

9. In view of these difficulties, it is hardly surprising that there is still a major task of reconstruction in South and South-East Asia. The outstanding fact is the amount of work which has already been done and the levels of production which are being achieved. The course of the various economies is described in a wealth of detail in the United Nations Annual Economic Surveys of Asia and the Far East, and it is necessary here to relate only the essential facts. In the following table the more significant figures of pre-war and post-war production and exports are presented:—

Table 1.—Production and Exports of Selected Commodities from South and South-East Asia

				thousand tons	
<i>Production—</i>				<i>Pre-war</i>	
				1946	1949
Rice (paddy) ...	...	...	70,990	64,987	70,117
Wheat ...	...	...	10,160	9,180	9,517
Oils and fats ...	...	...	3,596	2,844*	3,174
Sugar ...	...	...	6,223	5,789	6,200
Jute ...	...	...	1,831	1,427	1,340
Cotton ...	...	...	1,132	759	606
Tin ...	...	...	116	15	94
Petroleum (crude) ...	...	...	7,960	444	9,034
<i>Exports—</i>					
Rice (paddy) ...	...	...	5,676	956	2,460
Oils and fats ...	...	...	1,319	174	630
Sugar ...	...	...	1,029	2*	36
Tea ...	...	...	315	268	362
Jute ...	...	...	757	391	271
Jute manufactures ...	...	...	894	711	846
Cotton ...	...	...	573	171	177
Rubber ...	...	...	830	891	1,393

* 1947.

NOTE: For the definition and sources of these figures, and for details by countries and years throughout the period, reference should be made to Appendix 1.

10. It will be seen that, although production has in general been restored, exports have revived unevenly and exports of foodstuffs are still much lower than pre-war.

Rice.—The drastic effects of the war have already been described. Since 1946 the work of rehabilitation has partially restored the flow of supplies. There has been a full recovery in Thailand, but not in Burma or Indo-China.

Rubber.—The level of exports recovered rapidly after the war and is now far higher than at any previous time. Orders were placed for the necessary equipment long before Malaya was liberated. But the real effects of the years of neglect under Japanese occupation have yet to show themselves. The long period in which there was no replanting will react upon the productivity of the industry in future years, unless a large programme can be got rapidly under way.

Oils and fats.—The main producers of oils and fats in the area are India, Indonesia and Malaya. Immediately after the war the attempts made in India to increase the production of other foods reduced the output of oils and fats. Since that time competing demands for cultivable land have limited production. The level of India's exports of oils has also been affected by the cessation of its imports of copra and by a general increase in home consumption. In spite of internal difficulties, the production of oils and fats in Malaya, which suffered considerably as a result of the war, is now almost back to its pre-war level.