

## NEW BOOKS

EMPIRE AND COMMONWEALTH: STUDIES IN GOVERNANCE AND SELF-GOVERNMENT. By Chester Martin. Oxford. 1929. pp. xxi,—385. Price \$5.00.

There has been much debate in Canada on whether Clio is better served by a facile pen or by dreary research, whether romance and spirit do not weigh more heavily with her than detailed facts, and whether split infinitives, words ending in “-ate” and “-tion” and other “Americanisms” are not more difficult to expiate than a lack of footnotes. Until recently the stylists have excelled in quantity of offerings. The establishment of the Dominion Archives some years ago, however, brought aid and comfort to the protagonists of research. Of late the Archives has become a summer rendez-vous for an increasing number of the younger group of Canadian historians. Research has now come into its own as an accredited form of worship in Canada. Professor Martin's *Empire and Commonwealth* is perhaps the finest fruit of this new movement. It consists of six studies, each on an important stage in the evolution of Canadian self-government. One discusses the old colonial system of the eighteenth century, two concern constitutional development in Nova Scotia and Quebec before the American Revolution, two the winning of responsible government in Nova Scotia and Canada, while the last is an analysis of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Historians of Canada's political institutions have hitherto been largely circumscribed by geography. For the most part, they have endeavoured to trace the origin of our institutions either to the paternal despotism of New France, which was continued practically intact under early British rule, or to the Constitutional Act of 1791, which set up representative institutions in Canada. The Constitutional Act itself has been traced back scarcely further than the debates in the British parliament, and the correspondence and intrigue which surrounded the birth of the Act. Professor Martin has not been stopped by geographic barriers. He has pursued the idea of colonial self-government to its real source, the tradition of self-government in the American colonies under the “old colonial system”. Representative institutions were common to all the American colonies, and had indeed existed in English America since 1619 when the first Assembly met in Virginia. Though conceived in the interests of British trade, the old colonial system in reality interfered but little in the internal concerns of the colonies, and in colony after colony a steady drift set in towards a more complete control of government by the Assembly. “No British province in 1836”, concludes Professor Martin, “wielded the power over local administration that the average colony exercised in 1763”. Nova Scotia, though one of the youngest of the colonies, possessed similar traditions of self-government, and in the Assembly granted

to her almost a generation before the Revolution she found a practical means of realizing those traditions. The Revolution left the province unscathed, with her traditions and institutions intact. When in 1791 parliament set about creating representative institutions for Canada, it drew upon its long experience in colonial government, and transplanted to Canada institutions not struck off *de novo*, but adapted from the old model then flourishing in Nova Scotia and her daughter provinces, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Self-government in Canada, and indeed in the British Commonwealth as a whole, runs back, therefore, far beyond the Act of 1791 through Nova Scotia to the old colonial system, and not through Quebec to the old régime in New France.

Useful as is Professor Martin's discussion of the old Empire and of the trend towards revolution, it is evident that he is treading here on less familiar ground than in later chapters. He misses certain recent contributions of importance, for example, Professor MacIlwain's *American Revolution*, which shows how nearly the constitutional views of the colonists as to the powers of parliament coincided with the views of our own day. Indeed, the colonists of 1776 might well have written the passage in the Report of the Imperial Conference for 1926 which deals with legislation by parliament affecting the Dominions. This omission does not, of course, raise any question as to the soundness of Professor Martin's conclusions. Consideration of the constitutional issue would merely have been more grist to his mill, more evidence for the thesis that the ideas which ultimately crystallized in the British Commonwealth of Nations were latent in the first Empire, though they failed of acceptance by the legalists and pedants who then had the ear of parliament.

The study of Nova Scotia under the Old Empire will open a new page of history to many Canadians. Alone of the English-speaking colonies, Nova Scotia remained loyal to the Empire. This is the more remarkable when it is considered that her institutions of government were similar to those of other colonies, except that they were more autocratic, that her people were largely of New England origin, and that she was subjected to the same restraints in trade, the same objectionable taxes, and other unwarranted interferences of the British parliament which ultimately drove the American colonies into revolution. Why, then, did Nova Scotia not follow her sister colonies? There were several reasons: because of her youth, friction between the representatives of the people and the representative of the Crown developed later than in other colonies; again, the province was a ward of the Navy, depending on it for a market for its produce in war and peace, and on the British Exchequer for meeting the deficits in colonial finance. Yet, despite these advantages, the province for a time hovered perilously near the brink. In certain quarters there was active sympathy with the cause of the colonists, and an acute struggle between the notorious Governor Legge and the Assembly arose on the eve of the Revolution. The Assembly took the ominous step of drawing up a petition of grievances in secret session, demanding, among other things, the Governor's recall, triennial elections, and annual sessions. The Board of Trade for once proved conciliatory, and Legge was recalled. "Had Governor Legge been sustained by the British Govern-

ment", says Professor Martin, "there can be little doubt that the overtures of Congress might have met a different response from Nova Scotia" (p. 84). The influx of loyalists a few months later effectually turned public sentiment, and the loyalist tradition, combined with the fact that the vast majority of the settlers were fully occupied in a desperate struggle with Nature for existence, smothered for many years all demands for an extension of popular control of government.

In Quebec the British Government found a different problem in a solid block of alien people who were brought into the Empire by the Peace of 1763. One school of historians view the method of solving this problem which was ultimately adopted in the Quebec Act as an evidence of statesmanship. Professor Martin takes diametrically the opposite view. He brings forward abundant evidence to support the thesis that the Quebec Act, whatever its ultimate results, was of a piece with the whole policy of Lord North's Government, nay more, that it was the product of Carleton's military mind, and was intended by him, as the American colonists believed, to consolidate Quebec against the republican tendencies in the southern colonies. It sought to conciliate the seigneurs and clergy by re-establishing them in authority over the habitants, not out of any tender regard for French-Canadian Nationalism, but because Carleton believed the support of these classes was essential to safeguard Canada from propaganda from the older colonies. Perhaps he even hoped it would turn them into good recruiting agents. The Quebec Act, by antagonizing the habitants, proved a two-edged sword. When Ethan Allen appeared before Montreal, his troops were two-thirds Canadians. "The most ungrateful race under the sun", "a people of stupid baseness", and other phrases testify to Carleton's own opinion of the success of the Quebec Act. Indeed, Canada was saved by Carleton's gallant defence of Quebec, certainly not by the Quebec Act.

The goal of self-government was attained in the first Empire only by revolution; it remained for the second to find an alternative in the device of responsible government. Professor Martin finds new light on the struggle for responsible government in both Nova Scotia and Canada in the active sympathy between Reformers on both sides of the Atlantic, as seen particularly in the Howe-Buller correspondence. Tory citadels were being stormed on many fronts. What more natural than that the Reformers should uphold each other's hands? Further, in the provinces, Reformers were learning to work in harness through co-operation behind the scenes. This is clearly evident in the relations between Howe, Uniacke and Huntingdon in Nova Scotia, and no less so in Canada in the relations between Baldwin and Lafontaine, assiduously cultivated by correspondence even before the Union. These "extra-parliamentary developments", as Professor Martin points out, go far to explain the persistence of the demand for responsible government, the intransigence of Baldwin and Huntingdon, and other obscure moves on the part of Reformers. They were, indeed, fashioning that peculiarly British tool, the political party, the tool which had shaped the English Cabinet itself. Further, the development of parties prevented responsible government from becoming administrative chaos, as it has so often been in countries where parties are non-existent, or too fluid in content.

A brief penetrating chapter on the Commonwealth rounds out the story. It is too much to hope that here the author could add to our knowledge or understanding of the subject in view of the absence of new material, and the numerous studies already in existence. In the Commonwealth he sees the dictum of Burke fulfilled—that it is not the “dead instruments” of laws or even conventions which hold the Empire together, but the “spirit of communion” in a common heritage and a common purpose.

Professor Martin has given new point and meaning to our political history, thereby vindicating in a striking manner the cause of research even in a somewhat hackneyed field. Altogether, he has produced a brilliant book, which is at once a mine of information on the periods he discusses and a canvas unusually rich in colourful detail, but detail always subordinated to the central theme. One minor criticism is perhaps in order. Professor Martin has a fondness for quotations, particularly for striking phrases, and possibly he overdoes it. In these hurried days, quotation marks may become stumbling-blocks even for patient readers. This, however, detracts little from the interest, and not at all from the value, of the book as a scholarly production of the first rank. No one interested in the evolution of self-government in Canada, or indeed in British Imperial history, can afford to overlook this book. Without doubt, it is the most important contribution to the political history of Canada to appear within years.

ROBERT A. MACKAY.

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THE CAUSE. A SHORT HISTORY OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT  
IN GREAT BRITAIN. By Ray Strachey. London, G. Bell  
and Sons, 1928. Price \$4.50.

In this large, well-written and well-illustrated volume we are given a clear and tolerably full account of the Woman's Movement in England from the middle of the nineteenth century down to 1928, when the terms of the parliamentary franchise were made the same for men and women. Mrs. Strachey was herself an active worker in this movement, and writes with first-hand knowledge of its progress and its leaders. To the present reviewer it seems an error to ignore the less conspicuous but highly important influence of the earlier pioneers of feminism. Mary Wollstonecraft certainly deserves more than a passing reference, while George Eliot, Meredith, the two Brownings, and Harriet Martineau all did more by their writings to raise the status of women than did many of the more aggressive workers in the field. Mrs. Strachey does not seek to justify the methods of the “militant suffragettes”, but she exposes the unfair and provocative tactics of the opponents of the movement which were the excuse, though not the justification, of that outbreak of fanaticism and lawlessness. One of the few good results of the World War was the elimination of that unfortunate excrescence which disfigured a noble and idealistic struggle. For the most part, the leaders were women of singularly strong and fine character, and their devotion to the cause was unflinching.

While fully admitting the injury and suffering due to deficient education, legal disabilities, and social restriction of past generations of women, one may point out that Mrs. Strachey, like other writers on this subject, paints the life and character of the average English-woman of the early and middle parts of the nineteenth century in too gloomy colours. Those of us who can remember gentlewomen who lived through Queen Victoria's reign know that they were often neither foolish nor down-trodden; nor were they useless or unimportant members of society. The period of Dorothy Wordsworth, the Brontë sisters, Harriet Martineau, George Eliot, and Mary Somerville also produced many women who, not possessing their genius, yet in their own more limited spheres maintained high standards of conduct, were broad in their interests, and intelligent in their outlook on life. Nor were husbands always tyrannical, or homes the "prison-houses" they are here designated. To quote as an authority the silly book of Mrs. Ellis on "The Women of England" is as unfair as if one should take the "Woman's Column" of one of our daily papers as indicative of the mental calibre of the educated woman of the present day.

That the outcome of the feminist movement has been a great gain, is hardly open to serious question. Yet, like other revolutions, it has perhaps not done all that its leaders once hoped. Freedom from unfair and cramping restrictions has been won; opportunities for a higher and more worthy life are within reach; but not all have made good use of their freedom and opportunities. Is the Neo-Georgian young person who plays at bridge, drinks cocktails, and smokes cigarettes much better, wiser and happier than her Victorian forerunner who played croquet, drank lemonade, and worked cross-stitch? Let us hope so.

E. R.

#### SELECT DOCUMENTS ON BRITISH COLONIAL POLICY, 1830-1860.

Edited by Kenneth N. Bell and W. P. Morrell. Oxford, 1928. pp. L-610. Price \$7.50.

This book surveys colonial policy largely from the British point of view during the transition period in the "Second Empire", when governance gave way to self-government. In a sparkling introduction the editors give a penetrating analysis of the forces of the period, and sketch briefly and epigrammatically such important actors in the drama as James Stephen, the original of Buller's "Mr. Mother Country"; Wakefield, the brilliant and persuasive amateur; Lord Grey, enlightened, but irascible and doctrinaire; Lord Elgin, tactful and clear-minded; and the redoubtable Sir George Grey.

As the authors point out, this collection of documents must be read along with such contemporary classics of colonial history as Durham's *Report*, Buller's *Responsible Government for the Colonies*, and Wakefield's *The Art of Colonization*. Nor does it supersede or duplicate such standard works as Kennedy's *Documents on the Canadian Constitution*. The titles of the various sections—Self-government, Colonization, Transportation, Commercial Policy, Slavery and the

Plantation System, and Native and Frontier Policy—will indicate that the book aims to cover the whole field of colonial policy, and not merely the constitutional side. This is a healthy reaction from the conventional practice of isolating constitutional history. Constitutions, whether national or imperial, are not made *in vacuo*.

The editors are to be commended on the selection and editing of their material. Many useful documents have been brought to light from the buried files of Parliamentary Papers, and from such private collections as the *Howicke Papers*. Each section is introduced by a running commentary which cites the documents of the section in their appropriate order. Cross-references, references to other sources, and explanatory foot-notes seem to be quite adequate. The reviewer does not pose as an authority, but he ventures the opinion that this will at once be recognised as a standard collection of documents in colonial history. The editors have placed teachers and students of colonial history in their debt.

ROBERT A. MACKAY.

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CANADA IN THE COMMONWEALTH. By The Right Honourable Sir Robert Borden. G.C.M.G., K.C.. Clarendon Press, Oxford. 1929. \$3.00.

In this book is contained the substance of the first series of the *Rhodes Memorial Lectures*, which were delivered by Sir Robert Borden at Oxford during the summer term of 1928. The main purpose of the lecturer, as stated in the Foreword to the volume, was "to portray such leading features and dramatic incidents as might perhaps awaken, not only in Great Britain but in my own country, an interest in its history, which is invested with a significance not limited to this Dominion nor even to the British Commonwealth." In so far as his English audience was concerned, the presentation of his subject seems to have been well adapted to this end. The more picturesque and dramatic events in the earlier stages of Canadian development are adequately dealt with, and certainly no Englishman who has heard or read this narration can continue to deny or ignore the striking and often heroic aspects of Canada's story. Much of this, however, is already familiar to educated Canadians, and to some of them it may be a matter for regret that Sir Robert Borden has not included in his survey a more comprehensive and systematic account of the constitutional history of the Dominion,—a subject with which he is so fully competent to deal. The later chapters of the book, which discuss the position of Canada during the war, the status of the over-seas Dominions at the Peace Conference at Paris, and that of Canada at the Washington Conference on Disarmament, are perhaps the most valuable in the work.

E. R.

Aberystwyth in 1923. The contents of the book according to chapters are: I. The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion; II. Origins of Greek Mythology; III. Primitive Belief and Ritual; IV. Gods of Nature and of Human Life; V. The Homeric Anthropomorphism and Rationalism; VI. Legalism and Mysticism; VII. The Civic Religion; VIII. The Religion of the Cultured Classes and the Religion of the Peasants.

To those who have early learned the story of the Olympian divinities, and given little further thought to the matter, the number and variety of books dealing with the subject is no less disquieting than the vast and confusing mass of phenomena that they reveal. No one can criticise the evidence who has not examined it; and where Sir James Frazer says, as he does here, "so far as I can judge," the ordinary student of the classics must think very highly of himself before he can aspire to the rank of *unoculus inter caecos*.

The story of the Mycenaean religion and its influence is of special interest, though it may—as Sir James Frazer hints—abate our Aryan pride. Our author's principle of criticism seems sound:

Where Greek religion and myth show a peculiar character, we have a natural right, supposing that we are dealing with districts saturated with pre-Grecian and especially with Minoan culture, to assume that this special character is due to the influence of the pre-Grecian religion.

Concerning the origins of Greek mythology, we learn that "The great cycles of myths, then, belong to the main centres of Mycenaean culture, and—what is more significant—their richness and fame are in direct correspondence with the importance of the towns in Mycenaean times". The mixed character of the gods, which has excited much comment from Xenophanes downward, receives explanation:

The needs of social life forced these (i. e. ethical) functions upon the old Nature gods. They are fundamentally in opposition to their character, for the natural powers have nothing to do with morality, and never renounce their true origin.

Homer's contribution to the religious development of Greece is succinctly stated:

A consistently developed anthropomorphism is Homer's legacy to a later age. It was a splendid but contradictory legacy which the religion never overcame, and never could overcome.

Quotations might be multiplied; but a satisfactory summary is provided by Sir James Frazer:

In the present work Professor Nilsson has traced in outline, but with the sure touch of a master, the history of ancient Greek religion from the cradle to the grave, if indeed one can speak of the grave of a religion which, as the author points out, survives in certain primitive forms under all the weight of an alien faith and ritual.

To the work of the translator some praise is due for clear and pleasant English.

E. W. NICHOLS.

RICHARD BURDON HALDANE. *An Autobiography*. Hodder and Stoughton, Limited. London, 1929.

This book is an oasis in the weary land of recent biographies and memoirs. Especially will the student of modern British politics enjoy it. For the past forty years, the game and play of statecraft in the Old Country has involved brilliant personalities and clear-cut principles. Some of the best thought of the nation, individual and collective, has been given to the problems of State, while in the wider sphere of international relations the lines of British polity have gone out to the ends of the earth. Altogether, this field of activity is fascinating and, in his long career, Lord Haldane moved steadily from its circumference to the very centre. His autobiography is more than a record of events in high places. It reveals on every page the distilled wisdom of one of the most profound and effective intelligences of our time—a man who, in the words of a competent critic, devoted to public life abilities rarely, if ever, surpassed.

Richard Burdon Haldane was a Scot—a Lowland Scot—with a crystalline intellect which found ample scope for its exercise in the fields of philosophy and law. With this double-barrelled equipment, after a notable success at the bar, he passed on to the service of the State. Here he shed lustre on the ancient office of Lord Chancellor, recalling, in the breadth of his intellectual interests, the tenure of the same office by the most illustrious of his predecessors—Francis Bacon. It was the War Office, however, that gave him his chance for constructive work along the large lines of his peculiar genius. His grasp of first principles, his systematizing mind, and his capacity for organization combined to make him an incomparable War Minister. For once, the occasion, the office and the man were in happy conjunction.

In a book so full of interest one finds it hard to be specific. But there is one episode in Lord Haldane's career that the reader will not fail to canvass—his unjust treatment at the hands of an ill-informed Demos, blinded with the passions of the War. In his discussion of this unfortunate incident, he is entirely free from recrimination. He could afford to be, for he lived to see the wheel come round full circle. In a letter from Field-Marshal Haig, the text of which is published in a foot-note by his sister, Lord Haldane is accorded his full meed of praise:

I appreciate very much indeed your kindly remembrance of my work with you at the War Office. For me that time will always stand out in my memory most prominently, because the organization of our Army *for war* dates from then. Until you arrived at the War Office, no one knew for what purpose our Army existed! And I feel sure that all the soldiers who in those strenuous years were working at the War Office will bear witness to the all-important service which you then rendered to the British Army in the Empire. You then sowed the seeds which have developed into the tremendous instrument which has vanquished the famous German Army and brought about a victorious peace. And where would we be to-day without the Imperial General Staff which was your creation, and the Field Service Regulations (Part II. Organization) which you forced through, in spite of opposition from Army Council and Treasury?



I and many soldiers with me are greatly distressed at the ungenerous treatment which you have received during the critical phase in our country's history, and I hope the day is not far distant when the invaluable services which you have rendered to our Empire may be adequately recognized.

D. HAIG.

After which, all criticism of the "organizer of victory" may be ignored.

In his last chapter, entitled "Looking Backwards", the eminent statesman sums up his philosophy of life, and tries to trace the current running through the chief events of his career. To one who reads biography with an eye to first principles, this will be found to be the most suggestive part of the book. Recognizing certain limitations in his inheritance, which prevented him from being "a more potent personality in the sense in which the word is popularly understood", he considers that, if he had been "endowed with certain gifts physical and social", which he did not possess, he would probably have accomplished much more. In particular, he might, he thinks, "have been able to bring the Liberal and Labor Parties into a unison which they ought to have possessed but so far never have":

But it was not given to me to gain the confidence of great masses of men and women in the way which this task required, nor did I stir a finger either to accomplish it or to attract the Press. The result has been that a good deal of my work has been little known. The best I can say for myself is that I have not been slack in either thought or action, and that some substantial results have emerged from time to time.

His backward glance on life and its achievement leads to some definite conclusions:

We ought never to disturb ourselves about the quantity reputed to have been ours, or about our own prominence with the public. Even for those who have been most fortunate in the eyes of the world, accomplishment is only relative. Nor is there any truth attained which anyone dare look on as final. For we are all limited in varying degrees and ways. We little know our own limitations. Our duty is to work, without turning our eyes to the right or to the left from the ideals which alone can light up our paths. It is not any finality attained that can ever be ours; what is ours can be no more than the best quality of which we are capable, put into the effort towards the attainment of what we have set before ourselves. The effort towards it is one which we daily find ourselves called upon to make anew. We have to think of how to live, before we can learn how to die.

Lord Haldane was not "a folio edition of mankind". His was not an architectonic intelligence, to rank with that of an Aristotle or an Einstein. But among the secondary order of minds, those who apply fundamental principles to the scheme of social relationships, it would be difficult to find his superior within the range of British public life.

H. F. M.

# THE VARIED HUES OF PESSIMISM

DOUGLAS BUSH

THE most casual glance at contemporary literature might safely warrant the inference that our generation does not accept the universe. We are all pessimists and cynics nowadays, for optimism has been abandoned to the service clubs, and your intellectual will defend to the last his inalienable right to be unhappy. Since the romantic movement, it has been the foible of intellectuals to believe that they direct the life and thought of mankind at large, and of late years they have outdone one another in gaily or sadly cynical estimates of the value of existence. Meanwhile mankind at large goes on existing much as it always did, and more or less indifferent, as it always has been, to its philosophic mentors. Even the despairing intellectuals, whose creed should forbid them to draw another breath, seem to flourish and prosper on their way to a green old age. In fact, as a generation we are akin to those persons who haunt psychiatrists with the complaint that they are abnormally high-strung and suffer accordingly; like Mrs. Gummidge, they "feel it more", and, also like Mrs. Gummidge, they are not a little complacent in their misery. To say that a good deal of our pessimism is a fad, like the Byronism of a century ago, is not of course to deny sincerity to numerous leading exponents of it. There is no need of recalling the familiar signposts, which range from *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land* to the last lyric of the "O-God-the-pain girls," from Mr. Huxley's annual bursts of simian laughter to the sober honesty with which Mr. Krutch reads the obsequies of love and greatness.

Pessimistic views of life are not a new phenomenon of the twentieth century, but in one respect at least our pessimism is peculiar, and that is its calm certitude. Others in times past may have despaired, but our despair is built upon a rock, our truth is ultimate truth. While our simple-minded ancestors solved the insoluble with one pious ejaculation, "God!" we, with our special illumination, ejaculate "Science!", and oddly enough, though we are so realistic in our thinking, we are content to acknowledge the inscrutable ways of glands, ganglia, and electrons. Science, we are told, has shattered for ever the illusions which