

REVIEWS

involved a systematic destruction of villas. It has often been noticed that the life of a Romano-British villa normally goes down to this period and there ends abruptly. But the importance of this fact has, I think, never been observed. With the destruction of the villas, Roman civilization in Britain was destroyed; for it was the civilization of a class, not that of a homogeneous social organism. The people who remained were significantly called by their conquerors not 'Romans,' as in Gaul, but merely 'Welsh.' The Celtic revival of which Haverfield wrote was not so much a revival of Celticism, as the survival of those lower classes which had never been at all deeply Romanized.

Thus the real destruction of Roman Britain, which was a social and economic affair, not a political, took place in 367; and nothing like that ever took place in Gaul. By the time the Imperial government abandoned Britain, there was nothing left worth keeping. Had the landed classes with their villa estates remained intact, Roman civilization would have survived the Roman evacuation in Britain as it did in Gaul, to set its mark on Anglo-Saxon society. Whether that would have been a good thing or a bad thing for the world's happiness, is another matter. But if it was a good thing that Roman civilization, a romance tongue, and the Christian religion, survived in Gaul, it is worth our while to realize that the reason why these things survived was because the social class survived whose property they were.

R. G. COLLINGWOOD.

REPORT ON THE EXCAVATION OF THE "A" CEMETERY AT KISH, MESOPOTAMIA. By ERNEST MACKAY. Field Museum of Natural History, Anthropology Memoirs, Vol I, no. 1. Chicago, 1925. pp. 61, and 20 plates.

The most dramatic sidelights on the life of vanished civilizations and peoples have often been afforded by a study of ancient graves; and recently discovered tombs of a Norse queen at Oseberg and of Tutankhamen in Egypt are obvious instances in point. For the serious archaeologist the study of cemeteries has another advantage: the funeral gifts interred with a single corpse present the most perfect example of a "closed find"—a group of objects unmistakably in use together at the same epoch. The chronology of predynastic Egypt is based entirely upon a comparison of various types of objects found in association in the many cemeteries excavated in the Nile valley.

Mesopotamia has been sadly neglected in this respect. The earlier excavators were concerned primarily with objects of artistic or epigraphic interest and were apparently entirely unconscious of the meaning of a "closed find." The excavations of the Germans at Assur and of the British Museum at Eridu and Ur marked the first steps towards more scientific methods, but to Mr Mackay of the Oxford and Field Museum Joint Expedition, falls the honour of publishing the first detailed account of a necropolis explored on modern lines.

The thirty-eight tomb groups that he describes naturally do not suffice for the establishment of a comprehensive system of sequence dating such as Sir Flinders Petrie has worked out for Egypt, but their furniture throws a new light on the more every-day arts and crafts of ancient Babylonia and thus provides terms of comparison with barbarous lands to the north and east. The pots, weapons, and ornaments of the common people in Mesopotamia were previously scarcely known. In view of the large claims for Egyptian influence that are being made to-day on the strength of comparisons between grave-goods from the Nile valley and other regions, material of a like order was badly needed for the kindred area of the Tigris-Euphrates valley.

ANTIQUITY

Of course our cemetery, on the dating of its excavators, only takes us back to the period of the Royal Tombs of Naqadeh in Egypt; but behind cemetery "A" lies a long past represented by earlier buildings at the same site, by the painted pottery of Jemdet Nazr and the still earlier wares of Tell el Obeid. When this is remembered, a comparison of the pottery and metal work from Kish with those of Europe, shows that pan-Babylonianism may still be a serious rival to pan-Egyptianism. Let us take a few instances.

The pottery is all made on the wheel, a device not introduced into any part of Europe till a thousand years later, but it has curious analogies with barbaric wares used in various parts of our continent Europe, not to mention India. Almost every grave was furnished with a "brazier," an open dish standing on a high hollow pedestal that is generally perforated. Dishes on a high hollow pedestal also perforated were typical grave-goods at Lengyel in Hungary and recur in many contemporary cemeteries and settlements in the Danube Valley and Transylvania; the so-called "vase-supports" found in megalithic tombs in France and the Channel Islands have a similar structure and again exhibit the curious perforations in the base.

No less general at Kish were large handled jars with a female bust modelled in high relief on the handles. We see the same idea at work on the well-known anthropomorphic vases of Troy and the middle Danube.

The implements and ornaments of copper buried in the graves by the citizens of Kish are peculiarly instructive for the history of metallurgy. The battle-axes bring us near to the origin of the modern shaft-hole type of axe-head. The hole for the shaft was here made simply by bending the butt of the axe back upon itself so as to form a loop. A reminiscence of this method of manufacture may be seen in the imitations of rivet-heads ornamenting the body of an axe from a Copper Age tomb at Tsarevskaya, north of the Caucasus.

At Kish again we meet the earliest examples of the eyelet pin that was destined to become typical of the European Middle Bronze Age. One specimen in which the neck has been hammered out flat bears an engraved pattern almost identical with that found on the round swollen necks of the European pins.

Again the spiral ear-rings with their flattened ends take back an additional thousand years a type familiar to European archaeologists from the hoards of Troy II and the Early Bronze Age graves of Central Europe.

Every student of prehistory will therefore do well to study minutely Mr Mackay's admirable work and will have every reason to be grateful for the prompt publication of his important results. We hope his example will be followed by other excavators. At the same time we may express the wish that the metal objects should be analysed and that the excavator's statement that the daggers and axe blades have been "cut out of sheet copper" should be tested by microscopic examination. V. GORDON CHILDE.

DOWNLAND MAN. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. London: Jonathan Cape. 1926. 8vo, pp. 422. 21s.

One result of the work of General Pitt-Rivers was that archaeology from being a hobby became a science. Now the alpha and omega of science is accuracy: accurate observation, accurate comparison and logical deduction. To jump with insufficient evidence to conclusions indicates that there is a preconceived theory around which must be gathered at all costs some scraps of supporting evidence. This is unscientific and has