

ANGLO-SAXON VS CONTINENTAL SCHOLARSHIP: ON CRITICAL EDITIONS OF ECONOMIC CLASSICS

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The present paper discusses different editions of economic classics, in particular focusing on the recent edition of the economic works of François Quesnay, published by the Paris *Institut National d'Études Démographiques*. It is argued that its quality is well below the standards one is entitled to expect for the critical edition of one of the most important economists of all time.

JEL Classification: B1; B4.

The quantity and quality of British—and more generally Anglo-Saxon—critical editions of economic classics is remarkable. To produce scholarly editions of classic texts has been one of the objects of the British Economic Association (later Royal Economic Society) since its foundation in 1890. Given the insularity of which British economists have often been accused, it will surprise many that the first of their publications should have been nothing other than the *Tableau économique* (in what was to be called the “second edition”), which had been recently discovered by Stephan Bauer (who was then the Association correspondent for Austria) among the Mirabeau Papers at the French *Archives Nationales*. It was published in 1894 by Macmillan (Cambridge University Press having declined to take part in the editorial plans of the Association).

Many other publications followed, at irregular intervals. One may recall Edgeworth's *Papers Relating to Political Economy* in 1925 (edited by Edgeworth himself; it was completed by Peter Newman's edition of *Mathematical Psychics* and other papers in 2003), Marshall's *Official Papers*, edited by Keynes, in 1926 (a *Supplement* was edited by P. Groenewegen in 1996). In the same year James Bonar edited a reprint (with some critical apparatus) of the first edition of Malthus's *Essay on Population*; in 1925 the Society had launched the initiative of publishing Ricardo's collected works, under T.E. Gregory's editorship, which was passed on to

¹ I should like to thank Giorgio Gilibert and Murray Milgate for very helpful comments on previous versions of this paper.

Sraffa in 1930, and took another 20 years to start to appear (it had been feared it would never see the light of day); in 1930 the Society (much at Keynes's instigation) commissioned from Richard Kahn a translation of Wicksell's *Interest and Prices* (which was only published in 1936); in 1930 the Society also commissioned from C. Guillebaud a *variorum* edition of Marshall's *Principles*, which only appeared in 1961; in 1931 there was Henry Higgs's edition of Cantillon,² in 1952 Stark's edition of Bentham's economic writings, in 1972 (jointly with the American Economic Association) Marguerite Kuczynski and Ronald Meek's edition of the *Tableau économique* (this time in the "third edition", i.e. the "true" version, which had been unearthed by Kuczynski in the 1960s), in 1975 the early writings of Marshall edited by J.K. Whitaker (and his three-volume *Correspondence*, again edited by Whitaker, in 1996), the *variorum* of Malthus's *Principles* (edited by J. Pullen) in 1989, Malthus's *Population* (edited by P. James) in 1990, the editions of the catalogue of Adam Smith's library,³ and the 30 volumes of Keynes's *Collected Writings*, edited by D. Moggridge over the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, there have been many other editions of economic classics, not published for the Royal Economic Society, like Edwin Cannan's editions of Adam Smith's *Lectures* (1896) and *Wealth of Nations* (1904), his (1919 and 1925) editions of the *Bullion Report*, F.B. Kaye's (1924) edition of Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*, the several series of reprints (some with critical apparatus) published by the London School of Economics, the Scottish economic classics series (James Mill's *Selected Economic Writings*, edited by D. Winch, McCulloch's *Taxation*, edited by D.P. O'Brien, Sir James Steuart's *Political Economy*, edited by A. Skinner), the Glasgow edition of Adam Smith, Jaffé's *variorum* edition of Walras's *Éléments* (published in English translation in 1954 under the joint auspices of the Royal Economic Society and the American Economic Association), and Walras's *Correspondence and Related Papers*, published (in the original) at Amsterdam in 1956 for the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences and Letters. From the other side of the Atlantic we have had C.H. Hull's edition of Petty's *Economic Writings* (1899), the Johns Hopkins's series of Reprints of Economic Tracts (mostly due to Jacob Hollander),⁴ which had some critical apparatus and scholarly if brief introductions, the Toronto edition of Godwin's *Political Justice* (1946) and, also from Toronto, the monumental John Stuart Mill.

The above list (which of course does not claim to be exhaustive) will not fail to impress. The quality of so many different editions is bound to differ, as it indeed does. I hope it is not too frivolous to say first of all that by far the most beautiful

² Already in 1892 Higgs had edited a (mere) reprint of Cantillon for the American Economic Association.

³ The first edition of this catalogue was published by Bonar in 1894 for the "Junior Economic Club" (on which see de Vivo, 2001, p. 90), but a second, much improved, one was edited by him for the Royal Economic Society in 1932. A *Supplement*, still for the Royal Economic Society, and under the editorship of Hiroshi Mizuta, was published in 1967. The definitive edition of the catalogue was published by Mizuta in 2000, but it was not sponsored by the Royal Economic Society.

⁴ Hollander also edited (jointly with T.E. Gregory) an indifferent edition of Ricardo's *Notes on Malthus* in 1928, and a collection of Ricardo's *Minor Papers on the Currency Question* in 1932, both for the Johns Hopkins Press.

of them is Kaye's edition of *The Fable of the Bees*, published by Clarendon Press. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find in the original 1924 printing, but it is still in print, though the reprints are not so lavishly produced. It is also a very good edition from a scholarly point of view. Among the editions I have mentioned, probably the best are those by Hull, by Cannan, and by Sraffa. Some are instead not very good, like for instance (at least partially) the Glasgow edition of Smith (the *Correspondence* volume was marred by many mistakes and had to be reissued relatively soon in a corrected edition⁵), or Skinner's edition of Steuart, scarred by the decision to abridge it, entirely absurd in what purported to be a *critical edition*. Also the edition of Keynes's writings leaves not little to be desired, and cannot be regarded as the definitive edition, but it must be agreed that in this case the task confronting the editors was a very difficult one.

It must be stressed that already at the end of the nineteenth or the beginning of the twentieth century the standards of these editions were sometimes remarkably high, so much so that some of them can still be regarded as the one to be used—for instance Cannan's *Wealth of Nations*. As an example of these high standards, I should like to mention Cannan's refusal to "modernize" the spelling and the punctuation, almost defiantly expressed by him in his Preface:

I have retained the spelling of the fifth edition⁶ and steadily refused to attempt to make it consistent with itself (Cannan, 1904, p. v).

He immediately justifies his decision by quoting the example of the name of The Lord Protector, which Smith generally spells "Cromwel":

Few modern readers would hesitate to condemn this as a misprint, but it is, as a matter of fact, the spelling affected by Hume in his *History*, and was doubtless adopted from him by Adam Smith (*ibid.*)

To modify the spelling would have suppressed a relevant element of knowledge. Cannan goes on:

I have been equally rigid in following the original in the matter of the use of capitals and italics (*ibid.*).

It should not, however, be thought that this derived from a dogmatic rigidity on Cannan's part—he was flexible enough to make changes to the original, when this could mean an improvement, without loss of any kind:

I have allowed the initial words of paragraphs to appear in small letters instead of capitals, the chapter headings to be printed in capitals instead of italics, and the abbreviation 'Chap.'

⁵ Also the *Wealth of Nations* volumes had to be reissued, with (minor) corrections, three years after the original publication of 1976.

⁶ Cannan adopted the text of the fifth edition because it was the last published in the author's lifetime, therefore it was to be regarded as the definitive edition, although the corrections made by Smith were minimal. I cannot agree with the assertion of the editors of the Glasgow edition, that this choice was "illogical" (Campbell *et al.*, 1976, p. 64), nor with their choice of publishing a text which is a medley of the various editions, incorporating all the changes they deem to be attributable to Smith. A discussion of this point is, however, beyond the scope of the present notes.

to be replaced by ‘Chapter’ in full. I have also allowed each chapter to begin on a fresh page, as the old practice of beginning a new chapter below the end of the preceding one is inconvenient to a student who desires to use the book for reference. The useless headline, ‘The Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,’ which appears at the top of every pair of pages in the original, has been replaced by a headline which changes with every chapter and, where possible, with every formal subdivision of a chapter, so that the reader who opens the book in the middle of a long chapter with several subdivisions may discover where he is immediately (pp. v–vi).

Cannan also added many entries (in square brackets of course), to the original index.⁷ About the editorial task of integrating Smith’s incomplete references to sources (an important question in view of the then raging Franco-English debate on the so-called “Turgot myth”⁸) he wrote:

That many more references might be given by an editor gifted with omniscience I know better than anyone. To discover a reference has often taken hours of labour: to fail to discover one has often taken days (p. viii).

The fact that more than 70 years later the editors of the Glasgow edition of the *Wealth of Nations* acknowledged “the great benefit [they] have derived from the work of Edwin Cannan”⁹ is the best tribute to his achievement: if he had not reached omniscience, he had got reasonably near to it. Cannan was also an important mentor for Sraffa (another candidate to omniscience¹⁰), who often sought his advice in view of the editorial decisions for his Ricardo (on how to publish the correspondence, the *Notes on Malthus*, etc).

If we cast our eye to the Continent, the picture is quite different from the one just highlighted for the Anglo-Saxon world. The Italians started very early (in 1803) to reprint their economic classics, with Baron Custodi’s famous 50-volume collection *Scrittori Classici Italiani di Economia Politica*, but did not do much afterwards: in mid-nineteenth century an important collection of (mainly foreign) authors (in translation) was started (*Biblioteca dell’Economista*), whose several series kept appearing until early in the twentieth century, but there are still no critical editions of important

⁷ Also here we can (*a posteriori*) validate Cannan’s decision: we now know that the index was not compiled by Smith, but by the antiquary and bookseller John Noorthouck, to whom a payment was made for having done the work (a receipt for this payment was offered for sale in an antiquarian bookseller’s catalogue in 1954, a copy of which is in Sraffa’s papers in the Wren Library, at Trinity College Cambridge). No mention of Noorthouck is to be found in Smith’s *Life* by Rae, nor in the more recent one by Ross, nor in the Glasgow edition of Smith’s works. According to his unpublished autobiography (the manuscript of which is in the Beinecke Library at Yale) Noorthouck was a friend of W. Strahan, the publisher (with T. Cadell) of the *Wealth of Nations* (Strahan bequeathed him an annuity). The ODNB entry on Noorthouck states that for many years he worked as an indexer, but does not mention the *Wealth of Nations*. In the Preface to one of his books (*Grand Lodge Book of Constitutions*, 1784) Noorthouck wrote: “A full index is added, without which no publication beyond the size of a pamphlet can be deemed compleat”.

⁸ That is, the question of Smith’s alleged plagiarism of Turgot, or at least his indebtedness to him. On this subject, Cannan’s loyalty to Adam Smith appears to have led him astray (see de Vivo, 2001, pp. 88–90).

⁹ Campbell *et al.* (1976, p. v).

¹⁰ G. Stigler (1953, p. 304) wrote of his edition of Ricardo: “The editorial notes . . . seem unbelievably omniscient . . . Their presence not only clarifies much of Ricardo’s work but also provides a vast fund of information on the economics of the period”.

authors such as Galiani¹¹ or Verri,¹² nor have more recent authors as Pareto or Pantaleoni received the scholarly attention they deserve.¹³

If we turn to France,¹⁴ we certainly do not find an abundance of (good) editions of economic classics. Walras for instance has only recently been dealt with (as mentioned above, the *variorum* of the *Eléments* had only been available in English translation, and the publication of his *Correspondence* by Jaffé was not a French enterprise); J.B. Say is only being done now. Before the middle of the nineteenth century Guillaumin started the important *Collection des Principaux Economistes* (the model for *Biblioteca dell'Economista*, I believe), which was certainly on a very good level for its time, and which can still be useful today for texts which could otherwise be difficult to find, and also because it is the edition which other important authors (for instance Marx) often used in their study of French political economy. It contained mostly French, but also some foreign, classics, such as Smith, Ricardo and Malthus, in translation. The collection of course included Quesnay's works, within the two volumes of *Physiocrates* edited in 1846 by E. Daire. What Daire did was basically to republish *Physiocratie*—the collection of his economic works which Quesnay himself had arranged for Dupont de Nemours to edit in 1767, and which had given a name to the "Secte"—adding the two economic articles Quesnay had published in the *Encyclopédie* ("Fermiers" and "Grains"). Another two volumes of the *Collection des Principaux Economistes* two years earlier had been devoted to Turgot's *Oeuvres* (of course Turgot was not strictly speaking a Physiocrat, and did not see himself as part of the "Secte").¹⁵ We find here a "modernized" spelling, and more generally a tendency to tamper with the text, not uncommon in the nineteenth century:¹⁶ in the *Physiocrates* volumes, for instance, the summaries of each chapter, which in the original were all given together in the *Table Sommaire*, are moved to the beginning of each chapter or section, and the *Table Sommaire* is abolished. This might have been acceptable at the time, but not today. A better (more complete) edition of Quesnay's works was published (in the

¹¹ There exists a good edition (due to F. Nicolini) of his *Dialogues sur le commerce des bleds* (published in 1959 by Ricciardi), but no scholarly edition of *Della Moneta*.

¹² An edition of Verri's works is being published, but the volumes of his economic works have not yet appeared.

¹³ The Geneva edition of Pareto (published by Droz) does not purport to be more than simply a reprint of his works.

¹⁴ I am not familiar with German editions of economic classics, but my impression is that the situation there is no better than what we find in France and Italy. Mention, however, must be made of M. Kuczynski's excellent editions of the *Tableau économique* and of Quesnay's economic works, unfortunately published in German translation.

¹⁵ Turgot is probably the French economist to whom most attention has been given, if we judge from editions of his works: before the one just mentioned, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Dupont de Nemours had already edited a collection of his works (which was described in the Guillaumin's edition as "un véritable chaos en neuf volumes"), and a monumental collection of his works and correspondence (in five massive volumes) was edited by Schelle at the beginning of the twentieth century. This was probably due more to Turgot's standing as a statesman than simply to appreciation of his achievements as an economist.

¹⁶ Custodi did much worse things in the way of altering the texts he was republishing in his collection *Scrittori classici italiani di economia politica*.

original French) some 40 years later (in 1888) by A. Oncken in Frankfurt. This edition still took liberties with the text, much in the nineteenth century fashion. Restricting ourselves to editions of Quesnay's works, it is remarkable that (leaving aside the modest *Pétite bibliothèque économique* volume of Quesnay's works, published by Guillaumin in the 1890s) after Oncken there was a gap of 70 years before the appearance of what purported to be a critical edition of Quesnay's works: the two-volume *François Quesnay et la Physiocratie*, published in 1958 in Paris by the *Institut National d'Études Démographiques*, where (in the second volume) a selection of Quesnay's works are republished. In an important article of 1971 (which also appeared in English in 1988), R. Zapperi wrote that "of this [INED] edition, little good can be said" (1988, p. 132).¹⁷ That this edition could not be the definitive one was more or less a general conviction. Indeed, a new edition was commissioned by INED to a team of editors composed of C. Théré, L. Charles and J.C. Perrot, and it is the recent publication of the result of their work¹⁸ which has prompted the writing of the present article.

This new INED edition is much more ample than the 1958 one, but it follows what has unfortunately become established practice, and publishes Quesnay's works in a very fragmentary fashion, overlooking that (to restrict ourselves to economic works) Quesnay has published at least one book, the above-mentioned *Physiocratie*, which, despite being a collection of several writings, has a unity of itself,¹⁹ and, more importantly, stems directly from the author. As Zapperi wrote in 1971, any collection of Quesnay's works ought to start with the republication of *Physiocratie* as such. In this new edition, on the contrary, the editors give *Physiocratie* in a completely fragmented shape, and the reader would have a hard time to discover what it actually contained. Indeed, *Physiocratie* is the text to which the editors devote perhaps the least attention. Of the first issue (which bore the false imprint of *Pékin*) they have not seen a single copy, as witnessed by the fact that they write that the only two copies in existence (as a matter of fact some eight or ten are known) are in Japan and at the Einaudi Foundation in Milan (p. 1433). If they had looked for the Einaudi Foundation in Milan they would not have found it²⁰ of course (the Einaudi Foundation is in Turin), and they certainly have not travelled to Japan to see it: as will be explained below, the editors seem incapable of moving outside Paris. They have simply chosen to ignore the variant issues of *Physiocratie*, and all the problems they raise, and just refer the reader to a note by Luigi Einaudi in the 1958 INED edition, which, it must be frankly said, only muddled the issue, as Piero Sraffa and Raffaele Mattioli explained to Einaudi in a private

¹⁷ The original Italian actually expressed a harsher judgement than its English translation.

¹⁸ F. Quesnay, *Oeuvres économiques complètes et autres textes*, edited by C. Théré, L. Charles and J.C. Perrot, Paris, Institut National d'Études Démographiques, 2005. I understand that Théré and Charles are mainly responsible for the edition.

¹⁹ So much so that Mirabeau, in his obituary of Quesnay, called *Physiocratie* "un traité" (Mirabeau, 1774, p. 35).

²⁰ As a matter of fact, in Milan there is a copy of the *Pékin* issue of *Physiocratie*, in the library of the Mattioli Foundation, but of course the editors know nothing about it.

letter²¹ of August 1958 (which the editors ignore, notwithstanding its being published in the same issue of the journal in which the English version of Zapperi's article is published, which they use).

I think Zapperi was also right in stating that *Philosophie Rurale*, being a work by Quesnay no less than by Mirabeau, ought to be republished in its entirety in a collection of Quesnay's works. On the contrary, in this new edition we only get Chapter VII (which has been long known to be *entirely* due to "the Doctor"²²). To this, the editors add a very fragmentary "Dossier *Philosophie Rurale*", where they publish manuscripts which partly went into the initial chapters of *Philosophie Rurale*. Out of their context, these pieces are of much less use than if they had been published as a complement to a new edition of the entire work. Such a new edition would have also been called for, considering another criterion which I think ought also to guide the editor's choices in modern editions of classics: the ease—or the difficulty—with which the original text can be found. Among major Physiocratic works, *Philosophie Rurale* is one of the most difficult to find, all four editions published at the time²³ being now rare, and having been reprinted only once in modern times (in Germany in 1972, in a small print run), to the best of my knowledge.²⁴ I do not know whether to attribute to this rarity, or to the sloppiness of the editors, the fact that they completely ignore at least one of the four editions of *Philosophie Rurale*, and that they appear to know nothing of the differences between the various editions. The edition they completely ignore, published in 1766, even had a partially different, and quite interesting, title: *Philosophie rurale ou économie générale et politique de l'agriculture, pour servir de suite à l'Ami des Hommes*, instead of the "normal" title *Philosophie rurale ou économie générale et politique de l'agriculture, réduite à l'ordre immuable des lois physiques et morales qui assurent la prospérité des empires*.

Something similar to what has been said on the desirability of republishing the entire *Philosophie rurale* could also be said for *Théorie de l'Impôt*. The latter has instead been completely ignored by the editors, who inexplicably do not even publish Quesnay's long notes on it, which were published by Weulersse in 1910. These notes, as Weulersse wrote, "sont très développées; quelques-unes constituent de véritables articles" (Weulersse, 1910, p. 53). To read them, one would still have to have recourse to Weulersse.

As far as exclusions and inclusions are concerned, the apex of absurdity is reached with the correspondence, of which as a rule only Quesnay's side is included. As if this could justify their decision, the editors write that, of letters written to Quesnay, only a few are extant. Moreover, the "Dossier Correspondence" does not even include a list of the letters published, so that to find a particular letter one has to go through the whole of it, page by page.

²¹ Sraffa (1988). The letter is published under Sraffa's name, and indeed it was signed only by him, but it was the result of work done jointly with Mattioli.

²² See Dupont de Nemours (1906, p. 248).

²³ Two in 1763, one in 1764, and one in 1766.

²⁴ This is a reprint of the 1764 edition, I believe.

Not much good can be said of the care with which the editors give us the texts. As was to be feared, they “modernize” the spelling,²⁵ but even fail to make it consistent: on the same page (p. 439) where they say they have “modernized” the word “oeconomique” into “économique”, they publish the “Tableau Oeconomique”. Even punctuation has been tampered with (exceptionally, we are told²⁶). To add confusion to confusion, the spelling of texts published from a manuscript has *not* been modernized (they say²⁷).

Of the editors’ treatment of *Physiocratie* enough has been said. Other texts, for example the *Maximes*, are (rightly) published in their different versions and with their different titles (“Maximes de Gouvernement Economique” in the *Encyclopédie* article “Grains”, “Extraits des Economie Royales de Sully” in *Tableau Economique*, “Maximes Générales du Gouvernement d’un Royaume Agricole” in *Physiocratie*), but they add no editorial matter pointing out the differences between the several versions, or explaining them.

The edition is characterized by laziness probably unequalled. As already mentioned, the editors seem unable to move out of Paris, to the point that, for instance, when they (rightly) publish the text of Quesnay’s *Encyclopédie* articles in the uncensored version of which a copy is at Oxford, they reproduce the text at second hand, as published by others, without checking the original, “n’ayant pu [se] déplacer à Oxford” (p. 127)! Also, they are proud to publish (“pour la première fois” as we are told on the dust-wraper) Quesnay’s *Despotisme de la Chine* from the manuscript rather than from the text published in the *Ephémérides* of 1767, but although they know of another manuscript version, they have not made the effort to compare the two. If a word of an important letter from Quesnay to Forbonnais is illegible “in the photocopy we have”, as they write, they refrain from looking for the original (which it would not have been difficult to find).

Another surprising aspect of this edition is the apparent lack of communication between different parts of it, so that the editors get the same thing right in one place, and wrong in another. For instance, in the bibliography of Quesnay’s work, they rightly give the date of publication of the Leyde issue of *Physiocratie* as 1768 for the first volume, and 1767 for the second,²⁸ but when they quote *Physiocratie* elsewhere, they give its date as “1767–1768”. Still in the bibliography, they fail to mention the “tirage à part” of the “Despotisme de la Chine”, which they themselves mention elsewhere. Another (more important) example of this kind of problem is the following. The editors publish a revised and improved version of the catalogue of Mirabeau’s papers conserved in the Paris *Archives Nationales*. The catalogue had originally been

²⁵ Their explanation is: “Il n’était . . . pas justifié d’imposer aux lecteurs non spécialistes du XVIII siècle cet inconvénient [l’orthographe originale]” (p. xxx).

²⁶ However, a random check appears to show that alterations to punctuation are not exceptional.

²⁷ As a matter of fact accents, capitalization and separation of words have been modified even in texts published from manuscript (see p. xxx).

²⁸ As is well known, this derives from the complicated publishing history of *Physiocratie*, about which (as mentioned above) the editors are happy to just refer the reader to the article by Einaudi in the 1958 INED edition of Quesnay.

given by Weulersse in 1910, but Charles and Théré decided that for several reasons the work had to be done again.²⁹ In so doing, they find (p. 1321) that a manuscript entitled “Mémoire sur la liberté du commerce des grains”, which Weulersse had simply given as “l’oeuvre d’un Physiocrate” (1910, p. 18), is in fact the work of Charles de Butré, an amateur mathematician who used to help Quesnay with his arithmetics. However, when in their “Dossier *Philosophie Rurale*” at p. 776 they meet a reference by Quesnay to the “mémoire de M. de B. sur la liberté du commerce”, instead of referring the reader to Butré’s *Mémoire*, they write an apparently scholarly and rather complicated note saying that this could perhaps be a reference to a *mémoire* by an anonymous writer, inserted in Chapter 9 of *Philosophie Rurale*. They add that another reference to this anonymous *mémoire* is made by Quesnay in another manuscript, which they publish further on. However, when 20 pages later (p. 794) they publish this other manuscript, where Quesnay again refers to “le memoire de M. de Butré” (this time with the full name spelled out), they wake up, and append a footnote stating that Quesnay’s previous reference to the “mémoire sur la liberté du commerce” was a reference to Butré’s *Mémoire*. In other words, at p. 776 the editors ignore what they know at p. 794.

Even apart from the problems already mentioned, the bibliography of Quesnay’s works leaves much to be desired. Inclusions or exclusions seem rather haphazard: for the *Ami des Hommes* (which is not included as such, but only for the parts attributed to Quesnay), only the first edition (of 1758–60) and that of 1787 (and a modern reprint of 1970!) are given,³⁰ whereas between 1758 and 1787 dozens were published.³¹ Similarly for *Théorie de l’impôt*, of which only the first (1760) edition in 4to and one of the (at least three) editions in 12mo of the same year are given (but there were at least two editions the following year). The late-nineteenth-century collection of Quesnay’s works edited by Y. Guyot for Guillaumin’s *Pétite bibliothèque économique* is missing. Details such as the presence of frontispieces, tables, etc., are not normally given, and in general no pagination is given for works published in more than one volume; for one work however (the 1743 *Mémoires de l’Académie Royale de Chirurgie*) they give not only pagination, but also the contents. The editors also add a 150 page bibliography of works *about* Quesnay, which, in the present writer’s view, is just a waste of space, even irrespective of the fact that

²⁹ Although their decision was right, their air of superiority towards Weulersse’s pioneering work appears wholly unwarranted (see p. 1226: “le travail de Weulersse n’était plus adapté aux exigences scientifiques actuelles. Trop souvent, les informations qu’il fournissait se sont avérées fausses ou trop imprécises pour être satisfaisantes”).

³⁰ On p. 331 however they quote the second edition of the fourth part, “datée 1759”, apparently unaware that in 1758 there was more than one edition of the fourth part, and therefore the 1759 edition cannot be regarded as the second (whatever 1759 edition they have in mind: their reference is not sufficient to identify the edition they are talking about).

³¹ About *L’Ami des Hommes*, they write (p. 331) that Quesnay’s *Questions intéressantes sur la population, l’agriculture et le commerce* (published in its fourth part) were a last minute insertion, which they seem to infer from the fact that they are independently paginated, which they claim is only true for the first edition (p. 331 and n.). This claim is wrong: the “Seconde édition” published “à Hambourg chez Chrétien Hérold” in 1758, has *Questions intéressantes* separately paginated (pp. 1–102).

inclusions and exclusions are here even more haphazard than in the bibliography of Quesnay's own works. It is also regrettable that nothing should have been done to improve on J. Hecht's 1958 biography of Quesnay, which is here reprinted virtually unchanged from the INED edition of 50 years ago. Also regrettable is the fact that the editors tell us nothing about Quesnay's library.³² To finish on a more cheerful note, we must say that the two volumes are well produced, and their price (€68) is very reasonable for more than 1600 printed pages, hardbound. However, this edition can only be accepted as a stopgap. We still want the *definitive* Quesnay.

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³² J. Hecht in her biography of Quesnay tells us (in this edition, p. 1404) that it contained about 300 books. An extract from its inventory was given by M. Kuczynski in her German edition of Quesnay's works (Kuczynski, 1971, pp. 493–8).