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LAND AND LABOUR

IN A

DECCAN VILLAGE.

BY

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IN COLLABORATION WITH

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PREFACE.

† DURING the last few years there has been constantly increasing interest in the economic problems of rural India. That these are special in character, and not by any means analogous to those of many other countries is very obvious to those who have made even a superficial study of the question.

As regards the Deccan, interest in the matter was awakened some years ago by the appearance of Keatinge's "Rural Economy in the Bombay Deccan," a book which for the first time collected together and reviewed the available data with regard to the economic history and present economic situation of the rural population of the western portion of the large central plateau of peninsular India. This book was in the highest sense stimulating. One felt, in reading it, that the author had raised a large number of questions which urgently demanded solution, and had pointed out the method of local close detailed study which alone could give the solution demanded. One felt, on the other hand, that many of the conclusions at which Keatinge arrived were extremely doubtful, not because of the fault of his methods, but on account of the inadequacy of his data.

It seemed, in fact, that the close study of a single village might give helpful data in approaching many of the matters which arise when any of the numerous economic and economic-agricultural questions in the Deccan are considered. And on suggesting to my assistants at the Poona Agricultural College that such a close study of a single village would be valuable, they volunteered to carry it out. Led by Messrs. D. L. Sahasrabudde, B.Sc., L.Ag., N. V. Kanitkar, B.Sc., B.Ag., V. A. Tamhane, B.Sc., L.Ag., they undertook the very long, laborious, and painstaking investigation of which an account is given in the following pages.

The village which came under investigation was chosen (1) as being near enough to Poona to be accessible, and yet as being largely out of the immediate influence of a large town ; (2) as being typical of a large tract in the districts of the Deccan where the *kharif* or rains crop is the most important, and where, hence, the rains are more certain than they are further east ; (3) as being one where the influence of irrigation, whether from canals or wells was all but negligible.

The various parts of the inquiry were specially made by the following gentlemen, and to them I tender my very sincere thanks for the care which they have given to the obtaining of the data :—

Mr. D. L. Sahasrabuddhe—Geology, Sociology, Holdings, Cattle, and the following crops, Carrots, Peas, Sugarcane.

Mr. N. V. Kanitkar—Drainage, Sociology, Holdings and the following crops, Jowar, Sugarcane.

Mr. V. A. Tamhane—Soils, Holdings, and, among crops, Wheat.

Mr. D. M. Ranade—Manures, Implements, and, among crops, Bajri and its mixtures.

Mr. V. G. Patwardhan—Drainage, Soils, and, among crops, Groundnut.

Mr. D. D. Abhyankar—Waters, and, among crops, Gram.

Mr. S. R. Paranjpe—Rotations and mixtures of crops.

Mr. S. R. Deshmukh—Manures, Implements.

Mr. R. K. Bhide—Weeds.

The late Mr. G. D. Mehta.—Seeds.

HAROLD H. MANN.

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