

BOOK REVIEWS

Information Computer Communications Policy—5—Microelectronics, Productivity and Employment: Published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, 1981, pp. 287.

This book contains the proceedings of a Special Session on the Working Party on Information, Computer and Communications Policy on "Impacts of Microelectronics on Productivity and Employment", which was held during 27-29 November at the OECD in Paris. The objectives of the meeting were to evaluate the various studies of the present or potential impacts of microelectronics on employment completed or underway in member countries. The member countries are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The only Asiatic country which is a member is Japan.

The Working Party on Information, Computer and Communications Policy (ICCP) has a fairly broad mandate, which includes tackling problems generated by rapid technological change in information technologies in an integrated way.

The present volume deals with the impact of microelectronics on employment and productivity growth. The topics discussed are the outcome of studies made by University Groups, research organizations, ministries of industry, departments of communications and similar organizations in the member countries. Some of the problems discussed are, impacts of electronic digital technology on traditional job profiles, microelectronics and conventional industrial products, impacts of microcomputers on employment, implications of developments in microelectronics technology on women in the paid work force, monopoly, competition and regulation. Though this kind of study has been carried out only over the last few years, the results have shown that though some contraction of employment has resulted by the use of integrated electronic circuits, there is also a possibility of the creation of new jobs closely linked to secular growth of information occupations. It is also a fact that the total output of information industries has grown in spite of a number of crises situations.

Policy makers of the growth of electronic industry, in particular the microelectronics industry in India will be benefited to encourage such studies in our country, especially at this stage when they are thinking

of manufacturing large scale integrated circuits, microprocessors and microcomputers.

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Concepts of Health and Disease. Interdisciplinary Perspectives: Edited by Arthur L. Caplan, H. Tristram Engelhardt Jr. and James J. McCartney. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Advanced Book Program/World Science Division, Reading, Massachusetts. The book contains 47 titles covering 735 pages. Price \$29.50.

In a situation when specialities and superspecialities overpower the basic concepts of health and disease, an integrated approach to medicine becomes absolutely essential. The book not only serves this purpose but also views the concept of health and disease in its historic and contemporary perspective. There is a wide range of views about the nature and concepts of health and disease.

The very introductory topic gives a broad based definition to the concept of health and disease. 'Topics on Ethical Components in the Definition of Health' by Mervyn Susses, and 'What is disease?' by Lester S. King are dealt with considerable thoroughness. The authors rightly argue that comparative observations and experiments are the only solid foundation for experimental medicine. The topics on nineteenth century views on Masturbation and Homosexuality as a mental illness make interesting reading. The doctor patient accommodations have been well brought out by authors in an intellectual background without changing the theories of medicine, health and disease.

The volume is unique and the first of its kind in bringing together the requisite literature and concepts in undertaking health and disease over the years. The volume makes interesting reading and every practising doctor, medical teacher and reformer (research fellows) who are interested in the concept of total health should necessarily read this volume. No doubt the volume will help to widen one's medical horizon and enrich one's knowledge.

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A History of Agriculture in India—Edited by M. S. Randhawa, Vol. 1. Published by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, 1980. Pages 541 and 204 illustrations. Price Rs. 50/-.

First of its kind in India, it is a comprehensive treatise on historical development of agriculture in its various facets in the Indian sub-continent. It deals with geological history of the world as related to birth of Indian sub-continent; the various evolutionary processes through Cambrian, Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods which resulted in the formation of the soil, the river water systems and vegetation; the Tertiary, Quarternary and Mesolithic Periods during which biological evolution took place leading to that of *Homo sapiens*, the present form of man. The Neolithic Agricultural Revolution in Western Asia is traced back and linked to the revolution in the northern parts of Indian sub-continent. The Pre-Harappan cultures with the supportive evidences from the excavations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa in Pakistan have been clearly brought out. The descriptions, state-wise of the ancient Harappan culture in north India, are elaborate and authentic. The history of crop cultivation and domestication of animals and birds given respectively in chapters 13 and 14 throws much light on the advanced agriculture and rural culture which prevailed in India more than 3500 years ago. The author's the ancient Harappan culture in north India, are elaborate and authentic. The history of crop cultivation ancient history with agriculture, as an art and way of life, of those periods. The association of ancient religions of Buddhism and Jainism with agriculture, especially the protectionist approach to trees, animals and birds, received support of the people of India and the Buddhist religion spread wide to the near and far East in Asia. Chapters 22 to 35 bring out agriculture as practiced under various Empires, Dynasties and Kingdoms, from Fourth Century B.C. to Eleventh Century A.D. In dealing with the history of agriculture the author has brought out the historical aspects of the people, their culture, art and literature, their annual crops, horticultural plants, animal husbandry including poultry, land revenue system, marketing, international trade, etc. He has dealt at length the historical developments in South India, North India including Assam, and in the Deccan region.

The 204 illustrations consisting of photoprints, maps, histograms and other diagrams add much value to the publication. The Appendix I giving landmarks in Evolution, Appendix II the Radio-Carbon Dates of Archaeological sites, Appendix III on Chronology of Ancient India and the Appendices IV to VI on cultivated plants form rare compilation of valuable information. Going through the book one can be proud of Indian heritage in every sphere, not only in agriculture, but also in arts, culture and science. It kindles a feeling of self-respect and patriotism. The author

being a great lover of art as well as science, both ancient and most modern, has very talently interwoven several aspects of rural life. As a scientist and an eminent administrator, occupying different high positions in Central and State Government services, he has served Indian agriculture to grow over the past four decades and this, his latest contribution to agricultural literature, in my opinion, surpasses all the earlier ones. Indian agriculture will ever remember him for this. I do hope that the subsequent volumes on History of Agriculture in India will come out in quick succession to speedily fill the long existing gaps in our knowledge.

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Impact of the Development of Science and Technology on Environment—Edited by A. K. Sharma and Archana Sharma. Published by Indian Science Congress Association, Calcutta, 1981. Pages: 196. Price: Rs. 150/-.

The focal theme of the Indian Science Congress of January 1981 was the impact of development of science and technology on environment, and this book represents a collection of selected papers on this theme, presented at that Congress, as well as the recommendations of the Congress on this subject. It is an excellent and timely collection which brings together contributions from a number of leading scientists from India as well as from abroad along with important policy statements by the Prime Minister and the Minister of State for Environment and Science and Technology. The Presidential Address by A. K. Sharma sets the tone with a detailed review of our pollution problems and his own special interest in genetical consequences of environmental hazards further runs through the papers by Bevan, Seabright and Rees. Other specific contributions include amongst others a review of effect of air pollution on plants, dust pollution, post-explosion hazards in mines, biodegradation of pesticides, microwave radiation effects and aerobiological research. B. P. Lal who led the National Committee on Environmental Planning and Co-ordination at a critical juncture presents a much broader review of environmental problems and D. Shankar Narayan of environmental education rounding up an excellent collection. This is a book which should certainly be purchased not only by all scientific and academic institutions, but also others seriously interested in environmental and pollution problems in particular in India.

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