

Book Reviews

A. H. SMITH, *The Place Names of Gloucestershire. Parts 1-4, Vols. XXXVIII, XXXIX, XL, XLI*, English Place Name Society, Cambridge University Press, 1964. xiv + 268 pp.; xiv + 264 pp.; xiv + 272 pp.; xv + 274 pp. 42s. each.

This addition to the county volumes produced by the English Place Name Society is of great interest to agrarian historians, both as regards the interesting material in volume IV and the detailed analyses of place, field, and other names in volumes I to III. The introduction itself is a model for the handling of place-name evidence for historical and topographical questions, much aided by a sheaf of eight maps. The analyses of place and field name elements which follow are of the greatest assistance, not merely to the Gloucestershire historian, but to anyone concerned with English social and economic history in the pre-industrial era. It goes without saying that for purely agrarian matters, a survey which has so many minor and field names from each parish is of the greatest interest. Many field names indicate what grains were best sown on them (e.g. 'bean land', 'barley hill'), what the soil was like (e.g. 'catsbrain'), or some aspect of husbandry ('lott mead', 'goose marsh', 'hitchen'). Were one also able to locate the field itself, a detailed analysis of old rotations would be much aided. Unfortunately, as anyone who has tried to compare medieval field names with modern estate maps will know, in many parishes a clean sweep has often been made of pre-enclosure field nomenclature.

A topic much helped by place names is that of local communications. Manorial documents, at any rate in medieval times, contain only scattered references to the roads. In a systematic collection of names such as this it is possible to get a much better idea of the road system than is possible from manorial and legal sources. There is, of course, a separate section on road names, but a lot of additional information for minor tracks is to be found

in the field name sections of each parish.

Some historical explanations are not entirely convincing. The interpretation of 'Charlton' as 'land recovered from waste on the edges of an estate for the use of peasants' seems unnecessarily elaborate (I, p. 111). The historian might also wonder whether some indication that an apparently minor place was once a village would not be worth making. For example Bidfield in Miserden parish, that is 'Bida's piece of open countryside' (I, p. 130), was a taxation unit in the fourteenth century. Although deserted by 1380, the earthworks of its houses can still be found. Another of these places, still a local name, has been missed altogether. The village of Sevenhampton in the Colne Valley has a ghost village a mile or two to its west, shown by identifiable earthworks, and known locally as 'Old Sennington', a name not recorded. Indications of other deserted sites are also lacking. Since place-name investigators may well come on evidence of the desertion of occupied sites sooner than other specialists, it is a pity some attention is not given to this aspect of place names.

Gloucestershire was a county of many occupations. The Cotswold parishes have many place-names indicating the once predominant interest in sheep. Bisley parish, within which Stroud and its industries grew, has an impressive number of minor names, many indicating its industrial past. Parishes in the Hundred of St Briavels abound with names indicating coal and iron working. All these, if plotted on maps, could help, along with other sources, in the reconstruction of the county's past economic and social life. Nor should a reference to folklore be omitted. What was more important to communities that lived from the soil than good weather? Is this the reason for the large number of fields called 'Cuckoo Pen'? Is the reference to the penning of the cuckoos to prevent the passing of summer only jocular? (I, p. 43).

R. H. HILTON

E. L. JONES, *Seasons and Prices. The Role of the Weather in English Agricultural History.*

Allen and Unwin, 1964. 194 pp. 28s.

Weather no longer exerts a dominant influence on English prices, but we need to assess farmers' complaints in the eighteenth century when, as Ashton put it, "what was happening at Westminster or in the City was of small account compared with what was happening in the heavens." This study of contemporary links between weather and agriculture since about 1700 is primarily intended, to use the author's words, "for the layman who is interested in the history of farming." However, its novel approach and conclusions should make it useful to all agricultural historians.

Weather chronologies, hitherto published for Britain by Lowe, Walford, Wilde, and others, have generally been unreliable in both content and chronology. The unpublished collections of Britton, Jeffery, and T. H. Baker contain well-documented information not found in the standard printed sources. The present work is based especially on the materials collected by T. H. Baker for a proposed third edition of his book (1883), the materials of which are now in the library of the Royal Meteorological Society. Chronology in the present work is nevertheless relegated to the final part of the book and consists of short summaries for each year since 1728. These summaries are much abbreviated, but they are useful especially as they include information from unpublished farmers' diaries. In this chronology some years meteorologically outstanding, such as the wet year of 1872, are not mentioned; agriculturally it was overshadowed by 1879. The drought of 1921 is not mentioned in the book at all, perhaps because by that date weather had become less important than formerly.

The rest of the book is devoted to interpretation and discussion. The wisdom of the farmers is enshrined in the superstitions about Hunger-bournes, streams which break forth, as we now realize, only after a series of wet years and which were regarded (pp. 54-5) even in seventeenth-century Wiltshire (and

in White's Selborne in 1764-74) as a sign of scarcity. The significance of autumn wetness in reducing the acreage sown for the subsequent wheat crop is now appreciated and is noted by the author. The effects of pre-June drought in reducing the hay-crop have long been recognized.

Livestock are affected by the weather in many different ways. Sheep-rot (e.g. 1828-31, 1879-81) follows runs of wet summers as in the twenties and seventies of last century. Cattle are affected by long droughts as in 1826, 1836, 1844, 1864, and 1937-8. Pigs are affected by the acorn crop, abundant in such years as 1762, 1781, and 1783. Winter-fattening of both sheep and cattle was so dependent upon the turnip by the late eighteenth-century that the series of cold winters between 1789 and 1799 caused consternation. The temperatures in the first quarter of the year indeed still determine the seasonal losses of sheep and lambs (cf. 1895, 1916, 1963).

The complexity of the relationships is emphasized. There is no attempt to introduce statistics—even meteorological data—or to apply modern correlations to the past. Thus we now find that a mild March normally leads to good milk yields not only in April and May but also in September, and that apple scab is linked with wetness in April and May but potato blight with wetness in July. Dry Junes in the period 1780-1810 have suggested to L. P. Smith ('The Significance of Climate Variations in Britain', *Unesco Symposium: Arid Zone Research*, xxi, 1963, pp. 455-63) that hay-harvests should have been much better than, e.g. in the 1830's or 1910's. There is indeed no attempt to discuss the effects of climatic fluctuations. However, this is another story, and the views of contemporary farmers are often more reliable than those of modern statisticians. We must meanwhile be grateful to the author for explaining in a clear and well-documented manner the extent to which the relationships between weather and agriculture were already understood. These relationships, Ashton has said "seem to have evaded the notice of social historians." There

is thus food for thought in the varying numbers of complaints about the weather listed for different years, the peak year (*cf.* pp. 44, 55, 57, 95, 121, 150, 151) being 1789.

D. J. SCHOVE

MARGARET FULLER, *West Country Friendly Societies*. Oakwood Press for the University of Reading, 1964. ix + 173 pp. 63s.

A distinguishing feature of the village friendly societies of Somerset and of the immediately contiguous areas of the neighbouring counties is that they had decorative brass polehead emblems which were carried by members at their annual festivals. Most of the emblems, of which the maker is known, were the product of the Bristol brass industry which provides one reason for their highly localized occurrence. More than 900 of these brass emblems are now in the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading. To this collection this volume provides an excellent illustrated catalogue. But Miss Fuller has used this opportunity to make a study of rural friendly societies in a particular part of England which complements P. H. J. Gosden's general account of *The Friendly Societies in England, 1815-1875* (Manchester, 1961). Involved in the economic vicissitudes of small communities, the rural friendly societies never achieved permanent financial stability, but the benefits they provided from the contributions of their members included medicine and money for the bare necessities of life when they fell sick or grew old, and a decent burial when they died. The companionship they afforded and the convivial feast day also helped to reduce the bareness of life for many. Of the annual festivals of friendly societies this volume provides a number of excellent photographs of such occasions in the early years of this century. As the state began to pay old-age pensions and sick insurance, the friendly societies lost much of their *raison d'être* and a great number have now ceased to exist. This volume is a most useful by-product of the activities of the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading.

W. E. MINCHINTON

H. B. CARTER, *His Majesty's Spanish Flock. Sir Joseph Banks and the Merinos of George III of England*. Angus and Robertson, 1964. 520 pp. 90s.

Mr H. B. Carter is an Australian wool biologist, now working in Great Britain, and this book is one result of his interest in the number and type of Merino sheep that entered Australia at the end of the eighteenth century. It provides the first reliable account in narrative form of the way in which the unique fine-woolled sheep, long jealously guarded by Spain, came into British hands, and uses original sources, mostly unpublished before, the main one being the papers of Sir Joseph Banks P.R.S.

Mr Carter demonstrates that the principal agency in obtaining the Merino for the British Commonwealth was the Royal flock, established about 1790 by devious means through the partnership of George III with Banks. This partnership forms the theme of the book. He considers that the flock was perhaps the first British example of organized public research in agriculture, and the main body of this painstakingly detailed account is concerned with the period 1780-1820 within which the royal flock was in existence. Its vicissitudes are therefore closely associated with a turbulent period of European history and a time of interest in agricultural and (notably wool) improvement in Britain.

Mr Carter has dealt with the problem of whether to use a chronological or a subject approach by superimposing subjects on a chronology. The work is accordingly divided into 14 chapters beginning with *The Background, 1700-1800*, and ending with *The Legacy, 1788-1962*. Although this approach leads to some overlapping of dates and much repetition, it helps to make each chapter stand alone.

In his first chapter, Mr Carter discusses Spanish wool production and the requirements of the British wool manufacturing industry. At the end of the eighteenth century the production and manufacture of wool became the key to many mercantile and military problems besetting European politics, and

wool was a theme in the economic duel with France with important consequences for the agricultural and manufacturing industries of the two nations. The battle was one of quality as much as of cheapness of manufacture, so adding to the strategic importance of Spanish fine wool.

The Foreground (1782-1788) describes the way in which Sir Joseph became involved with the Lincolnshire longwool growers in their abortive contest with the worsted manufacturers of Yorkshire. The price of combing wool had fallen so much that the growers wanted the law to be revised to allow limited export of wool. Banks was able to ascertain that there were pockets of longwool production on the Continent that were sufficient for local needs, interest there being directed more to the supply of Spanish fine wool than to the possibility of obtaining English longwool. Banks's attention was drawn to the wool of Saxony which had been improved by the importation of Spanish Merinos—an observation that remained dormant in his mind until it flowered into his own interest in fine wool improvement.

Chapter III, *The Savants (1782-1794)*, deals with the co-operation of Banks with the French scientists who were carrying out wool improvement experiments. Among these Broussonet was prominent in assisting him to obtain a few Merino sheep for his own experiments in 1785. It was from the same source that Banks obtained more sheep as the basis for the flock of George III, but the French were not told that they were for the king. The next chapter (1787-1792) discusses the desire of the king to establish a flock of Merinos alongside flocks of other sheep in his possession, and the secret plans involved in the smuggling of sheep from Spain. Expense was no object, and the most important route was through Portugal. Between 1788 and 1792, 14 rams and 73 ewes were obtained through this channel, and another 40 animals later on from the court of Spain.

In *The Faithful Shepherd (1788-1811)* is described the way in which Banks, the President of the Royal Society, gradually assumed

the informal rôle of scientific shepherd to His Majesty's Spanish flock. As he did so he gave his own small flock to Arthur Young so that he could devote all his energies to that of the king. But even the P.R.S. suffered restraints within the royal gates, and Banks was continually frustrated by inexperienced farm workers and disease amongst the sheep. He did, however, build up a lasting association with the king's shepherd who sent him monthly returns that now provide valuable statistics, and Banks himself attended all important events, such as shearing, when a wool stapler graded and valued the wool.

The Royal Fleece (1788-1809) describes the way in which Banks kept in touch with the crossing and wool improvement experiments carried out in France. He was able to show by keeping his Merinos on the best possible pasture that "breed alone directed the fineness of the pile, and that keep, when the pile was really fine, had little if any influence in making it coarser". Yet he found it difficult, as it is indeed difficult today, to convince manufacturers and many breeders of British sheep that this is so. Banks continued these experiments with the royal flock and put forward a project for spreading the Spanish breed through Britain, as was being done in France.

In 1791 when the royal flock numbered over 150 animals George III began to grant Merino sheep to a few favoured persons interested in establishing flocks, or wishing to improve British breeds such as the Ryeland and Southdown, and Mr Carter traces, by number, the fate of each animal from the flock. In *The Twilight Years (1810-1820)* Mr Carter summarizes the fortunes of the flock, and shows that by 1810 other European countries, notably France, were well ahead of Britain in Merino breeding. Britain suffered the disadvantage of too small an original introduction, which meant that there were insufficient numbers to provide replacements for the flocks established in Britain. The problem of Britain's supply of fine wool was solved for her by the colonial settlers of New South Wales whose Merinos

multiplied rapidly under a sun similar to that of Spain so that by the mid-nineteenth century Australia outstripped the Continent as a supplier of fine wool. This enabled Britain to concentrate on the carcase at home, and emerge as the leader in the development of mutton breeds. The last flock return, dated January 1813, records 2,700 animals, most of which were sold later in the year in poor condition. The deaths of the king and Banks within a few months of each other in 1820 finally ended the enterprise, but the remnants of the royal flock apparently existed in Essex until 1895.

An excellent appendix of maps and tables ameliorates the difficulty imposed by the author's verbosity and tortuous style in extracting the main points from the text, but it is a disadvantage that these, like the figures and plates, are not referred to in the text. Altogether the book makes fascinating reading, and we look forward to further volumes from Mr Carter following up various points concerned with the legacy of the Spanish Merino in the British Commonwealth.

M. L. RYDER

CHARLES VARLEY, *The Unfortunate Husbandman*, edited by Desmond Clarke. Oldbourne, 1964. 118 pp. 21s.

Charles Varley, or Varlo as he was also called, was born about 1725 on the borders of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, then "the greatest hemp and flax country in England." Although a farmer's son, he worked as a labourer before going to Ireland, where his knowledge of flax was a considerable asset. He had a successful career there as steward, government flax-growing instructor, and eventually as grazier and merchant. The lure of authorship may well have been his undoing, for he left Ireland after the publication of his first book in 1766 and thereafter led a wandering life as farming expert and agricultural writer which can hardly have been remunerative.

Varley published eight works in all, but as the material in each succeeding volume was largely taken from its predecessors, he was

not quite so prolific an author as might appear at first sight. His second book, *The Modern Farmer's Guide* (1768), was prefaced by the autobiography of a 'Real Farmer'. Mr Fussell was the first to draw attention to the literary quality of this piece of writing, but it has been left to Mr Clarke to identify the author. Varley came from a level of society which rarely found literary expression so that he presents pictures of farm life and work not to be found elsewhere. On the other hand, he suffered from the wrongheadedness and dogmatism of the self-educated man and consequently produced large quantities of rubbish as well.

An uneven and chaotic writer such as Varley is well suited to the anthologist. Unfortunately, the editing of this book does not reach acceptable standards. There is no indication of the source of the material reprinted, although it is drawn from more than one of Varley's works, nor are there any references, index, or bibliography. Mr Clarke should have made a wider selection from Varley as the 'Real Farmer' is too slender to stand alone, and there are plenty of vigorous passages to be found elsewhere in his writings. Still, there is enough to give the reader a taste of Varley, who is always original and can often be entertaining and instructive.

E. R. R. GREEN

ANNE HUGHES, *The Diary of a Farmer's Wife, 1796-1797*. Edited by Suzanne Beedell. Countrywise Books: *The Farmers Weekly*, London, 1964. 188 pp., illus., 27s. 6d.

Diaries kept by English farmers or their wives in any century are so rare that the publication of any document falling under this heading gives rise to pleasurable expectations in the minds of agricultural historians. Unfortunately these expectations are not fulfilled by what is presented to the public as the diary of Anne Hughes, farmer's wife in an unnamed and apparently unidentifiable village somewhere in the Chepstow-Gloucester-Hereford area (these are the only local place-names mentioned in the diary, except for farm names and an obscure place called 'Telforde' on

page 40). It is curious that the local market town is never identified, although Anne's husband went to market there frequently, but, contrary to what might be expected, not on any fixed day of the week.

The material now offered in book form was originally serialized by *The Farmers Weekly* in 1937 from what was said to be the original manuscript in the possession of a Mrs Jean Preston. Neither the original manuscript nor Mrs Jean Preston can now be traced. The diary, it must be confessed, is entertaining enough considered purely as light reading, being full of the stock rustic japes of popular fiction—ghosts in the graveyard and lanes, witches in the deserted cottage, the tribulations of young love, and immersions up to the neck in the muck-heap. But as one progresses through the diary a number of disturbing questions arise which, to a professional historian, raise serious doubts as to its authenticity. The social structure of the village seems curiously idyllic. Mrs Hughes never mentions tithes, rents, or rent-days. There is a local landowner, Squire Manton, named only once (p. 131), who hovers vaguely in the background, while the two daughters of a former squire hobnob with the local farmers. Mrs Hughes is extraordinarily friendly with the wife of the local (and anonymous) peer at the 'Big House', but this Lady Susan Blank dies on 3 July 1796. No obituary of any Lady Susan is to be found, however, in either the *Annual Register* or the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1796. There is no mention in the diary of a village constable, an overseer of the poor, or a surveyor of highways, although to judge by the state of affairs described in the diary, the place was much in need of their services. Nocturnal burglaries are punished on the spot with rough justice. Rough as it is, this justice is fantastically mild by eighteenth-century legal standards. Odder still are the ecclesiastical arrangements, which do not conform to eighteenth-century realities. The village church is served by a succession of 'supply' parsons with no visible patron, and on one occasion there is a meeting of villagers to discuss having a parson to live in the village

(pp. 81-2). These village Hampdens must have been crypto-Methodists.

Some of the agricultural practices seem odd too: 3 July is too early to start cutting corn (pp. 56-7), and 20 March late for threshing it (p. 31). Ninepence a bag is an impossibly low price for wool (p. 52), and no trace occurs in the diary of the great dearth of 1795-1800. Most damning of all, Mrs Hughes gets her calendar hopelessly and erratically wrong: e.g., 10 February 1796 is noted down as a Sunday, but was in fact a Wednesday; 16 February 1796 is given as a Sunday but was a Tuesday; 3 March 1796 is stated to be a Sunday but was in fact a Thursday, and so on. No wonder that under 17 January 1797 the extraordinary entry occurs: "Yester eve we toe church, Passon not now sticking to the Sabbath for his services!" The suspiciously consistent 'olde Englishe' in which the diary is written consists largely of correct spellings which look archaic because a final 'e' has been added or the final letter doubled. These are interspersed with the more difficult words spelt correctly or almost correctly, and the whole is peppered with dollops of dialect. The question inevitably arises: did someone in 1937 pull wool over the eyes of *The Farmers Weekly*?

W. H. CHALONER

CHRISTABEL S. ORWIN and EDITH H. WHET-
HAM, *History of British Agriculture 1846-
1914*. Longmans, 1964. xx + 411 pp. 63s. This eagerly awaited work provides a much-needed modern account of the fundamental changes that occurred in British agriculture between 1846 and 1914 for all those historians, economists, and agriculturalists, concerned with the subject or the period. The authors wear their learning lightly, their writing is lucid and, on occasion, moving, and most delightful and felicitous tribute is exacted from nineteenth-century literature, Wilde for Jeffries and Tennyson for Hudson being refreshing substitutes. It is good to see John Steadyman of Wearywork Hall so justly resurrected.

This is a work of history that some today,

particularly among economic historians, may consider old-fashioned in its approach. In the authors' words, and already indicated by their choice of opening date, 1846-1914 was a period "when international trade exercised an increasing influence upon the markets of British farmers." This surely was the crucial determinant and yet information about, or analysis of the rôle of, imports is scarce. Prices too are inadequately treated, Sauerbeck being of limited use, and Rhee's rent series equally open to criticism in terms of coverage (Charts III and IV). Chapter 13 includes an interesting discussion of productivity that might have been taken further: gains in productivity are much more difficult to achieve in the livestock than in the arable sector, as the Russians know to their cost.

Two other topics that could have been further explored are Ireland, whose progress since the Famine is well illustrated by the Irish agricultural statistics with their valuable export series, and is not to be guessed at from the two pages devoted to the Irish Land Problem (pp. 290-2); also the rôle of the urban horse, whose numbers increased rapidly during the century (*cf.* Select Committee of the House of Lords on Horses, H.C. 325 of 1873), and whose mouths must have consumed a considerable proportion of the remarkable increase in the acreage of hay shewn in the Agricultural Returns. But there is scope for a major work on both Anglo-Irish trade and the rôle of the horse in the Victorian period.

A noble attempt to cover the formidable regional complexities of the whole of Britain almost succeeds, but, strangely enough, falters most noticeably in the fascinating sections which analyse so perceptively the social structure of the farming community, and where the authors' sympathies evoke most feelingly rural life in Victorian England. The contrast between Wales and Scotland on the one hand and England on the other is well brought out, but the question remains—surely life in the Pennines of northern England, a not inconsiderable stretch of country, has more affinity with that of west-

ern and northern Britain than with that of southern England? All three regions (and the south-west) fall into the Highland zone with its basically pastoral economy. The typical unit was the family farm employing at most one regular man who was usually a surplus son of a neighbour living (or eating) in. He was thus of the same social class as his employer, and 'agricultural labourer' and 'union' were foreign concepts.

It is disturbing to note that the "traditional four-course rotation was only dominant in the north and west of England" (p. 124), that a short discussion of potatoes (pp. 6-7) does not mention Lancashire, and that the section on cheese (pp. 365-6) omits both the Lancashire and the Wensleydale varieties. A more astonishing omission is any reference to Dr E. L. Jones's article 'The Changing Basis of English Agricultural Prosperity', *AHR* X (1962). Misprints are few and confined to the tables, the only one of importance being the absence of horses from Table II (p. 121). But the inevitable sectional criticism cannot diminish the stature of Mrs Orwin's and Miss Whetham's achievement, which succeeds remarkably in solving the complex problems of writing a history of British agriculture between 1846 and 1914. It deserves a place on the bookshelves of all readers of this Review.

T. W. FLETCHER

MICHAEL TRACY, *Agriculture in Western Europe. Crisis and Adaptation since 1880.*

Jonathan Cape, 1964. 415 pp. 55s.

The author's chief purpose in writing this book is to set out the real nature of Western Europe's farm crisis and to urge more realistic and positive approaches to policy-making than in the past. Few people are more competent to undertake this task. Mr Tracy's work as an agricultural economist on the staffs of the United Nations in Geneva, with P.E.P. in London, and latterly with O.E.C.D. in Paris, has enabled him to view the contemporary agricultural scene in Western Europe with excellent overall perspective. Furthermore, Mr Tracy has gone to great pains to

analyse the course of agricultural development and policy-making in Britain, Denmark, France, and Germany since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is this attempt to arrive at a fuller understanding of present-day problems in terms of comparative historical evolution that comprises the major part of Mr Tracy's book and which will prove of greatest interest to the economic historian. Students of agricultural adjustment will doubtlessly agree with the author that "the problems of agriculture are . . . too often seen in the limited context of a given country and of the present time."

Mr Tracy contends that European agriculturalists have been subjected to essentially similar economic forces over the last eighty or ninety years. The author's purpose is to show how and why reactions varied from period to period and to what extent policy measures were effective from place to place. This book, therefore, is largely concerned with the effects of the growth of overseas competition from temperate foodstuffs. Mr Tracy is at his very best in tracing the development of attitudes towards protection and state intervention in agricultural affairs. The whole book is noteworthy for its lucidity, terseness, and balance. Good structure adds to the clarity of Mr Tracy's exposition.

The book is divided into four parts. In the first of these, the author deals with the problems created by overseas competition at the end of last century. He shows how a deep-seated belief in the virtues of free trade and an inability to adapt inevitably led to the collapse of a large part of British agriculture. In Denmark, on the other hand, the family farm structure and an educated peasantry proved more flexible. Cheap imported grains provided a basis upon which lucrative export markets for pigmeat, butter, and eggs were built up. In France and Germany, however, protection was the order of the day. It went hand in hand with military and commercial rivalry and fundamentalist attitudes. Lobbies organized by large grain-growing interests were particularly powerful in both countries.

In the second part of his book Mr Tracy turns to the period between the two world wars. This was an era of growing economic nationalism, resulting from a failure to tackle commodity problems and the economic depression of the 'thirties on an international basis. Britain found herself the odd-one-out, and was compelled to abandon her free trade position in order to preserve her own and commonwealth agricultural interests. State aid also proved essential in Denmark, since even the development of a particularly efficient agricultural production and marketing system could not secure vital export outlets. In France, the ruthless logic of protection led to deeper and deeper commitments. As the author comments, "in general, agriculture in France has hardly seemed to be a subject for economics." But it was only in Nazi Germany that the approach to policy-making was other than piecemeal. Under the leadership of Walther Darré a comprehensive programme for agricultural production and marketing was brought into being. As the author points out, it is ironic that much of Darré's "thinking on agricultural matters has persisted, both in Germany and elsewhere."

In part three, Mr Tracy examines the growth of state intervention in the period since World War II. Agricultural lobbies had grown in power and importance with the urgent need to tackle food shortages and balance of payment difficulties. The need to raise productivity and to improve the living standards of agriculturalists became common aims throughout much of Europe.

Lastly, in part four, Mr Tracy considers the attempts to integrate agriculture within a European economic framework. Much excellent material is summarized here, especially concerning Britain's attempts to overcome the chief obstacles to partnership. However, the inevitable difficulty of separating rather ephemeral detail from the more significant and long-term issues tends to tax both author and reader. Nevertheless, no reader could possibly fail to appreciate the logical connections between the arguments threshed out in Brussels and the national traditions

and attitudes formed over the previous seventy-five years.

Mr Tracy's conclusions, likewise, are very clearly made. Historical and economic analysis have convinced him that there are no simple solutions to Europe's agricultural problems. Instead, he wisely stresses how complex and far-reaching these problems really are. They range from a need to improve the structure and efficiency of production and marketing to providing greater trading opportunities for primary producing countries overseas, and from raising farmers' living standards to tackling food shortages in under-developed areas. The main lesson of the last one hundred years, according to Mr Tracy, is first and foremost that successful policy-making depends upon the correct identification of problems. Secondly, there is abundant evidence from the past to show the need for co-ordinating plans on the basis of broad international agreement. Lastly, he urges the need for pragmatism and declines simple 'economic' solutions which disregard political possibilities and social realities.

It is probably true that the economic historian will find the latter part of Mr Tracy's book of limited interest, but he is likely to find the remainder indispensable. Students, too, will find this an admirable introduction to the agricultural history of our times. Mr Tracy has a particular gift for lucid exposition and despite extensive research over a very broad field he has produced a concise and eminently readable study. The attachment of an extensive bibliography is to be commended.

J. D. SYKES

SIR SAMUEL WADHAM, R. KENT WILSON,
JOYCE WOOD, *Land Utilization in Australia*.
Melbourne University Press, 4th edition,
1964. xv+295 pp., illus. 50s. (Australian).

"The country, my Lord, is past all dispute a wretched one." So reported an officer with the First Fleet, and so the Australian environment has frequently appeared to later settlers. Much of the soil is poor; rainfall is generally adequate in coastal regions, but is extremely capricious and dwindles rapidly inland; and

the vastness of the country imposes tremendous economic problems. Yet in such conditions has been established a highly successful primary industry which has contributed greatly to the economic progress of Australia.

Land Utilization in Australia was first published in 1939, has been substantially revised on three occasions, and experienced a change of authorship at the third edition when R. K. Wilson replaced the late G. L. Wood, and Joyce Wood prepared the excellent maps and diagrams. The new edition is an invaluable account of land use by Australia's major primary industries: wool, wheat, dairying, meat, sugar, and fruit. Land use has been determined by the interaction of climatic, economic, technical, and political factors. Climate has been the most important influence, but the historian will probably find this work most interesting for its account of the technical and scientific developments that have enabled various types of farming to be adapted to the difficulties of the environment.

The book contains a number of historical sections which are generally unsatisfactory. For these the authors have relied on outdated sources and have missed the opportunity of including in the revised edition the findings of a new generation of economic historians. On page 97 the authors argue that without the wool industry "there would have been little progress before the gold discoveries [of the 1850's] and little stability after the gold boom was over. For Australia in the nineteenth century . . . wool became the great national industry—the staple." The first part of the statement is questionable, the rest is wrong. Professor N. G. Butlin's estimates show that in 1861 (the earliest year for which estimates are available) the pastoral industry accounted for 7.8 per cent of gross domestic product at current prices. This share rose to 17.6 per cent in 1875 and fell to 12.5 per cent in 1890 and 8.6 per cent in 1900. During this period the growth of the Australian economy was centred not in the pastoral industry, nor indeed in the primary sector as a whole, but in secondary industry. In 1861 the share of secondary industry (manufacturing and con-

struction) in G.D.P. was 13.0 per cent, in 1875 20.7 per cent, in 1890 22.7 per cent, and in 1900 17.6 per cent. Between 1861 and 1889 secondary industry grew faster than any primary industry. As for stability, capital formation in the pastoral industry was more unstable than in any other sector of the economy.

Some other points deserve comment. The depression of the 1840's is explained by falling wool prices. Professor S. J. Butlin's work, showing that the depression was mainly the result of rising production costs as the pastoral industry moved into outlying areas, is ignored. Similarly, the economic collapse of the 1890's is attributed to the "world economic crisis of 1893," although N. G. Butlin has shown it to be the result of events within Australia. The recent study by Perry of land

settlement in New South Wales to 1829 is not used; nor is Dunsdorfs'—admittedly contentious—history of the wheat industry. The strangest neglect of all is of the essays on pastoral expansion during the later nineteenth century by N. G. Butlin, Barnard, and Cain in A. Barnard (ed.), *The Simple Fleece*, although the technical articles in the same volume are used.

The historical weaknesses of *Land Utilization in Australia* have been laboured for the benefit of English readers who may not be familiar with Australian economic history. But it should be remembered that, in the treatment of its main theme, the book is authoritative and an essential reference work for all who wish to understand the development of primary production in Australia.

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CORRECTION: The biographical details for E. A. Cox and B. R. Dittmer in the last issue omitted to mention their M.A. degrees of the University of London.

Books Received

CAMPBELL, CHRISTIANA M., *The Farm Bureau*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1962. viii+216 pp. \$4.75.

CARSTENSEN, VERNON (ed.), *The Public Lands. Studies in the History of the Public Domain*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963. xxvi+522 pp. \$6.75.

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GUPTA, SULEKH C., *Agrarian Relations and Early British Rule in India. A Case Study of Ceded and Conquered Provinces (Uttar Pradesh, 1801-33)*, Asia Publishing House, 1963. xv+338 pp. 45s.