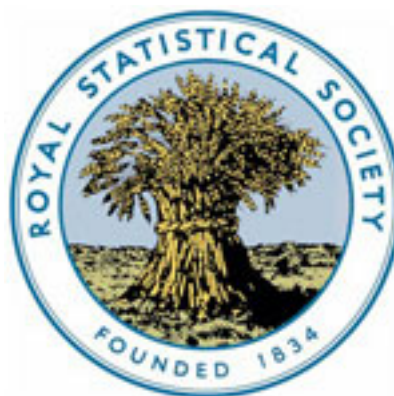


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REVIEWS OF STATISTICAL AND ECONOMIC BOOKS.

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1.—*Statistics*. By the late Sir Robert Giffen, K.C.B., F.R.S. Edited, with an Introduction, by Henry Higgs, C.B., with the assistance of G. Udny Yule, M.A. xiii + 485 pp., 8vo. London: Macmillan, 1913. Price 12s. net.

Applying to the late Sir Robert Giffen a phrase used by himself about Adam Smith, Mr. Higgs states in his Introduction his belief that in matters statistical "we are none of us wiser than Sir Robert Giffen." His contemporaries in the field of his favourite pursuit will cordially endorse this tribute to the shrewd commonsense, the penetration, and the comprehensiveness with which he dealt with the figures before him, and the bold and often singularly accurate hypotheses he would frame in order to project those figures beyond their ordinary and apparent scope. Above all, he was, as the Editor truly says, a past master in the discovery and avoidance of pitfalls, and of this trait plenty of evidence is provided in this work. Any one, in fact, rushing in where Sir Robert had put up a Caution Board would be likely to have to admit himself to be what his monitor would most probably have called him. Though versed above most in analysis and statistical method generally, Sir Robert Giffen had taken certain subjects specially to his province, the best known of them being Foreign Trade, Finance and the Money market. All of these are as prominent in the present work as in his previous writings. He has also reviewed, in serial economic order, most of the other branches of the official statistics of this country, showing for each what is the object it is intended to serve, where it may fall short of it, and what is the fullest harvest of statistical information it can be got to yield. By this means he illustrates the application of the principles he sets out to inculcate. Being the work of Sir Robert Giffen, it is unnecessary to point out that these chapters bear the impress of his wide experience and the grave consideration he gave to all matters of public importance upon which he wrote. Equally superfluous would it be to state that there is no avoidance of the controversies of the day, provided they serve as a good text for relevant criticism. A good portion of some of the chapters,

indeed, is taken up by the quotation or reproduction of views already published in former works, though none the less pertinent to the argument, or to the author's general object, viz., to make use of such controversies as live instances of statistical treatment on its practical side.

It is not proposed to enter here into the details of the wide field covered in this book. In the first place, the scheme the author had in view has not been completed. Then, again, the figures dealt with relate, as mentioned above, almost entirely to this country, where the improvement and expansion of official statistics have made noteworthy strides since this work was written. Criticism on these points is disarmed by the position with regard to them taken up by Mr. Higgs in his Preface, in which it is said that the work was undertaken twelve years before the death of the author, but carried on by him very spasmodically, and not revised in his later years. The result is that the figures upon which the illustrations and arguments depend are now obsolete, whilst had those of later date been substituted they would not, in some cases, have supported the conclusions drawn from their predecessors. The population, for example, usually quoted, is that of 1891. Changes and innovations, too, have rendered much of the criticism so freely dealt round by the author beside the mark, as many of the shortcomings then justly brought to notice have since been remedied. The Board of Trade census of Production puts out of court the remarks upon this subject made in 1898. The Foreign Trade statistics now include some of the more important detail the lack of which Sir Robert Giffen herein deplores. The London Water Board is not recognised, nor the Canal Commission; the Financial Relations of Ireland rest upon the Report of 1894; and the new form of Financial statement and new method of collecting and expounding Agricultural information are similarly omitted. The taxation reviewed, with the proportion called direct and indirect respectively, is that of the year 1897-98; yet one of the last bits of writing done by the author was a slashing attack upon the "People's Budget" of 1909. The expenditure of nearly 40 millions on Defence is considered worthy of special justification. The expenditure by the United States of 29 millions upon Pensions is said to be "quite without example in the finance of older countries," and Pensions and Insurance are not mentioned in connection with Pauperism.

It is always a difficult, and generally a very delicate, task to select from the unpublished material left by an author that which it is due to his reputation to give to the world after his death. In the case of Sir Robert Giffen the reputation acquired during his lifetime rests upon a foundation as wide and firm as any of his colleagues and followers could wish, and needs not the addition of work practically abandoned by him, and not markedly original. The belief of Mr. Higgs quoted at the opening of this review, in justification of the publication of these studies, will appear to some

to be rather wanting as a working creed; and his conviction as to the wisdom of the author might, if it rested upon this work, have been more widely accepted had a considerable part of the Preface been left out.

J.A.B.

2.—I. *The English Convict: A Statistical Study*. By Charles Goring, M.D., B.Sc.Lond. Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office. 440 pp., fol. 1913. Price 9s.

II. *Schedule of Measurements and General Anthropological Data*. 1913. Price 5s.

The work before us has a double claim to be described as a novelty. In most Government publications the official atmosphere is steadfastly maintained, and there is a certain dryness (by no means to be confounded with dullness), and an avoidance of topics which, however relevant to the issues, might introduce a personal note. In Dr. Goring's work these limitations are not observed; its blue covers and unwieldy format alone distinguish it from the book which any private investigator of equal skill and learning might be expected to publish.

The English Convict's second title to be called a novelty consists in the method of research actually employed. The development of statistics associated with the names of Professor Karl Pearson and his pupils has called forth many memoirs and a few treatises, but Dr. Goring's work is the most extensive application of biometric methods to a particular class of problems which has yet appeared. The most hostile critic of the new school could not peruse the tables and rows of constants which greet the eye on almost every one of Dr. Goring's 440 pages and refrain from a tribute of respect for the patient labour which the results must have involved. The work is divided into two parts. In the former, following on a trenchant introduction in which various schools of criminology are assailed in vivacious language, the alleged existence of a criminal type is subjected to rigorous scrutiny. The conclusion is reached that no physical stigmata of the criminal, in the sense in which the term stigma has been generally employed by the followers of Lombroso, can be shown to exist. In other words, that the criminal is not a *qualitatively* distinct physical type. The second part is divided into several chapters. The first deals with the physique of criminals (it must be understood that the word criminal is used in the strict legal sense of persons actually convicted of crime sufficiently serious to involve confinement in a convict prison), and the conclusion is that criminals, except those technically convicted of fraud, are markedly differentiated from the general population in stature and body weight; there is, in fact, a sense in which the term criminal type is justified, since thieves and burglars (who constitute some 90 per cent. of all criminals) are *quantitatively* differentiated from the non-criminal population in virtue of their inferior average physique. These are, in Dr. Goring's opinion, "the only elements of truth out of which have been