

THE ELEMENTS OF STATISTICAL METHOD

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The Elements of Statistical Method by Willford I. King

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WILLFORD I. KING

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STATISTICAL
METHOD**

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STATISTICAL METHOD

BY

WILLFORD I. KING, M.A.

INSTRUCTOR IN STATISTICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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PREFACE.

The purpose of this book is to furnish a simple text in statistical method for the benefit of those students, economists, administrative officials, writers, or other members of the educated public who desire a general knowledge of the more elementary processes involved in the scientific study, analysis, and use of large masses of numerical data. While it is intended primarily for the use of those interested in sociology, political economy, or administration, the general principles set forth are applicable likewise to every variety of statistical data. The author has found that the members of his classes in this subject were not, as a rule, expert mathematicians, and he believes that this is true of a majority of those persons who are called upon to make practical use of statistics, hence, no pretense whatever has been made, in this work, of presenting any but the most simple of the mathematical theorems upon which statistical method is based.

So far as the author is aware, there is no book published in America which attempts to cover the field of statistical method in its present state of advancement. There are several excellent treatises published abroad but they either embrace but a part of the subject or are adapted especially to the biologist, to the advanced

student of statistics, or to those having considerable mathematical training. Under these circumstances, it is believed that there is place for an elementary text of this nature.

References are given to only a few of the principal works on the subject. It is not expected that the student will read all of those listed at the close of any chapter, but, when all are available, it will usually be best to make use of them in the order in which they are named. If more advanced study of any topic is desired, the student will find abundant references cited in those books.

My thanks are due to Dr. Horace Secrist, Professor John R. Commons, and Professor T. K. Urdahl, all of the University of Wisconsin, for reading my manuscript and offering me many valuable suggestions which have resulted in its improvement.

To Dr. Thos. S. Adams, my former instructor, now of the Wisconsin Tax Commission, I am indebted for the major part of all that has made this work possible, and any merit which it may possess must be credited largely to his efforts.

WILLFORD I. KING.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN,
September, 1911.

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