

siderably from the plan of the work as a whole; the former brings us down to the present day, while the latter carries us from Theophrastus to the first De Candolle. Still, both essays are germane to the purpose of the book, and add so much to its value that it would be more than ungracious to cavil at their presence among these delightful and informing sketches of the "Early Naturalists."

THE WANDERING OF THE BRONZE AGE POTTERS.

A Study of the Bronze Age Pottery of Great Britain and Ireland, and its associated Grave-goods. By the Hon. John Abercromby. Vol. i., pp. 163+1xi plates. Vol. ii., pp. 128+plates 1xii-cx. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912.) Two volumes, price £3 3s. net.

ARCHÆOLOGISTS have long been looking forward to the Hon. Dr. John Abercromby's monograph on Bronze Age pottery, and, as was to be expected, it has proved to be exhaustive and workmanlike. As an indication of the pains which the author has taken, it may be mentioned that there are photographs of 54 Continental beakers, 291 British beakers, 421 food vessels, 570 cinerary urns, numerous photographs of other objects, several plates of details of ornamentation, and a number of valuable maps of distributions. A classified list of the vessels illustrated in the plates would save the reader a great deal of trouble. The purely descriptive matter is as succinct as possible, though all essential information is given, and as there are full references the student knows where to go for further details.

Not only have we data of form, ornamentation, and distribution, but Dr. Abercromby has sought to make them tell a tale by coordinating other finds, such as skulls, implements, beads, &c. He rightly endeavours to give a picture of the life of the people, but some of his speculations on their social condition and religious beliefs are too hypothetical, and are scarcely consistent with the scientific method he adopts when dealing with his immediate subject. His general conclusions may be summarised as follows. About 2000 B.C. it would seem that Britain was invaded by a rugged, enterprising people, mainly of Alpine stock, whose ancestors, perhaps three to four hundred years earlier, had lived beyond the Rhine, not very far north of Helvetia. They had scarcely emerged from the neolithic stage of culture, and perhaps brought no single copper or bronze knife among them, but not long afterwards they possessed such

small implements, and perhaps flat axes. Their wealth must have consisted in cattle, sheep, goats, and swine. They were also acquainted with cereals. They were not an inventive people, for they had only two forms of sepulchral pottery, which lasted with small variations for about 500 years, and they never abandoned geometrical ornamentation. Women were buried with as much ceremony as men. They presumably spoke an Aryan language.

The invaders probably landed on the coast of Kent, and in course of time some moved north and others west; these began to cluster on the Wiltshire downs, especially round what is now Stonehenge. About 1880 B.C. the northern branch crossed the Humber into East Riding, where they also found the earlier natives in possession. About this time their influence had reached Hibernia, in the shape of a beaker, though they themselves may not have crossed over so early. Not until about 1600 did they colonise the south coast of Moray Firth, and the extreme north was reached some time later. By 1500 B.C. the direct evidence of the brachycephalic invaders ceases. In the south their ceramic ended, and the skull-type was obliterated by cremation; but they were not exterminated. It is not unlikely that Stonehenge was erected about 300 years after the invasion.

About 1350-1150 there was a remarkable development of material civilisation in south Britain, new forms of small, often beautifully made cups are first met with, and there were skilful artificers in gold; traces of foreign influences are also met with. From about 1150 to 900 B.C. is an obscure period, with diminished material wealth. During the next period (*circa* 900-650), south Britain was entered by new tribes, apparently refugees, who introduced a new form of entrenchment and new forms of pottery, some of which have analogies east of the Rhine, others about the northern base of the Pyrenees. There is no evidence that they spread north of the Thames. During the period beginning *circa* 900, the population increased, and the dead were interred in flat cemeteries, though barrows never fell entirely into disuse; the change was not due to foreign influence, as the contemporary pottery from cemeteries and barrows is identical. The period from 650-400 is obscure; in remote parts like Dorset and Ross-shire, the Bronze Age certainly lasted till about 200 B.C.

This admirable monograph breaks new ground, and will long remain the standard work on the early Bronze Age of the British Islands.

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