of leaders of their respective religious leaders residing outside Boriavi.

The reviewer is not trying to deny the importance of either leaders or of economic factors. What he is objecting to is that Dr Somjee's survey is neither deep nor systematic, and Dr Somjee lacks the requisite 'bag of tools' to carry out effectively the task he has undertaken. One methodological question seems to have escaped him altogether: what guarantee is there that voters finally vote as they have told the investigators they would? Again, does one know they give the reason which really prompt them, assuming that they are clearly aware of them?

Dr Somjee's pamphlet seems to have been written in a great hurry. Spelling and punctuation leave much to be desired. One sentence reads:

'This difficulty was all the more greater in the case of female samples.' (Emphasis added) Then there is a germ on p 24: "Among the Patidars the samples who failed to express their vote-intention were essentially female samples." (Emphasis added) What were they inessentially?

These criticisms should not be understood to mean that the reviewer does not welcome the pamphlet. He does. Dr Somjee's endeavour deserves to be praised. He is on the right road and that is the important thing. Let us hope that in the near future the Department of Political Science in Baroda will lead the other Universities in this type of research.

Rural sociology in India

THIS is a revised and considerably enlarged version of Dr Desai's earlier Introduction to Rural Sociology in India. Both books have the same pattern: a first section discussing some of the problems and categories used in the study of rural society, and a second part consisting of reprints and abridgements of various substantive articles on the subject.

Virtually no changes have been made in the first part of the book. But the 'readings' of the earlier edition, none of which had specific reference to India, have been replaced by writings about Indian rural society. One or two of the articles selected come from the 'classics': for example, there is the famous extract from Capita) and there are two short pieces from Baden-Powell's book, The Origin and Growth of Village Communities in India. But most of the pieces are taken from recent publications by sociologists, some of them from relatively inaccessible or ephemeral sources. In addition, Dr Desai has classified the pieces into ten sections, which are designed to show the change and development now taking place in Indian rural society, and the obstacles which such developments meet.

It is to be regretted that Dr Desai was not able to apply to the first part of the book the same radical surgery which he has used on the second. When a third edition of the book is contemplated, I would recommend that the following points should be taken into consideration. Firstly, although the


categories and theoretical framework of the first part of the book are in many ways directly applicable to Indian society, there nevertheless remains here and there an outlook and approach which is not Indian, but American. For instance in the chapter on Economy, I consider that the distinctive character of Indian as against American agriculture — its labour-intensive nature — is not sufficiently brought out.

Secondly there is an unfortunate air of 'manifesto' or 'programme' pervading the first part of the book. We are continually being told what should be done. I confine myself to one example, from page 20:

"A detailed map of India indicating various natural and economic regions; indicating areas inhabited by populations living in various stages of economic development; showing linguistic regions including regions based on different dialects as well as different variations of the main language; and showing, further, religious regions based on different religious beliefs prevailing among the people; will throw great light on some of the most burning problems of Indian society...."

Woud it not have been better, in a book designed to introduce people to the subject, to show them what has been done: or even, if such a map is an 'urgent need' to make it and publish it in the book? The basis of my criticism is that many of the questions described in the first part of the book as requiring an urgent answer, could in fact have been answered, at least in part, from the readings given in the second part, or from other sources. One might even argue that more

is known about the peasants of India, their economic, political and religious life, than about peasants anywhere in the world. The first part of Dr Desai's book has not tapped the rich sources of information to be found in the older, as well as more recent, literature about the Indian countryside.

Thirdly I would like to suggest that in future editions of the book there should be some discussion of sociological theory; at least an explanation of such basic concepts as 'structure', 'function', 'system', and so forth. It is true that an intelligent reader will pick up the meaning when he goes through the second part of the book, but, unless he is exceptionally intelligent, he will not realise that behind many of the analyses lies a coherent and systematic body of sociological theory.

Finally the student who uses this book would benefit if he were told something of the methods and techniques which can be used in the study of rural society. I think it would add life to the book if one were told how a survey is conducted, of what intensive fieldwork consists, how questionnaires are framed, what a genealogy is, what the 'case method' is, and, most importantly, if the student were warned to look at particular bodies of information and try to evaluate their accuracy and worth against the methods used to collect that information. A teaching book should try at least to inculcate the habit of criticism.

Nevertheless, if intelligently used, Dr Desai's book will provide a stimulating aid to class-room teaching.

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