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Board in time to be considered in connection with midyear reports on crops and livestock.

Early results on livestock data were encouraging. Expanded totals from Corn Belt samples for most items appeared well within the sampling errors and fairly close to available check information. In general, check data on livestock are more dependable in these States than in the Southern

States. They offer an "acid test" for the methodology as it fits that section of the country.

Still remaining is the problem of sampling for livestock under conditions experienced in the West. One of the next steps will be to learn whether the closed or the open segment sampling method will bring satisfactory results in that region.

Book Reviews

Traité d'Économie Rurale, vols. 1 and 2. By Jules Milhau. Presses Universitaires de France, Paris. 442 pages. 1954.

THE 90-DAY travail which Ph. D. candidates undergo to acquire the rudiments of a foreign language is generally regarded as a deference to classical notions of learning that yields no further advantage. The attitude is unfortunate. Foreign literature in agricultural economics surely has more to offer than to serve as grist for a declension and syntax mill. There is little occasion for smug confidence that foreign sources can add nothing to our own, even while granting that the volume of our own literature is overwhelming. This review frankly originated in routine pursuit of a passing grade in a language tool. That quest, aided by a professor's dictum that the work read be relevant to his field, not only brought the grade, but unearthed a refreshingly lucid pair of texts by a French agricultural economist, Jules Milhau.

Milhau's twin subjects are economic theory and economic policy in agriculture. These have re-

ceived exhaustive treatment in this country, perhaps commanding as much lineage as the career of Marilyn Monroe. Milhau's contribution is, first, the meticulous attention he devotes to the peculiar nature of the economics of agriculture; second, his insistence that an understanding of those characteristics must precede any review of policy; and third, the complete and equal treatment he accords both theory and policy. This balance contrasts with a number of American studies that are notably unbalanced: those on economic theory of agriculture, in which a chapter or two on policy is added almost as a footnote; and those advocating a particular policy, with a small and selective bit of theory introduced as justification and as evidence of the author's learning.

Milhau is an anticlassicist where agriculture is concerned, and he is an empiricist. He insists emphatically that the economics of agriculture is not

a special application of classical economic theory but a subject field in its own right requiring specific treatment based on observation.

Reminiscent of T. W. Schultz, he deplores the inherent instability in agriculture. He differs from many American economists in that he stresses instability of supply a great deal more than that of demand, though his view may earn more sympathy in these days when United States farmers' prices and incomes are riding the roller coaster dips in spite of remarkably stable demand.

But Milhau goes further, describing the supply- and price-making forces in detail and distinguishing always between short- and long-run as well as intermediate periods. As would be expected, he dwells on price elasticity of demand commodity by commodity, discusses the shape of the derived total-value curve for each commodity, and considers the effect of relatively fixed farm-to-retail margins on elasticity at successive stages of marketing. On these matters, also, economists in the United States are entirely knowledgeable, yet inclined to take too much for granted. To what extent, for instance, did the current Soil Bank program originate in earlier erroneous estimates of elasticity of demand for livestock products—in overrating the capacity of that demand to absorb the products produced from acres diverted from wheat, cotton, and other allotment crops?

In his volume on policy the author names surplus supply as the most persistent of all problems. Dubbing as "Malthusian economics" the various measures for reducing supply, whether by production control or market diversion, he earns sympathy when he first admits his reservations on

supply-control then concedes that natural instability in agriculture is so acute that some prudent action by government is unavoidable. He suggests briefly that if price supports are necessary they should be flexible and determined by a price board having a maximum of discretionary power.

But these views are of only incidental interest to us. More significant is his scheme of devoting correlative attention to theory and to policy, with a proficient and scholarly approach to both. He is ever reasoned, rational, reserved. To complete the alliteration he is also reconciled, for he concludes his second volume by observing that whether we like it or not the real world is departing farther and farther from the classical model—though the trend may arise in a search for more economic justice—and many of the changes are permanent ones that have to be reckoned with.

Proving that professors behave the same way the world over, Milhau developed his two volumes by the familiar mechanic of assembling notes from his classroom lectures. Further evidence of universality is the resulting flaw of imperfect integration, the breaks between lectures showing and professorial repetitiveness appearing too often.

M. Milhau is a gentleman of protean accomplishments. He is professor both on the faculty of law and in the national school of agriculture at Montpellier. He is a member of the National Economic Council of France, and member or chairman of several agricultural organizations. His published works date back to the mid-thirties. He is a farmer. And he is mayor of his home village of Causses-et-Veyran.

Harold F. Breimyer

IF A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE be a dangerous thing, then it surely is fun to live dangerously. That is this reader's reaction to a perusal of this third and revised edition of Moroney's delightful book.

Common sense and simple arithmetic, the essence of statistics, are all that a busy administrator or a sophisticated statistician needs to enjoy it. They will not learn a great deal of statistics—neither the administrator, who thinks that because statistics is just applied common sense he already knows it, nor the statistician, who thinks that because he has studied and uses statistics, it is *necessarily* common sense. But if they can take a little hazing, both will get more than a few chuckles over Moroney's sobering remarks on the uses and abuses of statistics.

The author jolly well disposes of mathematicians who cannot find problems for their solutions, of statisticians who cannot dig up questions for their decision processes, of social, economic, and political indexers and fortune tellers who, though fearful of the stability of economic, political, and social structures, have not a worry in the world about the stability (or the importance) of their indices and forecasts, and of samplers who reject samples with excessive defectives because the samples are small but accept their testimony when their results are reasonably to be expected.

You hire a statistician to work out a sampling plan to give a certain desired protection in the most economical way. With a given sample size, he insists that any sample containing more than a single defective calls for rejection of the entire lot. As Moroney puts it, "You take the sample and are aghast to find two defectives . . . very disturbing . . . not so jolly. . . . 'Blow this for a game. Let's take another sample.'"

Though statistics are common sense they are not

necessarily either obvious or common knowledge. The author stresses, by discussion and by example, what the statistician is trying to achieve with his techniques, and so creates on the part of his reader an appreciation for their need without attempting to insure mastery of their use. Their proper application is a complex business best left to experts. "It is easy to lay down the law," Moroney comments, "much less easy to know the meaning and effect of what you have said." The author presents statistics as an art in interpreting figures, never mistaking the intrinsic accuracy of the methods for a knowledge of the problem at hand.

The book touches upon a wide variety of statistical methods, from those occurring in the most elementary of texts—charts and graphs, averages, correlation—to more specialized tools ordinarily found in similarly specialized texts—variance and covariance analysis, methods of time series and ranking analysis, sampling and quality control techniques. The treatment is necessarily brief but sufficient to whet the appetite. An adequate bibliography is appended for those who wish to learn more. The section on sampling and related topics is more nearly adequately treated than any other.

Everyone, not excluding the index number fadists and the fortune tellers who come in for the least sympathetic treatment, will enjoy and profit from a reading of the book. The only faults I find with it are a rather large number of printing errors, considering the fact that this is the fourth printing, and the absence of warning as to the technical limitations of the methods discussed, a common defect in such an elementary treatise. But the Moroney paints with a wide brush; not many are going to err as a consequence of his inattention to detail. It would be difficult in these times to find more reading pleasure for 95 cents.

G. L. Burrows

REASONING has almost become a lost art in our present-day era of electronic computers and other "brain" machines, and thinking is deemed to be essentially unfashionable in a culture that prides itself on its anti-intellectualism and love of gadgetry. It is refreshing and heartening, therefore, to find a book on survey design and analysis which places its major emphasis on the rational procedures involved and which clearly demonstrates the significant extent to which the complex technical apparatus of survey research is dependent on the thought processes of the survey analyst.

Dr. Hyman's manual judiciously combines theoretical and practical considerations. The volume begins with a treatment of the institutional setting within which the analyst works and the problems that are the starting point of his inquiries. The main sections present the technical and theoretical principles involved in the analysis of both descriptive and explanatory surveys. Finally, there is a discussion of selected problems in the utilization of survey findings.

A particularly valuable feature of the manual is its brilliant exploitation of several concrete, illustrative cases. These include "The American Soldier," "The Kinsey Report," "Industrial Absenteeism," "The U. S. Strategic Bombing Surveys," "The Psychology of Social Classes," "The People Look at Radio," and "Public Opinion and the Atom Bomb." The discussion of the major

critiques of several of these case studies assists considerably in sharpening the readers' critical faculties. The author's command of his material is impressive and his discriminating use of sources reveals a logical, orderly mind well prepared to address itself to significant intellectual problems.

The chief topics systematically reviewed by Dr. Hyman include: the precise definition of variables, the detection and control of error in the survey process, validation procedures, contamination of variables, time-order analysis, direct and indirect tests of relationships, spuriousness, and elaboration. Inevitably, some problems are treated better than others, and some, like replication, are scarcely touched on at all. It is unfortunate, for example, that the materials in Durkheim's "Suicide" are presented without reference to the follow-up study by Halbwegs. In addition to its value as a study in the differential analysis of the same source data, this would have been useful as a lesson in replication.

Addressed primarily to the relatively advanced student in social psychology and sociology, this remarkably well-written, thought-provoking manual for the training of students in survey analysis comes complete with problem exercises, solutions, and even, at extra cost, a special deck of IBM cards. Although written as a training aid, it should also prove valuable to experienced survey practitioners and social scientists generally.

Harry P. Alpert

A REVELATION of how statistics can at once be made interesting and meaningful is contained in this venture in business journalism. Anyone who has recently visited a modern home show, an annual automobile show, a trade exposition, or even a supermarket hardly needs to be convinced that postwar market products or marketing methods are interesting. But one may need to read this book to realize how well the statistics behind sales and consumption can be brought together into a truly fascinating story.

The presentation is interesting both in the sense of being intriguing and in indicating the degree to which aggregate data, broken down and supplemented with sample survey data, can be woven into dramatic analyses. Of course the accompanying prose and graphic art are essential in achieving and holding interest. The accounts of where we were, where we are, and where we are going are sufficiently absorbing to overcome any nostalgic loss a statistically inclined economist might get from the almost complete absence of such phrases as "this table indicates . . ." or "figure Y shows"

The statistics are made meaningful primarily from the standpoint of business planning and decision. As the businessman reader will most likely be provoked to reflect on opportunities lost or be stimulated to think of opportunities ahead, the economist may be impressed with this illustration of the influence the profit motive will have in bringing about advances in social science analysis at much faster rates in the future. For example, the way desires, motives, and actions of native American women having millions more babies are dissected, examined, and measured suggests upward trends in pragmatic analysis for business purposes as well as in population. Similarly, the way segments of the market are related to buying potentials effectively reveals that the pursuit of added and redistributed income dollars is assuming scientific characteristics.

Old sayings to the effect that consumers' desires call the tune in the market place are not altered by this study, even though stress is placed on how

much methods of production and distribution have changed. New methods by which the wants of consumers become known to the perceiving businessman are amply demonstrated. The result can be construed as a story of how ingenious analysts can gather and translate relevant statistical data for the corporate executive.

Chapters devoted to population growth, income distribution, and suburban market development as well as summary chapters on background and prospects justify the aim of the authors to present "an exciting new kind of travelogue for everyone interested in America." Assessment of the food market may hold more direct interest but no more fascination to many agriculturists than comparable chapters on houses, home goods, cars, clothes, recreation, and luxuries.

Prospects for increasing expenditures for food, although rated among the better pictures, hold no great hope for farm returns. The favorable conclusions rest heavily upon anticipated demands for higher quality and "built-in services." Although no attempt is made to segregate the food raw-material market from the market for associated services, the clear implication is that food-marketing margins will continue to rise. The much more exhaustive study of demand for farm products by Rex F. Daly reported in the July 1956 issue of *Agricultural Economics Research* lends further support to this view.

Optimism pervades the entire study, as might be expected since the book is drawn from 12 articles originally appearing in *Fortune* magazine. Considerable variation in degree of optimism with respect to different markets is evident, and the reasoned conclusions are conditioned here and there. In the aggregate, however, the predictions are portentous, suggesting that the economy will rise substantially by 1959, that it may be depression proof, and that no new developments comparable with the automobile, the radio, or television are in the immediate offing to bolster the economy. Neither are they needed, as they could affect only the degree of expansion.

Harry C. Trelogan

ALTHOUGH DESCRIBED in a subtitle as "a textbook in accounting principles for students of economics and the liberal arts," this work is actually more than a mere textbook in accounting principles. It is an exceptionally fine presentation of relationships between (1) the social accounts, which have gained wide usage by economists and businessmen in recent years, and (2) the underlying business accounts from which they are derived.

The basic social accounts—national income and product, gross and net investment, flow of funds, and balance of payments—are explained and derived transaction-by-transaction. The approach is a model of clarity and completeness, using typical individual firm transactions, balance sheets, and profit and loss statements. Clearly outlined and explained are the differences between the aims, functions, and substance of social accounts, and those of typical business accounts prepared by accountants.

Any economist, even if he has little or no background in accounting principles and techniques can get from this book an appreciation and understanding of the social accounts. Agricultural economists, no less than economists in other specialized fields, will find that it contributes to a better understanding of the nature of the general economic forces that act upon the agricultural sector, and of the processes by which these forces bear upon agriculture. Farm sector income and

product accounts have become increasingly useful and virtually indispensable in making broad appraisals of conditions in agriculture and in diagnosing many of the problems that beset it.

These farm sector income and product accounts serve also as useful adjuncts to other measures of agricultural activity and to other criteria by which determinations may be made of the economic status and progress of agriculture relative to other sectors of the economy.

With the extension of uses of social accounts into more and more fields of economic analysis, such an appreciation and understanding are prime requisites to useful, meaningful studies based on social accounting data.

The literature in economics in recent years has been replete with treatments of social accounting concepts, definitions, and analytical uses. These have been fine so far as they have gone, but some of the subtler aspects of social accounts have been largely neglected.

Two of these are (1) the elimination of certain interfirm and intersector transactions resulting from consolidations in the aggregating process and (2) eliminations resulting from the fundamental differences in the perspectives from which the economist and accountant view the economic processes. The author explains and illustrates these eliminations exceptionally well. His illustrations are extremely simple and his explanations are clear and adequate.

Robert H. Masucci

THE NINTH EDITION of this valuable assemblage of world agricultural statistics contains a complete listing of data for 1954, the latest revisions of data for earlier years and, for the first time, a postwar average (1948-52) as well as a prewar average. The crops section contains new tables on tomatoes and pineapples.

While this volume is entitled "Production," there is more to it than the presentation of production data, by commodity, by country, although its major contribution is in this field. There is a group of food supply tables which have been arranged to show long-term trends in food consumption. The section on means of production contains data on consumption of fertilizers and pesticides

and the number of tractors. The section on prices of agricultural commodities contains a new table for miscellaneous feedstuffs. And an entirely new section on wages and freight rates (maritime) has been added. All of the tables are elaborately foot-noted.

Most of the data for the book come from questionnaires addressed by FAO to co-operating governments. With the improvement in the statistical services of the several countries, there has been a corresponding rise in both the quality and quantity of data offered in this useful reference work.

Part 2, "Trade," will be published within the next few months.

United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1955. Prepared by the Statistical Office of the United Nations. Columbia University Press, New York. 1955. 644 pages. Paper, \$6.00, cloth, \$7.50.

THIS EDITION of the Statistical Yearbook, the seventh in the series, contains 183 tables, an appendix, and an index by subject and by country. The book is a statistical abstract of as much of the world as has statistics to offer—in this case 148 countries or territories. The time series presented are as nearly comparable internationally as available statistics permit, and the figures as a rule relate to territorial units within their present de facto boundaries.

Index numbers have been recalculated wherever possible to the base 1953=100, the period adopted for publications of the Statistical Office. Tables that appeared in previous issues of the Yearbook, but that are not included in the present edition, are noted in the table of contents. One item of

particular interest is that the response of the USSR to the questionnaire sent out by the Statistical Office has made possible the inclusion of that country in the totals given in tables dealing with production of coal, crude petroleum, electric energy, cement, pig iron, and steel.

The tables are grouped under the following chapter headings: Population, Manpower, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Industrial Production, Mining and Quarrying, Manufacturing, Construction, Electricity and Gas, Consumption, Transport, Communications, Internal Trade, External Trade, Balance of Payments, Wages and Prices, National Income, Finance, Public Finance, Social Statistics, and Education and Culture.