

among the selected problems some useful discussion is offered of unsymmetrical bending, the influence of elastic foundations and—more briefly—instabilities, thermal stresses and inelastic behaviour.

The text is supported by about sixty very clear diagrams, some short tables of mathematical functions, and a quite adequate bibliography. It should find a substantial readership among students of stress analysis and design, and has much to offer to established workers.

B. N. COLE

THE DUTCH STUDY CIRCLE FOR AGRICULTURAL HISTORY

De Studiekring voor de Geschiedenis van de Landbouw, 1939–1964

(Study Circle for Agricultural History, 1939–64.) Pp. 37. (Wageningen, Netherlands: Royal Association for Agricultural Science, 1964.)

ON the initiative of Dr. W. A. J. Oosting of Benneken an effort was made in 1937 to establish a Dutch Study Circle for Agricultural History. The plan came to fruition in 1939, but the Studiekring was set up as a part of the Nederlandsch Genootschap voor Landbouwwetenschap. Dr. Oosting was elected chairman, and J. A. van der Loeff was elected secretary with an influential committee. The intention was to study agricultural history in the broadest sense of the word; but the activities of the nascent Studiekring were brought to a standstill by the German invasion in 1940. The death of Dr. Oosting in 1942 was a great loss.

In 1944 Prof. Z. W. Sneller wrote to van der Loeff saying he had been approached by several people to form a society for the study of agricultural history, and enquiring whether the Studiekring was still operative. It was in fact in being, but in a state of war could do little, and it was decided to wait for more peaceful times. The members of the Studiekring are historians and scientists working on agricultural and kindred subjects.

Activities were resumed in April 1946. An open meeting was held and a programme of work planned. It was (1) to organize a 'history day' during the Nederlandse Landbouwweken in conjunction with the Nederlandsch Genootschap voor Landbouwwetenschap; (2) to encourage research in the field of agricultural history, and to publish the results in a series of *Agronomisch-Historische Bijdragen*; (3) to promote the publication of brief contributions to the subject in the *Landbouwkundig Tijdschrift* and to collect reprints of these in an *Agronomisch-Historisch Jaarboek*; (4) to foster the compilation of a bibliography of important articles on Dutch agricultural history from early Dutch journals; (5) to encourage the reprinting of scarce old publications of value for the purpose.

Until 1950 it was possible for the Studiekring to participate in the Agricultural Week, and the annual lectures presented were printed in the *Agronomisch-Historisch Jaarboek*. After that date this arrangement ceased. Lectures, however, continued to be read at the annual meeting of the Circle. Lectures, combined with excursions to the part of the Netherlands discussed, were also arranged each year after 1951.

Five volumes of the *Agronomisch-Historisch Jaarboek* have been published containing reprints that had been contributed to the *Landbouwkundig Tijdschrift* and other material. These appeared in 1940, 1942, 1947, 1949 and 1951. Unfortunately the *Jaarboek* had to be discontinued for lack of material. Six volumes of *Agronomisch-Historische Bijdragen* have been published, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1958, 1959, 1964. The last-mentioned bears the title *Ceres en Clio: Seven Essays on Agricultural History written to celebrate the 25th Year of the Studiekring*.

One of the Circle's desiderata was the compilation of a bibliography as a fundamental basis for the study of

farming history. A committee was set up in 1946, but after collecting some material it laid this programme aside in anticipation of the foundation of a readership in farming history at the Agricultural University. Instead a chair of agricultural, economic and social history was established in 1949. At the same time the Dutch Agricultural History Institute was formed at Groningen in connexion with the State University, one of the purposes of which was to solve the problem of publication of sources for Dutch farm history. Prof. B. H. Slicher van Bath became the first appointed to the new chair at Groningen. Thus ten years after the formation of the Studiekring the study of farming history was recognized as a subject for higher education. The bibliography that was one of the first aims of the Studiekring was finally compiled by Dr. J. M. G. van der Poel in 1953 while he was director of the Agronomisch-Historisch Instituut, and published under the title *Wegwijzer in de Landbouwwescheidenis*; besides its primary purpose this was intended as a guide for teachers in secondary and primary agricultural and market garden schools, who wished to teach simple farming history. A general international background is provided, but naturally the contents are mainly Netherlands sources.

Another object of the Studiekring was research into old land measures, and in 1956 a committee of three members was appointed to go into this subject. This small committee came to the conclusion that, in addition to land measures, other ancient measures and weights ought to be collected and related to those of modern times. Prof. Slicher van Bath, a member of this committee, published an *Alphabetical List of Books and Articles of Importance in Relation to Ancient Dutch Weights and Measures in A.A.G. Bijdragen* No. 11 issued by the Department of Agricultural History of the Agricultural University at Wageningen in 1964.

The work of the Studiekring has been very effective during its 25 years of life. Not only has it encouraged research and publication of results, but also it has been largely responsible for the development of farming history at all levels of education throughout the Netherlands.

G. E. FUSSELL

NOMAD PEOPLES OF THE STEPPES

The Royal Hordes

Nomad Peoples of the Steppes. By E. D. Phillips. Pp. 144 (141 illustrations). (London: Thames and Hudson, Ltd., 1965.) 30s. clothback; 15s. paperback.

THIS is a first-class publication, useful both for the specialist and for the interested layman. It is profusely illustrated, many of the illustrations being in colour. Most people have heard of the Huns, and of the danger to western civilization due to their incursions. But not everyone realizes that the Huns were only one of many hordes who roamed about the vast areas of Central Asia, stretching from Modern Russia to China, and who, starting as early as 4000 B.C., continued to flourish until only a few hundred years ago when they were finally suppressed by the growing urban civilizations of Russia and China. Nor must one think of these nomad hordes as mere crowds of savages. Nomadism was a real substitute for urban civilization, which, given the suitable environment, produced fine works of art and a not uncivilized way of life. Anyone studying the illustrations in *The Royal Hordes: Nomad Peoples of the Steppes* will have to admit that in the realm of art these nomads were by no means behind their urban opponents. The ability to produce a fine art is one of the criteria which separate man from the animals.

It is suggested that nomadism grew out of an early neolithic way of life by emphasizing the domestication of animals rather than agriculture; and with the development of the horse, a true pastoral as against a settled agricultural