

Revista Portuguesa
de História

application of a new science, that of sociology, to an old body of material. «Addressed to the lawyer, to the student of history, and to people generally concerned with the problem of method in the social sciences», this book takes Blackstone's «Commentaries» as its text and analyses this classic study of English law to see how Blackstone employed the assumptions and ways of thought current in his day to rationalise the complex legal institutions which confronted him. Mr. Boorstin concludes that this reconciliation of what was with what should have been made of the law at once a science and mystery. As with so much scientific treatment of well-known themes, one is tempted to respond «Of course», and «What else would you expect?» Yet such work contains a germ of truth that historians do well to bear in mind, especially constitutional historians. We look at our authorities and persuade ourselves that they tell us what was, forgetting that in no sphere of human activity does make-believe play so large a part as in government. It is well for us to be reminded that our authorities tell us not the facts, but what they believed or what they hoped to be the facts — a vastly different matter.

MARJORIE BLATCHER

História Económica e Social (1940-1941)

Relatively little research into the economic and social history of England has been undertaken in England since the fall of France in the summer of 1940. Much of the work which has been published since then was really drafted, or at any rate prepared for drafting, before the end of 1939. It is becoming rather difficult to know which works should be included in this kind of survey, and which should be excluded for one reason or another. Many works which are not primarily about economic subjects nevertheless contain much that is interesting to the economic historian; when the survey is widened to include social as well as economic history, the difficulty of knowing what to put in and what to leave out is still further increased.

The most important book on economic history published in England in 1941 was the first volume of the *Cambridge Economic History*, edited by J. H. Clapham and Eileen Power (Cambridge University Press). This is a comprehensive work dealing with *The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages* on a European scale. The book was planned by English scholars as a complete unity; but not much of the work is about England, and not many of the writers were English. Taken as a whole it is a magnificent achievement, especially when war-time difficulties are considered; it will probably be a long time before such international team-work among economic historians is again attempted.

The agrarian life of medieval England has been astonishingly well portrayed by Dr. G. C. Homans (an American scholar) in his *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century* (Harvard University Press, 1941). Dr. Homans has much fresh light to throw on all the main aspects of country life — fields, families, feasts, and manors. It will be interesting to compare this book with Kosminsky's work on *The English Village in the Thirteenth Century* (Moscow, 1935) when the latter book has been translated from the Russian.

Among English contributions to medieval economic history, a very prominent place must be given to the late Professor Eileen Power's work on *The Wool Trade in English Medieval History* (Oxford University Press, 1941). For fourteen years before her untimely death Miss Power had been working hard on this subject; the present volume may best be regarded as the preliminary draft of a definitive and fully documented book which Professor Postan plans to complete, from material prepared by Miss Power, when the times become once more propitious. Meanwhile, Miss Power's Ford Lectures, as now presented, give a most lucid and illuminating account of the English wool trade, displaying great learning without any taint of pedantry.

Several important articles on the economic history of medieval England were published in the learned journals during 1940-1941. Miss E. M. Carus-Wilson, in drawing attention to «An Industrial Revolution of the Thirteenth Century» (*Economic History Review*, 1941), attacks the prevalent theory that the English cloth industry was in a declining condition at that time. In her view, the period was one «of striking progress industrially, though of

equally striking change and upheaval. It witnessed, in fact, an industrial revolution due to scientific discoveries and changes in technique». According to Mr. J. Saltmarsh's article on «Plague and Economic Decline in England in the Later Middle Ages» (*Cambridge Historical Journal*, 1941), the turning point between general prosperity and deepening depression came about the middle of the fourteenth century, largely as the result of persistent infection and a progressive decline of population caused by the Black Death.

Mr. R. H. Hilton's short article, «A Thirteenth-century Poem on Disputed Villein Services» (*English Historical Review*, January 1941) illustrates several points concerning the distinction between villeinage by tenure and villeinage by blood, the position of the village reeve in the thirteenth century, and the social attitude of ecclesiastical landowners towards their agricultural tenants. Mr. R. Lopez, «The English and the Manufacture of Writing Materials in Genoa» (*Economic History Review*, November 1940), argues ingeniously that the art of paper-making may have been introduced at Genoa by an Englishman named Walter in the first half of the thirteenth century. Prof. B. Wilkinson offers a critical and copiously documented revision of the evidence concerning «The Peasants' Revolt of 1381» (*Speculum*, 1940), though he deals mainly with the political aspect of the rebellion rather than with the economic and social grievances of the rebels. Miss Helen Cam, writing on «The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism» (*History*, December 1940), is also concerned primarily with non-economic factors, but reaches conclusions which must have weight with economic historians. In her view, «the legislation of Henry VII and Henry VIII, followed by the suppression of the two great northern rebellions, killed political feudalism and dealt a mortal blow to economic and social feudalism».

The economic and social aspects of Miss Cam's subject are more clearly illuminated by Prof. R. H. Tawney's long and important article on «The Rise of the Gentry, 1558-1640» (*Economic History Review*, 1941). Professor Tawney depicts the rise to dominance of «an indeterminate middle classe» of land-owning commoners, knights and esquires, distinct from the old feudal nobility on the one hand from the general mass of small land-holders on the other. Of this rising middle class the

House of Commons became the instrument; as the gentry rose to economic and social dominance, so did the House of Commons struggle towards political supremacy. At some points Professor Tawney's work may find corroborative illustration in Mr. A. L. Rowse's book on *Tudor Cornwall* (Jonathan Cape, 1941), though the two writers do not find themselves in agreement on all subjects. Miss Margaret James, in her article on «The Political Importance of the Tithes Controversy in the English Revolution, 1640-1660» (*History*, June 1941), approaches Professor Tawney's general field of research from a special angle. During the English Revolution, tithes became «an issue of blood», led directly to the overthrow of the Parliament of 1653, and were a contributory factor in the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. On the economic side, the interest of the question rose from the fear that if tithes were abolished, other forms of property would not long remain secure.

Among several contributions to the detailed study of English agricultural development in early modern times, prominence may be given to *Three Seventeenth-century Yorkshire Surveys*, edited by T. S. Willan and E. W. Crossley (Yorkshire Archeological Society's Record Series, 1941.) The three surveys are of the Duke of Lennox's manor of Wensleydale, and of the lordships of Middleham and Richmond. All this part of the country was predominantly pastoral, and the course of agricultural development here did not run closely parallel to that of the more southerly counties. There was nothing like an «agrarian revolution» in Yorkshire at this time, though there was an enclosure movement. Agricultural changes in a later age of rapid enclosure, in the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, have been the subject of detailed but incomplete studies by several scholars. Mr. J. D. Chambers, in «Enclosure and the Small Landowner» (*Economic History Review*, November 1940), confirms the conclusion of Mr. E. Davies (*ibid.*, January 1927) that the number of small landowners increased in most English counties in the years before, during and after the generation of warfare against France. The multiplication of such regional studies may eventually lead to the modification of the traditional view's concerning the social effects of enclosures at this time; meanwhile, serious students of the subject will be grateful for Mr. W. E. Tate's

short but most useful «Note on the bibliography of enclosure acts and awards» (*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, London, Vol. 18, N.º 54, 1941.)

The history of English overseas trade was the subject of several notable studies published in 1940-1941. Mr. F. J. Fisher, in his article on «Commercial Trends and Policy in Sixteenth-century England» (*Economic History Review*, November 1940), argues that the trade depressions in the third quarter of the sixteenth century forced the government into «an erratic attempt to mould the economic system according to something like a pattern» — the pattern of mercantilism. The mercantilist trend of policy strengthened persistently during the seventeenth century, in the struggle against the Dutch for commercial supremacy. By the middle of the eighteenth century this struggle had been decided in favour of England, and Dutch trade was declining. Mr. C. Wilson, in his book on *Anglo-Dutch Commerce and Finance in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1941) traces the process of decline. He shows that the failure of Dutch trade in general, and for Anglo-Dutch trade in particular, drove Dutch capital to seek safer and more lucrative employment, which it found in England; especially between 1740 and 1780, «the financial element ousted the commercial in relations between the two countries». That Dutch capital remained important in English business, even after 1780, receives some incidental corroboration from Mr. H. Furber's painstaking researches into the financial history of «The United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, 1783-1796» (*Economic History Review*, November 1940.) It may be useful to compare Mr. Furber's work with Mr. C. H. Philips's article on «The New East India Board and the Court of Directors, 1784» (*English Historical Review*, July^r 1940), and with Mr. Philips's detailed book on *The East India Company, 1784-1854* (Manchester University Press, 1940.)

English financial history has received an increasing amount of attention in recent years and will almost certainly make great progress in the future. Prof. J. H. Clapham (now Sir John Clapham, President of the British Academy) is exploring the records of the Bank of England with the calm and ruthless industry which has always characterised his work. The first

fruits of his research, an article on «The Private Business of the Bank of England, 1744-1800» (*Economic History Review*, 1941), carries forward the work begun by the late R. D. Richards in *The First Fifty Years of the Bank of England* (1934.) Sir John Clapham's highly illuminating article covers the second half-century of the story; but it possesses further importance as a statement of «work in progress.» Other work in progress, on a rather later period and a different aspect of the Bank's activity, is by Mr. J. K. Horsefield. In «The Bank and its Treasure» (*Economica*, May 1940) Mr. Horsefield has investigated the relationship between the Bank's cash holding and its notes and deposits during particular years falling mainly between 1778 and 1832. Mr. Horsefield's later article on «The Duties of a Banker» (*Economica*, February 1941) traces the origins of the protracted controversy between the Banking Principle and the Currency Principle which culminated in the Bank Charter Act of 1844. He shows that the controversy, in all essential points, dates back to the time of Adam Smith, or even earlier.

Not much research seems to be in progress on English industrial history; but the subject is not completely at a standstill. Mr. J. E. Pilgrim has written an informative thesis on «The Cloth Industry in Essex and Suffolk, 1558-1640» (*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, London, Vol. 17, 1940.) Mr. H. E. Matthews has edited the *Proceedings of the Company of Soapmakers, 1562-1642* (Bristol Records Society, Vol. 10, 1940), which are useful for the study of provincial industrial organisation in a very critical period. Mr. D. Chapman, in his short article on «The New Shipwright Building Company of Dundee, 1826-1831» (*Economic History Review*, November 1940), has described an interesting but unsuccessful attempt by a local trade club to enter the ship-building industry as an independent company after a dispute with the organised employers.

Almost all sides of economic history — agriculture, industry, commerce, finance — find their reflections from one angle or another in Miss Gladys Scott Thomson's fascinating book on *The Russells in Bloomsbury, 1669-1937* (Cape, 1940.) Following up her very successful account of *Life in a Noble Household, 1641-1700* (1937), Miss Thomson carries the story of the family down to the death of the fourth Duke of Bedford. Much inci-

dental light is thrown on the economic and social problems of London during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: on the method of managing a town estate, the leasing of building plots and the development of streets, the fluctuations of prices, the changes of fashion in furniture and dress. On one important problem of London life Miss Thomson's work has been supplemented by Mr. E. S. de Beer, whose study of «The Early History of London Streetlighting» (*History*, March 1941) illuminates a subject which has hitherto been left almost completely obscure.

It is doubtful how far works on imperial and colonial economic history can be regarded as within the scope of this survey; yet the economic development of modern England cannot properly be studied in isolation from the history of the British Empire and Commonwealth. Prof. W. K. Hancock, in his *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs: Vol. 3, Problems of Economic Policy, 1818-1939, Part 1* (Milford, 1940), shows sympathy with the liberal economic policy followed by England between 1846 and 1932. He traces the decline of this policy and discusses some of the problems arising from attempts to pursue the alternative policy of imperial self-sufficiency. Books about particular regions of the Empire and Commonwealth continue to be issued, by both English and overseas publishers. Mr. Brian Fitzpatrick's book, *The British Empire in Australia: an Economic History, 1801-1939* (Melbourne University Press, 1941), may be regarded as completing the work of which the first volume (*British Imperialism and Australia, 1783-1833*) was published some years ago. Mr. C. W. de Kiewiet, in his *History of South Africa: Social and Economic* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1941), covers the whole social and economic development of South Africa, but pays special attention to the period since the Union. His book may properly be ranged alongside Sir A. Pinis *Financial and Economic History of the African Tropical Territories* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1940.) As a reminder of the Empire's climatic, economic, and constitutional diversity, Mr. Harold A. Innis's book on *The Cod Fisheries: the History of an International Economy* (Oxford University Press, 1940), calls for an abrupt transition from jungle heat to the ice and fogs of Newfoundland.

Finally, some mention must be made of work which, though important in itself, does not fit easily into any of the groups

already described. Prof. E. Hughes, in his scholarly article on «The English Stamp Duties, 1664-1764» (*English Historical Review*) April 1941), explores the antecedents of Grenville's Act which was to become so important in the history of the North American colonies. Dr. J. M. McPherson's book, *The Kirk's Care of the Poor* (Avery and Co., Aberdeen, 1941), ranges from the Reformation to the Scotch Poor Law of 1845, and should be useful to both ecclesiastical and economic historians. Last, but not least important, Mr. G. D. H. Cole has found time in the midst of his other activities to write *Chartist Portraits* (Macmillan, 1941), presenting a dozen biographical studies of men prominent in different phases of the movement. A preliminary essay analyses the forces which expressed themselves through Chartism, and the book as a whole forms a very attractive introduction to the subject.

ARTHUR REDFORD

História do Pensamento (1939-1941)

The period reviewed in these notes has been a particularly lean one for English workers in the field of the history of science. Yet, in 1939, although coming events had already cast their shadows over our activities, three numbers (out of the annual four) of the fourth volume of the *Annals of Science* appeared before war actually broke upon us. The January number contained papers by Professor Marjorie Nicolson on 'English Almanacs and the «New Astronomy»'; Dr. Oswald Walker on 'August Kekulé and the Benzene Problem'; Dr. K. J. Franklin on 'An Introduction to the Earlier History of Phlebitis'; Professor T. S. Patterson on 'Blaise de Vigenère, John Ferguson, and Benzoic Acid'; and Dr. H. P. Bayon on 'William Harvey, Physician and Biologist: His Precursors, Opponents and Successors — Part iv'. Mr. V. A. Eyles presented an additional note on 'Macculloch's Geological Map of Scotland'. This number also contained some interesting and rare illustrations bearing on the work of Kekulé, Blaise de Vigenère, Harvey and Macculloch.

In the issue of the *Annals* for April, 1939, Professor J. R.