.A. has shown great enterprise in getting its research on Hatfield into print, and it is now well launched on

its series of illustrated booklets. This is Book 9, and another five titles are due to appear shortly. This study of Hatfield farming is based on farm accounts, surveys, a few probate inventories, tithe maps and awards, and some private papers in the possession of local farmers. The authors' local connections have been used to good advantage, and there is much detail in the later history of the parish that would have been difficult to come by without them. The sources for the earlier centuries up to 1800 are less abundant, and the remarks on them occupy only nine out of forty-nine pages. They could have been enlarged by using some of the material on the county as a whole, for example, in the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*, and this would have helped towards the understanding of the place of Hatfield in its region.

The old parish of Hatfield was a large territorial unit, nine miles in length, and covering 13,000 acres. It possesses several different types of soil, some chalky, some a sandy loam, and some gravelly. Hatfield itself lies in the centre, and colonization of the extremities of the parish was a long-drawn-out affair: already under way at the time of Domesday, it had made substantial progress in the northern sector by the early thirteenth century, and in that area was probably complete by the end of the fifteenth century. A survey of the parish in 1607 shows that the farms in the north had as much ploughland as they possessed in the early nineteenth century, when arable cultivation was at its height.

There is much evidence in this book to support the statements of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers that the county was made fertile by London manure. Without it, the comparatively poor soils of Hatfield, and Hertfordshire, could not have been improved so early for cereal production. More than many other parishes in the neighbourhood, Hatfield also relied on the dung and the hoof of the sheep, and by the early eighteenth century large farmers were buying sheep from elsewhere in the autumn, and fattening them for the butcher in the spring. Some

Hertfordshire farms nearer London were already supplying oats for London horses in the early seventeenth century, if not before, and this traffic (oats in return for London manure) exerted considerable influence over the pattern of farming in Hatfield by the end of the eighteenth century.

The havoc wrought by nineteenth-century depression on arable farms is dramatically portrayed in maps and surveys. The parish had 59 farms in 1824 and only 32 at the end of the century. Twenty-four farms changed hands in the period 1824-38, though without losing their separate identities. After 1850 they began to be amalgamated into larger units, and by 1905 nearly half the arable in the parish had been converted to pasture. But some of the most successful farmers in the lean years at the end of the century were not the ones who turned to grass-farming; they were Scotsmen who had arrived in Hatfield before the onset of the Great Depression, who made careful choice of their farms in the more fertile northern half of the parish, near the Great North Road and the railway, and who grew potatoes. Their success encouraged more of their countrymen to come to Hatfield, and Lord Salisbury seems to have favoured them as tenants. Some of their descendants continue to farm in Hatfield to this day.

This brief summary is enough to show the wealth of fascinating detail in this book on the history and economy of Hatfield. Those who are also interested in the history and economics of these booklets as a publishing venture should read an article by the editor of the series in the *Amateur Historian*, v, no. 3, Spring 1962.

JOAN THIRSK

H. C. DARBY and E. M. J. CAMPBELL, *The Domesday Geography of South-East England*. xviii+658 pp., illus. £6. H. C. DARBY and I. S. MAXWELL, *The Domesday Geography of Northern England*. xvi+540 pp., illus. £5 5s. Cambridge University Press, 1962.

The second volume of Professor Darby's great Domesday series, published in 1954,

consisted of 498 pages and cost 55s. The third and fourth have now appeared, at prices which reflect not only their greater bulk but also the successive increases in printing costs over the last eight years. Like other publishers and printers, the Cambridge University Press is here in the grip of forces beyond its control; but so too are its customers, and the economics of book-production might well have suggested some departures from the original plan, which, requiring as it does a fresh start to be made with each county, has entailed a good deal of costly and—to be frank—rather tedious repetition.

As it is, the original ground-plan has been retained (except in Yorkshire, where the nature of the material defies convention), nor has Professor Darby been visibly moved by criticisms levelled at the earlier volumes. For example, the Domesday figures are still manipulated so as to fit into the county boundaries of the 1960's, which may be out of date by 1970; the maps do not attempt to reconstitute the hundreds and shires of King William's day; there is the same hesitant treatment of the *servi*, who are still called "serfs"; and the historian will continue to be irritated by finding Domesday Book habitually miscalled "the" Domesday Book. It may be added that fuller use could have been made of pre-Conquest documents, such as the ship-list of c.1000 which couples Barnes with Chiswick among the estates of St Paul's Cathedral. Barnes is named in the Domesday of Middlesex, but Chiswick is not, nor does Professor Darby's co-author include it in his enumeration of missing settlements.

And so on, and so forth. In twelve hundred pages closely packed with detail, a captious critic will easily discover matter for fault-finding. What is more important is to recognize with gratitude the service Professor Darby and his collaborators have rendered to historians and geographers by extracting, digesting, and illustrating for our benefit the multifarious information hidden in the Domesday folios. That information is not the less valuable for being coloured to some extent by the shortcomings of the great survey

itself, with its exaggerated emphasis on arable husbandry. Indeed, the volumes before us help to correct that over-emphasis, with their maps of woodland, vineyards, fisheries, and salt-pans, and their citation of entries concerning rural handicrafts.

A fuller notice must await the completion of Professor Darby's undertaking, when the series as a whole can be reviewed in an article of some length. Meanwhile, attention should be drawn to two items of particular interest: the appendix on the identification of the Yorkshire vills, and the thorough discussion of the New Forest under King William.

H. P. R. FINBERG

STAFFAN HELMFRID (ed.), *The Morphogenesis of the Agrarian Cultural Landscape. Papers of the Vadstena Symposium at the XIXth International Geographical Congress, 14-20 August 1960*. Reprinted from *Geografiska Annaler*, XLIII, nos. 1-2, 1961. iv+328 pp.

This volume is like a rich cake. It contains so much information and so many ideas that no one but a reviewer should attempt to digest it all at once. On the other hand, no one who claims some interest in agrarian history should fail to sample at least some of its contents. It contains twenty-eight mostly short papers, of which eleven are in English, two in French, and fifteen in German. The reader who intends to tackle the German articles can smooth his path by first reading the paper towards the end of the volume on 'Old hamlets with infield and outfield systems in western and central Europe', written in English by the German scholar, Harald Uhlig. It has a much wider scope than its title implies, and besides giving a valuable survey of recent German research on types of settlement and field patterns, also explains the precise German terms for strip fields, common fields, and enclosed fields, etc. The German articles deal with three main themes: the effects on agriculture and landscape of economic crisis and population changes; the history of enclosure; and the origin of different field patterns.

On the first theme, Professor Abel analyses the effects on agriculture of the slow but steady recovery of population in Europe from the second half of the fifteenth century. It led everywhere to pressure on food supplies, but food prices rose unevenly. Grain prices quadrupled while those of animal products rose only two-and-a-half times, and in Germany this led to a fall in meat production and an extension of corn cultivation. Since corn-growing seems to be associated in Germany (and, for that matter, in England, too) with the strengthening of the village community, Professor Abel suggests this as the explanation why villages expanded, and hamlets declined, or at least ceased to multiply, in the sixteenth century. For the poor, however, whose purchasing power was drastically curtailed by inflation, meat was beyond their means, and they were obliged to eat more of the cheaper cereals, and drink beer rather than wine. Hence, concludes Abel, the reduction in vine cultivation. We might add also that this possibly explains the extreme surprise of German travellers in the sixteenth century at the large quantities of meat consumed by the English peasant. Professor Mortensen's paper consists of a series of challenging questions, to which he offers some tentative answers. Why did people in the high Middle Ages cheerfully colonize new sites for settlement, whereas in the period after the desertions they preferred to enlarge old villages? Why did the period of desertions and retreating cultivation also witness in Germany the spread of the three-course rotation of crops, signifying a more intensive use of land? Why were some places in Germany, in East Prussia, for example, depopulated at the same time that new settlements were being created nearby? If Professor Abel is right in attributing depopulation in the later Middle Ages to the plague, why did populations in West Germany begin to rise again about 1470 when the plague was still rife? Some of these questions simply serve to emphasize the differences in detail between English and German experience in the fifteenth and sixteenth

centuries. Others, however, suggest new ways of looking at the English scene.

Three papers on the enclosure history of Germany and Sweden likewise afford instructive comparisons with England. Gerhard Erdriss describes enclosure in the Allgäu. Although it was one of the earliest districts in south Germany to show an interest in enclosure—the first moves were made in the 1550's—and although the impetus came from the peasantry, little progress was made until the eighteenth century. In Sweden, where the movement started late, it too required encouragement from above, and legislation, before it slowly won support. In north-west Germany, it was the enclosure of the commons which constituted the largest problem. A map accompanying this paper by Helmut Jäger shows how extensive they still were in the mid-eighteenth century. In consequence, the modern landscape owes much to the changes that followed enclosure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whereas in other parts of Germany much of the countryside had been shaped by events in the previous five hundred years.

Several articles on field patterns show that European scholars are well ahead of their English colleagues in achieving a precise classification of types: Uhlig gives on p. 306 nine different schematic village layouts for Germany, involving open, but not necessarily commonable, land. More striking still, however, is the common assumption that underlies all these papers, namely, that there is nothing permanent in field patterns and rules of cultivation. The point is proved in several well-documented examples, showing strip fields which developed out of square, enclosed plots, and vice versa. Annaliese Krenzlin's evidence is derived from a com-

parison of field patterns between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in northern Lower Franconia; Svetozar Ilešić describes, and illustrates with maps, two transformations of the field pattern in north-west Yugoslavia which occurred in less than a hundred years, between 1860 and 1936.

Other papers in this volume deal with Swedish settlement patterns, and the evidence of systematic allotments of strips in England, similar to the *solskifte* in Sweden; two stimulating essays on Wales are offered by Professor Jones Pierce and Glanville Jones, and another on Ireland by James Johnson. Others deal with Poland, Albania, and Algeria. Dr Finberg summarizes recent progress in English agrarian history.

Despite the widely diverse districts and periods with which these papers are concerned, certain general conclusions recur more than once. A number of writers agree in associating the emergence of common fields with the extension of arable land, and consider that this occurred most often in periods of rising population. At such times, partible inheritance was also powerfully at work—the paper on Ireland makes this point as well as others on Germany and Yugoslavia—giving rise to a pattern of land in strips, though subdivision did not always take this form. It seems to be agreed also that hamlets and infield-outfield cultivation represent a stage of development following upon shifting cultivation, and that this phase in turn was likely to be superseded by the growth of villages and a common-field system. Since both types of settlement and field arrangement occur in many European countries, there is clearly nothing peculiarly Celtic about the former, or Anglo-Saxon about the latter.

JOAN THIRSK