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For British economic historians interested in the statistical framework of their subject, the most important book published in 1939 is Sir William Beveridge's *Prices and Wages in England from the Twelfth to the Nineteenth Century*. Vol. 1. *Price Tables: Mercantile Era* (Longmans). The English series of which this volume is the vanguard forms part of a co-operative investigation into the history of prices in England, France, Germany, Austria, Holland, Spain, and the United States ; the English part of the work is designed to be complete in four volumes. This impressive undertaking must clearly be judged as succeeding (and perhaps superseding) Thorold Rogers's monumental work on *Agriculture and Prices in England*. The fundamental importance of the new survey does not need further emphasis ; for its accuracy and scholarship the name of Sir William Beveridge is a sufficient guarantee.

On the strictly industrial aspect of economic history not much work has been published during 1939. D. Knoop and G. P. Jones, in *The Scottish Mason and the Mason Word* (Manchester University Press) have made a preliminary survey of the Scottish building industry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A. Raistrick and E. Allen have written an informative article on *The South Yorkshire Ironmasters, 1690-1750*. {*Economic History Review*, May 1939}. T. S. Ashton, in *An Eighteenth-Century Industrialist: Peter Stubs of Warrington, 1756-1806* (Manchester University Press) has given a fascinating account of file-making in Lancashire during the early part of the Industrial Revolution. The social effect of the Industrial Revolution, at a later stage of its development, receives some reflection in W. C. R. Hicks's article on «The Education of the Half-Timer» {*Economic History*, February 1939}. Among the more general works bearing upon the Industrial Revolution, prominence must be given to H. W. Dickinson's *Short History of the Steam Engine* (Cambridge University Press), which is pleasantly written, technically accurate, and admirably illustrated. For a scholarly and com-

prehensive history of an industry which has hitherto been curiously neglected by historians, reference may be made to Marjorie Plant's *The English Book Trade* (Allen and Unwin).

Among agricultural historians, G. E. Fussell has recently been most prolific. He has extended his account of «Crop Husbandry in the Eighteenth Century» from Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire (*Journal of the Ministry of Agriculture*, September 1938) to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (*ibid.*, July 1939). In collaboration with M. Compton, Mr. Fussell has also written a detailed account of «Agricultural Adjustments after the Napoleonic Wars» (*Economic History*, February 1939). Substantially the same subject is treated less academically in his article on «Farming Depression A Century Ago: Home Counties Farming, 1816-1836» (*Contemporary Review*, March 1939). Among other recent articles by the same author may be mentioned «Old English Farming Books» (*Library Review*, Spring 1939) and «The 'Coke' of Cumberland: John Christian Curwen» (*Country Life*, 25th March 1939). The problem of feeding an urban population in time of war gives increased importance to all such studies of farming history ; for a more direct historical approach to the problem, attention may be drawn to the recent book by J. C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham, *The Englishman's Food: Five Centuries of English Diet* (Cape).

The shadow of war seems also to hang over recent British work on financial history. The most important book published in 1939 on this branch of the subject is A. Hope-Jones's *Income Tax in the Napoleonic Wars* (Cambridge University Press), a short but penetrating book based partly on duplicate income-tax returns recently discovered in the Public Record Office. E. V. Morgan attacks the financial problems of the Napoleonic period from a different angle in his article on «Some Aspects of the Bank Restriction Period, 1797-1821» (*Economic History*, February 1939), and concludes that the Bank of England was a mainly passive agent in the price fluctuations of the period. Fresh light on the financial effects of other wars has been thrown in articles by Max Beloff and W. W. Rostow. Mr. Beloff in «Humphrey Shalcrosse and the Great Civil War» (*English Historical Review*, October 1939) presents useful new material on

the rapid transference of landed property in England during the Civil War, as well as on the scrivenors' secondary occupations of money lending and banking. Mr. Rostow, in «Investment and Real Wages, 1873-1886» (*Economic History Review*, May 1939), pursues further his study of the trend of investment during the «Great Depression» which was partly a secondary aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871.

Preoccupation with wars and rumours of war has been less apparent among students of commercial history than among the historians of finance. J. F. Rees has made a penetrating analysis of the nature of «Mercantilism» (*History*, September 1939). R. M. Lees and D. B. Horn have written scholarly articles bearing on the governmental regulation of English overseas trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Mr. Lees's article on «(Parliament and the Proposal for a Council of Trade, 1695-1696» (*English Historical Review*, January 1939) shows among other things how rapidly commercial considerations were tending to overshadow religious considerations in politics. Mr. Horn, in «The Board of Trade and Consular Reports, 1696-1782» (*ibid.*, July 1939), makes the important suggestion that the consular reports of the eighteenth century might profitably be used to supplement the British official statistics of trade, which are grievously defective. In the period to which Mr. Horn's article refers, England was struggling for commercial supremacy against both France and the Netherlands, though it has commonly been assumed that the competition of the Netherlands was already waning before the end of the seventeenth century. C. H. Wilson, in his article on «The Economic Decline of the Netherlands» (*Economic History Review*, May 1939), maintains that both Dutch and English observers have tended to antedate this process of decline. In his view, the decline did not become really serious until the eighteenth century, and the real catastrophe was the war of 1780-1783

All this recent work on commercial history is valuable, but it is overshadowed and out-classed by W. O. Henderson's important volume on *The Zollverein* (Cambridge University Press) ; this is the first full-length and fully documented account of the Zollverein to appear in the English language. Mr. Henderson has not only digested the vast German literature on the subject,

but has also carried out independent research with profitable results in the archives of London and * Vienna; his book will almost certainly become a standard work of reference upon a subject which is likely to attract increasing attention in the future.

To turn from such high topics to consider work done in British local and provincial history may seem rather like turning from strong drink to small beer ; but a growing number of British economic and social historians are working on local or provincial subjects, and their researches often have an unexpected bearing on more general problems. Sir H. Llewellyn Smith has recently published a fascinating *History of East London* (Macmillan), which traces the growth of this district from Roman times to the end of the eighteenth century and deals with such varied topics as the medieval manor, the parish, suburban development, economic and social organisation. R. W. Greaves has made a detailed and judicious study of *The Corporation of Leicester, 1689-1836* (Oxford University Press), and has effectively linked up local history with many national problems. A. Redford, in describing «The Emergence of Manchester» (*History*, June 1939) has shown how the multifarious local authorities governing the district in earlier times have, in the course of the last century, been absorbed into the new civic organisation. He pursues the same theme at much greater length in *The History of Local Government in Manchester* (3 vols., Longmans, 1939-1940), of which Volume 1 (*Manor and Township*) has already been recognised as an important contribution to local administrative history. Among other writings on municipal history must be included C. G. Parsloe's brief but competent account of «The Growth of a Borough Constitution: Newark-on-Trent, 1549-1688» (*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 11th May 1939). On the more strictly economic side of municipal history, reference may be briefly made to the increasing amount of work which is being published on the history of the various City Companies of London ; P. E. Jones, in *The Worshipful Company of Poulterers* (Oxford University Press) has made an especially useful contribution to this branch of the subject. W. G. Bell's *Short History of the Worshipful Company of Tylers and Bricklayers* (H. G. Montgomery: for private circulation)

links up in subject with an important article by D. Knoop and G. P. Jones on «The London Masons' Company» (*Economic History*, February 1939).

The City of London and its Companies also figure prominently, though reluctantly, in T. W. Moody's account of *The Londonderry Plantation, 1609-1641* (Mullan, Belfast). The Plantation was an experiment in systematic colonisation, financed by the City and the Companies at the direct request of the Crown and Privy Council. Mr. Moody's book is impartial, scholarly, clear, and admirably illustrated ; but it must be confessed that it is not always easy to read. Students who prefer a lighter touch may be referred to E. MacLysaght's *Irish Life in the Seventeenth Century* (Longmans). For Welsh historians an important event of 1939 has been the publication of the second (and concluding) volume of *The History of Carmarthenshire* (William Lewis, Cardiff) edited by Sir J. E. Lloyd ; this volume is mainly concerned with the religious, social and economic history of the county between 1536 and 1900. Recent work on more specialised topics in Welsh economic and social history includes David Williams's scholarly biography of the Chartist leader, *John Frost* (University of Wales Press Board, Cardiff).

Relatively little work has been published in 1939 on the medieval economic history of England. M. M. Postan has written an important historical revision of «The Fifteenth Century» (*Economic History Review*, May 1939). H. A. Cronne has analysed «The Origins of Feudalism» (*History*, December 1939); and D. C. Douglas has discussed the historical relationship between «The Norman Conquest and English Feudalism» (*Economic History Review*, May 1939). All this is valuable work; but it hardly compares in substance with the work which is being published on more recent periods of English economic history. In general, however, English economic historians do not worry about the effect of their work upon the balance of the subject as a whole ; they follow their individual interests. M. M. Postan, in his inaugural lecture on «The Historical Method in Social Science» (Cambridge University Press) seems inclined to acquiesce in this individuality of enterprise. On the other hand, he is equally concerned to discourage the historian from mere antiquarianism. He believes that «the microscopic problems of historical research can and should

be made microcosmic — capable of reflecting worlds larger than themselves». Most economic historians in England will agree with him on this point.

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British economic historians continued in 1940 to give more attention to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries than to earlier periods. Several writers have recently made comprehensive surveys of modern economic development. Of these general surveys the most exhilarating is C. R. Fay's *English Economic History, mainly since 1700* (Cambridge: Heifer. 5 s.) which was originally delivered as a lecture course in the University of Cambridge, and still retains the freshness of good *ex-tempore* lecturing. The book is rather uneven in quality, and cannot be recommended to the elementary student; but parts of it will delight every academic teacher who has not become completely fossilised by long years of orthodox routine. The elementary student who cannot appreciate the rich allusiveness of Mr. Fay's work, and is not yet ready to tackle the monumental volumes of Professor Clapham, will find himself better served by G. P. Jones and A. G. Pool's *A Hundred Years of Economic Development in Great Britain* (Duckworth. 18 s.). This is a careful and scholarly survey «concerned broadly with changes in the methods of producing wealth and distributing goods and services, and in the types of organisation and forms of association developed for those purposes». It gives no account of the poor-law system, and does not deal adequately with such subjects as public health, housing, and social services. Many parts of the book have a strongly statistical flavour, which makes for sober reading but accurate judgement.

More strictly statistical inquiries into one of the basic problems of modern industrialism have been made by J. H. Wilson («Industrial Activity in the Eighteenth Century», *Economica*, May 1940) and Sir W. Beveridge («The Trade Cycle in Britain before 1850», *Oxford Economic Papers*, February and September 1940). These articles are inter-related, and Sir W. Beveridge's work is based partly (though not mainly) on material

collected by Mr. Wilson. Both writers discuss the origins of the modern trade cycle, and use purely physical indices of production to overcome the inadequacy of the financial indices hitherto relied upon. Mr. Wilson deals with the period 1717*1786, and reaches the provisional conclusion that industrial fluctuations played a relatively unimportant part in the life of the eighteenth century. There were industrial fluctuations, but they were mainly confined to particular areas and individual industries ; whereas the trade cycle of the nineteenth century was a generalised phenomenon affecting every department of industry and trade. Sir William Beveridge inclines to the view that the trade cycle, in the modern sense, has been in operation since at least 1785. Any exact dating of the phenomenon would be out of place at the present stage of the inquiry; but it is already clear that the new way of attacking the problem can yield useful results which could not have been reached along the old lines and with the old material.

Among studies dealing at shorter range with the history of the Industrial Revolution, some special importance may attach to J. E. Cule's article on «Finance and Industry in the Eighteenth Century: the firm of Boulton and Watt» (*Economic History*, February 1940). Mr. Cule sets himself to controvert the generally accepted view that the commercial development of Watt's steam engine was dependent upon the financial resources of Boulton and Fothergill's hardware business. Using unpublished material in the Birmingham Assay Office, Mr. Cule maintains that the hardware business was on more than one occasion saved from bankruptcy by the financial acumen of Watt and by the development of the steam-engine enterprise. The social side of the Industrial Revolution has received some new illumination from an unusual angle in Prof. E. Hughes's inaugural lecture on «North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century» (*History*, September 1940), which contains many vivid sketches of the varied economic developments and distinctive social conditions of the period in the four northern counties of Durham, Northumberland, Westmorland and Cumberland. Closer to the centre of the contemporary social problem is J. H. Hutchins's *Jonas Hanway* (S. P. C. K. 8s. 6df.), which is a short biography of a well-known philanthropist whose activities included work for the

Foundling Hospital, the Marine Society, the destitute poor, and especially for the young chimney-sweeps of London.

Recent works on the economic history of the nineteenth century have been of a more austere character than those just mentioned. Of outstanding importance is D. L. Burn's *Economic History of Steelmaking, 1861-1936* (Cambridge University Press, 27s. 6d.), which has already been recognised, as the standard work on a subject hitherto strangely neglected. It is a laudably thorough piece of research, and is of especial value because it deals with technical developments of a period too recent to come within the professional competence of most English economic historians. There have been published several short studies dealing with financial and kindred problems of the nineteenth century; among these may be mentioned E. V. Morgan's article on « Railway Investment, Bank of England Policy, and Interest Rates, 1844-48 », C. H. Walker's « Unincorporated Investment Trusts in the Nineteenth Century », and W. W. Rostow's « Explanations of the Great Depression, 1873-96 » (*Economic History*, February 1940). In the same general field of study, Marie Dessauer-Meinhardt has broken new ground with articles on « Unemployment Records, 1848-59 » (*Economic History Review*, February 1940) and « Monthly Unemployment Records, 1854-92 » (*Economica*, August 1940). If American work on English financial history may be regarded as coming within the scope of this survey, commendation may be given to Elmer Wood's book on *English Theories of Central Banking Control, 1819-58* (Harvard University Press and Oxford University Press, 26s. 6d.). This is a careful and well documented work which stresses the importance of the Bank of England's indirect control over the provincial banks through their London correspondents.

Although, as already indicated, British economic historians tend to pay more attention to the last two centuries than to more remote epochs, the earlier phases of economic and social development are not being altogether neglected. Prof. V. Gordon Childe's book on *Prehistoric Communities of the British Isles* (Chambers. 20s.) is a work of first-rate importance, summarising and interpreting the archeological research carried out during the last quarter-century by Elliot Smith, Praeger, and others. Nearer

in subject to our own times are H. C. Darby's twin books on *The Medieval Fenland* (Cambridge University Press, 12s. 6d.) and *The Draining of the Fens* (Cambridge University Press, 21s.). Mr. Darby's special technique is that of the historical geographer rather than that of the economic historian, but the historian has much to learn from him. Most students assume that the medieval economy of the Fenlands depended essentially on fishing and fowling; but Mr. Darby shows the importance of arable cultivation in the region, and explains the arrangements for the use of the pasture land, which was good though scanty. In his second volume he gives a particularly illuminating account of the drainage schemes which transformed the Fenlands during the seventeenth century. In the same general field of study, several articles have recently appeared dealing with the tenure and reclamation of land in medieval and early modern times. These studies include H. J. Habakkuk's «English Landownership, 1680-1740», and R. A. L. Smith's «Marsh Embankment and Sea Defence in Medieval Kent» (*Economic History Review*, February 1940); Christopher Hill's article on «The Agrarian Legislation of the Interregnum» (*English Historical Review*, April 1940) makes accessible the fruits of much research work done by Professor Arkhangel'sky, of the University of Gorky, U. S. S. R.

Recent works on foreign economic history have included several on the Iberian Peninsula. Charles Verlinden's bibliographical article on «The Rise of Spanish Trade in the Middle Ages» (*Economic History Review*, February 1940) is a summary of lectures delivered at the «Institut des Hautes Etudes de Belgique» at Brussels in 1937, and of a communication presented to the International Congress of Historical Sciences at Zürich in 1938. Readers of this scholarly article will be better fitted to appreciate Jean O. McLachlan's important book on *Trade and Peace with Old Spain, 1667-1675* (Cambridge University Press, 15s.). Of more particular concern to Portuguese readers is A. R. Walford's *The British Factory in Lisbon and its Closing Stages ensuing upon the Treaty of 1810* (Lisbon: Instituto Britânico em Portugal, 5s.). This work traces the rather chequered history of the factory with great industry, and will be useful as a companion volume to Skillington and Chapman's *Commercial Relations of England and Portugal*; it includes a collection of documents and a bibliography.

Among several recent books bearing on imperial and colonial economic history, special attention may be given to P. J. Thomas's *The Growth of Federal Finance in India, 1833-1919* (Oxford University Press, 20s.), which has a wider significance than is implied in its title. Mr. Thomas traces the history of Indian public finance from the days of the old East India Company, and throws much light on the struggle of the Provinces to secure freedom from the rigorous control of the Government of India. For the most part Mr. Thomas maintains an admirably objective point of view, which is sufficiently rare among writers on the economic organisation of India. Less ambitious in scope, but commendable within the limits of its own field, is J. M. Gray's *A History of the Gambia* (Cambridge University Press. 30s.); this is the first authoritative work covering the whole period of the British connection with Gambia. A. F. Hattersley's *Portrait of a Colony* (Cambridge University Press. 8s. 6d.) recounts the history of Natal from the 1840's to 1879; the author has made good use of official records, old newspapers, and settlers' memoirs, and has painted a vivid picture of pioneering life in one of the «outposts of Empire». W. P. Morrell's book on *The Gold Rushes* (A. & C. Black. 18s.) is the first work to deal with the subject comprehensively and with special reference to the influence of gold-seeking and gold-mining upon movements of population.

Many of the historical works mentioned in this brief survey may seem curiously remote from the present-day problems of people who live in England. One painfully topical book may be mentioned in conclusion — T. F. Reddaway's *The Rebuilding of London* (Jonathan Cape. 18s.). Statesmen who may be called upon to direct the rebuilding of London once more within the next few years should be persuaded to read this important book with grave attention. If they cannot find time for this, they may at least be recommended to read the convenient summary and appreciation of Mr. Reddaway's work given by A. H. Thomas in his article on «The Rebuilding of London after the Great Fire» (*History*, September 1940).