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## Book Reviews

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*A Guide to Keynes.* By ALVIN H. HANSEN. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1953.  
237 pages. \$3.75.

ALTHOUGH the so-called Keynesian controversy is still alive, it has at least moderated to the extent that the stature of Keynes as an economist is now recognized and his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* is numbered among the classics with which all serious students of economics should have some first-hand acquaintance. Unfortunately, the *General Theory*, which Keynes addressed to his fellow economists, is difficult reading and is organized in such a way as to limit its usefulness as a text. As a result, there have been a number of attempts to restate the *General Theory*, in whole or in part, such as Lerner's *Economics of Employment*, which presents the essentials of the Keynesian system in nontechnical language, and Dillard's *Economics of John Maynard Keynes*, which is a systematic exposition on the advanced textbook level. Books of this type are indeed useful, but they are not complete substitutes for the original.

Professor Alvin Hansen of Harvard University, whom the editor of the McGraw-Hill Economic Handbook Series accurately describes as "the most prominent Keynesian in the United States," has now provided a book specifically designed to aid and induce the reading of the *General Theory* itself. The prospective reader should be forewarned that Hansen's *Guide* does not provide the casual browser with an easy tour through the realms of Lord Keynes. It is designed for the diligent reader who seeks not only a firm grasp of the Keynesian system as such, but also an understanding of its relation to the contributions of others, including J. M. Clark, D. H. Robertson, Wicksell, Pigou, and Hicks.

The *General Theory* contains 24 chapters. Adhering to the general sequence followed by Keynes, Hansen has grouped them under 12 topics, on each of which he provides a chapter of commentary. These chapters follow no fixed

pattern. Each contains the particular type of material which Hansen believes will best serve to illuminate the topic covered.

This unusual volume is not one that can be readily summarized. In lieu of this, a few items have been selected which I hope are fairly representative of its content.

The first part of chapter 1 contains an essay—which is truly a gem—covering the pre-Keynesian dissenters from the orthodox views concerning the self-adjusting properties of the economy, the influence of Say's law on business-cycle analysis, and the position of Pigou, whom Keynes singled out as his special adversary at the very beginning of the *General Theory*.

Chapter 2 disposes of the troublesome wage-unit problem by showing that Keynes could have carried out his analysis equally well by using a general price index instead of the wage unit to deflate his variables; and contains a clarifying statement of the difference between an equality of savings and investment and an equilibrium between them. Chapter 4 presents helpful graphic illustrations of multiplier effects under different assumptions as to "leakages;" and also elaborates Keynes' sketchy treatment of certain different concepts of the multiplier.

Chapter 7 reveals the inadequacy of Keynes' formulation of the theory of interest-rate determination; and provides a more comprehensive formulation which goes a long way toward reconciling the Keynesian money supply-liquidity preference theory, the loanable funds theory, and the classical theory of the demand for and supply of savings. Chapter 10 further explores the relation of wage flexibility or rigidity to changes in aggregate demand. Chapter 12 discusses the difference between the relation of money to prices as explained by the standard quantity theory and the relationships involved in the Keynesian theory.

Professor Hansen states that "this book is intended primarily for students majoring in economics and for first-year graduate students," but I think it will prove extremely valuable to anyone who wants to gain a thorough understanding of the Keynesian schema, together with an appreciation of its accomplishments and limitations. Although I find this book very much to my liking (perhaps I am unduly influenced by its obvious usefulness in my annual efforts to expound Keynes to graduate stu-

dents), this does not mean that it is without flaw. For example, I think that the distinction between equality and equilibrium of saving and investment in chapter 2 could be more thoroughly demonstrated; and that the discussions of "The Role of Money Wages" in chapter 10 and "The Keynesian Theory of Money and Prices" in chapter 11 are not as successful in clarifying the issues involved as are some of the other chapters.

James P. Cavin

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*E. A. Stokdyk—Architect of Cooperation.* By JOSEPH G. KNAPP. American Institute of Cooperation, Washington, D. C. 1953. 229 pages. \$3.

TO EVALUATE THIS BOOK one must judge it in the light of its purpose. This is best set forth by the author on page 1, under the heading "A Personal Word." He asks:

"Who was Stokdyk? What was he like? What did he stand for? This volume attempts to answer these questions. It is not a psychological essay. . . . It is based on the record of what Stok . . . said and did, and on the memories of those who shared life with him. . . . This, then, is really the object of this book: To capture some of the spirit, charm, and purpose of this unique personality so that we may get the full benefit from the lessons of his life."

In a strict sense, this is not a biography, although it has many attributes of one. Rather, it is the story, and to some extent an interpretation, of the professional years of E. A. Stokdyk—years largely devoted to the development of cooperative marketing and purchasing in agriculture. The author does succeed in capturing "some of the spirit, charm, and purpose" of a many-sided and talented figure who sought to build and improve. Helpful in this respect are the four pages of photographs that depict some of the highlights of Stokdyk's life.

Roughly the first half of the book is devoted to the origin and evolution of a train of thought which culminated in the California Agricultural Prorate Act and which still later gave rise to

marketing agreements under Federal legislation. Stokdyk was a notable leader in the effort to enable agricultural producers to conduct orderly marketing with the assistance of the trade and Government, and his faith and untiring effort helped to translate the idea into reality. These particular chapters of the book are significant, both because of their revelation of Stokdyk and the role he played, and because of their historical references.

The latter half of the book is built around specific phases of Stokdyk's work—particularly in the fields of cooperative law, teaching, research—and of his contributions as statesman and advocate. Taken together, these chapters reveal both the ability of the man and the scope of his talents and interests.

In addition to the story told by the author, the book contains the text of a dozen selected articles written by Stokdyk between 1932 and 1945. These relate to widely different subjects, although most of them pertain to farmer cooperatives and deal with such topics as management, public relations, finance, and policy formulation. These articles are followed by a complete bibliography of the several score of articles, pamphlets, and books written by Stokdyk during the quarter century 1921-46.

The Stokdyk personality was a happy mixture of the "human" traits and those of the



intellectual and the objective scholar. This reviewer knew him for a decade and had frequent contacts with him, although they were not as intimate as those of the author. This book presents a good word picture of the man himself.

In some respects, however, this word picture is not complete. The author has selected and emphasized the positive and successful phases of Stokdyk's efforts. The book passes over very lightly the failures and disappointments which characterize every life and often provide the basis for an individual's successful career. Also, there is little evaluation of the importance of Stokdyk's work in relation to the total work done in a given field. The result is a not too clear perspective of the relative importance of Stokdyk's work, as, for example, in the effort to amend the law to permit retirement of Gov-

ernment capital in the Banks for Cooperatives, and in efforts in the field of public relations.

Whatever shortcomings the book may have, it still does justice to the memory of a departed friend. There may be some who will feel that in the latter chapters the author injects more of himself than he should in a book of this character. This, however, is excusable on the grounds of an acquaintance that ripened into a long and close friendship.

Regardless of any criticism that may be made, this book is a notable contribution because of the biographical material it contains and because of its economic significance. The author is to be commended for his work in producing the book on his own limited free time and without any compensation other than that derived from the joy and satisfaction of the work itself.

*John H. Davis*

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*A Textbook of Econometrics.* By LAWRENCE R. KLEIN. Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston, Illinois. 1953. 355 pages. \$6.00.

*Studies in Econometric Method.* Edited by WM. C. HOOD and TJALLING C. KOOPMANS. Cowles Commission for Research in Economics. Monograph 14. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York. 1953. 324 pages. \$5.50.

**WORKING TOOLS FOR ANALYSTS** who wish to use the simultaneous equations approach are provided by these volumes. Klein's book presumes only a knowledge of calculus. The monograph issued by the Cowles Commission presumes a knowledge of matrix notation and manipulation but explains many other mathematical concepts in the text or in footnotes. Klein's book has the advantage of being written as a text, so that each new subject is related directly to those presented in preceding chapters, and the entire book covers all major concepts in the field. Monograph 14 brings together several closely related research papers that have been published elsewhere, and fills in the gaps with new material.

Chapter II of Klein's book gives a summary of those parts of probability and statistics that

are essential to a comprehension of econometrics, and an appendix includes important definitions and theorems that apply to matrices and determinants. In the preface Klein states, "No attempt is made at mathematical rigor. On the contrary, an intuitive approach is used throughout and interspersed with literary explanation to make the subject as understandable as possible." On the other hand, the reader is fully aware that the results given are based on a rigorous mathematical approach.

Chapter I of the Klein book outlines some basic principles that relate to econometrics. It states, "The purely theoretical approach to econometrics may be envisioned as the development of that body of knowledge which tells us how to go about measuring economic relations. . . . The empirical work in econometrics deals with actual data and sets out to make numerical

estimates of economic relationships. . . . Econometrics is a way of studying history—a very systematic way. We never know what economic behavior will be like in future, unobserved situations, but we try to make as strong a statement as possible about this unknown area on the basis of past history. . . . A sensible method of extrapolation (or forecasting) is not naive or mechanical, and the econometrician is no less flexible than any other historian who tries to evaluate the future on the basis of the past. Even without the attempts at extrapolation, however, econometrics is interesting as a mere study of the past to show how quantitative magnitudes interacted at that time.”

This approach is outlined in more detail in a later part of the chapter. Klein states, “There is no unique way of constructing equation systems to describe economic behavior. . . . For any given hypothesis, the relevant empirical data are examined to see whether or not this hypothesis is acceptable. Hypotheses which are inconsistent with the sample observations, in a statistical sense, will be rejected as unacceptable. Those which are consistent will be tentatively accepted. If all but one were rejected, we could accept that one as our definite hypothesis, but experience has shown that the sample data usually employed in econometrics are consistent with a variety of hypotheses. The acceptable group is continuously narrowed down by extrapolation of estimated equations to observations beyond the sample point and repeated examination of independent samples of data. Those equations which do not extrapolate well outside the sample or those which do not stand up under repeated estimation in independent samples are gradually rejected.” Such a view is reassuring to analysts who have worked mainly in applied fields.

After laying out the econometric and statistical groundwork, Klein considers problems of estimation for aggregative models. He discusses the special case for which maximum likelihood and least-squares estimates coincide, and then considers general problems of identification, showing how maximum likelihood and limited information methods can be used in the over-identified case. Efficient methods of computation are described in the following

chapter, as applied to least squares, maximum likelihood, and limited information estimates using desk calculators, regular I.B.M. equipment, or the Card Programmed Electronic Sequence Computer.

Methods of sector analysis are discussed next. The sectors may be individual consumers, firms, industries, or geographic regions or countries. Input-output studies are discussed as one example in this field. In some instances, a single sector may be studied in detail and then be “grafted” onto an aggregative model by one or two equations to form a complete self-contained system. Methods for pooling time series and cross section data are considered, and formulas are presented that show the relation between estimates derived from these two types of data under specified assumptions.

Principles and techniques of prediction, and special problems involving errors of observation and measurement and varying lengths of observation periods are then considered. An example shows the exact effect on the number of degrees of freedom in using quarterly data versus annual data in a particular problem under various assumptions regarding the degree of lag and of serial correlation in the residuals.

Ten papers are included in the Cowles Commission monograph. Jacob Marschak, writing on “Economic Measurements for Policy and Prediction,” gives an illuminating discussion of changes in structure as they affect the need for specifying a complete model. Jean Bronfenbrenner, in a paper entitled “Sources and Size of Least-Squares Bias in a Two-Equation Model,” illustrates both algebraically and graphically several clear, simple examples that show the source and size of bias that may occur if individual equations of a simultaneous equations model are fitted directly by least squares. Herbert A. Simon presents diagrams in connection with certain simultaneous equation systems which are pictorially similar to the “path coefficient” diagrams used by Sewall Wright in the early 1920’s. The subject of the Simon article is “Casual Ordering and Identifiability.” Reprints of Koopmans’ paper on “Identification Problems in Economic Model Construction,” Trygve Haavelmo’s “Methods of Measuring the Marginal Propensity to Consume,” and “Statistical Analysis of the Demand for



Food" by M. A. Girshick and Haavelmo are included. Other papers by Koopmans, Hood, Herman Chernoff, Herman Rubin, S. G. Allen, Jr., and Nathan Divinsky deal with mathematical and statistical problems involved in the estimation of simultaneous relationships, including 30 worksheets showing the steps in certain methods of computation.

Workers in applied research who wish to

use modern econometric methods will find both of these books valuable reference sources. The examples, particularly those in the textbook by Klein, should be studied with care. Readers who wish only a general introduction to this field can learn much by skimming over the more mathematical sections and reading with care only those sections that deal with basic assumptions and conclusions. *R. J. Foote*

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*Resource Conservation: Economics and Policies.* By S. V. CIRIACY-WANTRUP. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles. 1952. 395 pages. \$6.50.

THE ALREADY IMPRESSIVE SERIES of contributions that Dr. Wantrup has made to the field of resource economics is materially strengthened and expanded by this work. It presents a comprehensive and systematic economic rationale for analyzing problems of resource conservation in terms that provide a basis for formulating public programs and policy.

The author's conception of the problems is broad and the scope of issues treated is correspondingly extensive. He deals with the theory underlying private and social economics, the influence of social institutions and their potential for implementing and limiting conservation practices, direct and indirect tools of national and international conservation policy, and governmental organization for achieving conservation objectives. The variety of aspects covered necessitates the use of different levels of abstraction in order to emphasize segments he considers important for public policy decisions.

Primary attention is directed to the development of a better understanding of the economic and social forces that affect the use of resources over time, which is the main objective of the study. Conservation is defined in terms of any change in resource use in the direction of the future. Stress is placed on the implications of differences between the two principal resource classes, "stock resources" and "flow resources."

The income or revenue maximization criteria applicable to any production or utilization function is used in defining the optimum state of conservation. This optimum is a distribution of resource use rates that will maximize the present value of future net revenues.

Resource economists will find the discussion of the economic and social issues in conservation stemming from differences between private individuals and society particularly stimulating. The treatment of these issues is among the more significant contributions made by the study. In dealing with the behavior of individual resource users, detailed attention is given to such economic forces as interest, uncertainty, and price, and to the economic effects of such social institutions as property, tenancy, credit, taxation, monopolistic market conditions, and economic instability.

The principal change required in a shift from private to social economics according to Dr. Wantrup is a reinterpretation of "revenues" and "costs" in terms that will be meaningful for social accounting. Major modifications needed include allowances for transfer items that have no net effect on social costs or revenues, extension of coverage to include extra market goods and services, and use of administrative values in the social weighing of effects. The author considers the treatment of uncertainty to be one of the more radical reformulations required by social economics.

Avoiding a condition of economic irreversibility for critical flow resources becomes the main concern of public conservation policy, and the basis for the primary objective of such policy as that of maintaining a safe minimum conservation standard or level.

Achieving objectives through the selection and coordinated application of appropriate tools is considered by the author as an integral part of the social economics of conservation. At this stage he focuses attention on implementing conservation policy at various governmental levels in the United States, although a chapter is devoted to international aspects.

The work was designed to reach groups with varying interests and backgrounds, including professional economists, legislators, and government administrators as well as general readers. To accomplish this, a two-level treat-

ment is attempted. Readers who are not versed in economics are advised by the author to skip certain designated sections. Although much of the introductory material and most of the concluding part on implementing conservation policy may be understood by many general readers, the central core of the analysis is likely to prove difficult even for professional economists. The complex nature of most of the problems treated requires a rigorous presentation, and in spite of the author's efforts to simplify discussion it demands a considered reading. But economists who are interested in any phase of social valuation, and those who are concerned with resource economics in particular, will find the time and effort required to comprehend the analysis justified by the significant contributions it makes to a major underdeveloped area of knowledge.

Mark M. Regan

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*Woolen and Worsted Manufacturing in the Southern Piedmont.* By JAMES A. MORRIS. University of South Carolina Press, Columbia. 1952. 197 pages. \$5.00.

**W**OOLEN AND WORSTED MANUFACTURING is concentrated mainly in New England and the Middle Atlantic States. The rapid growth of wool manufacturing in the South in recent years has stimulated much interest among followers of the textile scene. New England, which has lost most of the cotton-manufacturing industry to cotton-growing States, is concerned about the possibility of the migration to the South of another important industry. The South welcomes the shift in wool manufacturing as a part of its industrial development designed to improve economic conditions in that region.

In the book here reviewed, the author attempts to give an unbiased answer to the question, "Why are woolen and worsted mills moving South?" As background for chapters dealing more specifically with developments in the South, he presents a brief history of the wool industry in the United States and of the manu-

facturing processes involved, along with a brief discussion of current problems relating to tariffs, competition, and technological changes.

Detailed information is presented to show developments, present status, and future possibilities for the wool-manufacturing industry in the Southern Piedmont. Influences of such factors as sources and availability of raw materials, labor supply, wages and productivity of labor, and other items of cost are considered in detail. The author reaches the conclusion that an overall comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of New England and the Southern Piedmont as to their suitability as locations for woolen and worsted manufacturing plants reveals a relatively favorable position for the Southern Piedmont, from both immediate and longer time viewpoints. Consequently, he states that it appears safe to predict that wool manufacturing will continue to expand in the Southern region.



Dr. Morris, an associate professor at the University of South Carolina, is thoroughly familiar with the textile industry in New England and the Southeast. The study of woolen and worsted manufacturing in the Southern Piedmont was made in connection with meet-

ing the requirements for a doctorate degree at Harvard University. Although the author was handicapped by lack of adequate information, he has made a significant contribution to an outstanding problem of the wool industry.

L. D. Howell

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*The Farmers' Movement, 1620-1920.* By CARL C. TAYLOR. American Book Company, New York. 1953. 519 pages. \$5.50.

THE THESIS OF THIS WORK, the product of scholarly research extending over many years, is stated by the author as follows: "The farmers' movement evolved out of and still revolves around the issues of prices, markets, and credits." The movement, according to Dr. Taylor, is as old as commercial agriculture in the United States. But it is composed of fluctuating relationships that are not easy to analyze; therefore the author deemed it necessary to present the story of several episodes in the movement before attempting to analyze their common economic and social pattern.

Down the 300 years from 1620 to 1920, he tells us, all the upheavals of the farmers' movement—the violent revolts, the giant parades, the formal farmers' organizations, the agrarian political parties—dealt with the same issues. Agriculture had lagged in its adjustment to the evolving price and market economy. By organized effort, farmers were struggling to catch step with the economy—so Dr. Taylor argues.

You see the thread of the farmers' movement in such episodes as the plant-cutting riots of colonial Virginia in 1682, and, during the early years of the Republic, in such revolts as Shays,' the Whiskey, and Fries' rebellions. You follow it through Jeffersonian agrarianism and, in bolder relief, in the political upheaval of the Jacksonian revolt. But the import of the movement as class-conscious mass pressure does not reveal itself fully until the period of the rise of third parties, in the 1870's.

During the 1870's the movement of farmers for control of the railroads and for economic cooperation captured the Grange, which had started as an anti-horsethief association in one place, as a debating club in another. After that, the story of the farmers' movement is an account of farmers' organizations in politics. Dr. Taylor takes us through the Granger movement and the Populist revolt, describing their policies, their objectives, and the issues which animated these organizations, relating them to the main stream of the farmers' movement. Likewise he chronicles the origins and programs of the Farmers' Union, Equity, the Non-partisan League, and the farmers' cooperatives, linking these also with the movement.

Dr. Taylor credits Thorstein Veblen with the germ of the idea for his thesis, but it was the work of John R. Commons, *The History of Labour in the United States*, that furnished the final component of his concept of a farmers' movement. Commons, the institutional economist, saw "the evolution, more or less clear, of the economic conditions and social and political philosophies, which, like streams from different sources, have formed the labor movement of the 20th century."

It is in this sense that Dr. Taylor sees the farmers' movement—in a main stream of evolution, derived from various sources, flowing through various channels. Structuring the movement is a concomitant pattern of ideologies, philosophies, and sentiments.

His thesis is supported with an impressive



array of facts. As Dr. Taylor acknowledges in an 8-page bibliography, much of his data may be found elsewhere. But he has embellished his own pages with significant and vivid new material gleaned from fugitive sources in a score of libraries across the country.

Dr. Taylor has been with the United States Department of Agriculture since 1934, first with the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, then with the Resettlement Administration and BAE. In 1952 he resigned as head of the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life in BAE to join the Foreign Agricultural Service.

Students of social, economic, and political forces that have shaped national farm policies will find Dr. Taylor's work a valuable source book. For all of us who are engaged in research or related work in agricultural economics the book makes good reading because it helps us to understand how our separate and specialized activities fit into the great social structure of our rural life. His readers will look forward to the completion of his study of the farmers' movement from 1920 forward.

*Charles E. Rogers*

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*Farm Policies of the United States, 1790-1950.* By MURRAY R. BENEDICT. The Twentieth Century Fund, New York. 1953. 548 pages. \$5.00.

**T**HIS HISTORICAL SURVEY and analysis of farm policies of the Federal Government from 1790 to 1950 is the first one-volume study to cover the entire period. It is a valuable contribution to the fields of agricultural history and agricultural economics. The book should be of interest, as Dr. Benedict suggests in the introduction, to those who are directly concerned with making farm policy and should provide college students with a "more adequate foundation for their study of current farm problems."

This book is to serve as a companion study to a forthcoming Twentieth Century Fund study, under the direction of Dr. Benedict and Dr. O. C. Stine, designed to give "the general public an impartial, over-all picture of the vast governmental operations in the field of agriculture and of their causes and effects."

Dr. Benedict in his survey of past farm policies does not attempt to draw definite conclusions concerning the value of present programs or the future need for governmental assistance to farmers. However, in his introductory chapter he states that "it is imperative that we gain perspective and seek to understand whether we are trying to restore a world that existed a

century ago, or to adapt ourselves realistically to one that exists today."

The book presents a well organized and detailed description of Government programs and of farm organization activities in a changing economic setting. Because of the author's standing in the field, his discussion of tariff policies, fiscal policies, and government programs affecting agricultural prices will be of special interest to economists.

One of the main values of the work lies in its well-integrated economic background material. But it fails to include equally well-integrated material on the political process. This is particularly noticeable in the latter part of the book.

The tendency to ignore the political process in the discussion of organizational and program changes in the period after 1936 gives the reader an unbalanced and sometimes erroneous impression of the factors related to these changes. The discussion of organization and of organizational changes is particularly weak. These are occasionally inserted in the discussion of program changes and are seldom followed through sufficiently to give an adequate picture of the changing pattern of or-

ganization or of the factors related to the changes. For example, the establishment of the Agricultural Labor Administration is mentioned in passing but no information is given to indicate that this organization never really functioned and was replaced in a short time by the Office of Labor. This failure to follow through on organizational changes is also made occasionally with respect to specific programs. For example, Dr. Benedict mentions the announcement of a \$100,000,000 incentive payment program, January 1943, but does not mention that the program was abandoned because Congress did not appropriate funds for it.

If the book is to be used as a comprehensive historical study rather than as an economic analysis of changing governmental policies it is weak in source materials for the period following 1930. Throughout the book Dr. Benedict tends to rely on a limited number of generally accepted reference books. The results are satisfactory for the earlier period in which well-

balanced reliable published materials are available. Apparently the more limited accounts available for the later period were not always consulted. In any event the published materials should have been supplemented more adequately by documents and interviews. Inclusion of a bibliography would have increased the value of the book for research workers and students.

These are not major defects in a work of this scope and size as they do not seriously affect the reader's impression of developments over a period of 160 years. But they do decrease its usefulness as a historical reference for the last 20-year period covered in the volume. Nevertheless, this book should stimulate analysis of present governmental policies and programs in the light of historical perspective and it should be of use as a reference work for college students and research workers interested in agriculture.

*Gladys L. Baker*

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*The Harvest Labor Market in California.* By LLOYD H. FISHER. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. 1953. 190 pages. \$4.50.

LLOYD FISHER was on the staff of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics from 1940 to 1943. His death in February this year at the age of 41 cut short a tremendous urge to make a rational analysis of the seasonal farm labor field and to discover what measure of orderly operation might be brought to it. The present volume, his Ph.D. thesis prepared at Harvard in 1949, goes far toward accomplishing his first purpose. It breaks into new economic territory by analyzing the fundamental forces underlying the seasonal farm labor market in California. The generalizations, though, apply to many other seasonal areas in the United States.

Several years of experience on the research staff of the CIO influenced parts of Fisher's analysis. For example, he characterizes the

seasonal labor market as "structureless," and to some extent intentionally "unstructured." Such a market he defines as one in which virtually any type of labor can be hired to fill any of the jobs to be done. There are no rules as to seniority, preferential hiring, or division of labor; no hierarchy of jobs to reward the more proficient. Urban employees, farmers, housewives, and students crowd into this market or leave it as opportunities in their own fields dictate. Fisher's analysis is not dominated by any union bias, however, and he freely points to restrictive practices of labor unions as among the factors that hold labor in this insecure field of employment.

He points out that the situation in the harvest labor market in California is not primarily a matter of size of farm nor of absentee



ownership. It arises out of local specialization in crops with intensive harvest-labor demands. As these demands overlap in unpredictable ways and as most of the crops are perishable, farmers make sure that the labor supply is ample.

Fisher points to the labor contractor as the central figure in the seasonal labor market. He brings workers and jobs together and relieves the farmer of all relations with the laborer who handles his crops. As Fisher sees it farmers are not willing to renew this relationship, hence prefer the labor contractor to the free public employment office. Furthermore the labor contractor provides some insurance against unionization in that he provides leadership to workers which is congenial to employers. Fisher believes that if trade unions are to play much part in the seasonal labor picture, they will need to take over many functions now performed by labor contractors.

Fisher cites evidence presented to the La-Follette Committee and at various wage hearings to show the proliferation of organizations and gentlemen's agreements among California farm employers to "stabilize" farm wages and maintain control over the market situation. He also indicates that growers have made use of Government programs of wage stabilization

and importation of foreign labor to control wage rates.

The author is particularly skeptical of the role that government can play in giving aid in the situation. He recounts a list of more than 50 occasions when special committees have set forth programs to help migratory farm workers. Fifteen of these reports were by Federal committees. Yet while the government rediscovered the facts year after year, farm employers had built up such strong barriers to government interference that nothing could be accomplished. Fisher concludes that these organizations are so strong that the farm worker has little chance to secure the resources of government to obtain any objectives he may have.

Fisher likewise sees no immediate prospect for unionization. A solution, if any, lies in the long-range contraction of the farm labor force by the increase of farm mechanization. These conclusions follow logically from his orderly analysis; yet it is hard to believe that he really meant to heed them. His basic belief in the dignity of all men allied his sympathies with disadvantaged groups without regard for the immediate prospects of their economic progress.

*William H. Metzler*

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*Catalogue of Economic and Social Projects of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies.*  
International Documents Service, Columbia University, New York. 1953. 138 pages. \$1.50.

**T**HIS PUBLICATION lists, describes, and indexes the work of the secretariats of the United Nations and specialized agencies in economic and social fields, including studies and surveys as well as technical services and operational activities. It describes the work in pro-

gress during 1952, including work initiated during the year, as well as continuing projects carried over from previous years and described in earlier issues. It indicates work to be continued in 1953 or authorized by the beginning of the year as part of the 1953 work program.