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### BOOK NOTES.

**The Western Range Livestock Industry**, Marion Clawson. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1950. Pp. xiii, 401. \$5.00.

Those who are familiar with the professional contributions of Marion Clawson on the economic problems of farming in the western semi-arid areas of the United States will probably be disappointed in this recently published book. This is not any reflection on the book itself, because Dr. Clawson indicates that it is designed primarily as a text-book for courses in range management at American universities. Within these limits, Dr. Clawson has produced a comprehensive text-book covering the economic, agronomic and livestock husbandry aspects of land management in the area with which he is concerned. The chapters are crammed with factual matter which is revealing of the author's intimate knowledge of the area and its problems.

The emphasis on facts rather than on principles and methods of analysis naturally limits the value of the text-book to overseas readers. Nevertheless Australian pastoralists, administrators and students may gain much insight into the problems which arise in comparable semi-arid grazing areas in this country by a comparative study of analogous problems in the United States, such as this book affords.

Certain chapters of the book, such as Chapters 4 and 23, in which the author draws more directly on his doctoral dissertation and previously published work will be of more interest to economists than the main body of the work. Some, like the reviewer, may wish that the book contained more of this type of material.

**The Consumer and the Economic Order**, W. C. Waite and R. Cassady, Jr. New York: McGraw Hill Book Company (2nd Edition), 1949. Pp. x, 440. \$4.50.

The first edition of this book was published in 1939. The second edition has taken some account of developments in the intervening ten years and statistical tables have been brought up to date. In the preface, the authors said their aim was to provide students with a broad viewpoint as well as with a recognition of the more restricted issues. They have done this. The book contains a large amount of material which lucidly describes the institutional factors in the economic order. This material should be valuable for reference purposes since a variety of topics have been brought together. There is a theoretical treatment of consumers' demand, including indifference curves, and a useful table of elasticities of demand for various commodities, derived in statistical studies in the United States.

In addition to a description of some of the legislative consumer protective agencies, there is a survey of non-legislative protective agencies and a chapter on consumers' co-operatives. The authors suggest that if price-setting by the different trades continues, consumers may have to organize and set up a maximum schedule of prices beyond which they will not go in buying the products or services of industries using such pricing techniques. They are not wholly sympathetic with the consumers. Consumer education is mentioned as being important for the development of a "pride in efficient consumption."

There is the danger of over-simplification in the method adopted by Waite and Cassady. One case of this is the brief treatment, in Chapter II, of the ways in which wants are satisfied in the various types of economic system, ranging from the unregimented to the regimented. The authors have not brought out the influences of the various interest groups which are really the key to the political organization. In another place (p. 21), the authors have devoted only a few lines to the still controversial issue of the short-term and long-term effects of price-support policies.

It is curious, in view of the title, that references to the consumer are only incidental to the descriptive and theoretical treatment of the working of the economic order. The effects of the institutional set-up on the consumer are discernible but are not discussed. In some of the descriptive material the authors have made it fairly obvious that they consider the consumer is adversely affected. In particular, advertising methods, monopoly elements and income inequalities are closely examined.

There is room for more theoretical work in this field, assuming knowledge of the institutional framework. The introduction of a wide range of topics in this book has resulted in theoretical discussion being practically omitted. There is no detailed discussion of the different types of consumers' goods or of the different clashes of interests such as between farmers, including farmer-controlled organizations, and consumers. Two other aspects not covered are the effects of changes in the national income and the effects of conditions of work on consumption. A theoretical work, with much less institutional material, could have taken up such questions.

### PUBLICATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

(United Nations publications may be obtained in Australia from Messrs. H. A. Goddard Pty. Ltd., 255A George Street, Sydney.)

**Proceedings of the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources**, Volume I. Plenary Meetings. New York: United Nations Department of Economic Affairs, 1950. Pp. iv, 431. \$4.50 (£2 os. 8d. (Aust.)).

The United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources (UNSCCURE) was held at Lake Success, New York, during the latter part of 1949. The purpose of the Conference, which was attended by seven hundred scientists and observers from fifty different countries, was to permit an international exchange of scientific ideas and experience as a first step towards the mobilization of existing scientific and practical knowledge on the world resources and their future utilization and conservation.

The Conference aimed at giving primary consideration to broader practical issues rather than the many refined techniques of scientific research. It was particularly concerned with the question of how methods of resource conservation and use, which have been developed in the more advanced countries, can be applied to the future development of the more backward countries.

UNSCCUR treated six major fields of the world resources problem. Reports on each of these fields, together with a report on the plenary meetings and an index, are to be published in eight volumes: I. Plenary Meetings; II. Mineral Resources; III. Fuel and Energy Resources; IV. Water Resources; V. Forest Resources; VI. Land Resources; VII. Wildlife and Fish Resources; VIII. Index.

Volume I, the first to be published, incorporates the full text of papers and verbatim reports of all discussions offered at the eighteen plenary meetings. The purpose of the latter was to provide an introduction to the section meetings which followed, as well to provide a place of review and mutual assessment of the concepts raised at these specialised meetings.

The plenary meetings covered a wide range of subjects and viewpoints. For the most part, the papers presented were concerned only with general principles and were expressed in non-technical language. The papers varied considerably in scope, as is often the case at conferences of this nature; some papers concerned themselves with the world situation as a whole, whilst others referred specifically to conditions existing in particular countries. The subjects on which papers were delivered were as follow: "the world resource situation (the legacy of resource depletion, the increasing pressure of resources); a world review of critical shortages (food, forests, minerals, fuels); the interdependence of resources (the complementary nature of European resources, the planning of land use for full production with special reference to European conditions); the use and conservation of resources (soil and forest conservation and the protection of water supplies, techniques for increasing agricultural production, estimates of undiscovered oil and gas reserves, economics of competitive fuels for various purposes and their use to meet future fuel requirements, metals in relation to living standards); the development of new resources by applied technology (fodder yeast and algae, the contribution of chemurgy, wood fibre, food yeast, fat synthesis by micro-organisms and its possible applications in food industry); methods of resource appraisal; the adaption of resource programmes; assessing resources in relation to industrialisation plans; education for conservation; resource techniques for less developed countries; and the integral development of river basins."

To consider adequately the wealth of scientific opinion and factual information contained in the report of the plenary meetings is well beyond the scope of this review. It is proposed to comment on several of the more general aspects of the report.

The broader problems of the supply of, and the demand for, resources (especially in relation to population densities and trends) were the theme of many of the papers and discussions at the plenary meetings. Many of the delegates considered that world population was increasing more rapidly than production and maintenance of world resources. Supported by statistics on world resource levels (for example, man-land ratios) and estimates of potential increases in population and reserves of resources, such opinions painted a gloomy picture of the future. On the other hand, certain scientists were more optimistic and considered that world physical resources and technological skills would continue to keep pace with anticipated world increases in population.

The reviewer considers that many of the opinions expressed in relation to the problems of world population and resources overlooked several important factors. First, in view of the lack of any worthwhile body of accurate data on potential resource levels and existing use of resources in most countries throughout the world (including the so-called advanced countries), any figure which purports to represent the estimated quantity of a particular resource throughout the world must be used with caution. It can hardly be used as a concrete basis for assessing world problems as has been done in some of the papers presented at the plenary meetings. Use of such figures often leads to unfounded fears for the future of the world's populations. Whilst the drawing-up of estimates of world resources is a necessary prerequisite of successful planning, the degree of accuracy of the estimates should always be kept in mind.

Second, most of the analyses which related figures for world resources to estimates of anticipated world population levels of the future, approached the question of resource conservation and utilization as if it were a field necessitating world-wide international action. The economic and institutional difficulties likely to be encountered in dealing with problems of differential rates of population growth and differences in population densities and standards of living received little attention from these studies. However, papers delivered by Colin Clark (Australia) and Stephen Raushenbush (U.S.A.) at least gave some time to the analysis of the complexity of the world population and resources question.

Colin Clark outlined the significance of differential trends in mortality rates and birth rates associated with developments of technological skills as the important factors affecting trends in populations in the various countries throughout the world. He stressed the varied time incidence of these factors in different countries. Raushenbush approached the problem of the economic factors to be considered in the conservation and development of resources in the light of the two major world groups of countries—the under-developed and the developed. He presented several remedial measures for existing problems which he considered should be adopted.

The United Nations aims to attack the problems of world population densities and resource levels by world-wide co-operation and action. That is, action is to be undertaken on a one-world basis or by the developed countries helping the backward regions of the world. Notwithstanding the desirability of this ideal as a long-run measure, many of the scientific opinions expressed on this subject in the plenary meetings gave too much emphasis to the long-run ideal and little or no attention to pressing short-run problems. Commenting on Raushenbush's paper, J. D. Black (U.S.A.) observed that many discussions of the world population and resources problem seemed to proceed "as if the population of the earth were one vast drove of hogs feeding out of a common trough." It is considered that Black assumed a realistic attitude (but what might be termed by some, a cynical attitude) to the situation when he observed that "we are neither *one* world nor *two* as far as food production and use are concerned—and this is equally true for most other resources—but instead a complex of social aggregates of varied types and descriptions, and we must do our thinking in terms of this complex if we are to be realistic or even truthful. . . . For purposes of food-resource analysis, the several different groups

of nations who stand in the relation of exchanging food for other products with each other are important social aggregates, and in the main these groups work out within themselves their own particular adjustments of population and food supply." Whilst mutual aid and advice between the nations of the world (that is, between the various social aggregates as well as between the nations within each aggregate) is a worthwhile ideal to which nations must strive, much of the present-day population and resource problems can be best approached (if only in the short run) within the framework of each social aggregate. In this framework such adjustments will be facilitated by political and institutional ties already developed. To the extent that these observations are valid, many of the scientific statements made at the plenary meetings tend to confuse the issue by basing calculations on figures for overall world population and resource levels. We cannot afford to lose sight of the complex variety of problem areas, each of which will require special treatment.

Movement of populations from overpopulated lands to underpopulated but "fertile" lands was presented by some scientists as one possible measure for alleviating existing world problems of overpopulation. Such measures, *per se*, provide no worthwhile solution to the problem but merely serve to spread and accentuate it. In any case, it is very doubtful whether areas of fertile land exist throughout the world in sufficient quantities to permit the movement of a significant number of peoples from the overpopulated areas. A number of scientists referred to the tropical area of the world as presenting much scope for further intensive development. It is considered that the existing knowledge of the undeveloped tropical areas is insufficient to warrant such opinions being used as a basis for a United Nations plan for relieving present population problems.

Those plenary meetings which were concerned with techniques for the appraisal and conservation of resources and the detailing of techniques being employed throughout certain parts of the world provided a valuable venue for the exchange of ideas and for the scientists present to cement contacts between one another. The discussions on the need for conservation of the world mineral resources are to be commended since this aspect of resource conservation has not received the treatment it deserves in the past.

For practical purposes the plenary meetings failed to give sufficient emphasis to one important aspect of the resources problem. The report states that the Conference aimed at a mere exchange of ideas—the time-wasting procedure of formulating and passing resolutions was deliberately avoided. However, pressing questions such as the social, economic, and institutional measures by which each of the social aggregates of the world might step up a more efficient use of their resources received insufficient attention.

**Implementation of Full Employment Policies, Report No. 1.** New York: United Nations Department of Economic Affairs, 1950. Pp. v, 52. 3s. 9d. (Aust.).

*National and International Measures for Full Employment*, published by the United Nations last year, embodied the recommendations of a group of experts on measures, both national and international, deemed necessary if full employment is to be maintained in member countries.

This present publication provides a brief factual survey of the employment situation in over twenty countries during the latter half of 1949 and outlines the measures being taken by governments to maintain or achieve full employment in most of the countries concerned.

This report is the first of a series which is to be published semi-annually, and which is compiled by the United Nations Secretariat from the replies of various countries concerning measures taken for the purpose of achieving full employment.

Of the countries dealt with only the United States and Belgium reported high levels of unemployment during the period under review. In a number of countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and the Soviet Union, unemployment was reported to be very low or non-existent. In a third group of countries, including Canada, Denmark and Switzerland, unemployment was significant but low.

**Economic Bulletin for Europe.** First Quarter, 1950, Vol. II. No. 1. New York: United Nations. Pp. 62. 4s. 9d. (Aust.) per copy; annually, 15s. 0d. (Aust.).

The review of economic developments in Europe during the first three months of 1950, contained in this bulletin, reveals a marked improvement in the trade position with other countries, and with the United States in particular, compared with the same period twelve months previously.

Comparing the six months since devaluation in September, 1949, with the six months before devaluation, the bulletin shows that Europe's total exports increased 15 per cent. in volume and that those to the Western Hemisphere rose by some 40 per cent. The United Kingdom and most continental European countries made important shifts in their imports away from Canada and towards soft-currency countries.

A special article on "Changes in the Relationship between European Production and Trade" indicates that Europe is less dependent on imported raw materials than it was before the war, despite the fact that industrial production is significantly greater than pre-war.

**Non-Self-Governing Territories.** New York: United Nations, 1950. Pp. v, 253. 18s. 9d. (Aust.).

This report contains summaries and analyses of information transmitted during 1949 to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by member governments responsible for the administration of non-self-governing territories. In most cases, the information relates to conditions during the calendar year 1948.

Member countries supplying information include Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

The report is divided in five sections under the headings Economic Conditions, Labour, Public Health, Education and Social Welfare.