

lose much of their value and they may also be criticized on the grounds of incompleteness. The work and monograph of Colhoun on clubroot of crucifers, for example, receive no mention, and the chapter on soil sterilization is accorded five very meagre references (this has since been found to be due to the printers omitting in some copies a page of references).

Some of the control measures now seem rather old-fashioned (for example, soaking seeds in copper sulphate solution to control certain damping-off diseases). Errors also occur in several places. The photograph of the effect of *Verticillium* wilt on tomato leaves is not of the normal symptoms associated with the disease; Bordeaux mixture is not used (as stated) against *Didymella* stem-rot of tomatoes; the section on big vein of lettuce does not give an accurate representation of the latest information or experiments on the disease.

The publication gives the impression that in attempting to cover a very wide range of subjects and of readers the authors have only partially succeeded. Even so, the book does provide a useful compendium which may with advantage be used both as a guide to some of the other sources of information on the subject and as a supplement to them.

W. G. KEYWORTH

## KNOWING OURSELVES

### Understanding Human Society

By Prof. Walter Goldschmidt. (International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction.) Pp. 253. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1959.) 21s. net.

THE distinguished editor of the *American Anthropologist*, Walter Goldschmidt, has essayed a most difficult task—to provide a guide to the development of man in society. Such a book has long been needed. The great majority of anthropologists have for too long been too preoccupied with the immediate problems of their subject. There can be little doubt that studies of kinship have dominated the anthropological horizon for a considerable time. It is refreshing, therefore, to come upon a book which attempts to deal with the broader implications of the subject.

One of the most valuable sections of this book is entitled "The Dimensions of Anthropological Theory". It begins, "The ultimate task of the anthropological enterprise is to explain the uniformities and diversities in the natural condition of mankind . . .", and proceeds to a discussion of the various approaches which have been made to the study of man. Curiously enough, the history of anthropology, with the exception of Haddon and Penniman, is extraordinarily sparse. For the student this chapter fills a long-felt want. The teacher is apt to presume a knowledge on the part of the student which does not always exist. Frequently he is too concerned with his own bias to worry about the theories of others. The individual who sat at the feet of the late Father Schmidt in Vienna would scarcely have obtained an unbiased account of, say, Malinowskian functionalism. Prof. Goldschmidt, on the other hand, is remarkably fair in his treatment of the theories of others.

In developing his theory of social evolution, which forms the core of the book, the author is at pains to point out that we must exclude any idea of moral values which so bedevilled the old evolutionary

hypotheses. The theory presented is eminently respectable, and few would quarrel with it. Its fault lies in the fact that it does not take us very much further on the way. "It does not in and of itself explain these social systems, in the sense that it offers a full account of what makes them as they are." Perhaps no theory could; but we are back where we started being forced to consider each society as a unique whole.

The value of this book is perhaps not in the field of original theory but rather in the clarity and succinctness with which the author deals with the ideas of others about the nature of human society. In the jargon-ridden jungle of the social sciences, Prof. Goldschmidt has created a little oasis of simplicity for which we must be grateful. It must be admitted that Americans are not usually exemplars in this matter.

The publishers have not been too well served by the printers who, by using a different type for the concluding words or sentences of chapters, have managed to convey an arcane sense which is totally misleading.

F. HENRIQUES

## SOCIOLOGY OF CASTE IN CENTRAL INDIA

### Caste and Kinship in Central India

A Village and its Region. By Adrian C. Mayer. (International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction.) Pp. xvi + 295 + 16 plates. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1960.) 35s. net.

THIS is a sociological study of caste as it operates in Central India in the E. M. Forster country, and it provides a valuable addition to the literature on caste in India. Much has been written on this subject, but mainly on a broad and generalizing and on an India-wide scale, or in a theoretical, evolutionary or historic form. What are lacking are the detailed studies of caste as it actually functions in specific Indian communities, against which these generalizations and hypotheses can be tested. Dr. Mayer's book is one of the best studies of this sort that has yet been made and the only one that deals with the caste system as it operates in a multicastric village and its surrounding neighbourhood. It brings out very clearly the interconnexion between kinship, sub-caste and caste. Village boundaries are shown to be something more than territorial and to mark the difference between two kinds of relationship, that of common caste and of agnatic kinship (in the village) and that of common sub-caste and of bilateral and affinal kinship (in the region).

The book is divided into three parts: the first sketches the historic and economic background, the second examines intercaste relations as they affect ritual, economic and political status and the third analyses the constitution of the caste, its internal structure, the part played by unilinear descent, and the pattern of marriage and of social control within the sub-caste.

Social anthropologists interested in kinship, whether or not they are also concerned with the study of caste, will find much of value in this study, while those more immediately concerned with rural Indian political and economic development would do well to read the chapters on caste and village leadership and on the economic aspects of caste.

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