


REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

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POLITICS OF THE CHAIR.*

This book should sell if it had no other merit than its sincerity of purpose—an ethical gesture somewhat unfamiliar in these days of political ballyhoo. But it is a book of substantial value throughout. In it we have the voice of the Professor speaking as a Prophet to a feckless generation which is allowing the political institutions that made Britain *Great Britain* fall into disrepair. It is a call to return to that sanity in state-craft that England lost at the close of the nineteenth century.

Dr. Hearnshaw does not hesitate to proclaim himself a partisan. But his partisanship is simply an attitude of mind, knowing no party affiliations and owing no nourishment to the cash nexus. He tells us that he began his study of history at the feet of Sir John Seeley and learned from him that no man can form a rational judgment about politics without knowing a good deal of history. Here then we have an explanation of his prejudice in favour of those professing and calling themselves Christians who hold that attachment to the Conservative party in England is not inconsistent with such a profession. Nor should we find fault with Dr. Hearnshaw for laying himself open to the charge of prejudice. Burke tells us that we ought to cherish our prejudices in matters political, and while Hazlitt criticises Burke's remark he is constrained to admit that it is a mistake "to suppose that all prejudices are false," and that "most of our opinions are a mixture of reason and prejudice, experience and authority." So that in so far as Dr. Hearnshaw fortifies his opinions with reason, experience and authority we ought to excuse any dash of prejudice that may flavour them.

The political leanings of our author's salad days were towards Socialism, impelled in that direction by "the seductive influence of the Fabian essays." From that "new political superstition" he emerged under the attraction of Free Trade Liberalism. In turn he found himself disillusioned by "the terrible Liberal record of 1906-14," and his present inclinations are towards Conservatism, where, as he says, "since I have attained the grand climacteric, they are, I think, likely to remain." But his concern with politics has always been one of 'the chair.' He says: "I do not belong, and never have belonged, to the Conservative or to any other party. I view politics, as a historian, from the outside."

In his introductory chapter the author briefly repeats the assault upon Socialism which he made in his *Survey of Socialism*, published in 1928. Since then he finds in the Russian, Australian and British experiments proof that a survey of Socialism resolves itself into nothing but a "critique of pure unreason." In Part I. Dr. Hearnshaw analyses the two conflicting ideals,

* *Conservatism in England*. By F. J. C. Hearnshaw, M.A., LL.D. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd; Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada. 1933. Price \$2.50.

Order and Progress, and asserts that both are necessary for the proper working of a democratic State. That, of course, is nothing more than a platitude, and hardly calls for the preachment the author devotes to it. In the following subdivision which deals with the psychological bases of Conservatism, his defence of the fear of change as the best guarantee of sound public policy is not convincing. It is not easy to reconcile his approval of Disraeli's trust "in the sublime instincts of an ancient people" with his own characterisation of man as an "uneliminated ape as well as an undeveloped angel," and his view that "the development of the angelic element in him demands freedom and opportunity." We can say this and yet profess the belief that progress to be real must reflect the ethos of existing order, and that change which does not reveal a consciousness of history is experiment and not reform.

Then, again, the inclusion in his tabulation of the general principles of Conservatism of a recognition of "the divine source of legitimate authority" is strikingly at variance with modern ideas as to the basis of sovereign power. And even in the seventeenth century Hobbes said that sovereignty is "in him or them, on whom the sovereign power is conferred by the consent of the people assembled."

In Part II. the author traces the development of Conservative principles from the time of Henry VIII. down to our own day, interspersing the historical facts with critical comments that serve to show how hard it is even for an Englishman to eliminate the ape and develop the angel in his political conduct. To us, this portion of the work is by far the most valuable, and demands the attention of all who desire to follow the course of conflict, between the party of order and the party of progress, which hammered out the British Constitution as it stood in its fullness before the Parliament Act of 1911. The author apparently intended this historical survey to serve as a proper ligament between the introductory—the analytical—part of his book and the conclusion, that is the portion labelled "Political;" but he has not succeeded in moulding any real interrelation between the formal divisions of the work. So far as logical progression from one to the other is concerned, the parts might have been published separately. But if we sense this lack of integration it is compensated by the vigour and clarity of the author's style and his competency to write on his chosen subject. In Part III. the author paints the political situation in England with as gloomy a brush as Spengler uses in dealing with Western civilisation as a whole; and he ends his book with an appeal to Conservatives to defend "the menaced citadel of civilisation," and maintain "the eternal sanctity of the moral law."

Dr. Hearnshaw's book is professedly written by the hand of a historian and not by that of a philosopher: but if the old definition of History as "Philosophy teaching by examples" is a valid one, then it may well be that the book has thrust itself to some extent into the philosophic domain.

CHARLES MORSE.

Ottawa.

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Responsible Government in Canada. By Rosa W. Langstone. With a Foreword by Sir Raymond Beazley. Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. Price \$3.50.

There seems to be no end to the output of books about responsible government in Canada, and yet it cannot be said that Miss Langstone's pen has been fruitlessly busy or that her performance is not well worth while to reading people. The book abundantly testifies to her industry in research. She also writes with lucidity and power. Take, for instance, her summing up of the result of the ebullitions of rebellion in 1837, at pp. 71, 72: "After trying all other methods, the colonists were endeavouring, by force of arms, to compel the Mother Country to realize the fact that they were no longer children, that they were entitled to, and capable of enjoying, a large measure of self-government. Great Britain was faced with one of the greatest crises in her history, for the complaints of the people of Canada would, in a few years, have been those of Australia and South Africa. It was not only a question of how Canada was to be governed, but also of whether the sovereignty of Great Britain should be limited to these islands in the North Sea, or whether it should spread, majestically, in all parts of the world. If she failed a second time to conciliate her imperial policy with the aspirations of the New World, her position and prestige as a colonial power would be entirely destroyed. On the other hand, however, if she was able to maintain her rule over Canada, it would prove that she had learnt her lesson, that she knew, at last, how to retain her colonies as well as to give birth to them."

The author's accurate summary of Lord Durham's Report and her just appreciation of its bearing on the subsequent development of political liberty throughout the British world create a distinctive place for the book in the field of colonial constitutional history.

In the appendices will be found the full text of some notable contemporary key-documents; and the bibliography will prove of excellent service to students who desire to make an exhaustive survey of the literature bearing on the subject of Miss Langstone's book.

C. M.

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Digest of Co-operative Law at Home and Abroad. By Margaret Digby. London: P. S. King & Son, Ltd. 1933. Price, 7s. 6d.

The author explains that there are co-operative societies in almost every country of the world controlled by legislation which shows "considerable traces of mutual influence among legislators." She divides this legislation into five or six main types originating in different countries at different periods of co-operative development and directed to different types of co-operative activity. The earliest type is that of the industrial and provident society legislation in England, derived from Friendly Society legislation and designed for trading operations carried on by persons of small resources to whom the Companies Acts were unsuited. The British colonies and the United States of America adopted legislation modelled on that of England at the outset, but subsequent legislation in many of these countries has departed from the original type. The Latin type of legislation developed early in France, and placed co-operative societies as far as possible under the Commercial or Civil Codes. Italy, Belgium and the French Colonies and parts

of South America followed the example of France. In those countries, however, the law was supplemented by decrees applying to some special branch of co-operation, and to these decrees rather than to the principal law recourse must be had to discover a particular society's co-operative characteristics and its relations to the State. In the United States and some of the British Dominions at the present time the typical co-operative form is the large-scale agricultural organisation resulting in the marketing contract and the introduction of compulsory co-operative marketing.

More than 2,000 legislative Acts, ordinances and decrees of the countries where co-operative associations exist have been examined by the author, and the result is embodied in the form of a Digest. It is a useful book.

C. M.
