

ECONOMIC ORGANISATION OF INDIAN VILLAGES

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(VOL II.)

FOREWORD

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INTRODUCTION

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of interest are novel and deserve investigation. The evils of excessive fragmentation of holdings, absentee landlordism, defective irrigation and deterioration in cattle wealth, are carefully depicted and the remedies suggested are sensible and are well within the region of practical politics.

The chapter dealing with the place of women in our rural economy and the lessons drawn from village social life in Belgium in this respect and those dealing with famine-relief and cheap transport of food, manure and fodder, are suggestive and stimulating.

Last but not the least interesting portion of the book is that embodying a scheme of agricultural development organisations consisting of village and district agricultural panchayats and a Presidency Agricultural Development Board.

There is much in this volume which a Development Minister of the Province might usefully acquaint himself with. Prof. Ranga has placed co-operators and others interested in agricultural reform and rural re-construction under obligations to him by the publication of the results of his researches into a field of useful knowledge.

Farbat Bagh, }
 3rd September 1928. }

V. RAMADAS.

INTRODUCTION.

The author in this interesting and instructive book on "Indian Economic Organisation", particularly deals with the necessity for and the advantage of emigration from the Andhra country into the Hyderabad State. It has, however, a far wider application and will certainly provoke thought which after all is the theme of every writer. India is essentially an agricultural country and 90% of the population depend on the land for their livelihood. As remarked by the writer, certain parts of the country are thickly populated while in others there are vast tracts cultivable but uncultivated and undeveloped. He rightly contends that little or no attention has been paid either by Government or by the public and the politician to the problem of internal migration; that no encouragement has been held out, to those who migrate from the Andhra province to Hyderabad, and that the disabilities such emigrants labour under are neither enquired into nor redressed. The Andras, chiefly the Kammas, Reddis and Telagas have not only a military tradition, but have always been skilled agriculturists. These people have not prospered in the Hyderabad State owing to the "inefficient and autocratic administrative machine", though their methods of cultivation are far more advanced than those of the local people. Emigrants are not only not encouraged by the village officials, but are oppressed. The author's investigation has been searching and thorough and shows that given proper help the colonisation by Andhras in Warangal District must be highly beneficial to themselves and will be of material advantage to the state as well. Ancient as the methods of these ryots are still, they are decidedly superior to those of the Warangal ryots. They adopt deep ploughing and distribution of cattle and green manure, stocking and preservation of fodder, garden culture, fruit-growing,

etc. Some of them have realised the benefits of education and send their children to school. But what is needed is, that these emigrants require a Protector ; and the author rightly lays stress on the Government of India appointing one such officer to look after their interests. The author quotes from his statement submitted to the Royal Agricultural Commission, the elaborate suggestions made by him. They are worthy of serious and earnest study. The agricultural labourer has a long spell of unemployment during the period of non-cultivation ; and the author's suggestions about cottage industries, labour exchanges, weaving, etc., are on the right lines. Whatever political significance some people may attribute to Khaddar there can be no two opinions on its undoubted efficiency in providing food employment and clothing to the ryot and 'Satan cannot find idle hands to do mischief'.

The author's enquiry into the economic condition of the ryots of the three villages Uppalapad, Takkellapad, Kakumanu—is thorough and in the collection of materials he has taken considerable pains and interest. The statistics he has quoted after so much trouble appear to be accurate. They throw considerable light on the indebtedness of ryots, fragmentation of holdings borrowing on usurious rates of interest, standard of living wages, drinking, education, extravagance in dress, marriages etc. In this brief note, I must necessarily confine myself to a general summary of the author's observations. The general reader will be amply compensated by a careful study of the book and will find in it much food for thought.

'The system of labour exchanges' is certainly a remedy for unemployment. There have always been migrations of workers from dry villages to those under irrigation but the author correctly says, that these movements have not been methodical and that Government ought to make one of its officers responsible for the initiation and working of these migrations. England, France, Sweden,

and Norway have organised such exchanges. The Labour Commissioner and the Development Department in Madras must take up this question seriously.

Dairy Farming has been little developed, and the author deploras the decline in the quality of the cattle in the villages surveyed by him. His suggestion for a cattle insurance scheme is sound.

'Back to the land' is one of the solutions for the middle class unemployment. The author suggested to the Royal Agricultural Commission, the levy of a penalty or punitive tax on absentee landlords to persuade them to take to cultivation. His view may be novel but certainly merits consideration.

The present method of the constitution of village panchayats does not commend itself to the author as he says it lends to factions; and he suggests' election by lottery—the latter was in the ancient South Indian Constitution.—How far this will be acceptable to the democratically inclined Public, it is not difficult to say. Parties are the necessary concomitants of democratic elections and the evils will disappear with time and the education of the electorate. The suggestion to create District Federations of Agricultural Panchayats for the purpose of agricultural development, Co-operative organisation, dissemination of information of produce, and prospects, sericulture, etc., is excellent.

As the author says, the facilities for transport of agricultural products are still poor. He rightly urges the development of roads and canals and the construction of new ones. Canal transport needs immediate attention.

On the question of fragmentation and consolidation of holdings, the author is not satisfied with the co-operative efforts made in the Punjab. His suggestions on the lines of those in vogue in Norway and Sweden are interesting.

It is a lamentable state of affairs that certain classes of women have not taken to development of

cottage industries. The author refers to Kamma women; but the evil is to be found much more among other classes, particularly Brahmins.

The question of improvement of irrigation is the most important of all questions facing the Government. It depends on the finances of the country. Large schemes must necessarily be undertaken by the Government; but where ryots are prepared to undertake the financial responsibility for starting the scheme, the author wishes the Government to provide them with water. His detailed suggestions are worth considering.

The mass of statistics regarding village budgets furnished in the final chapters of the book is interesting reading.

The book closes with a re-print of the colonisation rules of H. E. H. the Nizam. In any scheme of land assignment the capitalist and the middleman must be eliminated and no assignment of large areas for cultivation should ever be made. The author notes that the Madras Government has not taken measures to secure plots for the aboriginal tribes; and I may add for the *bona fide* landless cultivators in congested Districts.

The author deserves to be congratulated on the care, interest and energy shown in the collection of materials and compilation of the book, containing suggestions for the material advancement of the agriculturists. It is hoped that his next volume will be as interesting as the one I have just perused. To him it is obviously a labour of love. To the public it is a mine of useful information and though his survey is limited to a few villages, the observations and suggestions are applicable to other parts of India.

A. V. RAMALINGA AIYAR.

PREFACE.

I very much hoped in vain to be able to publish this volume long before the Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture was placed before the public. Anyhow, I am not sorry, because, I am convinced that there is a great need for such intensive studies as I propose to place before the public in this series, in order to enable it to get hold of actual facts and to think out for oneself, a detailed policy of rural economic development. Moreover, all that the evidence gathered and the report published by the commission can do, is to centre the attention of the public upon certain problems of rural economics and we cannot get away from the fact that, however authoritative may be the results of the labours of such a commission, they are neither more nor less than dignified generalisations which need many qualifications. Such intensive studies as these are absolutely necessary at least as correctives to the politico-economic generalisations and impressions of such commissions. I admit that an intensive survey, made without any relation to the results already achieved in that direction elsewhere, is not very useful but a survey made on scientific lines and properly related to and balanced with other similar surveys is as much needed now as ever. In fact, in spite of the commission, we know miserably little about the rural economic organisation of our country and as long as there is so much ignorance there exists a great need for such surveys. This is the fruit of my work in the study of Rural Economic science, after I had left Oxford in 1926 July. Except for Chapters 5 and 6, Part II of this volume was completed in 1927 August. I was able to write the first part in 1927 May. But owing to some difficulties, this volume could not be printed much earlier. This delay has been, however,

utilised in correcting certain portions, adding a few more details and presenting the volume in a much more complete form than could have been possible in 1927.

The method of enquiry followed is just the same as that which was adopted for the purposes of my first volume. Since I was able to devote much attention to 'Farm Costs' in that volume. I thought it better to concentrate my attention on other aspects of 'Rural Economic Science', hence, the non-appearance of a chapter on 'Farm-Costs'. I think I have successfully demonstrated in the first volume the value of separate enquiries into the 'Farm Costs' and 'standard of living' of different classes of agricultural masses. I have taken those methods of work for granted and I have, therefore presented here, the results of my enquiry in a more general form than was possible in the first volume.

I attach very much more value to the first part of this volume than to the second, because I have been able to study an aspect of Rural Economics, which has almost escaped the attention of our economists. I believe that there is a great scope for agricultural development, if a policy of internal immigration, on the lines suggested in this volume, is adopted by the Government.

I am glad to note that Prof. P. J. Thomas, Ph. D. (London) has also realised the importance of research into agricultural economics. Although it is two years since I put forward, in my first volume, the plea that the State should organise research into agricultural economics, nothing in that direction has so far been done by the Provincial Governments in India. It is much to be deplored that even the Royal Commission on Agriculture has failed to notice the importance of this work, inspite of the fact that my enquiry into "Farm Costs" has shown the great importance and usefulness of such work. It is indeed surprising to find in India writers in economics neglecting to take stock of all that has already been achieved, before they formulate their own theories. I have been able to conduct a systematic

enquiry into the economic conditions of Guntur, Coimbatore, Salem and Nilgiris Districts on behalf of the Government of Madras and I hope that the reports submitted to the Government will soon be published.

Lastly, I like to draw the attention of the public to the difficulties of ryots of such places as Uppalapadu and Takkellapadu, whose lands do not properly fall into the famine zones, and are, therefore, not served either by major or minor irrigation works. Unless some such policy as is outlined here, is followed by Government, I am afraid there is not much chance for such unfortunate ryots to make a decent living.

I have tried my best to make use of some of the suggestions made in the review of the "Hindu" upon my first volume. Owing to the prohibitive cost of a map, I have chosen not to add one to this volume also. Mr. J. Sambayya, B.A., has kindly prepared the index and Errata. I must take this opportunity to express my feelings of gratitude to my friend of Oxford days, Mr. L. V. B. Chowdary, B.A. (Oxon), Bar-at-Law, who has assisted me greatly with his criticism and advice, while this book was receiving its final form. Mr. U. Krishnayya, B.A., has helped me in preparing the first part for the Press. Mr. G. V. Subbayya, a student of the Pachaiyappa's has helped me by accompanying me on my visits of investigation. I must finally thank Hon. Mr. V. Ramdoss Pantulu for having given me the Foreword and Diwan Bahadur. A. V. Ramalinga Aiyar, B.A., B.E., who has kindly contributed the introduction.

This book is dedicated to Dr. Gilbert Slater, D. SC. (Lon.) M.A. (Cantab.), Lecturer, London School of Economics, who gave me the first lessons in research and to Mr. V. Ramakrishna, M.A., (Hons.), B. SC. (Edin), I.C.S., the Dewan of Jeypore, who infused into me a part of his own unbounded enthusiasm for the schemes of economic development of India, and who guided me in my studies during the first year of my stay at Oxford.

DEDICATED
TO
DR. GILBERT SLATER
V. RAMAKRISHNA

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Foreword	1
Introduction	3
Preface	7
PART I—CHAPTER I	
The Problem of Internal Immigration ...	1
CHAPTER—II	
Nizam's Dominions and prospects for Immigration	6
CHAPTER—III	
Nellipaka a village in the Nizam's Dominions ...	18
CHAPTER—IV	
Future policy, for Internal Immigration ...	46
PART II—CHAPTER—V	
Agricultural problems. Three dry villages ...	49
CHAPTER—VI	
Irrigation	89
CHAPTER—VII	
Certain facts concerning the economic organisation of a village in Godavari Delta	97
CHAPTER—VIII	
Economic conditions of three dry villages ...	103
CHAPTER IX	
Economic conditions of Ryots	119
CHAPTER X	
Economic conditions of Labour	170
APPENDIX I	
Deltaic villages of the first volume	194

APPENDIX II

Colonisation policy, of H. E. H., the Nizam of Hyderabad	...	...	...	...	201
Reviews	...	...	...	...
Index	...	...	...	...
Errata ...	...	...	...	...