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later volumes of the Cambridge Modern History, chapters which form refreshing oases in that desert of crowded dullness.

C. R. FAY

*The York Memorandum Book. Part I., 1376-1419.* Edited by MAUD SELLERS, Litt.D. (Surtees Society. Vol. 120. 1912. Pp. lxxxvi+287.)

THE capital of the North has waited long for the publication of its early documents, and both economic and general historians will be most thankful to the Surtees Society and Miss Sellers for this first valuable instalment. The Memorandum Book, which "in form, matter, and date corresponds very closely with Letter Book H of the City of London," is essential for comparison with other mediæval records. The volume contains a number of documents both earlier and later than the period 1376-1419. It is particularly rich in gild regulations, for York was a city with a very highly developed gild life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Not that the gilds show any signs of independence of the town authorities: there are no civic gild revolutions; but gild organisation is applied even to the tiniest groups of craftsmen or traders. Whereas Norwich, a town of comparatively weak gild life, had only six regular organisations in 1389, sixteen in 1440, and twenty-six in 1448, the York records for about the same period show forty-one gilds, varying in size from the tailors' gild, with 128 masters, to the wax chandlers' with six and the founders' with five. The earliest ordinances here printed are those of the girdlers in 1307, which show a well-developed gild system with a four-year apprenticeship. A century later the seven-year period is practically universal. A fullers' ordinance of about 1390 suggests that the mastery was at that time open to competent men who had not been apprenticed: "Item que desormes chescun qad estee apprentice ou servant en le dit artefice et soit trove convenable a ocupier sicome mestre en mesme l'artifice," etc. (p. 72); but other interpretations are possible, and I have not noted any other ordinance which settles the point. A difficulty arises from the use of "servant" by the York scribes. Sometimes it applies to anyone who is not a master (*e.g.*, p. 89); in one case an English cross-heading to a Norman-French document equates it with apprentice; elsewhere it obviously applies to the wage-earning "journeyman," a term very rarely used at York.

The "servant," in the later fifteenth century, at any rate, is often hired by the week, and from an earlier date we find refer-

ences to "taskwork." The constant struggles to prevent men working for two masters, and to force them to work in their master's shop only (*e.g.*, skimmers, p. 63, sadlers, p. 89: both sets of ordinances undated), show how difficult it was to maintain what are usually called "typical gild conditions," and how easily the hired man might become a home-worker if gild rules were relaxed. In the fifteenth century we get the skinner's "servand" "that wyrkys a penyworth work for a penny, and wyll nought be governed at the serchyng of hys work be the serchours and maisters," who is to be fined. He is surely either a home-worker or a short-hired man like those Norwich "servants" in the early fourteenth century Book of Customs, for whom "there masters are not answerable . . . for that they are not of their mainpast because they receive a penny a day for a penny of work."

There is no evidence of permanent journeymen's organisations, but the cordwainers, about 1435, complain that certain servants—inspired by aliens and other outsiders—"sine causa justa recusant gubernari per statuta et antiquam regulam artis predicte," and "faciunt conventicula et congregaciones illicitas et confederaciones prohibitas . . . in numero magno, contra magistros suos quibus servirent, contra bonum usum civitatis hujus, et in contemptu regis" (p. 191).

The documents contain abundant information on other points of special interest to the mediæval economic historian, but of less interest to the modern economist—such as the gradual dissolution of the merchant gild, the economic position of women in the mediæval town, "overlap" disputes among gilds, the admission of strange craftsmen to gild privileges, the policy of the city towards runaway villains and aliens, and the close connection between gild life and pageantry. The modern economist may not even care to know that the saucemakers and sellers of Paris candles were specially interested in that pageant "in qua representatur quod Judas Scarioth se suspendit et crepuit medius" (p. 155). The mediævalist, on the other hand, will note with interest that there was not at York that concentration of traders in Poultryes, Milk Streets, and Ironmonger Lanes which one finds in so many greater mediæval cities. There were, in any case, few trades in York big enough to dominate a whole street.

Profound gratitude to the Editor is linked with a little regret at her insistence on dividing principal sentences by commas. "Certain boroughs, however, as early as the reign of Henry II., had obtained the right to treat freehold property in the same way

as personal, York was one of these, it became a matter of first importance that a good title should be secured," &c. There are many such sentences. The Index is not quite perfect, as it should be in a book of this kind. There are two mistakes in the five entries under "Clapham." But there is no reason to think that this is an average proportion of error, and one of the mistakes is only the still very common confusion of Claphams with Chapmen.

J. H. CLAPHAM

*Weibliche Dienstboten und Dienstbotenhaltung in England.* By DR. LISA ROSS. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr. 1912. Pp. viii + 99. 3 marks.)

THIS little book describes the conditions of female domestic service in England, institutes a comparison with Germany in this respect, and draws some general inferences. It makes no claim to solve the servant problem, and very little attempt to forecast the future.

The writer examines the motives underlying the practice of keeping domestic servants, and finds four factors at work. The housewife may help her husband in breadwinning, and employ a servant to replace her in the home. Or she may delegate her household duties in order to devote her time to the education of her children, to social work, or merely to culture and recreation. Again, the mistress of a house may employ a servant, or a given number of servants, simply to conform to the standard adopted by her class. Lastly, she may keep any number of servants as a mere matter of luxury. Between the motives at work in the last two cases it is not easy to draw a definite line.

It is clear that the practice first mentioned is economically productive, and directly so. The second, in the majority of cases, is indirectly productive, and therefore economically sound. In the third class of cases we are dealing with conventions which it is difficult to criticise. The fourth must be unconditionally condemned. Where the energies of women are set free for no useful purpose, we can only get national waste.

Dr. Ross is of opinion that the second factor is the more predominant in Germany, while the third operates more strongly in England. She supports this view by the fact that technical improvements and labour-saving appliances in the home are immediately followed by a reduction in the number of servants in German households; while in England the correspondence