INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL GEOGRAPHY

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THIRD EDITION

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Preface

IF YOU HAD CHANCED to be acquainted with rural U. S. A. twenty or thirty years ago, you might have seen in any one of a thousand counties groups of "honest farmers" repairing roads. With pick and shovel, horse-drawn plow, dirt scoop and cart, the farmers were "working out their road taxes." They had a pleasant social time as they heaved some dirt to fill the ruts. In some places two horses dragged a scoopload of earth to fill the major ruts and gulleys. Building new roads followed the same technique.

Now the bulldozer rips along on its caterpillar feet, flinging dirt and stones before it like chaff before the wind. The two-horse dirt scoop of the farmer is gone from the roadside. In its place a tractor-drawn monster on huge rubber tires tucks ten tons of earth into its wide belly and waddles along to the place of deposition. The ruts are gone now—roofed over with concrete or asphalt.

Old Dobbin no longer draws the chaise along the highways except in very isolated places. He is out of place where strings of autos outspeed the fastest race horse. Also the farmer's wagon stays off the road in most localities. The dealer from town often sends a truck to the farm to get the produce.

Yet more! Dobbin has almost stopped pulling the plow. An ungainly creature of metal, seemingly half reptile and half gigantic insect, now draws the plow. Instead of plowing two acres a day, a fair output for the horse-drawn plow, a gang of discs, operated by one man, plows nearly two hundred acres in a single day (see picture on page 410).

Go around the circle of productive industry and transport, and everywhere you will find that in the recent past power-driven mechanisms have enabled frail man to be vastly more productive than before. In the loom room, the spinning room, the machine shop, the rolling mill, the blast furnace, the chemical works, the cement plant, the sawmill, on the farm, on the highway, on the sea, and in the air—everywhere it is the same. Supergigantic power has made us, of this generation, many times as productive of *things* as were our grandfathers.

Now it so happens that every important new mechanism changes the relation of man to the earth, changes the total of available resource, makes industry in new places and, perchance, unmakes it in the old centers. Thus we live in a new world, one much newer than the world Columbus discovered. Columbus found merely more of a world that all men knew. Today we inhabit a world that is *different,* very different from the one into which we were born, different even from the world of but two decades ago. It is a world made new by the Power Age, which has engulfed us so suddenly.

In this, the third edition of this book, we resurvey the industries and resources of the world as they have been changed by the Power Age. We begin our study of the world in this new age by discussing mechanical power and appraising some of the results power has produced.

In the first 733 pages, we describe the great industries, and the great economic activities, each set in a geographic mold. For example, we discuss the wheat industry of the world in one chapter. The wheat crop fits into certain groups of natural conditions that exist in all six continents. Some wheat-growing countries import wheat, others export wheat. The explanations of these differences lie in a combination of natural conditions and ratios between men and resources. This method of presenting an industry permits us to make comparisons and to bring causes and results together in their explanatory relationships. This stimulates interest and aids memory, because it is easier to remember when things are explained, rather than merely stated. The addition of maps, charts, and diagrams for each industry gives a sound knowledge of the production and trade of each country.

The last 224 pages of the text are a synthesis. This part is devoted to an analysis of world commerce, the rise of trade centers, the evolution of overland and overseas trade routes, and of the more recent airways, with concluding observations on certain trends in human affairs. This study of commercial geography permits a synthesis and a regional application of the preceding material which has dealt with the world's basic resources and industries. We believe that this method gives a better understanding of the world in which we live than would result from a brief description of the fifty or more countries in the world.

What could we do about Germany? What will be its future? Who would dare to guess? We decided that a description of prewar Germany is the best available basis for understanding what may develop there in the next decade.

A book for the decade beginning 1946 cannot use many statistical facts from the war period. The last normal year for much of the world's economic activity was 1938. We are compelled to use statistical data with regard to that fact.

Nations may rise and fall; boundaries may flicker and change; the leagues may wax and wane; civilizations may glitter or smash; nevertheless man will still be tilling for breadstuff, drawing water, digging minerals, tending flocks, weaving fabric, catching fish, hewing wood, fashioning implements, and carrying freight to and fro. The primeval and unchangeable needs of man will continue despite changes in boundary, politics, and the continuity of nations or civilizations. Furthermore, most of mankind will continue to labor in order to get the means with which to gratify some of the ever-increasing wants suggested by the diligent gadgeteers who make this age so different (for some of us) from any that has preceded it.

World War II and its writhing aftermath have made it more difficult to understand the economic life of the world community, but war and its aftermath have also made understanding more necessary. Politics and wars may change

the man-made arrangements like a kaleidoscope, but man must continue to use material resources as best he can, and the threat of chaos makes it even more important that man should know the resources of his part of the world and of the rest of it.

Those who use this book should keep abreast of current publications, because the facts of industry may change tremendously in a short period of time owing to technological change and those acts of government that are caused by ignorance concerning geography and economics—and that ignorance is great.

Throughout this book, references are made to maps, graphs, diagrams, and other illustrations. This is done by referring to the page upon which they appear. Thus, "See Fig. 796" refers to the map on page 796. This saves readers time.

The sources for many of the more patent facts and statistics are not given because the facts were derived from standard government and other publications as follows: U. S. *Statistical Abstract,* U. S. *Agricultural Statistics,* U. S. *Commerce Yearbook,* National Resources Committee *Reports,* U. S. *Minerals Yearbook, Statistical Yearbook of League of Nations,* publications of International Labor Office.

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M. O. P.

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