

change, more attention could have been concentrated upon the unpublished sources to which Miss Abram has turned, and that a smaller portion of her thesis had been devoted to a summary of opinions already well known to students. The value of such compilation is not to be under-estimated, and in this case there is evidence of wide and careful reading; but in a thesis we look primarily for fresh material and for fresh conclusions based upon it. Miss Abram holds that the cloth and silk industries 'took root' in England during the fifteenth century (p. 5). Was not that early process already complete? For purposes of the general argument it would have been sufficient, as it would certainly have been more accurate, to emphasise the rapid growth of the woollen industry during that period. The silk weavers of London secured a privileged position as early as 1363, and the evidence cited for 1455 cannot indicate taking 'root' at so late a date. An attempt was then made to secure protection for an established industry against foreign competition. Nor is it possible to accept Miss Abram's conclusion as to the value set on English cloth abroad from the mere fact that Eugenius IV thanked Henry VI for a present of cloth. He could scarcely have done less. In dealing with the effects of the changes readers will probably differ on various points from Miss Abram, but many interesting facts will be presented to their notice which will be a real help towards the formation of views concerning a century about which it remains difficult to generalise and to dogmatise.

U.

M. Raimond van Marle in *Le Comté de Hollande sous Philippe le Bon* (La Haye: Nijhoff, 1908) gives a study of Holland and its institutions during the middle of the fifteenth century. As he points out, that age has received too little attention, though the great part which Holland was able to play in the world's history from the middle of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century was due above all to the work achieved by the Burgundian government. His object is not, however, to give a history of the country but to trace the course of its political development. Consequently he only sketches briefly the events by which in 1428 Philip the Good made himself master of the province, and devotes the greater part of his narrative to showing how a prince who had made a science of politics built up its future. The Burgundian dukes had gathered a number of very different states under their dominion. It was their aim to weld them all into one strong whole. But before this could be accomplished it was necessary that in each separate state the power should be concentrated and centralised in the hands of the prince. This was the task which Philip undertook in Holland. Before his time the towns had been stronger than their counts, but the duke of Burgundy could command from his other dominions a force to which the towns of Holland had to submit. On the other hand, the towns were attracted to their new ruler by their mutual opposition to the nobles. So they were content to abandon a part of their own privileges and assist the duke against the nobles, not foreseeing that Philip and his successors would keep the power for themselves. M. van Marle traces the lines of Philip's policy in the spheres of government, justice and finance, the position of the church, the growth of municipal organisation, the development of agriculture,

trade, literature, science, and art. He concludes that Philip's rule was to the advantage of Holland. The policy of the Burgundian dukes fostered both the foreign commerce and the native industries of the country. The wealth of which they thus laid the foundations, combined with the political unity which they enforced, endowed Holland with the strength which enabled her a century later to throw off the yoke of Spain. More than half the volume is taken up by a collection of unpublished documents, political ordinances, and commercial regulations. Some of these are of interest for English economic history. Trade relations with England made the cities of Holland reluctant to fall in with the change of foreign policy after 1435, and Philip had to remonstrate with them for their indifferent assistance in the war. Other documents deal with the trade in cloth and the negotiations which resulted in the commercial treaty between Holland, Zeeland, and England in April 1445. There is a copious bibliography of sources, both manuscript and printed.

C. L. K.

Dr. J. Lindeboom's dissertation on *Erasmus, Onderzoek naar zijne Theologie en zijn godsdienstig Gemoedsbestaan* (Leiden: Adriani, 1909) is a very meritorious piece of work. The author has made a careful study of Erasmus's theological writings, and is thereby enabled to emphasise a side of his character which is often overlooked. Despite the efforts of Dr. Seeböhm and some other biographers the common estimate of Erasmus is still based on the *Praise of Folly*, the *Colloquies*, the *Letters*, and the dreadful, unconvincing *Apologies*; is still tinged by the venom vomited forth upon him from both sides by combatants whom he would not join. Brilliant, shift, unheroic, ready to jest on any subject, however holy, ready to part with any conviction if it proved dangerous—such is the presentment his enemies created for him; and it has lived far longer than they could have hoped. Now, however, students have come to recognise the intense earnestness of the man; to value at its worth, despite his obvious weaknesses, the strength which could stand unwavering between the two lines of battle and not seek shelter with either; to perceive, despite all appearances to the contrary, the independence which refused one offer after another, each more tempting than the last, rather than sacrifice to courts any fraction of the lifetime he had devoted to learning. Erasmus's theology was not profound; religion was to him a spring of moral force rather than of orthodoxy. A simple view of life, offering no solution of fundamental difficulties; but, such as it was, he held to it with great tenacity, though here too, as everywhere, seeking and ensuing peace. It is this aspect of Erasmus which Dr. Lindeboom has set himself to develop; and he has carried out his task with great patience and lucidity. In his first part he examines in detail Erasmus's attitude towards the Bible and his views of the institutions, the doctrines, and the sacraments of the church; in his second he discusses Erasmus's character more generally, from the religious point of view. His interest is mainly theological; but here and there he touches on historical and biographical matter. One point on which he incidentally lays stress may be mentioned. Erasmus's hatred of the monasteries led him to represent them as anything but homes of learning. Dr. Lindeboom points out that his two most intimate friends