have features more purely negroid with coarser lips and heavier jaws. Many Serers are nominally Mahommedans, but nature- worship is still prevalent. Their two chief gods are Takhar, god of justice, and Tiurakh, god of wealth, who are worshipped at the foot of trees. Snakes, too, have their cult, and formerly living animals were sacrificed to them. A belief in transmigra­tion, as shown by their funeral customs, is general among the Serers. They are an honest and industrious people, but are very heavy drinkers.

SÉRES, Serros or Siros, chief town of a sanjak in the vilayet of Salonica, European Turkey, on Lake Takhino, a navigable expansion of the river Karasu or Struma (ancient *Strymon),* 43 m. by rail N.E. of Salonica. Pop. (1905) about 30,000, of whom about half are Bulgarians (one-third of them being Mussulmans), nearly one-fourth Greeks, about one-seventh Turks and the remainder Jews. Séres is built in a district so fertile as to bear among the Turks the name of Altin Ovassi, or Golden Plain, and so thickly studded with villages as to appear, when seen from the outliers of Rhodope on the north, like a great city with extensive gardens. It is the seat of a Greek archbishop and patriarch. It consists of the old town, *Varosh,* situated at the foot and on the slope of the hill crowned by the old castle, and of the new town built in the European fashion on the plain, and forming the commercial centre. The principal buildings are the Greek archiepiscopal palace, the Greek cathedral, restored since the great fire of 1879, by which it was robbed of its magnificent mosaics and woodwork, the Greek gymnasium and hospital (the former built of marble), the richly endowed Eski Jami mosque, and the ruins of the once no less flourishing Ahmed Pasha or Hagia Sophia mosque, whose revenues were formerly derived from the Crimea. On a hill above the town are the ruins of a fortress described in a Greek inscription as a “ tower built by Helen in the mountainous region. ” Séres is the headquarters of the Turkish wool trade, and has also manufactures of cloth and carpets. There is a large trade in rice and cereals, and the other exports include tobacco and hides.

Séres is the ancient *Seris, Sirae or Sirrhae,* mentioned by Herodotus in connexion with Xerxes’s retreat, and by Livy as the place where Aemilius Paulus received a deputation from Perseus. In the 14th century, when Stephen Dushan of Servia assumed the title emperor of Servia, he chose Sirrhae as his capital; and it remained in the hands of the Servians till its capture by Sultan Murad II. (1421-1451).

SERFDOM (from Fr. *serf,* Lat. *servus*, a servant or slave). The notion of serfdom is distinct from those of freedom and of slavery. The serf is not his own master: to perform services for other persons is the essence of his status, but he is not given over to his lord to be owned as a thing or an animal—there are legal limits to the lord’s power. Serfdom is very often con­ceived as a perpetual adherence to the soil of an estate owned by a lord, but this praedial character is not a necessary feature of the condition. Hereditary serfdom may sometimes assume the shape of a personal relation between servant and master. Such being the general features of serfdom, it is sure to appear in very different ages and countries. It will be formed naturally, for instance, in cases when one barbarous community conquers another, but it is not able to destroy entirely the latter or to treat its members as mere chattels. This mitigated form of appropria­tion of human beings by their conquerors may be brought about as well by the paucity or comparative weakness of the victors as by the difficulty for them to draw income from pure slaves. In a state of backward agriculture and natural economy it will sometimes be more profitable for the conquerors as well as for the conquered to leave the dependent population in their own households and on their own plots, at the same time taxing them heavily in the way of tribute and services. Such an arrangement clearly obtained in several of the agricultural states on ancient Greece. The Penestae of Thessaly appear as a remnant of a distinct tribe settled on the confines of Macedonia and at the same time as a class of tributary peasants serving Thessalian aristocrats. The Mnoitae, Klarotae and Apha-

miotae of Crete were more or less in the same position. Their chief occupation was the cultivation of the shares (κλfipoι) of the Dorian aristocracy, but they lived in households of their own and were considered as subjects rather of the Cretan com­monwealths than of private men. The relation between both classes is well illustrated by a fragment of the Cretan poet Hybrias, who thus glories in his shield and sword: “ I till the land with them, I press the wine from the grapes. On account of them I am called the lord of the Mnoa.” Even in the case of the Helots of Sparta, although their condition was very hard and they were made to perform services to any Spartiate who might require them to do so, features of a similar tributary condition are apparent. The chief work of the Helots was to provide a certain quantity of corn, wine and oil for the lords of the shares on which they were settled (roughly 82 medimni of barley a year per share) ; personal services to other Spartiates were exceptional. Pollux in his account of the Helots places them distinctly in an intermediate position between free men and slaves. The fact that in these instances governments had a good deal to say in the regulation of the status of such serfs is well worth noting: it explains to a great extent the legal limitations of the power of the lords. Even downright slaves belonging to the state or to some great temple corporation were treated better and carefully distinguished from private slaves by the Greeks.

We shall not be astonished to find, therefore, in the Hellenistic states of Asia a population of peasants who seem to have been in a condition of hereditary subjection and adherent to the glebe on the great estates of the Seleucid kings (see Rostowtzew in Lehmann’s *Beiträge zur alten Geschichte,* ii.). It is not un­likely that the customs of these λαοί *βασιλικοί* went back to the epoch of the Persian monarchy. In any case these peasants (γeωργoi) were certainly not slaves, while, on the other hand, their condition was closely bound up with the cultivation of the estates where they lived. The regulation by the state of the duties and customary status of peasants on government domains turns out to be one of the roots of serfdom in the Roman world, which in this respect as in many others follows on the lines laid down by Hellenistic culture. It is important for our purpose to notice that the condition of *coloni was* developed as a result of historic necessity by the working of economic and social agencies in the first centuries of the Roman empire and was made the subject of regular legislation in the 4th and 5th centuries. In the enactments of Justinian, summing up the whole course of development (C.J. xi., 48, 23), two classes of coloni are distinguished—the *adscripticii,* representing a more complete state of serfdom, and the free coloni, with property of their own. But the whole class, apart from minor variations, was characterized by the idea that the peasants in question were serfs of the soil (*servi terrae)* on which they were settled, though protected by the laws in their personal and even in their praedial status. Thus the ascription to the soil, although originally a consequence of ascription to the tributes *(adscriptio censibus),* became the mark of the legal status of serfdom. The emperors actually tried in their legislation to prevent the landowners from evicting their coloni and from raising their rents. In this way fixity of tenure and service was aimed at and to a certain degree enforced by the state.

With the break-up of the Roman empire the legal protection in regard to serfs could not be kept up in the same way as before. The weak governments which took the place of imperial authority were not able to maintain the strict discipline and the stress of judicial power which would have been necessary to guarantee the tenure and status of the serfs. And yet serfdom became the prevailing condition for the lower orders during the middle ages. Custom and economic requirements produced checks on the sway of the masters which proved effectual even when legal protection was insufficient. The direction of events towards the formation of serfdom is already clearly noticeable in Celtic communities. In Wales and Ireland the greater part of the rural working classes was reduced not to a state of slavery, but to serfdom. The male slave (W. *cœth)* does not play an