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THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION

PURPOSES

THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION is a scientific, professional and educational organization. Its membership is composed of statisticians, economists, business executives, research directors, government officials, university professors, and other persons who are seriously interested in the application of statistical methods to practical problems, in the development of more useful methods, and in the improvement of basic statistical data. Engineers, mathematicians, biologists, actuaries, sociologists, psychologists, and representatives of many other professions are included in the membership of the Association.

This diversity of membership is a natural result of the wide range of statistical work. It adds greatly to the value of membership. In the Association a member comes into contact with the leaders in many fields of statistics; from them he can learn about procedures that they have

found effective and that he can adapt to his problems, or about new sources of important data that he can utilize.

Methods which were developed for astronomy and biology are being used today in studies of prices and in regulating manufacturing processes. Mathematical statisticians are perfecting improved methods which were developed originally in agricultural experiments. Some of the methods utilized in advertising studies and marketing research are similar to those employed in public health studies. These cross connections of interest extend into almost every field of science, industry, business, finance, education, government, and public welfare.

In many of these fields of interest, great compilations of important facts are needed. The population of cities and districts, fluctuations of the number of workers in various industries, the quantity of goods produced, the rates of wages paid, the prices of important commodities, the condition of banks, and other basic statistics are used by statisticians in many fields. Hence the American Statistical Association is interested in the accuracy and usefulness of these statistics. Through its contacts with private and governmental agencies it seeks to stimulate the improvement of basic statistical data and to assist in solving technical problems which arise in developing new and improved statistics. The Association provides opportunities for contact between statis-

ticians who collect and compile statistics and the principal users of their product.

In addition to its concern with method and basic data, the Association seeks to advance the interests of the statistical profession by encouraging adequate training, by promoting public goodwill and understanding, and in other ways appropriate to a scientific organization.

ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the American Statistical Association are: (1) an annual meeting, (2) publication of the *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, (3) chapter meetings in the larger cities, (4) committee work and conferences, and issuance of a bulletin of news and notices to members.

Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting is held during the last week of December and lasts three or four days. In addition to the annual business meeting of the American Statistical Association, there are addresses of general interest, sessions for the discussion of statistical research and technique, and round table conferences on specialized problems. The Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for members to meet statisticians working in their own or related fields for informal discussion of matters of mutual interest. During the last ten years the Annual Meeting has been held in St. Louis, Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Washington, Philadelphia, and New York City.

The American Economic Association, American Farm Economic Association, American Sociological Society, and other associations have met at the same time and place and have arranged some sessions jointly with the American Statistical Association. The principal papers which are read at the Annual Meeting are published in the *Journal*.

The papers which were presented at the 98th Annual Meeting, held in Chicago, December 28 to 30, 1936, included such subjects as these:

Construction Cost and Value Indexes
Teaching of Business Statistics
Statistical Requirements of Social Insurance Programs
Correlation Analysis of Time Series
The 1935 Census of Distribution
Corporation Statements as the Basis of Investment Policy
Problems of Managed Currencies
Measurement of Public Opinion
Relation of Price to Quality and to Degree of Competition
Problems of Sampling in the Study of Family Expenditures
Old Age Insurance
Logical and Empirical Equations
Measurement of the National Income
Important Advances in Mathematical Statistics
Variations in Family Expenditures
Strike Statistics
Sampling Principles in the Theory of Simple Epidemics
Relief Statistics
Measuring the Effects of Reciprocal Trade Agreements
Price Research in Industries
Statistical Methods for Experimental Data
Outlook for 1937

Journal of the American Statistical Association: The *Journal* is published quarterly (March, June, September, December) and is sent to members as one of the privileges of membership. It contains articles on statistical subjects covering a wide range of fields. Many of the annual meeting papers are included. The *Journal* carries reviews of important books in statistics and closely related fields. New developments in the work of statistical agencies are presented in an extensive series of notes. Each annual volume contains about 800 pages. At the end of 1937 the *Journal* completes its 50th year.

The Bulletin: Between issues of the *Journal*, a bulletin is issued, carrying important announcements, items of news, correspondence about statistical problems, and other items of interest to members of the Association. The November bulletin presents the preliminary program of the annual meeting. The Bulletin is intended to serve as a forum wherein members of the Association may discuss informally matters of professional interest.

Chapter Meetings: Chapters have been organized under charters granted by the Association in Albany, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Connecticut (state chapter), New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C. These chapters hold meetings at monthly or quarterly intervals

to discuss statistical, economic, and business problems. Reports of some of these discussions are published in the *Journal*.

Committees: Through its committees, the American Statistical Association seeks to encourage research, to perfect statistical procedures, and to stimulate the improvement of governmental and private statistics. The scope of the Association's committee work may be indicated by the titles of some of the committees which have been active during the last five years. The list includes the Advisory Committee on the Census, the Committee on Government Statistics and Information Services (with Social Science Research Council), the committees on Industrial Statistics, Labor Statistics, Price Statistics, Income Tax Statistics (with American Economic Association), Statistics of Relief and Child Care, Statistics of Institutions for Mental and Physical Disorders, Census Enumeration Areas, Statistics of Delinquents and Criminals, Biometrics and Vital Statistics, Technique and Method, and the joint committees on Standards for Graphics and Development of Statistical Applications in Engineering and Manufacturing. The committee activities include the preparation of reports and recommendations, conferences with representative statisticians in the field of the committee's activity, and special meetings in addition to the customary regular committee meetings and correspondence.

Affiliations: The American Statistical Association is affiliated with the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It is one of the constituent members of the Social Science Research Council. The Association is represented on the Board of Directors of the National Bureau of Economic Research and on the Business Research Council.

HISTORY

The American Statistical Association was organized in Boston in 1839. Its founders were interested in a wide variety of statistical subjects. In the fading minutes, written almost a century ago, one finds references to Incorporated Towns of Massachusetts, The Longevity of Different Classes of the Community, Paupers and Almshouses of Boston, The Population of Canada, Comparison between the Population of the Northern and Southern Divisions of the United States, Manufactures in our Provinces before the Revolution of Independence, Massachusetts Taxation and Valuation, The Lunatic Hospital at Worcester, Education in Massachusetts, Vital Statistics of Salem, Foreign Emigration, The Sanitary Survey of Massachusetts, Rail Road Statistics of Lowell, Fires of Boston, Loss and Insurance, Commerce of Boston, and Crimes of Boston and New York City.

Almost from the date of its organization the Association took a lively interest in the improve-

ment of statistics, particularly those of the United States Census. The Census Bureau, the Treasury Department, and, later, the Commissioner of Education called on the Association for advice and assistance. The Association was also active in connection with state statistics, particularly those of Massachusetts.

About fifty years after its founding, under the leadership of General Francis A. Walker, the membership of the Association increased rapidly and became truly national in character. In 1888, the *Publications* (now the *Journal*) were instituted under the editorship of Professor Davis R. Dewey. The early issues of the *Publications* revealed the same broad interest that had characterized the Association at the time of its founding: water power, park areas, life insurance, causes of poverty, railroad statistics, municipal finance, labor statistics, gold and silver production, mortgage statistics, retail prices, etc. Meetings were held in New York, Washington, Chicago, and other cities.

In 1914, the committee work of the Association was expanded by the appointment of committees on federal statistics, state statistical work, municipal statistical work, and business statistics. During and immediately following the World War, the Association was greatly interested in statistics developed by the war-time agencies in which many of its members were outstanding leaders. At about the same time there was a

great growth of interest and activity in business statistics. The rapid development of statistics in government and business was reflected in the growth of the Association and expansion of its activities. Attendance at the annual meeting increased greatly and the programs expanded to include several times as many papers, most of which recorded the rapid progress of statistical science and its application to new problems. Chapters were established in a number of important cities, greatly enlarging the opportunity for members to meet together and discuss statistical questions and current developments. Important work was done by Association committees in several fields. Except for a decline during the depression, the membership of the Association increased steadily with the growth of statistical work.

In January, 1935, with the aid of a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation, the Association initiated a further expansion of its activities. During 1933 and 1934 the Association had been very active in surveying Government statistics, assisting in their improvement through the Committee on Government Statistics and Information Services (appointed jointly by the Association and the Social Science Research Council). In order to discover and develop the most appropriate means of continuing its earlier committee work in connection with government statistics and, on a diminished scale, the intensive work performed

by the Committee on Government Statistics and Information Services, the offices of the Secretary-Treasurer and Editor were merged and moved to Washington for an experimental period. Arrangements were made to have the full-time services of a Secretary-Editor and arrangements were made to facilitate the work of committees. At the same time, the other activities of the Association are being strengthened and developed. With its one hundredth anniversary approaching, the Association is pushing forward the frontiers of statistical progress in many directions as its founders did during the early years of its history.

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Organization and Government: The American Statistical Association was incorporated in Massachusetts in 1841. The officers of the Association are a President, eight Vice-Presidents representing the major fields of statistics, a Secretary-Treasurer, an Editor of the Journal, and six Directors. The President, Directors, and Secretary-Treasurer form a Board of Directors for the government of the Association. All the officers are elected for terms of one year except the Directors who are elected for terms of three years. There is a business session at the Annual Meeting for the election of officers and the transaction of other business.

Membership: There are four classes of membership: honorary members, fellows, regular members, and corporate members. Honorary members are persons distinguished in the fields of statistics or public service who have been elected to honorary membership by unanimous vote of the Board of Directors. Fellows are statisticians of established reputation who have been elected to fellowship by unanimous vote of the Committee on Fellows. They have all the privileges of regular membership. Their number is limited to one hundred. Regular members are persons interested in statistics who have been nominated by one or more members and elected by the Board of Directors. Regular members or fellows who pay dues of not less than twenty-five dollars per annum are designated as contributing members. Corporate members are business concerns or corporations who have been elected to corporate membership by the Board of Directors. Corporate members designate two regular members as their representatives.

Dues: The dues of regular members or fellows are five dollars per annum. Regular members or fellows may become life members by making a payment of one hundred dollars. Corporate members pay dues of one hundred dollars per annum.