
Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Medieval Cities* by Henri Pirenne

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movement is a necessary stage in the development of modern capitalism.

As part of the growing literature in adult education, directed at the untrained reader, the book is somewhat disappointing. The style is jerky, the language occasionally condescending, the author's viewpoint disturbingly naïve. Too elementary for the serious student of economic affairs, it also falls, as either layman's text or tract for the times, below Charles Beard's "The Open Door at Home," to which, however, and for a limited audience, it may serve as introduction.

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MEDIEVAL CITIES, by Henri Pirenne. Princeton: Princeton University Press, rev. ed., 1939, pp. xii, 253, \$2.50.

This is "an attempt to expound in general way the awakening and the birth of urban civilization in Western Europe during the Middle Ages."

The book opens with a brief but comprehensive discussion of the mercantile aspects of the Roman Empire during the sixth century. Contrary to the notion usually held that it was the invasions of the Germanic tribes which destroyed the commercial life of the Empire, Pirenne advances the thesis that it was the later invasion of the Mohammedan hordes which closed the Mediterranean and broke the connection of Western Europe with the Cultural East, forced it for the first time to live upon its own resources, and set in motion the internal forces which were to break gradually with the Roman antiquity and emerge with an entirely different pattern of economic life.

The period of the ninth and tenth centuries were dark ones commercially for Western Europe. With the eleventh and twelfth centuries came occasional indications of a new movement. The gradual experience and wealth accumulations of the Venetians and later the Genoese; the preserved and growing trade organizations and practices of the Flemish and Scandinavians; the gradual forced withdrawal of the Mohammedans

which returned the Mediterranean to European control; an unexplained growth in population accompanied by an increasing activity and interest in life and the improvement of living conditions; the gradual emergence of a class of itinerant merchants whose needs, obligations, and social, religious and economic status were neither defined nor suggested in the institutional patterns of the church town, the burg or the feudal manor—all vividly and concretely explained by the author—indicate the nature of the groundwork which was laid for the commercial and economic renaissance which was to follow.

It is in the explanation of the emergent class of itinerant merchants and traders for whom the existing order of things provided no place that M. Pirenne is at his best. In language that is clear and authoritative he shows how this new class with its unique needs and way of life brought into existence a new type of communal institution. The city of trade became an entity, a personality, with rights and duties defined in contractual arrangements with the church town or the burg; it was autonomous and free to develop its own pattern of activity around such needs as exchange relations, contracts, money definition and regulation, protection of citizens, relations and obligations of citizens both within and without; it was a new way of life different from either of the types which granted it permission to develop and exist.

The impact of this new institution upon the old ways wrought dynamic changes and laid the basis for the modern capitalistic order. Property took on a new and broader meaning; men became free from manorial duties by means of media of exchange and contracts freely made; production was for the purpose of exchange, division of labor developed; and the economy of consumption gradually was modified and displaced by one of exchange.

Although lacking in detail, and filled with personal judgments, the book has every indication of authoritative accuracy, and the reader observes the broad significant move-

ments and conflict of forces which transformed a commercial Roman Empire into an agrarian economy which was in turn converted into budding commercialism which was to evolve into Renaissance Europe. Students of History, and especially of Economic History, and the History of Economic Thought will find the book interesting and informative, especially if it is preceded by a wide reading in detailed accounts of Medieval European life.

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EFFECTIVE MARKETING, by L. Rohe Walter.
New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company,
1938, pp. ix, 381, \$3.00.

The organization of this volume revolves around seven principles which are suggested as basic for effective marketing: getting the product right, organizing for selling, knowing your market, understanding the customer's viewpoint, keeping ahead of the parade, planning and working your plans, and promotion programs. The author lays particular stress upon market research and urges more field contact with customers and prospects by major sales executives. Careful coordination of all marketing activities is considered the prime requirement of an effective sales program.

Executives should find the book useful in provoking thought and encouraging investigation of specific problems. Its relatively short compass as compared with texts on sales administration obviously precludes a comprehensive treatment of many of the topics. Although a number of references to more detailed studies are included, an extension of this idea to provide short, carefully selected bibliographies would undoubtedly have been welcomed by some readers.

Certain matters of content and logic of treatment deserve mention. Although one chapter discusses sales management problems, personal selling is not accorded nearly as much space as advertising and sales promotion. This lack of balance is not a serious weakness, but may limit somewhat the appeal of the book to sales management executives. The fundamental market research

methods are stated to be *questionnaire, observation* and *correlation*. This listing neglects the experimental approach (although sales tests are mentioned in an earlier chapter on product policy). Furthermore, the treatment of market research would have been clarified by some distinction between measurements of potential users which are essentially quantitative in character and measurement of other phases of the marketing process which are largely qualitative in nature.

In summary, *Effective Marketing* is a book which executives should find definitely stimulating and helpful whether or not they are in direct charge of marketing activities. A readable style, frequent case illustrations, and italicized summary sentences aid in dramatizing major points and avoid dullness. It is not suited for a text, but would be useful as collateral reading in a course on sales management or as a book review assignment for an introductory course in marketing.

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SALESMANSHIP FOR TODAY FOR SALES MANAGERS OF TOMORROW, by David R. Osborne. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939, pp. xv, 171, \$2.50.

Mr. Osborne, who is Sales Training Director for The Studebaker Corporation, offers here a condensation of his *Self-Management in Selling* which appeared in 1931.

The volume has thirteen chapters although the first three chapters contain only twelve pages of illustrations and text material while the last chapter has but four pages. This leaves nine major chapters in which the author covers prospecting, knowledge of the product and buying motives, pre-approach, controlling the interview, making the presentation, answering objections, closing, and management of the salesman's time, although he gives his chapters slightly different titles. His best chapters are those dealing with making the presentation and management of the salesman's time.

Mr. Osborne's book is not packed with inspirational fluff, although it would be definitely incorrect to say that it does not inspire. Quite the contrary is true. The author