

NOTICES OF
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS

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THE PERSONALITY OF BRITAIN: ITS INFLUENCE ON INHABITANT AND INVADER IN PREHISTORIC AND EARLY HISTORIC TIMES. By CYRIL FOX, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1938. Price 4s.

The new edition, enriched, enlarged and brought up to date, of Sir Cyril Fox' great essay, first published in 1932, will be generally welcomed. Considering the number of new maps and fresh material included, no one will object to the slight increase in price; at 4s. it is still a cheap store-house of data as well as a source of inspiration to any student of Britain's history and archaeology. The need for a new edition after only six years is a testimony to the general stimulating effect of his documented application of geographers' ideas to British prehistory. The fact that the original framework can be retained after the unprecedentedly intensive research of the intervening years—a good deal of it guided by the ideas presented in the book—affords sufficient proof of the solidity of the theses' foundations.

Of course the new edition is enriched with new material thus gathered. It contains new maps compiled by Miss L. Chitty, of flat axes, axes with cast flanges, cordoned urns, Breton and 'Yorkshire' socketed axes, and 'fine Celtic metal-work' and Chariot-burials. The first of these is particularly welcome as it shows graphically the influence of Ireland at the beginning of the British Metal Age. The point could have been further emphasised had the knife-daggers, mapped in Fig. 18, been reclassified on the lines recently suggested by Piggott. A comparison of the first and second new maps seems on the other hand to reveal the rise of a Lowland English school of metal work at the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age under the stimulus of the Wessex culture.

The original map of Iron Age A, based on the pottery map published in 1929, has been replaced by one showing also swan's neck and ring-head pins, La Tène I brooches and other types (so many indeed that the several monochrome symbols are not easily distinguishable), and Hawkes' 1931 map of Iron Age B gives place to one distinguishing hill-forts with inturned entrances, Glastonbury ware and other traits, the symbols for which the short-sighted reviewer cannot always distinguish. Many new megalithic tombs, beakers and food-vessels have been added to the appropriate maps without radically altering the distribution pattern, and a key to the types has been inserted at the end. But the map of double-looped palstavs has been reprinted as Crawford drew it in 1912 with the omission of the warning footnote of the first edition that it showed 'the range not the numbers in Spain or Portugal.' Exactly six times the number of dots shown should be inserted in Galicia and Portugal alone when the map would show graphically the long distance maritime trade responsible for the distribution. Moreover if the

Separate Grave pots from Denmark, plotted on plate i, be accepted as 'beakers,' their brethren in north-west Germany ought in fairness to be included.

The text again has been modified in the light of recent work. So the role of the Parisii, generally underestimated, is admirably emphasised. The author has revised his former view on the age of the Channel. He still insists, as I think rightly, that down to the transgression revealed at Peacock's Farm and the Essex Coast sites, the Straits and marshy flats and sandbanks in the adjacent southern part of the North Sea would present more formidable obstacles to through navigation, but an easier crossing, than to-day. But the admission on p. 26, 'Over the site of many a village recorded in Domesday Book tidal water now ebbs and flows,' is scarcely compatible with the assertion on the previous page that, after the above-mentioned transgression, 'about 3500 years ago we get back to the period of unchanging sea-level in which we are still living.'

The table of prehistoric climates has been enlarged and improved. Botanical deductions, worked out for the continental north, are no longer transferred uncritically to Britain with its more oceanic regime. 'The drier phases were never dry enough here seriously to restrict forest growth.' So too the history of the economic revolution due to the exploitation of the richer, more difficult soils is now traced back to La Tène times instead of beginning with the Saxons. The 'valleyward movement' is still explained as a change in economic outlook; but it surely also involved political preconditions. On Tweedside the small fort could be abandoned for the more sheltered farm site only when social tranquility allowed defence to become a secondary consideration. May the same consideration, rather than the climatic change invoked by Dr. Wheeler, explain that earlier valley-ward movement, not mentioned by Fox, when 'neolithic' hill-top camps were abandoned as Armorican chieftains established the Wessex Culture at the dawn of the Middle Bronze Age?

One substantial modification of the original conception is introduced in the new edition. In discussing the Parisii Fox writes on p. 17, 'Inadequacy of sea transport probably accounts for the smallness of the numbers concerned in these movements; it tends to give a unique character to the ultimate expression of any culture derived from the Continent in Britain. Her culture at any given period represents the mingling of a number of variant elements rather than the extension beyond the sea of a stable definite continental complex.' From the standpoint of a literary historian Toynbee too has expounded the disruptive effect of overseas colonisation in contrast to terrestrial migration. The now familiar proposition that in the Lowland Zone 'new cultures of Continental origin tend to be imposed' has to be interpreted in the light of this truth. It is accordingly reaffirmed in the conclusions by a new paragraph, ix.

The highly individualised character exhibited by admittedly continental cultures—Windmill Hill, A beakers, Deverel-Rimbury,

All Cannings Cross, etc.—indeed constitutes one of the major difficulties with which prehistorians have to contend. The resemblance of our neolithic A to its counterparts in Brittany or at Camp de Chassey is much less obvious than that of the Belgian Omalian to Danubian I in Lower Austria. Does not this concept affect also the absorption characteristic of the Highland Zone? The contrasted maps of megaliths and beakers might be interpreted as reflecting the spreads of two groups of invaders the one relying on spiritual, the other on spirituous—and other material—weapons for dominance. The second was naturally victorious; even in Anglesey, Argyll and Caithness the map shows beaker-folk obtaining a footing on the best land and imposing their burial rites. In Wessex their sway was successfully challenged by Armorican chiefs. But elsewhere in the Lowland, as much as in the Highland, Zone Middle Bronze Age ceramics are adjusted to Peterborough and Grooved Ware traditions. In short it seems that only after the Beaker phase was a mixed cultural tradition, established in the Highland Zone, able to absorb invasive cultures which in the Lowlands could maintain a greater degree of purity till swamped by a fresh invasion. Even in Britain the most important factor in man's environment was his fellow men.

But it would be impertinent in a brief review even to try and work out any of the ideas inspired by reading such a masterpiece. The new edition will assuredly stimulate discoveries that will in time demand yet another.

V. G. C.

MEDIAEVAL PANORAMA. By G. G. COULTON. Cambridge University Press. xiv+801 pp. 8½ in. by 5½ in. 8 plates, 31 line drawings. Price 15s.

The title of Dr. Coulton's new book is well chosen; in it he brings together not only his own extended researches into mediaeval history and manners, but completes the picture by much additional matter. The result is a survey, masterly in its main lines and absorbingly interesting in its detail. It would be difficult to single out one chapter more than another, but those on the Royal Court, Chivalry, the Black Death and Women's Life will make a very general appeal.

The fifty-two chapters each forms a separate essay on some aspect of mediaeval life. They follow so far as possible in chronological sequence, save where the subject is of more general application. The scheme, however, is to provide a picture of how our mediaeval forefathers lived, what they thought, their relationship to those above and below them, of the court and the church, the squire and the peasant, the merchant and the craftsman. Into these pictures, political history enters but little, except in so far as such calamities as the Hundred Years' War and the Black Death profoundly affected the life of the nation or the Great Schism shook the foundations of the mediaeval Church. Modern historical research has stripped much of the glamour from the Middle Ages, but Dr. Coulton's pages are abundant evidence of the absorbing interest

and colour of the historic residuum, when presented by one who can so well appreciate and transmit the human interest of his subject.

It will be a matter of satisfaction to many that in this book, Dr. Coulton re-assesses and perhaps redresses the balance of judgment of his former works in his chapters on the Mediaeval Church. Statistics and such documents as visitations form the inevitable bases of evidence in the matter, but they must nearly always provide a one sided picture in which the evil is more prominent than the good. Here we have, however, not only the recorded facts but the largely unrecorded reverse of the ledger and an appreciation of the ultimate effect of the standards of the church upon the mediaeval world.

Amongst this vast mass of material it is not surprising that here and there and in quite minor matters Dr. Coulton's statements may be disputed. Thus (p. 294) his depreciation of the architecture of our metropolis as compared with continental cities is hardly justified; the great churches of the Grey and Black Friars, St. Bartholomew and St. Mary Overie are not mentioned and the palace at Westminster was in its way as remarkable as that of the French Kings. Again (p. 568) the art-history of the draped and the undraped crucifix is far more complex than the text would lead one to expect, and the conflict is apparent in the story of the crucifix at Narbonne as early as the sixth century. Furthermore, the crucifix at Romsey has only the loin-cloth, unlike that at Langford which is fully draped. These, however, are small matters and hardly seem worthy of notice.

Dr. Coulton's *Mediaeval Panorama* will, we feel, form an inevitable introduction for all future students of the period, and we can warmly congratulate them on their opportunity of acquiring knowledge in so entirely delightful a manner.

A. W. C.

THE HERO: A STUDY IN TRADITION, MYTH AND DRAMA. By LORD RAGLAN. Methuen, London, 1936. Pp. 311. Price 10s. 6d.

Every historian ought to read and digest Lord Raglan's witty and penetrating critique of the value of tradition as historical evidence. His exposures of faked pedigrees and of manufactured 'traditions' connecting houses and landmarks with real events are shattering. He may reasonably ask historians to use the same scepticism with regard to the uncontrollable traditions of the ancients and of savages as he shows to be necessary in regard to controllable local traditions to-day. In this spirit he proceeds to examine the tales about Robin Hood, Leif Erikson, King Arthur, Hengist and Horsa, Cuchulain and Troy from which many want to extract historical truths to-day. With delicate irony he lays bare the contradictions in the traditional narratives, sagas and epics—contradictions blatantly revealed in the divergent expedients to which modern commentators have to resort in order to rationalise them.

Perhaps, however, Raglan forgets the onslaughts on the historicity of such tales made by last century's higher critics, and misapprehends the cause of the revulsion against complete incredulity. The cause was archaeological discovery, and the author explicitly admits

archaeology as a valid source of history. Now Max Müller's school reduced the Trojan war to a solar myth, and other Germans saw in the Iliad only reminiscences of tribal conflicts in Thessaly. Attempts to rehabilitate Homer's epics as historical documents have been inspired by the fruits of Schliemann's faith. Archaeology has revealed in Greece a truly historical civilisation radically different from that ruling when the epics are supposed to have taken final shape. Mycenaean armament and art do really illustrate Homer's battle scenes as no 'historical' Greek texts, monuments or relics do. Even the political geography of the Epics coincides closely with that of the Mycenaean age which was never subsequently reproduced at any known period. The latest excavations show that a 'city' (admittedly small by modern or even Sumerian standards) on the traditional site of Troy was really burned just about the date deduced from genealogies for the fall of Priam's capital.

Similarly the discoveries of Curle and Richardson and of Norwegian colleagues illustrate the domestic architecture and furniture described in saga literature. The latest reports, published since the book was written, of discoveries of undoubted Viking relics in America would seem to substantiate the outstanding feat attributed to Leif the Lucky.

Historical situations are admitted as the bases of these heroic tales, but these situations are no actual war between Achaeans and Trojans, no real voyage to Vinland, no cattle-raid on Ulster, but customs and rituals. Raglan points out how from six to twenty-two incidents in the lives of their heroes conform to a wide-spread pattern; they may be episodes in ritual dramas. But the evidence for these dramas, despite the researches of Prof. Hooke and his collaborators and the additional facts here adduced remains curiously fragmentary.

And how much do they explain? 'The artists of fifteenth-century Italy,' we are told, 'painted the Holy Family and the Apostles dressed in the costumes of that century . . . , because they were trying to paint what they saw in the miracle plays and religious processions of their own day.' The Attic vase painter of the fifth century may have been actuated by the same motive; he certainly did not depict the heroes in Mycenaean armour. But 'Homer' did!

Still, the influence of dramatic ritual patterns in shaping poetic tradition must be admitted. Alone it tells us little as to the historicity of the hero affected since it can be traced in the authorised versions of the lives of perfectly good historical characters. Alexander could be made to score twelve points in Lord Raglan's hero-count and even Augustus ten or eleven. Napoleon or Lenin would make a poorer score perhaps because the pattern has been impoverished and drained of drama since the Middle Ages. But clearly it cannot be, and in fact is not, seriously maintained that all 'traditional heroes' in every case are nothing more than the actors in ritual dramas. In traditional narratives, not excepting the written texts of Thucydides and contemporary historians, real men take on the actors' masks. Lord Raglan has shown how the theatrical trappings

may be recognised, not that they cannot be stripped off. Indeed, the simpler and more uniform the pattern be, the more easily should dramatisation be discounted. Each modern historian invests his characters with motives and scales of value taken from the infinitely complex fabric of his society's evolving experience, motives and values which simply did not exist in quite this form even ten years ago.

V. G. C.

COSTUME AND FASHION. Volume III. The Tudors (in two Parts: Book I, 1485-1547; Book II, 1547-1603). By HERBERT NORRIS. Crown 4to. Black, 1938. Pp. xx+832. Plates (colour and half-tone) 46; figs. 960. Price 63s.

This may fairly be called a monumental work: its mere scale lifts it out of the common ruck. The two parts appear under separate covers. But apart from that, the quantity and variety of research evident throughout entitle it to the serious attention of every reader genuinely interested in its theme. From the point of view of practical politics it deserves high praise. It is indeed all that one expects from one who has devoted a lifetime to translating the data of history into terms of pageant, stage and screen. I can think of no English expert better equipped for the task. The sheer abundance and variety of material thus presented should make it invaluable as a stand-by in 'period' productions.

To have accomplished so much is no mean achievement. Maybe it should have been enough for the author. Clearly, however, his aims were more ambitious: he was desirous of proving himself a scholar and an archaeologist. One cannot but applaud so worthy an intention. It would, however, be but a poor compliment to so much honest labour to dismiss the book with conventional courtesies. It challenges serious criticism and the verdict should not be suffered to go by default.

Before proceeding to points of detail one must notice a general defect in the arrangement. It is by no means convenient for immediate reference. The peculiar way in which the several items are broken up and scattered piecemeal throughout the text is confusing. This, a crowded double index of twenty-nine pages, does little to remedy. Indeed, once you have familiarized yourself with the general 'lay-out,' you may find it more expeditious to ignore the index altogether.

Churlish as it may appear to cavil at a board so lavishly spread for our delectation, candour compels the admission that this work would gain rather than lose by a moderate application of the blue pencil. It must be admitted it suffers from prolixity and repetition. While personal descriptions of historical notabilities are useful as aids to 'make up,' the biographical summaries and character sketches might well, I feel, have been spared. Nor am I, it seems, alone in thinking so (p. vii).

Again the numerous 'quotes' would in general have benefited (1) if they had *not* after all been 'printed in the same size type as

the rest' (p. vii), and (2) if chapter and verse had been consistently appended. Their authority is of very uneven weight.

One feels at times as if Mr. Norris' special experience were apt to be a handicap: as if he approached historical data in the light of the theatre rather than was adapting history to stage conditions. Obviously in the eleven years this book has been maturing he has done a vast deal of miscellaneous reading besides acquiring any amount of pictorial matter. If archaeological research meant no more than that, we should have no fault to find. Unfortunately it implies a great deal more: an acquired habit of *first-hand* contact with original sources, of rigid selection, of constant revision of one's data in the light of recent knowledge. An important point this last: every antiquary has had reason to know how essential—and how exceedingly difficult—it is to keep abreast of the latest advices on his subject.

A work so bulky, so comprehensive and so detailed could hardly be free from errors. Since, from its very importance, these, like the rest are apt to be accepted as Gospel-truth, honesty renders an early *caveat* highly desirable. For clarity's sake they may be arranged under (1) nomenclature, and (2) fact.

NOMENCLATURE.—This is admittedly a ticklish matter at best, apt to involve endless controversy. But much of Mr. Norris's costume terminology is highly questionable, nor is it helped by a rooted partiality for arbitrary old mis-spellings: as 'cutte' for 'cut,' 'pansid' for 'paned,' etc. There is not much point either in employing foreign terms: Spanish *muceta*, French *pourpoint haut de chausses*, *jaquette* for which we have perfectly good English equivalents in 'Spanish cape,' 'doublet,' 'upper stocks' and 'jacket.' In matters Continental Mr. Norris is by no means sure-footed. 'Huves' and 'hemets' by the way are *not* 'German expressions of the period for shirts' (p. 22, n.): 'Huve' (old English *howve*) means a coif, while 'Hemet' is merely the German *Hemd*, a shirt. The trouble would seem to be that for his foreign references he must perforce rely on various translations whose accuracy he could not verify. Be it noted that the plural of 'Landsknecht' is not 'Landsknechten' but 'Landsknechte,' that they have no connexion with 'lance knights' and are not to be confused with their hated rivals, the Swiss mercenaries.

It is quite wrong to state that the 'ruff' is more correctly described as a 'band.' This is to go flat counter to contemporary witness. 'Band' is seldom if ever used *alone* except to denote a 'falling band,' i.e. a turn-down linen collar; 'what we know as the ruff' (p. 504) was similarly known to contemporaries; also (though less commonly) as a 'ruff-band.'

In the matter of what have been known as 'small clothes' or even 'inexpressibles,' I confess Mr. Norris disappoints me, mixing up untidily 'canions,' 'upperstocks,' 'venetians' and 'gallogaskins'; 'hosen' and 'stockings.' The various forms of the English word *canions* (*cannions*, *caneyanes*, etc.) betray the *n* of the parent Spanish *canones* (not Italian *cannoni*).

That rather nondescript term 'slops' certainly applies commonly to full breeches, but to limit it rigidly to what contemporary writers knew as 'round hose,' 'French hose' or (later) 'trunkhose' is altogether unwarranted—particularly in describing the cut of Gabriel Harvey (Fig. 794).

ERRORS OF FACT.—One common source of these is the misattribution of modes to particular nations. It arises presumably from failing to take account of current influences, e.g. of Spain in some two-thirds of Italy, in Hapsburg and Catholic Germany. Thus there is nothing specifically German in the cloaks seen in figures 622 and 654: probably Spanish of origin, they were in fashionable favour c. 1555–1580 throughout cultured Europe and Mr. Norris might well have devoted more space to this charming mode (Cloaks by the way, are in general, rather cursorily treated). Again, the so-called 'Italian hat' seems also borrowed from Spain. Note, by the way, that Italian critics, describe the three Italian gentlemen by Moroni (Figs. 662–664) as 'vestiti *alla Spagnuola*.'

'Fig. 855, Philip II of Spain, 1565,' is from the full-length in the Escorial, and described in the official contemporary schedule as painted by Ant. Mor and representing the King in the Picardy campaign of 1557.

Re the figures from Hoefnagel's wedding-scene at Hatfield House, it is now established that the painter, his brother and his cousin were in London, 1567–1569. Figures 748, 749 do *not* represent the Duke and Duchess of Joyeuse, nor has the picture of 'Elizabeth dancing with the Earl of Leicester' any claim to the title, being demonstrably a French court-ball with Henri III dancing, as I proved some years back in the *Connoisseur*.

We might well have been spared the threadbare story of 'Master Higgins, the tailor,' in connexion with Piccadilly and *picadils*, which have nothing to do either with 'little spear-heads' or 'the pointed edgings of the ruff' (do I smell here a musty echo of Gifford?).

It is seldom that Mr. Norris's pencil betrays him, yet the 'hip yoke' of the 'slops' in 496 is palpably incorrect. There is one subdivision of his subject in which he is not at ease: arms and armour. Let two instances suffice. The 'military helmet' [*sic*] in Fig. 706 is a wholly impracticable piece of heraldic fantasy. As for the 'rapier' (Fig. 640) nothing like it ever flourished outside of a theatrical property-shop.

What it all amounts to is the old scholastic motto: 'Always verify your references.' To which one might well add: 'Make sure that your information is up to date.'¹

F. M. KELLY.

¹ How important, yet how easily overlooked, may be the latest advices, may be instanced from Mr. Esmond S. de Beer's recent article in the *Journal* of the Warburg Institute,

vol. ii, no. 2: 'King Charles II's own Fashion.' Henceforth no discussion of the famous 'Persian Vest' can afford to ignore the data herein revealed for the first time.

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