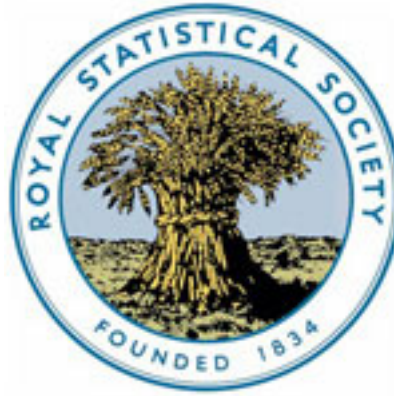


WILEY



Lezioni di Statistica Metodologica by Filadelfo Insolera

Review by: L. I.

Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, Vol. 84, No. 2 (Mar., 1921), pp. 278-279

Published by: [Wiley](#) for the [Royal Statistical Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2340502>

Accessed: 25/06/2014 08:06

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Wiley and Royal Statistical Society are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

REVIEWS OF STATISTICAL AND ECONOMIC BOOKS.

CONTENTS :

	PAGE		PAGE
1.— <i>Insolera (F.). Lezioni di Statistica Metodologica</i>	278	7.— <i>Douglas (Major C. H.). Credit-Power and Democracy</i>	287
2.— <i>Secrist (H.). Readings and Problems in Statistical Methods</i>	279	8.— <i>Money (Sir L. C.). The Triumph of Nationalization</i>	288
3.— <i>Ministry of Health. Report on the Pandemic of Influenza</i>	280	9.— <i>Lawson (F. M.). Industrial Control</i>	289
4.— <i>Kemmerer (E. W.). High Prices and Deflation</i>	283	10.— <i>Heaton (H.). The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries</i>	290
5.— <i>Pigou (A. C.). A Levy on War Wealth</i>	284	11.— <i>Other New Publications</i>	293
6.— <i>Snowden (P.). Labour and National Finance</i>	285		

1.—*Lezioni di Statistica Metodologica*. By Filadelfo Insolera. iv+191 pp. Torino: Fratelli Treves, 1921. Price L. 24.

This volume, based on lectures delivered by the author to the students of the Turin High School of Commerce, suffers a good deal from his indecision as to the amount of mathematical knowledge his readers may be supposed to possess. Half a page only is devoted to the nature of an index-number, and eight pages are given to the graphical representation of a fraction. A long chapter is occupied with the elementary theory of permutations and combinations, for which the student could be referred to an algebra book, but the same reader is assumed to be capable of following an analytical derivation of the law of error from Stirling's theorem and the derivation of a regression line by the method of least squares. The result is a great lack of balance in the book. Valuable space is used up by chapters on arithmetical approximations and interpolation, to the detriment of the treatment of frequency distributions and the theory of correlation. One example is given of the fitting of a normal curve and one of the calculation of a correlation coefficient. We cannot agree with the author's position with regard to correlation in the absence of linear regression. He starts by assuming that the regression is linear and obtains the correlation coefficient from the regression lines. He next says that the theory he has just expounded is no longer valid when the regression is not linear; that the study of correlation when the regression is not linear is very complex, and there is no complete theory of correlation in such cases. This is a very misleading statement. The correlation coefficient can be defined, and is better so defined, in an elementary treatise, in terms of the mean product of the deviations of the two variables and their standard

deviations. When so defined it often has a useful meaning in non-linear regression. The author fails altogether to mention the correlation ratio or mean square contingency for both of which a fairly complete theory exists and which can be applied to skew distributions. For the case of characters not capable of quantitative measurement, the only measure of correlation given is Yule's formula for a fourfold table $R = (ab - cd) / (ab + cd)$. The derivation of Bernoulli's law in Chapter vii is of doubtful validity. Partial and multiple correlation are not mentioned. There is no index, and the works consulted by the author are not always the latest available editions. On the whole this is a disappointing work, not up to the standard of Italian books on statistics. L.I.

2.—*Readings and Problems in Statistical Methods*. By Horace Secrist, Ph.D., xii + 427 pp. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1920. Price 16s. net.

This volume, intended to be used in conjunction with the same author's *Introduction to Statistical Methods*, was written, he tells us, "to illustrate concretely the attitude of mind in which statistical analysis must be undertaken, and to develop logically the steps and processes through which statistical data must be carried in order to be used as bases for logical inference." But the book is not a collection of arithmetical problems, nor of mathematical problems—it is not a mathematical book at all—nor of illustrations primarily intended to exemplify the use of "statistical method" in the narrower sense of the term. It is intended rather to show how statistics can be used "for planning, whether it is related to questions of social control, business policy, or statecraft." Much stress is laid, in certain sections, on the second head, *i.e.*, the work of the statistical department of a business corporation: we should judge the work, in fact, to have arisen as much from the author's position as Director of Business Research in the North Western University School of Commerce as from the courses given by him in his capacity of Professor of Economics and Statistics at the North Western University.

The volume consists to a large extent of reprints or adaptations of articles by the author and others. It opens with a chapter on the Meaning and Application of Statistics and Statistical Methods adapted in part from Professor Pearson's *Grammar of Science*, and subsequent chapters deal with the sources and collection of data, units of measurement (one section adapted from Dr. Bowley's article, "On the Improvement of Official Statistics," in the *Journal* for 1908), illustrations of methods in collecting data, tabular presentation, graphic presentation, averages, index-numbers, description and summarization—dispersion and skewness, and comparison—correlation. In each chapter are given a number of "review questions" the nature of which may be illustrated by citation:—

Can such a problem as the eight-hour day be settled by statistics? Would statistics have any bearing on such a problem as the tariff? Why? On the establishment of a wage policy? How? (Chapter I).