

nised as the natural outlet for English energy because Hakluyt had charted the way.

This book, published to commemorate the centenary of the learned society which bears his name, begins with a short biography of Hakluyt himself by Dr. J. A. Williamson; this sketches a personage, modest but active, diligent but discriminating, who used the moderate prosperity to which he was born to gratify an overmastering passion. Hakluyt (I am interested to find that Dr. Williamson prefers the more manageable pronunciation of the name—*Hack-lit*) was a sagacious advocate of trade and colonies, in many of his ideas a precursor of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. His expert knowledge was well recognised by the governments of his time, and the East India Company found that his information could save it money. In scholarship, as well as in enthusiasm, Hakluyt was at least the equal of most of his successors.

The volume also includes an essay on the work of Purchas, Hakluyt's literary executor and a publisher of new collections of travels, and a critical bibliography of English voyages between 1625 and 1846. The popular demand for books of travel and adventure remained persistent through three centuries. There is also an outline of the history of the Society, and a candid discussion by its president, Dr. Lynam, of its present aims and difficulties.

The Hakluyt Society is a publishing society, on a co-operative basis. In exchange for a subscription, an offence to economists as it remains the same in 1947 as it was a century before, its members receive its publications, usually two volumes a year. The Society now has a list of nearly two hundred volumes (available only to its members), an eclectic and varied library of travel in all its phases. Filling gaps is naturally one purpose of the Society, particularly by translations from foreign sources never before printed in English. One of the most recent Hakluyt Society books is a two-volume translation of the antarctic voyage of Bellingshausen, a Russian navigator who touched the New Zealand coast in the early 19th Century. The editors have been successful in striking a balance between pure scholarship and general interest, and prove in their publication of earlier and later voyages that the spirit of the Elizabethans is the perennial spirit of England, and also, to rebuke the arrogance of nationalism, that the Dutch, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and other countries have not wanted for captains courageous.

—David Hall

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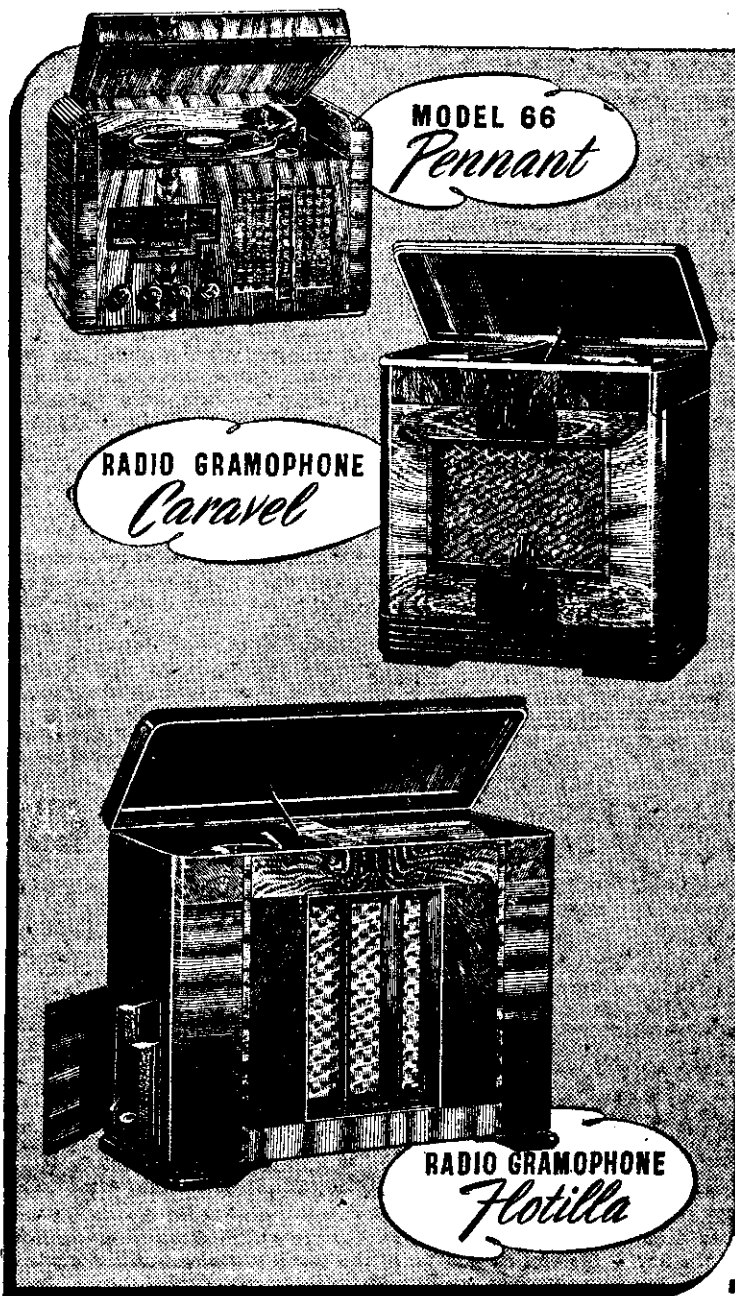
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