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## Book Reviews

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*Readings on Agricultural Marketing.* Edited by FREDERICK V. WAUGH. Assembled and published under the sponsorship of the American Farm Economic Association. The Iowa State College Press. Ames, Iowa. 456 pages. 1954. \$5.00.

THIS BOOK represents a unique approach to a readings volume. Readings, here, do not turn out to be a series of essays, articles, or chapters of a few selected authors. Rather they are a large number of brief excerpts (219 to be exact) from varied sources bound together by editorial notes that provide unity and coherence.

Contrary to another expectation, neither does the book present the core or even main points from each published or unpublished source. Instead, it is a selection of well-stated points relevant to the topics at hand. The topics are or should be familiar to agricultural marketing economists and in many instances the statements provide a virtual thesaurus of ideas pertaining to the topics, with opposing views juxtaposed to point them up.

The job of assembling the wide array of products of agricultural marketing writers deserves special commendation. High grade products are sorted in orderly, informative, constructive, and provocative fashion. They are packaged with pertinent, cogent and sometimes pungent observations. These achieve a continuity of interest which attracts the reader to consume more and more. The excerpts are a mixture of theoretical and empirical observations interspersed here and there with historical and philosophical notes which add considerable spice. But most of the condiments as well as much of the real meat of the book are found in the editor's introductory and transitional statements which frequently rival or exceed the quality of the excerpts.

Marketing efficiency is not only discussed but demonstrated as the book does a time-saving job of materials handling. It deals with definitions, descriptions, attitudes, and aims of agri-

cultural marketing. It discusses place, time, form, and ownership aspects. It devotes other neatly organized and indexed sections to the demand and supply equating function, competition, government policy toward competition, agricultural cooperation, and market development and improvement.

Main reliance is placed upon writings appearing in domestic agricultural marketing literature with few items drawn from foreign or industrial marketing sources.

The editor makes no claim of going to original sources of ideas or information. In fact, recently published material is featured throughout. Yet he delves sufficiently beneath subsequent repetition to impress the reader with how long currently sprouting ideas have been germinating.

Although the book results from Committee effort, the imprint of the editor is distinctly clear. It is another favorable reflection of his keen insight and broad perspective. It proves to be another way he helps researchers and teachers to beget and develop ideas. Few, if any, researchers will read this book without getting leads for more effective inquiry and teachers cannot fail to acquire fresh materials for old courses. This will be true even where conscientious readers have previously seen the excerpts, because they are presented in a setting that may be more effective than the original. Moreover, thoughts drawn from several generations of writers are distilled for effective comparison by a master reviewer who takes time to guide the way.

The American Farm Economic Association can be justifiably proud of its second volume of readings.

Harry C. Trelogan

MARSHALL HARRIS has brought together in one volume a description and analysis of the salient historical events surrounding the origin of the land-tenure system in the United States. As historical background, he sketches major adjustments in English common-law tenures through half a millenium—from the time that William the Conqueror foisted feudalism upon the population to the Statute of Tenures in 1660, when the back of the feudal land system was broken. The study deals primarily, however, with tenure developments during the two centuries prior to the union of the 13 original States. According to Harris, the major principles and features of our present land-tenure system were established by the end of the colonial period.

The central question that the study seeks to answer is what brought about significant changes or prevented changes in the land-tenure system. To accomplish this, both evolutionary and revolutionary adjustments are examined. The events are related to economic, social, religious, and political philosophies and theories that brought about changes in customs and laws dealing with land tenure.

The several factors that discouraged the development of feudal tenures in America are discussed. Among these were the relative abundance of cheap land, the ever-present frontier, the imprint of religion, the emerging democratic political system, the free growth of common law, isolation from the mother country, and the acceptance of the concept of equality.

The author pays special attention to the conflicting claims among the European sovereigns to the land of the New World and how the conflicts were settled. He reviews in detail the conditions under which land was transferred from sovereign control to the various types of settlement agencies, the kinds of tenures given to bona fide settlers, and the early processes in acquiring land from the Indians. The methods used in getting settlers on the land included headright and treasury-right transfers, sale, and military and special-purpose grants.

Also included in the book are sections devoted

to the development and decay of quitrents and the emergence of property taxes, the breakdown of primogeniture and entails under the impact of the basic concept of equality, the growth of the right of almost unrestricted alienation and freedom of transfer, opening the way to land speculation and concentration. The volume traces the evolution of laws, regulations, and practices regarding inheritance, and the recording of deeds and mortgages, surveying, leasing, and societal reservation covering the rights to tax, to condemn, and to police land as property.

The welfare of the colonists, the book shows, was tied closely to the land. Thus, land questions were major issues associated with the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution of the United States. During colonial days there emerged a system of relatively free land tenure, the concept of family sized farms, the principle of equality in inheritance, and the practice of protecting private property by the State with minimum social controls and maximum freedom of individual action.

Only brief reference is made to developments during the 150-year period since 1800. This fact is not indicated in the title. The gap probably is greater with respect to land tenure in the central and western States, particularly for rangeland and land under irrigation. Tenure aspects of public and urban lands and water rights are not treated.

The book is a careful marshalling of historical facts and events that surrounded the development of our land system. In addition, it includes analysis and interpretation. To select from the many pages of history those parts which deal with land tenure and to interpret and evaluate them has added much to the understanding of land problems.

This understanding of the origin of the land-tenure system in the United States will aid in appraising land-reform and improvement programs in this country and abroad. Because of the current interest in land-tenure improvements throughout the world, administrators and

policymakers, as well as students, teachers, and researchers in economics (particularly land economics), sociology, government, history, and

other related disciplines, will find this book timely and useful.

Wilfred H. Pine

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*Aid, Trade and the Tariff.* By HOWARD S. PIQUET. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York. 358 pages. 1953. \$5.00.

DR. PIQUET has written an objective book on a controversial subject. His primary purpose is "to estimate the extent to which temporary suspension of trade barriers would stimulate imports, to relate such increases in imports to the so-called 'dollar gap' and foreign aid, and to examine their impact upon domestic producers." The book owes its origin to a request made by the Congressional Joint Committee on the Economic Report shortly after the outbreak of hostilities in Korea.

Most of the book centers around the author's estimates of the effects of suspending tariffs and quotas for the duration of a period of national emergency such as that which began with the outbreak in Korea. The estimates assume continuation of 1951 economic conditions in the United States and in the world generally over a 3- to 5-year period. They implicitly assume the persistence of 1951 prices for each individual commodity.

Under these assumptions Dr. Piquet estimates that, at the end of 3 to 5 years, annual imports might be larger by \$1.2 to \$2.6 billion than they would have been in the absence of tariff and quota suspension. This increase would offset only a fraction of the \$4.6 billion "dollar gap" which existed in 1951, and which was covered by the same amount (\$4.6 billion) of net foreign economic and military aid funds from the United States. These estimates should be sobering both to those who believe tariff suspension would play havoc with the entire economy and those who assume that such action would put a quick and painless end to the dollar shortage. However, imports might increase by more than \$1.2 to \$2.6 billion if the tariff and quota suspension were believed to be permanent, rather than limited to the period of national emergency.

Detailed estimates of the effects of tariff and quota suspension are presented for 206 dutiable items or groups of commodities. Needless to say, these estimates are open to attack by specialists in the commodity fields concerned. Yet some such level of detail is essential if the analysis of tariff policies is to go beyond general principles.

Agricultural commodities play a surprisingly large role in Dr. Piquet's estimates. Under his assumptions, annual imports are estimated to increase by \$1,203 million to \$2,658 million if all tariffs and quotas are suspended. But 5 agricultural commodities account for 49 percent of both the minimum and maximum estimates (\$594 to \$1,303 million). Removal of *import quotas*, which apply only to certain agricultural commodities, is estimated to increase imports by \$358 million to \$833 million. Some 85 to 90 percent of this increase is estimated to come from removal of quotas on sugar, butter, and linseed oil and the "sanitary embargo" on cattle and beef. Suspension of the *tariff* on wool is estimated to increase imports by \$272 to \$544 million; suspension of all other tariffs on farm products and their immediate derivatives might increase imports by a similar amount. Altogether about two-thirds of the total increase in imports would consist of farm products or their immediate derivatives.

The maximum estimate for wool assumes continuation of the current price-support program apparently without use of subsidies to move domestic wool into consumption. In the "commodity digest" section the author states "If duties were to be suspended and the domestic price support program eliminated the increase in (wool) imports would be closer to the minimum than to the maximum estimate." The extremely inflated price of wool in 1951 (99.5

cents a pound U. S. farm basis compared with 52.3 cents in 1952) further exaggerates the importance of this commodity in Dr. Piquet's totals.

The estimated increases in imports for both wool (\$272 million to \$544 million) and sugar (\$194 million to \$387 million) would imply a drastic reduction in domestic output, including territorial output in the case of sugar. These two commodities, to which so much weight is given in these estimates, are striking illustrations of the real problems involved in a program of tariff and quota suspension. The question of which economic groups, if any, are to suffer in the interest of expanding international trade and reducing the "dollar gap" is here raised in

acute form. Dr. Piquet directs attention to suggestions that have been made that the Government assist workers and owners to transfer into other lines. A number of possible means of providing such assistance are discussed in Chapter VII.

Three-fourths of the book consists of a set of "commodity digests" on 200 or so dutiable products. Some basic information on the nature and uses of the commodity, the ratio of imports to domestic production, and the chief sources of imports are given for each commodity. This section of the book will be a valuable reference work for those interested in the specifics of our import trade in dutiable goods.

Karl Fox

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*International Trade Statistics.* Edited by R. G. D. ALLEN and J. EDWARD ELY. John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York. 448 pages. 1953. \$7.50.

MOST USERS of international trade statistics are in a hurry and do not take account of the concepts and institutions that underlie these data. In this book 25 American, British, Canadian, and French experts give us a comprehensive analysis of problems encountered in the compilation and use of international trade statistics. It will serve as ready reference in connection with courses in international trade and will be of help to the professional user of trade statistics.

The subject matter is arranged in three parts: Basic Characteristics of the Statistics, Important Derived Uses of the Statistics, and Statistics of Individual Countries. An appendix lists primary national publications of international trade statistics. Unfortunately, there is no similar listing of secondary publications of international agencies, although they are cited in the text.

The chapters on valuation and exchange conversion seem to be the highlights of part I. The reader learns that valuation is likely to be affected by importers' and exporters' desire to minimize duty payments or to obtain low freight rates, to get liberal foreign exchange allocations, or to retain foreign exchange credits. It may be further distorted by official valuation systems of governments drawn up with a view

toward stabilizing revenue from ad valorem tariffs. It appears to this reviewer that valuation procedures are not unlike real estate tax-assessment procedures when it comes to approximating "true value"—or deviating from it.

Consignment sales, it is explained, permit only an estimate of value at the time of exportation, but sales realization figures are needed for an analysis of a country's balance of payments. Conversion of currencies further complicates valuation, and the existence of multiple exchange rates may introduce additional difficulties.

The chapter on index numbers of volume and price in part II is an excellent presentation of "the index number problem." The writer shows concisely and clearly that different types of index numbers can coexist and reflect different methods of measuring average change. He also explains how index numbers get hazier and less meaningful the longer the period they attempt to cover.

Readers will learn of an experiment to judge the merits of the different systems of import and export statistics carried out in 17 countries between 1931 and 1933. It led to the conclusion that "the accurate matching of import records with export records relating to the same goods cannot be carried out, whether the country of

origin and the country of consumption employ the same method of assignment or different methods." But the underdeveloped nature of statistics in many countries, particularly of Asia and Africa, may make it necessary to use the statistics of trading partners with more highly developed statistics to get information regarding the trade of such countries. The statistics of trading partners are practically the only information available regarding the trade of Iron Curtain countries.

Part III of the book, *Statistics of Individual Countries*, treats in detail the United States and the countries and areas of the British Commonwealth and Empire. Continental Europe and dependencies are also adequately discussed. But the treatment of Japan, an important trading nation with highly developed statistics, seems too cursory.

In general, the book is carefully edited and cross-referenced. The editors succeeded in

securing the advantages of specialization from the large number of contributors without sacrificing necessary coordination. However, the last three chapters, which deal with the world outside the United States and the British Commonwealth, are not as well cross-referenced as the earlier chapters.

In connection with Latin America and the Near and Far East the writers mention: "Where countries export only one or a few products, data on such exports frequently are available more promptly and with reasonable accuracy, from sources other than the official trade statistics of the country." This reviewer regrets that the scope of the book was not extended to furnish specific references to the more important sources of nongovernmental trade statistics in areas where governmental trade statistics are not available or are of limited use.

Hans G. Hirsch

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1 *Comprehensive Agricultural Program for Puerto Rico*. By NATHAN KOENIG, United States Department of Agriculture in Cooperation with the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1953. 299 pages. \$1.75 (paper bound).

IN SPITE OF ITS MANY PROBLEMS — overpopulation, underemployment, limited agricultural resources, and undernourishment — the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has made real strides in improving its social and economic conditions. Conscious of the vital role played by agriculture in the Island's economy, the Government pooled all efforts to make an objective analysis of the agricultural situation. With the cooperation afforded by the United States Department of Agriculture it was possible to obtain the valuable help of Nathan Koenig, whose ability to channel the good will of Puerto Rican technicians has made possible the preparation of this book.

*A Comprehensive Agricultural Program for Puerto Rico* comprises the most serious effort attempted so far to present in one volume the basic problems confronted in the Island's agricultural economy. Furthermore, it gives to the

public the most up-to-date basic statistical information in tables and graphic presentations. In this, Mr. Koenig was able to rely on the unfailing cooperation offered by all governmental agencies, both Federal and Commonwealth.

The book analyzes in 13 chapters the most important features of Puerto Rico's economy. Basic information about the population and its characteristics occupies the first section, followed by analysis of the land situation containing some interesting features on agriculture's role in the Island's economy, land tenure and land usage, legislative policies during the new era since 1940, postwar developments, and the lack of economic balance and diversity.

The problem of soil erosion is fully discussed. The problem of the use and control of water is presented, covering such phases as irrigation, hydroelectric power, rural electrification, drainage, flood control, and marine and inland fishery

resources.

General fields for intensive agrarian policies are traced in several chapters.

Emphasis is placed on an intensive utilization of grassland resources as one of the ways to pull away from the sugarcane monoculture.

Several projects for reclamation of new lands are mentioned, especially those of the Lajas Valley development project, Tiburones and Loiza-Rio Grande drainage projects, and La Regadera and Coamo projects.

Agricultural credit is discussed because of its direct bearing on other aspects of agricultural economics and its paramount importance in any agricultural diversification program of wide scope.

Agricultural marketing is studied, from the standpoint of both the Island's overall marketing situation and marketing needs, and such important staples as milk, livestock and meats, pineapples, tobacco, and sugarcane.

Land and tax policies are cogently set forth, with special reference to the Land Law and the Land Authority of Puerto Rico.

In short, Koenig's main thesis treats of the Island's reality, of an imperative need to increase production from the local consumption point of view. To achieve this, it is his contention that all the limited resources should be put

to produce at a maximum. Among the first lines of approach he singles out the application of all known scientific techniques in land utilization and production, including the reclamation of new lands and the intensive utilization of grassland resources. To achieve this goal, adequate provision should be taken in such important fields as agricultural credit and finance and in all phases of the marketing of farm products.

No doubt Koenig has won his place among those who have labored hard to enlighten the path for Puerto Rico's progress by bringing together in one volume much needed information on the Island's agricultural situation. This reviewer was pleased to find a notably honest approach to many situations which, for a long while, have called for objective evaluations. Undoubtedly, the book provides an excellent guide for those entrusted with the agricultural development of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, leaving at the same time "... freedom for the exercise of initiative and the flexibility needed for determining in detail how it shall be carried out."

One last comment worth mentioning is that Koenig's contribution is highly valuable not only to the Commonwealth but also to other areas confronted with problems similar to those being faced in Puerto Rico.

*P. B. Vázquez Calcerrada*

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### Selected Recent Research Publications in Agricultural Economics Issued by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Cooperatively by Other Federal Agencies and the State Colleges<sup>1</sup>

BADGER, HENRY T. RETAIL MARGINS FOR SELECTED FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN PITTSBURGH, PA., JULY 1950 - JANUARY 1951. 41 pp., illus. Bur. Agr. Econ. September 1953. (RMA) (Processed.)

The retail margin for the 12 commodities studied averaged about 34 percent of the consumer's dollar after allowing for waste and spoilage. The margin varied considerably among commodities.

<sup>1</sup> Processed reports are indicated as such. All others are printed. State publications may be obtained from the issuing agencies of the respective States.

DUCOFF, LOUIS J. THE HIRED FARM WORKING FORCE OF 1952, WITH SPECIAL INFORMATION ON MIGRATORY WORKERS. 21 pp. Bur. Agr. Econ. October 1953. (Processed.)

The numbers and composition of the 1952 hired farm working force, the chief activity of the workers, time worked, and wages earned are discussed.

FOX, KARL A. THE ANALYSIS OF DEMAND FOR FARM PRODUCTS. U. S. Dept. Agr. Tech. Bull. 1081, 90 pp., illus. September 1953.

Presents supply-demand structures for a number of