

to comply with a difficult and in some ways obscure law, and the information it gives concerning the procedures open to large distributors in attempting to preserve the legitimate advantages in buying which grow out of their size, organization and methods of operation.

**SOME FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE MARKETING OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AND AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EFFECT OF RAILROAD TARIFFS UPON MARKETING AREAS,** by Harry W. Chinn. Published as Vol. XXXV, No. 3, of the *Quarterly of the Colorado School of Mines*, Golden, Colo., July, 1940, 39 p. 50 cents.

This bulletin will be of great interest to analysts of trading areas. Mr. Chinn classifies the factors which determine the price pattern and, therefore, the market-area pattern for refiners as follows: crude-oil production costs, refining costs, selling costs, tax costs, the relation of production to consumption in specific areas, and transportation costs.

After noting that these forces are apt to give a refiner different market areas for different products, he discusses each factor briefly, giving particular attention to the significance of a refinery's being in an area which produces more than it consumes or the reverse and of seasonal variations in consumption in various parts of the country. He then analyzes in some detail the significance of transportation and draws a series of maps showing "lines of competition among refining centers for gasoline based upon a study of railroad rates. His study will be useful more for the techniques it employs than for the market areas it outlines, since it is admittedly fragmentary in that it studies only gasoline and only the effects of railroad rates and thus gives results which would be modified substantially by a consideration of other products and other factors.

**THE POTASH INDUSTRY: A REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,** by Willard L. Thorp and Ernest A. Tupper. Washington, Bureau of Foreign and Do-

mestic Commerce, 1940, 95 p. (Mimeographed.)

This study apparently was made as part of an effort to determine whether the potash industry has been violating the anti-trust laws; but it has a broader interest to students of marketing as a condensed case study of an industry's operations in producing and distributing its products. The study is, unfortunately, not complete from the marketing man's point of view, since a heavy emphasis is placed upon pricing policies, whereas performance of the other functions of marketing and the organization and operation of distributive agencies receive relatively little attention. However, the study will give good service in providing illustrative materials and a discussion of the economic problems involved in such matters as the setting of prices for a standardized product; the use of ports at which imported potash is received as basing points for domestic producers; the inelasticity of the demand for a product used chiefly as an ingredient in mixed fertilizers; the use of guarantees against price decline; the use of a single seasonal discount to do two things simultaneously—give the producers a forecast of their sales so as to permit the planning and scheduling of production and encourage storage so as to permit a smoothing out of deliveries over the year in a highly seasonal industry; and the control of late-season cancellations by purchasers who have received substantial discounts for ordering early in the season.

**STATISTICS OF FARMERS' MARKETING AND PURCHASING COOPERATIVES: 1938-1939 MARKETING SEASON,** by R. H. Elsworth. Washington, Farm Credit Administration, 1940, 34 p. (Processed.)

The date given in the title of this pamphlet is unfortunate, since Mr. Elsworth really presents a description of developments in agricultural cooperation from 1913 to 1939 as revealed in successive surveys made by various governmental agencies. Only a small proportion of the total space is devoted to developments specifically in 1938-1939.

After discussing the weaknesses of the various types of data collected, both as re-

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