



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Geschichte Belgiens* by Henri Pirenne

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second and third Christian centuries. The *Bollettino* of De Rossi, the valuable writings of his disciples, the labors of Le Blant and Allard, the superb work of Duchesne, are now indispensable, not only to the thoughtful student of Christian antiquity, but to any cultured reader who would be abreast of the great movement in this direction. To neglect this material in such a work as the one before us is not unlike neglecting the latest excavations in the Forum and on the Palatine when writing of early Roman history.

The present writer cannot agree with Dr. Waterman (p. 195) as to the influence of the Clementines on the development of the tradition "that the bishops of Rome were peculiarly successors of St. Peter in that see." He rather holds with Harnack that too much stress has been laid on this,—indeed the Roman episcopal lists of Hegesippus and Irenaeus antedate any possible influence of the Clementines. Nor can these witnesses well be called non-Roman, since both spent many years at Rome, and both are professedly passive and recipient. It is possible that a perusal of the story of the Acilii Glabrones, as illustrated by the late excavations in Santa Priscilla, would lead Dr. Waterman to abandon his scepticism as to the martyrdom of the Consul Flavius Clemens. Is it not always too much (p. 389) to assert that the specific pro-Roman passages in the *De Unitate* of Cyprian are "forgeries"? It is a grave word, and one that needs sufficient external evidence to justify it. Any *innere Kritik* is not likely to show more, at this date, than the fact of interpolation,—but how, when, where, and by whom? It is a long cry to the fact of forgery.

The work of Dr. Waterman is well written, and omits none of the generally-known topics of interest that form the subject-matter of the history of this period. It is not without a bias,—indeed, it is impossible for a believing Christian to write such a book without bias. Training, faith, feeling, circumstances,—all combine to create in him a mental temper that cannot be set aside. All that can be asked is that the facts be carefully collected from every quarter, that they be scrutinized and set in their due sequence and relationship as far as is now possible, that the laws of enlightened and moderate criticism be known and applied, that caution be used in the assertion of things as certain, dubious, false, that the opinion of the critical searcher be set down in terms justified by the amount and conditions of the materials, and be not too much influenced by rhetoric or by the historical fancy,—those subtlest ways of prejudicing the mind of an ignorant or unsuspecting reader.

THOMAS J. SHAHAN.

Geschichte Belgiens. Von HENRI PIRENNE. Band I.: Bis zum Anfang des 14. Jahrhunderts. Deutsche Uebersetzung von FRITZ ARNHEIM. (Gotha: F. A. Perthes. 1899. Pp. xxiv, 496.)

IN M. Pirenne, Belgium has at last found an historian who combines an adequate knowledge of the local "sources" with a large historical

culture. Trained in German methods, evidently conversant with the most recent investigations, alike in Germany and France, in the field of medieval institutions, and master of a vigorous and lucid style, Professor Pirenne has produced a volume which will appeal both to the general reader in his own country and to the professed historical student there and elsewhere.

Beyond this general testimony to its interesting and scholarly character, I must perforce, from sheer ignorance, abstain from criticism. But it chanced that some seventeen years ago I had occasion to look into the sources for the history of Flanders in the age of the Artevelde, and to take stock of the then existing modern literature dealing with the period. And it has interested me to revive the recollections of my own juvenile and wooden performance, and to compare some of the conclusions which were natural enough then to the youthful enquirer with M. Pirenne's far more mature and competent judgment.

In narrating the "political" history, in the narrower sense, of Flanders and the surrounding territories in the thirteenth century, M. Pirenne has been unable to make much advance on the older Belgian writers, chief among them M. Kervyn de Lettenhove; and this for a couple of reasons. The material is scanty; and it has already been carefully worked over. M. Pirenne endeavors, and not without some occasional success, to supply the lacunae in the evidence of the chroniclers from his own wide knowledge of the general European situation, but nevertheless the story remains, and probably will continue to remain, full of the most sudden and most inexplicable changes of front—or what seems like changes of front—on the part of all the chief personages concerned. Even if M. Pirenne did not himself care chiefly for the institutional and economic sides of history, as it is clear he does, he would be thrown back upon them by the impossibility of making any other part of his subject really interesting.

Turning, then, to the development of institutions, perhaps the first question that will suggest itself is as to the origin of that civic life which so early characterized the corner of Europe we now know as Belgium. It is with some amusement that I observe how trustfully I followed in 1882 the leading of Georg von Maurer, and with the aid and countenance of M. Vanderkindere's little pamphlet, *Sur l'Origine des Magistrats Communaux*, found the germs of the later town-system in an imaginary mark-community. Since 1882, great has been the discussion on the subject; and now M. Pirenne, following the prevailing tendency among contemporary scholars, and applying to the Flemish towns the general doctrine of municipal *origines* which he has recently set forth with so much learning in the *Revue Historique*, finds the true beginning of town life in the settlement of "colonies" of merchants and craftsmen beneath the walls of an abbey or castle (p. 200). This view is probably nearer the truth, or, perhaps one had better say, a larger part of the truth, than the rural-village theory; but its statement here by M. Pirenne still shows the lack of precision which I attempted to point out in his *Revue Historique*

articles. This defect has been remedied, I hope, in the detailed examination of the history of landed property in Ghent which has recently been published by his pupil M. des Marez.

Whatever the origin of town life may have been, M. Pirenne's picture of the situation in the thirteenth century agrees in all its important features with the notions one could gather in 1882 from M. Vanderkindere's somewhat rhetorical but yet refreshing and original work on *Le Siècle des Artevelde*. The key to the period is the struggle between the city oligarchies and the craftsmen; the former seeking the support of the French king, who was anxious to increase his hold over the vassal county of Flanders, and the latter turning to the count, who was equally desirous, in his more statesmanlike moments, of tightening his authority over the town-magistrates. But on one point M. Pirenne has something fresh to remark. When, in 1882, I came to describe the crafts of Ghent, I felt in an obscure way that there was something in the position of the weavers and the fullers which was rather difficult to fit into the framework of industrial life as it is exhibited to us by the modern describers of "the gild system." Nevertheless, I seem to have had no hesitation in saying "There was no jealousy between employer and employed, inasmuch as the latter could without much difficulty save sufficient capital to become a master himself." It is now a comfort to have M. Pirenne point out, what seems very obvious once it is said, that "the textile crafts in the great manufacturing cities of Flanders and Brabant presented an essentially different appearance from that usually shown by the artisan corporations of the Middle Ages."

"The cause of this difference is easy to discern. Instead of working, like other crafts, for the local market, they produced wholesale and for export. The weaver, fuller, and dyer did not in the least resemble in position the bakers or smiths. The latter were at once artisans and traders, and they sold direct to their customers the products of their industry, while the former had to restrict themselves to the humble role of mere factory hands ('*Industrie-arbeiter*'). With the public they came not in contact; they had only to do with the *entrepreneurs* who employed them—the cloth-merchants (*drapiers*). The cloth-merchants put into their hands the wool to be worked up; and it was the cloth-merchants likewise who sold the finished cloth in the market. The merchant is a capitalist; the workman a wage-laborer" (p. 305).

When we realize that the richer cloth-merchants were members of, or closely associated with, the civic oligarchy, we can understand that the quarrel between the craftsmen and the town authorities was probably an economic one as well as a constitutional.

If the foregoing description by M. Pirenne be true—and it certainly fits well enough into what we know of the civic troubles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—it is evident that the peculiar conditions of the Flemish cloth industry had even thus early hurried it into a stage of development essentially different from and subsequent to "the gild system" in its "normal" form; into a stage such as German economists are wont to designate by the term *Hausindustrie*, and the English writers of the

early part of this century by *domestic system*. It differed indeed from these as they are to be found in later centuries in Germany and England, chiefly in its concentration in the cities; but in each case, though the little *meester* may have had his journeymen and apprentice, the real *employer* of them all, in the modern sense, was the merchant through whom the work came to them. M. Pirenne remarks (p. 417) as to the weavers and fullers of Ghent, that the specifically craft organizations—the *Gewerke*, or, as they said in medieval England, the *misteries*—were far too closely supervised by the *échevins* to be capable of being used as weapons against their rulers; “but it was different with the religious fraternities.”

Let us hope that when in his next volume he comes to deal with the constitutional changes of the period of the Arteveldes, he will draw more fully on the unprinted material to which he refers as his authority; that he will tell us more about these fraternities; and that he will enable us still better to realize the daily life of the *Weve Ambachte*.

W. J. ASHLEY.

The Foundations of England. By Sir JAMES H. RAMSAY of Bamff, Bart., M. A. (London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co. 1898. Two vols., pp. xxxiii, 553; xxiv, 509.)

“TWELVE Centuries of British History” is the sub-title of this laborious work, which aims at giving in these two volumes a complete compendium of the history of the British isles from B. C. 55 to A. D. 1154. It is obvious that such an undertaking as this would involve prolonged and tedious study; for Sir James has not only read for himself the authorities on which his narrative is based, but has plodded through a vast amount of the work of modern historians, especially of those who have added to our knowledge by their own original research. While careful to acknowledge “the greatest obligations to the works of others,” which have enabled him to place his readers abreast of the latest research, the author is no mere compiler; he has exercised throughout his own judgment, and has done so at once with marked independence and with singular freedom from prejudice and bias. If we detect a personal note, it is perhaps that of the Scotsman, in whose view Scottish history occupies a leading place; but English writers have been, perhaps, inclined to treat somewhat imperfectly the history of the northern portion of the island, so that the balance is here redressed. For the teacher of history and for the real student the special value of Sir James’s work will be found, not so much in the careful references to authorities, useful though these must prove, but in the arrangement of his volumes. An elaborate table of contents with the dates prefixed throughout is a very great convenience, as are the marginal headings to the text, in Clarendon type, and the dates at the head of each page, a point too often omitted.

That there was real want for a book of this character will hardly be denied by those who have worked at the period it covers. That period