

BOOK REVIEWS

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of Keynes on Britain's war economy: "With a fanatical single-mindedness for which few parallels could be found in history, we have sacrificed every precaution for the future in the interests of immediate strength."

Noble in utterance, subdued and never fulsome, often effectively polemical, occasionally humorous, these speeches of Lord Halifax will be remembered as footnotes to history, and with their strong emphasis on moral values and on the spiritual as well as the physical crimes of the Nazis, as a satisfying record of the greatest phase in the political career of a man who, though not typical of anyone but himself, yet may stand for his class, his party, and his nation as their justification in a changing, unbelieving world. A 17th Century cynic defined an ambassador as a man who lies abroad for the good of his country. The double meaning does not touch Lord Halifax. Perhaps Pascal should have the last word: "Oh, how happy are they who with an entire liberty of will and an invincible bent of their natures love perfectly freely all that they are obliged to love necessarily."

TO HAVE OR TO HOLD

AN EXPOSITION OF EMPIRE. By C. E. Carrington. Cambridge University Press.

SO many historical fallacies are exposed, so much nonsense punctured, in this short book about the Empire (the British Empire and/or the British Commonwealth of Nations) that the reader is left with that smug, superior feeling which comes from the assimilation without effort of a full meal of well-ordered and compellingly-marshalled facts. We know: J. A. Hobson didn't; even Kipling scarcely did; and certainly neither Disraeli nor Gladstone had an inkling. We know, from Mr. Carrington's excellent exposition, the successive phases of imperial expansion, and the reality that stood behind the gratifying or horrifying legends which have at different times clothed the imperial idea. Mr. Carrington begins with the warning, "Almost everything written here is controversial . . ."; this reminds us that the Empire (the whole broad scope of the mother-country's relations with her natural or foster children) has always been at the mercy of party politics.

The author reminds us, too, that the Empire's boundaries once extended over many areas now closed to British sovereignty, in two entirely different ways. First, a number of countries, particularly in South America, received indispensable help from British capital and British emigrants, but never accepted British sovereignty. Second, Britain's sea power brought her, at certain junctures, control over many territories now abandoned—nearly every island in the Mediterranean, Java, Guadeloupe. After the severe and salutary shock of the violent amputation of the American colonies Britain learned to part easily and gracefully with possessions for which others would have fought to the death. The great relinquishments of the last two years are not without precedent.

SOME might complain that British imperial policy has always lacked purpose and direction. That it has been fluid and lacking both in rigidity and

in the sort of administrative symmetry which pleases logic-ridden Latins is true enough. But there have been, if not lofty principles (though many imperialists have been philosophers as well as men of action), at least certain continuing impulses—the export of men from Britain and the parallel but less important export of capital; domination at sea; special interests grossly favoured at the expense of the common good; amazing sacrifices of commercial or military advantage for the sake of a humanitarian ideal. Consistent only in its inconsistency, British colonising has been an affair of instinct which has never been without a good sound practical plan, a romantic adventure which has usually paid a dividend, sometimes in honour, sometimes in cash.

THIS little book (I keep calling it "little" because it fits neatly into the pattern of the Cambridge *Current Problems* series—the word is, of course, an injustice) shows that our strength reached its greatest development in 1921, after which, largely by a number of voluntary acts, it has declined. Some may regret, viewing events since 1938, that we did not seek to hold our power by force. But those events, unhappy as their results may now seem, themselves show that this abdication of empire was not due to any failure of nerve. A moral victory may be worth more than a military one. The present character of the Commonwealth is shown by the fact that it is perfectly natural to write in New Zealand (the smallest, weakest, and most remote dominion) of "our" power. The Commonwealth is a partnership.

An *Exposition of Empire* is a clear and able summary of the history of imperial relations from the Tudors down to the present. Without chauvinism or fatuous self-congratulation, C. E. Carrington demonstrates that British imperialism has been both virile and magnanimous; he admits its faults, believing its virtues have outweighed its vices. The story is a proud one, told with zest, irony, and good sense.

—David Hall

SHADOW OF THE CAMERA

I CAN TAKE IT. By Jack Cato. Georgian House, London.

IF it is refreshing to be breezy, and entertaining to be discursive, the author justifies his autobiography. He was a Tasmanian who grew from an adventurous boyhood to special skills with camera and in the darkroom. He travelled widely and shot people and places from Australia to Europe and back, with a period in South Africa. His technical abilities are varied and should interest the layman as well as the fellow photographer. The many fine plates that illustrate the book are evidence of the author's mastery of his craft. The standard of writing in the book falls below that of the illustrations. The author is so cocksure that he flings around prejudices disguised as facts, and careless thinking disguised as homespun philosophy. The autobiography has the common fault that its writer pines for the good old days when even the women on art are biased and his attack on

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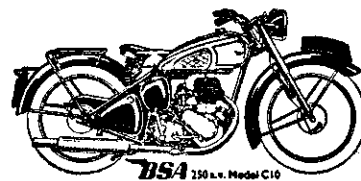
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