

grasp of many economic concepts. If fault is to be found, it would be in points of emphasis. Thus, there is insufficient emphasis on monetary policy, although the brief treatment of it is good. The extensive discussion of counter-cyclical fiscal policy does not perhaps take sufficient account of the unavoidable political realities. The national income analysis is disproportionately long. For the student of business administration there is not quite enough material on the impact of the cycle on segments of the economy, on particular industries, and on forecasting for industries and segments.

But if these are faults, they must be counted as very small when weighed against the excellence of Professor Gordon's book. He is to be congratulated.

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MAXWELL, JAMES A. *Federal Grants and the Business Cycle*. Pp. xiii, 122. New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1952. \$2.00.

This volume is the fourth in the series of "Fiscal Studies" issued by the National Bureau of Economic Research. It deals with grants by the federal government to state and local governments, principally from the point of view of their possible and actual use in counteracting business cycles. Mainly because of their fiscal limitations state and local governments in their economic activities behave almost like private businesses, in that their expenditures are expanded in prosperity and contracted in depression. If this tendency is to be corrected part of the activities of state and local governments must be financed by federal grants, which can be expanded in depression and contracted in prosperity. The author reviews succinctly the history of these grants, and gives some appraisal of the possibility of varying them countercyclically. Although the history of these grants stretches back almost to the foundation of the Republic, they did not become large until 1934. From 1919 to 1933 they ranged from \$86 to \$228 million, and from 1933 to 1949 from \$901 to \$2,909. About half the grants are now for social welfare; about a quarter for trans-

portation and communication. The main possibility for countercyclical grants lies in public assistance and in public works, and the author gives a careful appraisal of the possibilities in each case, being somewhat optimistic about the first and pessimistic about the second. In the course of the inquiry a number of other interesting problems are touched on, notably a suggestion for the apportionment of federal grants among the states in order to make some compensation for their differences in per capita income. The work is admirably equipped with tables and diagrams. It is a worthy addition to the impressive National Bureau list, both in content and in style.

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TAX INSTITUTE. *Taxation and Business Concentration*. A Symposium conducted by the Tax Institute, June 15-16, 1950, New York. Pp. viii, 264. Princeton, 1952. \$5.00.

In *Taxation and Business Concentration* the Tax Institute upholds its tradition of interesting and useful symposium volumes on controversial subjects in the field of taxation. A large measure of the success of the symposia and the resulting volumes has undoubtedly been due to careful program planning. In the case of *Taxation and Business Concentration*, the important role that planning played is attested to both by the titles of the papers presented, each of them dealing with a significant aspect of the main topic, and by the over-all excellence of the papers.

The introductory paper, "Recent Trends in Industrial Concentration and Taxation" by Professor J. Keith Butters, provides in succinct form essential background material and a conceptual framework for the papers that follow. The next two papers, "Taxation and Large Scale Retailing" by Dean Harold M. Somers and "Concentration in the Tobacco Industry as Affected by Tax Policies" by H. M. Robertson, are particularly well done.

Also worthy of special attention are the papers dealing with the effects on concentration of certain tax-exempt forms of business enterprise—farm co-operatives and government-owned and -financed enter-