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Review

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Permanent Secretary of the Treasury, and that Such-an-One, being dissatisfied with the Treasury's inability or unwillingness to provide new sources of revenue, sent for Blank of the Inland Revenue Board, who devised the scheme henceforth associated with Such-an-One's name, though he, in fact, always misunderstood its main principle. Of the seven Chancellors, Goschen was the only expert, and the example which he furnishes is not very favourable to the demand sometimes heard, that the office should be held by an expert. He was unable to carry out his ideas in their entirety, and his half-success in carrying them out confused the national finances for nineteen years, and still hopelessly confuses the finance of the localities. The system by which the expert sits unknown and able to attend to his work without the distractions caused by popularity and unpopularity seems a good one—if only it can be guaranteed that the expert *is* expert, a point on which the present arrangements can scarcely be regarded as altogether satisfactory.

The book will be extremely useful to politicians, and that not so much by giving them something to say, as by warning them not to give utterance to banalities which are already worn out. The student will find the comparative tables an immense aid in his researches.

I notice a few misprints, none worth recording except, on p. 415, "Professor Bastable Marshall."

EDWIN CANNAN

*Statistics.* By the late SIR ROBERT GIFFEN, K.C.B., LL.D., F.R.S. Edited, with an Introduction, by H. Higgs, C.B., and G. U. Yule. (London: Macmillan & Co., 1913. Pp. 485. 12s. net.)

AFTER his retirement from the Board of Trade, in 1897, Giffen took up the project of writing a descriptive and explanatory handbook on public statistics, and during the years 1898-1900 produced the treatise which is here published; but he put the uncompleted work aside and postponed again and again its continuation or revision; finally the manuscript was found among his papers and has been edited without substantial alteration or any attempt to complete it. The book suffers greatly from the want of compression, arrangement, and re-writing by the author; but his main line of thought is quite clear, and, while the intended chapters on technique are only represented by a scrappy discussion of tabulation, the principal part, which reviews seventeen branches

of statistics successively, is practically complete. The editors are to be congratulated on the accomplishment of a difficult and laborious task with judgment and success.

All who knew Giffen, whether personally or only from his writings, will be very glad to turn over these pages and recognise in them all his familiar traits, his turns of expression, and his outlook on economic problems; but they will find very little that is new to them either in facts or ideas. On the other hand, the student of descriptive economics, who has not had such opportunities, can derive great benefit from this book if he will read it thoughtfully with a modern issue of the *Statistical Abstract* at his hand. Statistical information has been developed and improved in many ways since 1900, and several pages, as the author wrote them, are no longer applicable; but essential methods are unchanged, there is still need for knowledge and experience in drawing true lessons and avoiding mistakes when handling official statistics, and perhaps no one has ever had quite so sure a touch and so developed a statistical sense in drawing the maximum of ascertained fact out of a complexity of imperfect numerical data as had Giffen at his best.

In most chapters some account is given of the discussions on economic questions which have been based on the statistics described; thus allusion is made to vaccination under death statistics, to free trade under imports and exports, to the sufficiency of the world's supply of wheat under agriculture, of coal under mineral statistics, and so on; bimetallism and the banking-reserve also find places. These digressions are fragmentary and not always illuminating, but they emphasise in a very significant way the importance of statistics to the economic student.

A useful distinction is made between administrative and sociological statistics, based on interesting historical accounts of the origin and development of various branches of statistics. In fact, in most of those cases where statistics reach back for more than a generation, they were established simply for purposes of administration, *e.g.*, so that the Treasury should have material for estimates, or that local and detailed official work might be checked; and these records must be continued in the same form. Thus it happens, and will happen, that officially compiled information very generally does not follow the lines that the economic investigator needs, and it is quite important that the divergencies should be realised in detail. Unfortunately, though our author is full of cautions and suggestions of possibilities of error, he never gives any means of measuring the numerical effect of the differ-

ences between the ideal and actual information. The application of statistics, then, remains a matter of judgment, not of scientific analysis; that this should be so is completely characteristic of Giffen's work and methods.

A. L. BOWLEY

*The Farm Labourer: The History of a Modern Problem.* By O. JOCELYN DUNLOP. (London: Fisher Unwin. 1913. Pp. 260.)

*The Land Hunger: Life under Monopoly.* Descriptive letters, &c., with an Introduction by Mrs. Cobden Unwin and an Essay by Mr. Brougham Villiers. (London: Fisher Unwin. 1913. Pp. 232.)

*The Tyranny of the Countryside.* By F. E. GREEN. (London: Fisher Unwin. 1913. Pp. 261.)

MISS DUNLOP'S book makes very attractive reading. The style is terse, the matter interesting, and the writer follows throughout the excellent plan of giving exact references to the authorities from which her statements are derived. The book on analysis divides into three parts: conditions before 1815, 1815 to 1880, present-day problems. The second part (Chaps. 3 to 5) is, without doubt, the strongest. The writer here draws with just liberality on her original authorities, in particular the Reports of Committees and Commissioners, concerning the Poor Laws, Allotments of Land, and the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture. The tale of the Agricultural Unions in the 'seventies is told directly from the contemporary literature, from the *Labourers' Union Chronicle*, *The Times*, *The Congregationalist*, and Joseph Arch's *Story of His Life*. It is surprising that, in the earlier portions of her book, Miss Dunlop neglects the richest mine of all—the manifold writings of William Cobbett.

"If all England had been like Northumberland," said Mr. Tufnell, "this Commission [*i.e.*, on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture, 1867-9] ought not to have been issued"; and throughout her book the writer justly emphasises the difference between the North and the South of England. The North never had in any degree the curse of Speenhamland. Life there was rough and keen, but food was wholesome and there was cheap fuel for cooking and warmth and the drying of clothes. The problem of a landless labour was solved," says Miss Dunlop of the North, "by higher wages, while still in the