

Medieval Sourcebook: Gebhard, Bishop of Constance: Allocation of Serfs to Crafts, 990

On the episcopal domain of Gebhard, Bishop of Constance, encouragement was given to the serfs to learn crafts which would be of advantage to those dependent on the estate for their existence.

After this he called his serfs together and chose the best among them and declared that they should be cooks and millers, victuallers and fullers, cobblers and gardeners, carpenters and masters of every craft, and he decreed that, on the day on which they took care of the brethren, they should be refreshed with the bread of the brethren, for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Moreover in order that they might work for their masters with a good will he added a gift of this kind, namely, that, if any of them, or of their successors, who is of their stock, should die, their goods should not be confiscated but their heirs might take the whole of the inheritance: but if any one of another family should succeed, he shall be deprived of this gift.

Source.

From: Gustave Fagniez, ed., *Documents Relatifs à l'Histoire de l'Industrie et du Commerce en France*, (Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1898), Vol. I, pp. 107-108; reprinted in Roy C. Cave & Herbert H. Coulson, eds., *A Source Book for Medieval Economic History*, (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1936; reprint ed., New York: Biblio & Tannen, 1965), pp. 235-236.

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