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THE HUNGRY WORLD

Dr. Josue de Castro, Chairman of Executive, Food and Agriculture Organisation, is a Brazilian, whose recently-published book "Geography of Hunger" presents an appalling picture of a world in which hunger is still the most potent source of social misfortunes.

Not all of this hunger is actual famine—although there is no lack of this, especially among the teeming millions of Asia. Dr. de Castro uses the term in a wider sense in painting a word-picture of national health being undermined by lack of any of the 40 or more food constituents needed to maintain health—the "hidden hungers" which are leaving their grim imprint on many nations.

He claims that 90 per cent. of the Far Eastern peoples are undernourished and that 50 per cent. of pre-war Britons suffered from malnutrition to a greater or lesser degree. Even in the U.S.A., often hailed as the world's best-fed nation, only two million out of 14 million people examined really met the required physical standards for military service.

He does not subscribe to the beliefs of the neo-Malthusians—as exemplified by William Vogt in "Road to Survival"—that we must limit populations if we are to continue to exist in a world rapidly nearing the limit of its food-producing capacity. Even soil erosion is not regarded by Dr. de Castro as a menace of the first magnitude, although he realises that it is a factor which cannot be ignored.

He writes, "If erosion were the devouring and insatiable monster some people have painted, much of the world would already be barren and devoid of life."

He cites the Yellow River valley, cradle of Chinese civilisation, where it has been estimated that 25,000,000 tons of soil go down to the sea every year, yet for some 5,000 years a "human ant-hill" has existed there on a basis of agriculture. With over 1,000 inhabitants to the square mile it is still one of the densest rural populations in the world.

Few people with first hand knowledge of soil erosion will share his complacency towards this factor.

Dr. de Castro writes a scathing condemnation of colonial exploitation along mercantile lines in which concentration upon a single product such as sugar, cotton, coffee, rubber, oil or precious stones has led to the enslavement—virtual or economic—of large populations.
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The labour forces in such cases have to be fed cheaply to keep down the cost of the product and he quotes many instances of mass malnutrition which have resulted from concentration on foods which were easy to raise and transport in quantity.

The so-called colonial economy which enables the industrial powers to get raw materials cheaply and so enjoy prosperity, has the malnutrition and misery of others as a natural concomitant, he claims, and the first step in alleviating the distress is to make the transition to a co-operative world economy based on mutual interests.

This, says Dr. de Castro, would not entail the imperialist or colonising countries going bankrupt, but rather would introduce an era of greater universal prosperity as the colonial areas developed into consumer markets capable of absorbing certain surplus products of the more highly-developed countries. He says:

"Two fundamental benefits will be achieved by seeing that everybody is well fed: the winning of health and the winning of security—collective victories over sickness and fear. Those ailments, one physical and one moral, are the two most degrading characteristics of our civilisation."

The world's soils, it is claimed can easily feed a much larger population. Existing farmlands could return more if they were farmed better, and we have vast tropical and sub-polar areas which, with the aid of science, can be brought into production.

The food wealth of the oceans is yet barely touched, even if we think merely in terms of fish, while there is still a vast scope for utilisation of the spectacular food value of those microscopic animals and vegetables that form the marine plankton.

Great progress has been made in the production of "synthetic foods" as new sources of proteins and fats, so Vogt's ideas of population restriction are stigmatised as defeatism inspired by people who, "living well themselves, are disquieted by the presence of vast numbers who are living badly."

The thinker will find much food for thought in Dr. de Castro's book, even though he may not see eye to eye with him on all his contentions. "Geography of Hunger" is not a "farming book"; it does not tell one how to farm better, but it is a book that will interest farmers.

It is brilliantly written, and the author's sincerity is self-evident in the manner in which he has scorned to "pull his punches".—J.M.

"Geography of Hunger" by Josue de Castro. Victor Gollancz Ltd. Perth price, 22s. 6d. Our copy from Alberts Bookshop, Forrest Place, Perth.

INSECTS AFFECTING LIVESTOCK

UNDER the title of "Insects Affecting Livestock" has appeared the fifth and latest volume of the "Australian Agricultural and Livestock Series," published by Angus and Robertson of Sydney.

The author, F. H. S. Roberts, D.Sc., is a Principal Research Officer on the staff of C.S.I.R.O. and is in charge of the Veterinary Parasitology Laboratory, Yeerongpilly, Queensland. He previously held a senior position in the Department of Agriculture and Stock, Queensland, and lectured in veterinary parasitology, including entomology, at Queensland University until 1952.

Dr. Roberts' training and long experience make him one of the few men competent to carry out the difficult task of producing an up-to-date book on Australian Veterinary entomology.

An attempt has been made to present the material in a way which will be useful to both the scientific worker and the farmer and grazier. Early in the preface the author acknowledges the difficulties associated with such a presentation but hopes "for some degree of success". To the entomologist and
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veterinarian the book will be invaluable. The layman will find the book equally valuable if he is not deterred by the rather text-book like form of the publication and uses the comprehensive index to guide him to his requirements.

The book deals thoroughly with such major insect pests as blowflies, buffalo flies and lice; in addition it includes much valuable information concerning lesser pests such as mosquitoes, March flies and bots. Ticks and mites, although not insects in the true sense of the word, are included in the scope of the publication. The fact that pests affecting cats, dogs, poultry and pigeons are dealt with gives even the city dweller an interest in the book.

Of particular interest to the entomologist are the keys to the identification of the major veterinary pests. But this technical detail is separated from the simpler descriptions of the individual insects and need not deter the general reader.

Minor points to which reference may be made appear on pages 63 and 154.

**Ocyphaps lophetes** is not the Flock Pigeon but the Crested Pigeon. This pigeon is widely distributed over the continent and is known to carry stick-fast flea.

**Myzantha melanocephala** referred to as the Soldier Bird will be better known to many as the Noisy Miner.

**Hippobosca equina** is not known to be established on cattle or horses in Western Australia, although specimens have been taken from imported stock entering the port of Fremantle.

The book is well printed with an attractive cloth binding. It contains 267 pages, 130 well produced line and half-tone illustrations and one colour plate.

Dr. Roberts' book is well worthy of a place on any farmer's bookshelf and will be appreciated by students of entomology and of agricultural or veterinary science.—C.F.H.J.


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**A FLOCKOWNER'S ENCYCLOPEDIA**

As a source of sound practical information for the pastoralist and farmer, "Sheep, Farm and Station Management" has been renowned for several decades. What is virtually a new edition of this excellent textbook recently made its appearance under the new title of "Sheep and Property Management."

Proof of the popularity of "Sheep, Farm and Station Management" is afforded by the fact that it ran into six editions, and the new volume has maintained all the good points of the old publication and incorporated a mass of up-to-date information on many subjects associated with sheep-raising.

The book is published by "The Pastoral Review" and is compiled by E. H. Pearse, who, for many years, was the editor of that journal.

Much of the information it contains was contributed by farmers and graziers whose contributions were based on knowledge gained in the hard school of practical experience.

The book contains over 600 pages in small but clear type and is a veritable encyclopedia on sheep and their management.

The breeds of sheep are discussed at length and the reader is taken through all the year's operations on a sheep property—mating, culling, lamb marketing, classing, shearing, dipping, etc.

There is a useful section on sheep diseases, another on pasture establishment and management, and many chapters dealing with such matters as fencing, water supplies, the building of sheds, yards and dips, clearing, tree-planting, fodder conservation and pest destruction.
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"Sheep and Property Management" sells in this State for 30s. and is obtainable from the leading booksellers. No better value for money was ever made available and I unreservedly recommend it as worthy of a place on every farmer's bookshelf—J.M.

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**GREAT FARMERS**

FARMING is a craft that is almost as old as the human race. It is the mainspring of human existence, for we all must eat, and the world long since passed the stage where nature alone could meet the needs of its population.

Few people ever pause to reflect upon the advances which agriculture has made to cope with the rapidly-increasing needs of populations which have multiplied madly during the last three centuries.

The industrialists took men from the land to man their mines and factories. Vast towns sprang up where cattle had grazed and crops were grown. Populations increased by leaps and bounds, while medical skill and better living conditions increased the expectancy of life and left more and more mouths to be fed.

To feed and clothe the extra millions, the farmers of the world had to produce more grain and meat, more milk and vegetables, more wool, cotton and flax and all this entailed advances in agriculture that would have been deemed little short of miraculous had they been made in other spheres of activity.

In "Great Farmers", recently published by Faber & Faber, of London, Sir James A. Scott Watson and May Elliott Hobbs tell the stories in vivid homely prose of the men responsible for converting moorland marsh and fen into fertile fields; for making better farm implements; for enriching poor soils, and for evolving the new breeds of highly productive livestock which have earned for Britain the title of "The Stud Farm of the World."

Such names as Coke of Holkham, Mechi of Tiptree Hall, Elliott of Clifton Park, and others who left their influence upon arable and grassland farming; Robert Bakewell, who evolved the Dishley Leicesters; the Colling brothers, and Booth and Bates, of Shorthorn fame; Francis Quartly and his Devons; M'Combie and the Aberdeen-Angus; Ellman and Jonas Webb, who wrought transformations in the Southdown sheep—these are but a few of the famous men, the story of whose contributions to agricultural progress makes enthralling reading.—J.M.

"Great Farmers" by Sir James A. Scott Watson and May Elliott Hobbs. Price in Great Britain, 21s. Our copy from the publishers.

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**MAKING FARM EQUIPMENT**

THE possession of welding plants by many farmers has greatly widened the scope of "make and mend" activities on the farm. An inexpensive booklet issued by an arc-welding firm shows how farmers can build 25 useful pieces of farm equipment.

The cost to build is small because the plans show how many odds and ends of scrap, found on most farms, can be used. The plans are for trailers of various types, saws, manure loaders, a hay sweep, post hole diggers, a hay loader and a drill press as well as other useful items.

Most of this equipment is available commercially but these plans show how anyone with the inclination and mechanical ability can build their own—perhaps with variations to suit local conditions—for very little cost.

"Plans for Making Farm Tools and Equipment" costs 3s. from The Lincoln Electric Company (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., who also publish "Arc Welding Lessons for School and Farm Shop" and "Welding Helps for Farmers".
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DISEASES OF SHEEP

RECENTLY to hand is the second edition of "Diseases of Sheep in Western Australia and South Australia," by H. T. Carroll, B.V.Sc., H.D.A. The author, who spent seven years in this State as veterinary adviser to Goldsbrough, Mort & Co. Ltd., was recently appointed to a position with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and left Perth by air during January last.

The first edition of Mr. Carroll's book was issued in 1949 and proved highly popular, being completely sold out in about 18 months.

The second edition has been extensively revised in the light of later discoveries in veterinary science and contains about 130 more pages including over 50 new illustrations.

Mr. Carroll's primary aim in writing this book has been to provide the flock-owner with readily-available information on the sheep diseases he is likely to encounter.

Diagnosis has been made as easy as possible by well-written accounts of the symptoms and by a carefully chosen series of photographs. The first chapter in the book is devoted to a differential diagnosis chart for which the author has borrowed the technique of the "trouble-shooting charts" with which most motorists and tractor-owners are familiar.

The principle is to broadly classify the diseases under headings such as "Animal Dies Suddenly" or "Animal Lingers for a Few Days" and then to narrow down the diagnosis progressively under headings such as "Deaths in Young Lambs"; "Deaths in Rams and Wethers Only"; "Deaths Associated with Pregnancy" and so on throughout a wide variety of symptoms.

Diseases are listed under each heading with a brief note on each, and extensive cross-references are given. By use of the differential diagnosis chart, even the inexperienced flock owner can narrow down the diagnosis to one or two possibilities before turning to the sections dealing with the diseases in detail for confirmation.

These sections are highly informative, being written wherever possible in non-technical style and they cover the subjects under such sub-headings as causes; symptoms; method of transmission; prevention; and treatment.

All diseases known to occur in this State and South Australia are included, and in addition to the notes on diseases, the book contains much valuable information on sheep husbandry in the light of disease prevention.

There is a chapter on sheep nutrition, another on infertility and a lengthy section dealing with internal and external parasites.

Plant poisoning, a frequent cause of sheep deaths is given good coverage and large numbers of poison plants are listed and described. Poisoning by mineral and inorganic poisons is dealt with in another chapter, and a section devoted to general information includes many useful notes on pulse and respiration rates; temperatures; weights and measures; dosages of drugs; suggestions for the farm medicine chest; methods of administering drugs; notifiable diseases, etc.

A glossary of technical terms used and a comprehensive index add to the value of the book, making it a volume that is well worthy of a place on any flock owner's bookshelf.—J.M.

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