

Book Reviews

H. E. BRACEY, *English Rural Life*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959. xiv+272 pp.

Any rural area is an amalgam of social and economic activities and institutions. These can, superficially, appear to be few and clear-cut. But if these activities and institutions take place in a long settled country with an increasing tempo of general change and a very large and widely scattered urban population, the teasing out of the resultant involved situation is intricate.

Dr Bracey has, therefore, been faced with a difficult task in this book as he has attempted to give a fairly detailed account of village activities, organizations, and institutions against a background of the dominant forces now at work in rural areas everywhere—the increasing tempo of change in occupations, communications, and attitudes to living. This has given rise to a rapidly increasing mobility and migration of goods, services, and people. It can, in fact, be argued that a basic problem of today in many parts of the British countryside is how to create conditions under which people will be happy to live and work despite the fact that the majority of them have developed essentially urban attitudes and values. The author has handled this complex task by giving brief but comprehensive descriptions of many rural institutions—their history, present organization, strains, and stresses, together with the author's own impressions and judgements. No village or rural activities of any size or importance are omitted and the factual accuracy of description appears to be very good. Agricultural matters occur throughout the book as the author has, refreshingly, dealt with this industry through the attitudes and activities of the people engaged in it rather than by a description of its physical and economic structure.

This book, therefore, has great value in that it is an excellent description of the social fabric of village and open countryside. It does not pretend to deal with the country town and its subtitle makes this clear. It does not dis-

cuss the Celtic areas of Britain—which possess a settlement pattern very different in its historical evolution and experience and problems. This is unfortunate as many foreign readers of the book will assume that the title *English Rural Life* deals with the whole of Great Britain.

The author has aimed his book, according to his preface, at an audience who need, according to his own judgement, to be better informed about country matters, especially “the day-to-day background to the rural way of life.” It is not a social history, though it contains many historical comments. It is not an integrated view of rural society as such. This would need much more of a cohesive matrix, with the section at the end of the book—Chapter 19, Prospect—expanded. This section has only 13 pages and so can handle only the two problems of declining local loyalties and the weaknesses of rural local government.

Looking at this section on ‘Prospect’ in the light of changes going on in the early '60s in Britain what might the author now consider? The mobility and migration of goods, services, and people have increased their tempo, though the back-flow from urban areas into country village and hamlet has shown a healthy increase as the countryside receives the dormitory dweller and holiday maker who have been made more mobile through the spread and relative cheapening of private car transport. The economic trends towards increasing farm size and reducing farm employment operate even more strongly and are only lightly checked by the emphasis on the *status quo* and the smaller farm engendered by the present pattern of British agricultural subsidies. Agricultural fundamentalism, at least in the countryside, continues to weaken as a philosophy though its strength in the corridors of Whitehall and amongst Members of Parliament remains surprisingly great.

This book, as a part of the International

Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction, fills a big gap in the written description of modern England. Thanks to the author's skill in description and diagnosis, the reader is provided with an encyclopedia of rural knowledge in a relatively slim volume.

G. P. WIBBERLEY

B. R. MITCHELL, with the collaboration of Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*. Cambridge University Press, 1962. xiv+514 pp. 52s. 6d.

Statistics, for so long the opium of economists, are fast becoming the standard fare of economic historians. Theirs is a discipline that has come to be regarded in the last twenty years as concerned, above all, with the study of economic processes which persisted over long periods of time: their studies have been focused less on the particularity and uniqueness of historical events than on the general processes of change to which they may be said to belong. Understandably, one of the natural allies of economic historians working within this frame of reference has been the statistician, and it is this alliance which has produced the present laborious and pregnant volume.

Characteristically enough, it is the offshoot of an enquiry, begun by Miss Deane and Dr W. A. Cole almost ten years ago, into the long-term economic growth of the United Kingdom, itself a contribution to an internationally organized series of similar studies in other countries which is being supported by the Social Science Research Council. The grain of this theme shows plainly in the raw material presented here in what is virtually a statistical appendix to the authors' *British Economic Growth, 1688-1959*, which has also just issued from the Department of Applied Economics in Cambridge: Dr Mitchell's present *Abstract* presents, in an almost entirely raw and unprocessed form, "the major time series for the United Kingdom over as long a historical period as possible," though most of them do not begin before 1800, nor many after 1900, and few go beyond 1938. They are grouped under population and vital statistics,

labour, wages and the standard of living, national income and expenditure, public finance, overseas trade, banking and insurance, prices, agriculture, and seven other industrial headings: the statistics are, of course, thickest on overseas trade and public finance, though agriculture gets treated better than the average. Each instalment is prefaced by explanatory and cautionary notes about the material, and is buttressed by bibliographies of books, government publications, and articles which either add statistical commentary or locate further data. Most of the material has been dug from Parliamentary Papers or from other well-known sources, but there is also a considerable amount of information published here for the first time, such as Lord Beveridge's valuable legacy of the London bread prices between 1545 and 1747 and the Eton wheat prices from 1594 to 1820, several long-hidden production series put together from MS. accounts in the Library of H.M. Customs and Excise, and Dr C. H. Feinstein's estimates of capital formation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This is, without question, an invaluable work of reference which, though it is bound to be supplemented, is unlikely to be replaced for at least a generation. As a work of historical scholarship it has had to be selective; yet, with all its riches, there is more room for disappointment than ought perhaps to be there. The chief compiler and his formidable team of advisers can at times be seen wrestling with their doubts over what to put in—as, for example, with the rather ragged statistics of bankruptcies, which were omitted—and coming at others to emphatic (but occasionally equivocal) decisions, like that to exclude 'social statistics'. There were clearly some possibilities which must have appeared unthinkable to them, like the inclusion of random quantitative measurements of particular phenomena of the kind that once stuffed out the various editions of Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics*, but on an otherwise unmarked map some such spot-heights would have been welcome. Some of the relatively shorter series in existence might also have been indicated:

for example, the Windsor wheat and malt prices between 1646 and 1745 printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1751, or the series on Exchequer Bills between 1828 and 1857 included in Scratchley's *Practical Treatise on Savings Banks* (1860). It is less churlish perhaps to regret that the opportunity was not taken to bring together some of the most important annual figures covering long periods which are available on housing, building and friendly societies, insurance companies, individual banks, foreign capital issues, tramways, municipal transport, docks, port traffic, coastal shipping, and internal migration.

A still more justified complaint must be that some of the bibliographies—deliberately “limited to works which have a direct bearing on the statistics themselves”—are seriously deficient, for comprehensiveness here would have gone a long way to redress the omissions in the statistical material. One curious omission, for example, is Bowden's index of wool prices between 1490 and 1610 and the subsequent discussion of it in the *Yorkshire Bulletin* for 1952 and 1955; another, in the field of general prices, is Phelps-Brown's index of ‘consumables’ from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century, printed in *Economica* for 1956, and the valuable commentary on this by R. G. Lipsey in the *Lloyds Bank Review* for October 1960; another is Ernst Kneisel's statistical challenge to Professor Gras's well-known thesis on the evolution of English grain markets before the sixteenth century, which was printed in the *Journal of Economic History* in 1954. These are not isolated shortcomings. To take one field alone, references to important statistical work on internal migration are conspicuously meagre: there is, for example, no reference to John Saville's *Rural Depopulation in England and Wales, 1851-1951* (1957), to A. K. Cairncross's study of migration in his *Home and Foreign Investment, 1870-1913* (1953), or to E. G. Ravenstein's path-finding work in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society* for 1885; the mid-Victorian statistics of regional movements worked out by Brinley Thomas, H. C. Darby, C. T. Smith, and R. Lawton in

Economica for 1930 and the *Geographical Journal* for 1943, 1951, and 1958, respectively, are all omitted; H. A. Shannon's valuable monograph, *The Population of Bristol* (1943) is not included; and there are a number of other more esoteric examples that could be quoted. Among the items of considerable statistical interest which have been omitted from the bibliographies in this general field are G. F. Plant's *Oversea Settlement* (1951), which has a more useful break-down of the Board of Trade returns from 1899 to 1949 than is printed here; W. A. Carrothers' *Emigration from the British Isles* (1929), and J. C. Russell's *British Medieval Population* (1948).

Agricultural historians, forewarned by the writings of G. E. Fussell and J. T. Coppock on the deficiencies and treacheries of agricultural statistics, may find this volume useful rather than revealing, but to scholars at work on a particular locality or in a pre-Victorian, pre-statistical period its contribution to their work cannot be more than marginal. In general, this unique (and relatively low-priced) work deserves the warmest welcome and the most thorough use. There are some blemishes, but what might now be anticipated is the due reward of the pioneer, a supplementary volume of wider interest and more variegated contents. When the second volume of *Historical Statistics of the United States* appeared in 1960 it was double the size of the first which had been published eleven years before. There are some grounds for hoping that another instalment of more broadly historical statistics might now be planned to follow Dr Mitchell's present *Abstract*.

H. J. DYOS

PETER J. BOWDEN, *The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England*. Macmillan, 1962. xviii+242 pp. 35s.

The conduct and regulation of the home wool trade has hitherto escaped the careful attention which has been given to the organization of the cloth industry in various parts of the country. Dr Bowden has filled this gap for two centuries when the changing fortunes of the industry had repercussions throughout En-

lish society, not least among the agricultural community. Until the mid-sixteenth century the growing manufacture of cloth absorbed ever-increasing supplies of wool which was no longer exported in any quantity to continental weavers. After the mid-century the industry's foreign markets contracted and its workers were faced with unemployment. In good times and bad both government and conflicting private interests were concerned that the supply of wool should be subject to continual regulation. The agricultural historian will find much to interest him in Dr Bowden's unravelling of the problems which these changes posed and of the measures with which they were met.

In a chapter on sheep farming and wool production, Dr Bowden has added much fresh evidence to that collected from published material to give a broad account of the sheep farmer's aims, methods, and problems. He is doubtless right to stress that wool production was the primary object, in many mixed farming as well as in pastoral districts. He seems, however, to under-emphasize the sheep's fundamental rôle in providing dung on light soils. In the chalk country of Wiltshire, for example, it has been argued that the order of priorities was wheat, barley, lambs, malt, and—last—wool. There is perhaps a need for agricultural historians to give the attention to the income and profits of the sheep-corn farmer that they have given to his methods of husbandry. Dr Bowden discusses the varying influence of the cloth industry's demand for wool on the enclosure and conversion of arable land to pasture, and gives a valuable account of the relative movements of wool and corn prices. Enclosure affected the quality as well as the quantity of wool produced, for richer pastures produced a longer and coarser fibre. English wool lost its reputation for fineness not only in Europe but eventually in the home broadcloth industry too, and the new wools were increasingly destined for the manufacture of worsted cloths.

The importance of the changing nature of English wool in promoting the growth of the worsted branch of the industry at the expense

of the woollen is fully discussed in an account of the industry and its sources of wool supply. Home wool, moreover, was increasingly unable to meet the needs of the industry and in the seventeenth century the import of Irish and Spanish wool played a vital part. And as local specialization developed within the industry, so middlemen assumed important functions as sorters of the wool they carried. Dr Bowden analyses the methods used by middlemen in their dealings with farmer and clothier and throws much light on this aspect of the farmer's business.

Studies of the agrarian economy of different parts of England will make it possible to test many of the arguments expounded in this book, and agricultural historians will frequently benefit by setting their work against Dr Bowden's backcloth.

K. J. ALLISON

F. W. STEER, *A Catalogue of Sussex Estate and Tithe Award Maps*. Sussex Record Society, Volume LXI, xvi+240 pp. Published jointly by the Sussex Record Society and the County Councils of East and West Sussex, 1962. No price stated.

"To the student of history and geography, to the artist, surveyor or mathematician, old maps can be both delightful and profitable," remarks the Sussex County Archivist in the introduction to this admirable catalogue. Mr Steer's knowledge and experience gained from many years of careful study of maps and their makers is everywhere apparent in his excellent introduction and the lists that follow. He has examined personally over eight hundred estate maps, together with surveys of the Goodwood Estates and Tithe Award Plans, in the preparation of the present volume. The earliest map dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century; the rest of the estate maps are listed in chronological order and cover the period up to the middle of the nineteenth century.

The system adopted in the presentation of the catalogue is that already well-tried by Mr F. G. Emmison in the earlier publications from the Essex Record Office. It has been

found that this system is equal to the demands of many types of student. Considerable detail about each map is given, including the title in its original form, the size, catalogue mark (if held in official archives), or the ownership (if in a private collection), and the position and area shown in the parish. Where the surveyor or cartographer's name is not given, it has been possible sometimes to ascribe penmanship on documentary or stylistic grounds. A brief description of the map's appearance and content follows each entry.

Two further sections follow, one describing the Goodwood Estate surveys taken between the years 1781 and 1791 for the duke of Richmond, and the other listing the Tithe Award maps which are now held in the two County Record Offices.

The catalogue allows the student to follow the development of the map-maker's art. He can trace the changing styles of decoration, elaborate borders and cartouches executed to please wealthy clients, or the methods of representing features on the ground. Many maps distinguish types of field boundary; buildings are often drawn in perspective view; and clapper bridges and windmills can be traced. Sussex has been the field of many skilled practitioners. John Norden's work is represented by examples from Littlehampton and Climping, Middleton, and Petworth. At a later period the joint work of Thomas Yeakell and William Gardner can be seen in the Goodwood surveys.

In preparing these surveys Yeakell and Gardner used their engraved maps of West Sussex (1778-83) at a scale of 2 in. to 1 mile to show the general site of the village or lands under examination. These fine county maps are extremely interesting in themselves, providing a valuable and accurate picture some years before the first Ordnance Survey sheets appeared. They are specially remarkable for the striking presentation of the relief in the South Downs by the 'woolly caterpillar style', whereby the smallest dry valley resembles a chasm. Having shown the general pattern of the village, the two surveyors set out a series of tables and plans showing first

the properties in the villages and then the individual holdings. In nearly all cases the proprietors had strips in common arable fields. Ownership in the common fields is distinguished by colour and a series of reference numbers. It is a pity that it has not been possible to reproduce some of these fine plans; in Strettington, for example, one could distinguish as many as thirty strips being worked by one tenant in the East Field alone, an area of only seventy-seven acres divided into six furlongs.

The whole question of colour reproduction of maps for publication or reference is one that deserves much more attention. If some satisfactory, cheap, and permanent method could be devised it would benefit writers, students, and archivists alike. A national archive of map data would then become a serious proposition instead of a pleasant idea as it is at the moment.

The section on Tithe maps has been indexed with a series of reference numbers indicating special features in addition to the usual information that can be gained by comparing the plans with the Tithe Award schedules themselves. Thus the basic information of names of owners and occupiers, names and descriptions of premises, state of cultivation, acreage, and rent charge apportioned on the land, is supplemented by details under twenty-one subject headings. These heads are numbered against each entry and cover detached portions of the parishes, marshes, and saltings (a valuable entry for the study of coastal changes), names of heaths and commons, strips in 'open' arable fields, meadow doles, insets of towns and villages at larger scales, railways, archaeological sites, and many other features.

By preparing this catalogue of maps held in public and private hands Mr Steer has done a great service to all those interested in the evolution of the landscape and in map-making. Of particular value is the list of those maps in private custody which are not easily accessible or even known. It is to be hoped that many more similar publications will appear for other counties, so that this often neglected source of information may be fur-

ther exploited. A second Sussex volume is planned to include enclosure award maps, plans prepared in connection with public schemes, and fifty more estate maps that came to light too late to be included in the present catalogue.

B. LOUGHBROUGH

H. M. COLVIN, *A History of Deddington*. S.P.C.K., 1963. x+132 pp. 12s. 6d.

It is matter for congratulation when a historian of Mr Colvin's recognized eminence turns his attention to parochial history, and does so, moreover, without feeling impelled to apologize for engaging in what is still sometimes thought to be a trivial pursuit. His careful researches, and the enterprise of the S.P.C.K. in publishing them at what for these days is a very modest price, should earn the gratitude of all who care about the English local community and its past.

Deddington is a parish of some 4,000 acres in north Oxfordshire, containing the market town of the same name, two hamlets, and the site of another hamlet which has dwindled to a solitary farm. The town, standing where the main Oxford-Banbury road crosses the highway from Buckingham to Chipping Norton, was well placed to develop into an agricultural market centre. By the end of the thirteenth century it was being taxed as a borough. Between 1302 and 1305 it enjoyed or suffered the privilege of sending two burgesses to parliament. But with Banbury only six miles away, the competition was too keen. Deddington failed to keep up with its thriving neighbour, and though its cattle markets were still well attended in the nineteenth century, only the little Town Hall now commemorates its former urban status. Outside the town the inhabitants cultivated their yardlands in common fields, of which there seem to have been two, subsequently divided into four. Enclosure came in 1808; there are now fifteen farms in the parish, some of them still known by the names of their unenclosed predecessors.

Mr Colvin began his work as a contribution to the *Victoria County History of*

Oxfordshire. Separate publication has enabled him, as he says, "to diverge somewhat from the established conventions of the *V.C.H.*," but perhaps the result would have been even more satisfactory than it is if he had availed himself more fully of this freedom. The formal categorization of the subject-matter under such headings as The Manors and their Lords, Local Government, Church History, Schools, Charities, and so forth, typical of *V.C.H.*, tends to obscure the developing pattern of communal life. Still, the essential facts are there, carefully assembled, and presented in manageable compass. We could do with many more such local histories.

H. P. R. FINBERG

PHILIP WRIGHT, *Old Farm Tractors*. A. and C. Black, 1962. x+78 pp., illustrated. 25s.

This book seems to have been written partly as a result of the great interest which was shown in veteran tractors when they were paraded at the Suffolk Agricultural Show in 1957. It is good to learn that "a large number of these ancients" have been preserved in various parts of the country and are "being given the same lavish care as is bestowed on veteran and vintage cars." The author illustrates twenty-five of them in his plates. These are perhaps the most interesting part of the book, and include some of the earliest English light petrol tractors, such as the Ivel designed by Dan Albone and made by his company, Ivel Agricultural Motors Ltd, at Biggleswade, Beds., in 1902; and an experimental 20 h.p. tractor, looking rather like a motor-car of those days, made by Ransomes, Sims, and Jefferies Ltd, in the same year.

There is also a list of the owners of old tractors and of the models they possess (some of which are still in use) and this should be most useful to any one who wishes to see the rarer models.

However, although individual tractors are well illustrated and described, it is a pity that the author decided to limit himself to what he calls "a note on the evolution and progress of the farm tractor," because much of the infor-

mation about the early history of tractor design and production which he has gathered from personal contact, or correspondence, with the pioneers is of considerable interest; but a rather confused method of presentation, and a style of writing which is not always clear, make it hard work to sift the relevant general information from the details of individual tractors. One of the difficulties is that the author does not seem to have been clear what audience he wished to address: the book is clearly meant for the general reader and yet many of the descriptions, while too imprecise for the engineer, assume a knowledge of technicalities which not every reader will possess—nor are the author's attempts to enlighten them in the chapter called 'The Tractor Mechanism' as helpful as they might have been.

The descriptions of the tractors which were demonstrated at various early tractor trials, such as those held by the Royal Agricultural Society of England at Bygrave, Baldock, Herts., in 1910, at Aisthorpe near Lincoln in 1920, and at Wallingford, Berks., in 1930, are interesting; but would have been even more so if the results of the trials and their influence on future designs had been discussed.

The influence of American manufacturers is rightly stressed, because after a promising start, British tractor-makers fell behind American. In general the pre-1914 British tractors were too heavy and too expensive to win widespread acceptance (the Saunderson and Mills 45-50 h.p. model cost £450 in 1910); and after the war American tractors, with a far larger domestic production behind them, were able to undercut British prices. For instance at the Motor Manufacturers' and Traders' Trials held at South Carlton, Lincoln, in 1919 seventeen English and nine American companies entered models, but only one of the English models, the Austin 25 h.p., was really competitive with its chief American rival, the Fordson, which was being made in Ireland at Cork. The Austin weighed 1 ton 8 cwt and cost £300, while the Fordson weighed 1 ton 3½ cwt and cost £280. Many of the English models cost more than their main American rivals by as much as £100.

Mr Wright has included much useful information and some rare photographs in his book. It is a pity that he gives few references and no bibliography, because this is an important as well as an interesting subject.

M. A. HAVINDEN

A. E. WILSON (translator and editor), *Custumals of the Manors of Laughton, Willingdon, and Goring*. Sussex Record Society, 1961. 102 pp.

This is the third volume of manorial custumals to be issued by the Sussex Record Society—the first being devoted to manors belonging to the bishop of Chichester and the second to those of the archbishop of Canterbury. The present volume is all the more welcome because the documents it contains relate to lay estates, for which information is usually harder to obtain. Moreover, these particular manors, though few in number, "stretched over all the main soil regions of Sussex." Three of the documents belong to the last decade of the thirteenth century and all the others were made in 1321. In an appendix we are given a statistical summary of an extent of 1325 and an inquest of 1338 for Laughton which provides material for a comparison with the conditions described in the extent of 1292, a translation of which is one of those published in the body of the volume. A useful Introduction and four illustrative maps facilitate the study of what is a distinctly valuable collection of material for agrarian historians.

F. H. HINSLEY (ed.), *The New Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. XI. *Material Progress and World-Wide Problems, 1870-1898*. Cambridge University Press, 1962. xii+744 pp. 40s.

Co-operative exercises in writing history are hazardous enterprises; and the more comprehensive and interconnected the team strives to be, the more difficult the task becomes. When each volume has to fit into a series, which has to knit together in chronological sequence, the task of each editor, and even more that of the general editors, is at its most

teasing. These difficulties should be remembered (as they often seem not to be) when books in a series are being appraised.

Considered merely as a collection of articles on various topics, there is much solid fare and some stimulus in this compilation. The chapters I found most stimulating were those by Mr Howard on the armed forces and by Professor Fitzgerald on China. In general, this volume closely follows the pattern set by Mr Bury's distinguished Volume x in the same series, though it just fails to maintain a similarly high level of individual performance and of overall unity of theme and treatment. Following a broad-ranging introductory chapter by the editor there are eight subject chapters, one each on economic conditions, science and technology, social and political thought, literature, art and architecture, education, the armed forces, and political and social developments. Then there are fourteen chapters devoted to particular countries or regions, and one chapter entitled 'International Relations'. A reader of this journal will probably be disappointed to learn that agriculture gets two inches of the double-column 48-page index, and a few cursory references as sub-items elsewhere.

Considered as a composite work presumably intended to portray a whole period comprehensively in the light of recent scholarship, and considered too as one work in a series, this volume has some serious shortcomings. Tighter editorial control could have cut down the amount of repetitive overlapping and drawn out controversial and conflicting interpretations more sharply. But what is most perplexing about the volume, and the series as a whole, is the policy about bibliography and footnotes. Very often chapters are, understandably enough, summary statements of what the author has written at length elsewhere. But there is never a reference to these previous works. Yet, surely, the general reader could be helped by being referred to these longer works, and the specialist would like to know what principles govern the inclusion of sporadic footnotes, when apparently (and unhappily) extensive biblio-

ographies are virtually all to be lumped together in a separate volume—presumably in Volume XIII, the announced *Companion to Modern History*.

PETER LYON

BRINLEY THOMAS (ed.), *The Welsh Economy, Studies in Expansion*. Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1962. xvi+218 pp. 30s.

"The aim of this book is to assess the performance of the Welsh economy since the Second World War, and as background we have outlined its growth and fluctuations over the last century in relation to the international community of which it is a member"—so begins the preface. It is an admirable aim; and so far as an amateur economist living in the industrial desert of northern West Wales can judge, it has been admirably attained—for industrial South Wales.

Industrial South Wales is naturally the focus of interest for this Cardiff team, and Professor Thomas has done well to point out how much the life and culture of Wales have owed to the fact that the natural increase of the rural population in the nineteenth century could be absorbed by this expanding industrial community, though it is hardly "a commonplace of the nationalist creed that the economic growth of Wales in the last century was seriously inimical to the nation's language and culture." English-minded education, not industrialization, is the nigger in the orthodox nationalist's woodpile; and a not-so-orthodox nationalist may suggest that Professor Thomas could have carried his argument further, for if industrial development could have been as strong in the north-east as in the south-east, Wales might have been spared the Liverpoolian contamination which is the curse of the northern coast and much of its hinterland.

The first three general chapters (by Professor Thomas), then, and those on Coal (by Mr Leslie Jones) and Steel (by Mr James Driscoll), give a clear factual picture which shows how great has been the change from the familiar inter-war pattern in South Wales. On the one hand there has been change in the scale and in the techniques of the coal and

steel industries which are still the most prominent; on the other, change from an almost colonial pattern dominated by these two primary industries to a much more diversified economy. The team could perhaps have told us more about the prospects of the new economy, for too little attention seems to have been given to the fact that so many of the new Welsh factories are appendages of large organizations with headquarters in England; we have already had reminders that the extremities suffer first when the circulation of an economic organism grows sluggish. This reluctance to prophesy may be a sign of purist concentration on fact; so too the acceptance (in Mr J. Hamish Richards's chapter on Transport) of the Ministry of Transport's rejection of arguments for a new North-South trunk road. But if these points were allowed to pass without comment, it was surely carrying caution too far to speak of the ample surplus of water in the central area of Wales as though there were no reservoir being built in the Tryweryn valley.

We may sometimes suspect that the team has not been quite diligent enough in pursuit of material: thus the reference to "the published data" of the 1954 Census of Production (p. 157) suggests that no attempt was made to have access to unpublished data. Suspicion hardens into certainty when we turn to Miss Anne Martin's chapter on Agriculture, which claims the greatest attention in this REVIEW. Better material than some of that used for the chapter was certainly accessible; and some of the material which was used has been clumsily handled. It would be tedious to go into detail: examples would be on the one hand the use of 1955 figures for agricultural co-operation when 1959 figures were accessible, and on the other the confused discussion of the average size of holdings which has resulted from uncertainty about how to deal with rough grazing.

This unsatisfactory use of figures is the more serious because the whole chapter gives so strong an impression of having been extracted and assembled from reports and tables of statistics at an infinite distance from the

farms to which they refer. To call the Fatstock Marketing Corporation "a non-profit-making company which organizes the slaughter and sale of fatstock on the farmer's behalf" does not suggest much familiarity with the agricultural scene, and does the Corporation both less and more than justice. Or again, a writer who had personal contact with post-war Welsh farming would surely have mentioned improved varieties as a factor quite as important as "increased use of lime and fertilizers and . . . improved methods of harvesting" in raising cereal yields. To Miss Martin's credit it must be recorded that though she quotes from the *Mid-Wales Investigation Report* the view that to have a tractor on the farm has often meant gross over-capitalization in machinery, she goes on to say that "in an area of high rainfall and restricted periods of good weather at harvest-time, a tractor in individual ownership may represent a very sound insurance." But why could she not have made an equally wise comment on the same Report's reference to farms "on wet land not suited to dairying"?

Perhaps she ought not to be blamed for accepting that nonsensical reference on the authority of the Welsh Agricultural Land Sub-Commission; and when she tacitly accepts the view that a small farmer is badly off if he does not receive a net income "which, after reasonable provision for the return on his capital, will not be less than that of a farm worker," she is adopting the orthodox standard of British agricultural economics. But it needs to be said as often as possible (since that standard is now used so often in determining official policy) that this view is an ill-informed one. The present occasion is not a proper one for developing the theme at length, but two points can be made very shortly. First, a small farmer having a given income (as calculated for income tax) can have a higher standard of living than an employed worker having the same income, if only because he lives on his farm and because he produces some of his own food. Secondly, he has greater security: one important factor in encouraging the flight of employed workers from the land is the fear

of redundancy caused by technical advance, but the small farmer does not become redundant even when he reduces his standard of living during a depression in order to avoid bankruptcy.

There is still room for a book which will assess the performance of Welsh agriculture since the Second World War against the background of its growth and fluctuations over the last century.

DAFYDD JENKINS

J. H. SMITH, *The Gordon's Mill Farming Club 1758-1764*. Aberdeen University Studies, No. 145, 1962. viii+156 pp. 30s. Of all the many institutional features of eighteenth-century Scottish agriculture, the innovating rôle of the improvement societies is not yet perhaps fully appreciated, although most textbooks at least refer to the national societies. As Mr J. H. Smith remarks, the smaller local farming clubs were probably most important for they had closer contacts with practical men; but few records remain, and it will be very useful to have these printed extracts of the Gordon's Mill Club minutes which the author has selected from the manuscript volume now lodged in the Library of King's College, Aberdeen University.

Mr Smith's introduction to the extracts provides a brief account of Aberdeenshire farming during the period, as well as highlighting some of the features of the Club's activities. Much of the ground will inevitably be familiar to those who know the literature, but there are a sufficient number of significant local developments to make this a helpful reference work for agricultural historians. The Club received visits from Grant of Monymusk and Barclay of Ury, and the minutes include comments on the Norfolk system, on Tullian husbandry, on cheese and butter making, on the ox versus horse controversy, and on other questions of more than antiquarian interest. Data on farm costs are also valuable evidence although economic historians will find them tantalizing rather than conclusive.

Questionnaires were in use in Aberdeen-

shire 200 years ago, and the details provided are instructive, even if some of the main questions which interest us today were not asked. The management of the arable ground was apparently the major interest of the members of the Club. I could find no trace of advice on breeding. Under-developed countries interested in expanding their livestock production may well conclude that some Scots farmers apparently put feed before breed—at least in the eighteenth century!

GEORGE HOUSTON

MARTIN RIDGE, *Ignatius Donnelly, Portrait of a Politician*. University of Chicago Press, 1962. xii+428 pp. 59s. 6d.

Ignatius Donnelly was one of the "ragged élite", as they have been so aptly called by Richard Hofstadter, who largely made up the leadership of the Populist movement in the United States in the eighties and nineties of the last century. Although Populism was basically an uprising of the farmers against their own depressed condition and the power of banks and business, all sorts of cranks and failed politicians flocked to the banner.

Donnelly went to Minnesota from his native Philadelphia as a young man and there forsook his Irish-American allegiance to the Democrats. He had a rapid early success in state and national politics as a Republican but threw it all away to become successively Anti-Monopolist, Granger, Greenbacker, and Populist. On the whole, it is fair to say that he was animated by ambition rather than by principle and more of the perpetual third-party man than the professional reformer.

There is a temptation to ask why such a big book should have been written on so small a subject. The answer probably lies in unwillingness to sacrifice much from the vast collection of Donnelly MSS. preserved in the Minnesota Historical Society and so far only skimmed by American historians. Greater brevity and a lighter touch would seem to have been more appropriate, especially in dealing with Minnesota politics and with Donnelly's literary work.

E. R. R. GREEN

S. LA ANYANE, *Ghana Agriculture: its Economic Development from Early Times to the Middle of the Twentieth Century*. Oxford Univ. Press, Accra and London, 1963. xiv+228 pp. 25s. (in U.K. only).

Agricultural histories of tropical countries are so rare that this one is much to be welcomed. The author is a Ghanaian who has served successively the Department and the Ministry of Agriculture, and to whom the study of their history has obviously been a labour of love. A professional historian might find the treatment of some parts of the story a little sketchy, and there are a few misspellings and awkwardnesses of English in the text; but the record is fairly presented, and most aspects that are relevant have been included.

The book is particularly instructive because the agricultural history of Ghana is so typical of a tropical country. The early records are slight, and provide little temptation for author or reader to linger over them. The greater part of the book is concerned with happenings from the late nineteenth century onwards, and the picture is of course soon dominated by cocoa. Here again we have a classic case of a successful export crop reducing the farmers' interest in food produc-

tion. At the same time the attractions of cocoa rendered almost nugatory all the attempts of the agricultural authorities to diversify the economy by the encouragement of oil palms, cotton, coconuts, and other crops. Rubber had its blaze of glory in the eighteen-nineties, and a brief resuscitation in the Second World War. From about 1930 onwards the spate of official pronouncements and policies to be recorded becomes so great that it sometimes tends to obscure what farmers were actually doing.

As a Ghanaian agricultural economist, Mr Anyane seems to have no great overall criticisms to make of the agricultural policy or lack of it under colonial rule, though he is critical on particular issues as we all might be. He does not enter into the controversies of the nineteen-fifties on the pros and cons of marketing boards. The book hardly includes any happenings since independence, though some of the statistical tables are taken down to 1961. This is a pity because the author ends by discussing prospects for the future of Ghana agriculture, in which some of the decisions taken in the last few years may prove to be highly significant.

G. B. MASEFIELD

NOTES AND COMMENTS (continued from page 114)

FUTURE CONFERENCES

The December conference of the Society will be held jointly with the Association of Agriculture at the London School of Economics on Saturday, 7 December. The main paper will be given by Mr R. V. Lennard, on 'Agrarian History: Some Vistas and Pitfalls (with special reference to medieval England)',

and Professor R. H. Hilton and Dr W. G. Hoskins will take part in the discussion in the afternoon. The annual general meeting and conference will be held jointly with the Economic History Society at St Patrick's Hall, University of Reading, from lunch-time on Friday, 3 April, to 5 p.m. on Sunday, 6 April 1964.