

NEW BOOKS

CANADIAN BOARDS AT WORK. Edited by John Willis. (A study of the Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie University). The Macmillan Co. of Canada. \$2.00.

The above volume, envisaged by Professor Willis, is devoted to a matter of growing public concern. The reliance on Boards of one kind and another, as methods of social control over economic institutions and operations, has been increasing. Since the war, their widespread use suggests the approach of a point of saturation, after which presumably we shall find further Boards established to control the other control Boards. When, at the end of the conflict, the reaction from stringent state controls is strong, there will be found need for objective appraisal of these Boards, of their worth, their proper sphere, and their methods. This volume, showing how Canadian Boards behaved in peace-time, is the necessary beginning of this valuation.

The study is in three parts. The first discusses the work of such institutions, the examples taken for specific enquiry being the Board of Transport Commissioners, the Ontario Securities Commission, and the Workmen's Compensation Board. The second part is devoted to the discretions and discriminatory powers used by such Boards, how their rulings become law. The third section reveals their administrative procedure, with examples in full from the Debt Adjustment Board and the Farmers Creditors Arrangement Act. The various chapters are contributed by authorities in these respective fields, with Professor Willis providing a short introductory essay to each section, explaining the matter and interpreting the situation critically. There is an introduction by Professor Corry on the nature of such Boards.

The matters raised by this study are elemental in democracies. We want to preserve certain freedoms, but are concerned to make such freedoms compatible with social ends. In political affairs, means have been found by which individuals can possess certain freedoms, like free speech, and can still be limited by social orders respecting the limits of this freedom. But in economic affairs we are still searching for means that will be generally accepted, means that will retain freedom in the ownership of property, freedom in choice of occupation, of buying and selling, and yet will ensure social order. This problem of reconciliation of freedom and order is more difficult in the economic life, because economic power is more indeterminate, more fluid than political power, because freedom of choice in, say, buying is difficult to maintain alongside order in consumption, and because personal initiative is so important in the economic life that regulation has to be more elastic. This volume shows part of Canada's experimentation with these questions, what sort of Boards have been tried, and what has been resulting from them. It is on such study that the common citizen has to rely for help in appraising the proposals and the machines that are going to be made, during and after the war, for internal and international controls.

S. BATES

THE MARITIME PROVINCES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. By Wilfred Brenton Kerr. Busy East Press, Limited; Sackville, N.B., 1941. Pp. 172.

This volume deals with the colonies of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, and gives a well-balanced and thoughtful account of their reactions to the background and course of the American Revolution. Naturally most of the text is concerned with conditions and events in Nova Scotia, which comprised both Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick until 1769 and 1784 respectively, had long been regarded as a buffer state between New France and New England, and was about to play a similar rôle between New and Old England.

In order to understand this rôle, Professor Kerr considers very carefully the origins of the population, the social, economic and political conditions in Nova Scotia, which might make for or against cooperation with the Thirteen Colonies, and concludes that the comparative lack of national sentiment amongst the New Englanders of Nova Scotia accounts for their neutrality in the controversies which rent the other colonies prior to 1775 and their reluctance to antagonize the New Englanders subsequent to that date. He shows a wide acquaintance with conditions in all the colonies, and has avoided the pitfall of indicting a whole people because of the actions of a small minority. His exposition of the enlightened selfishness of the official group in Halifax goes far to explain why the majority of the population was not antagonistic to government, and his analysis of the tactless behaviour of Governor Legge and the recruiting agents of the British forces goes far to explain the reluctance of the militia to enroll for service even at home. At the same time, he gives the fullest account that has yet appeared of the intrigues of Eddy and Allan in Cumberland, and of the competition between the British and New Englanders for control of the Indians on the St. John.

No one can read this little book without feeling that an attitude of non-belligerency was the true attitude of the majority of Nova Scotians, and the only attitude which they could have taken under the circumstances. With the exception of Eddy, Allan and the like, the Nova Scotians were British-Americans, felt neutral, tried to be neutral, but succeeded only in being non-belligerent. Far from being "unwilling prisoners of British power", as one writer puts it, they were exposed to threats and depredations of New Englanders because of British weakness, and the inhabitants of these exposed regions were induced to give aid to or express sympathy with the New Englanders by threats of violence or, as in the case of Yarmouth and Barrington, in exchange for commodities necessary to self-preservation.

D. C. H.

THE TRUTH ABOUT LIEF ERICSSON AND THE GREENLAND VOYAGES TO NEW ENGLAND. By Willaim B. Goodwin. Boston; Meador Publishing Company, 1941. Pp. 445:57 illustrations.

The reader of a work possessing this sort of title is set on his guard from the outset, for the superscription is presently found to mean no more than a gesture of defiance on the part of the author. Nor is his suspicion disarmed as he continues to read the pages of *The Truth About Leif Ericsson*, for he soon learns that Mr. Goodwin has definitely made up his mind as to the landing-place of Leif, as well as to many other disputed points in the sagas, and here assails the reader with a series of arguments which he almost invariably styles "proofs." Plymouth, Mass., is the point round which the theme eddies. The book is eventually found to be little more than a glorified "local antiquary" effort, of which there are some dozens in existence "covering" the Atlantic coast from Newfoundland to Virginia. The very fact that the heart of Wineland has been found, with some degree of plausibility, at so many points should have long ago made it abundantly clear and plain that the complete vagueness of the sagas renders it an impossibility to divine its location, even approximately.

Mr. Goodwin is unfortunately one of that category of men who take notes and promptly forget the context within which the note's substance is to be deposited. The result is very nearly a chaos; materials relating to individual themes are distributed throughout the book much in accordance with the precept of Isaiah, "here a little and there a little."

One section of the book is undeniably useful: the collection of notices of "Norumbega" in post-Renaissance writings and maps. This is a region called by this name that sometimes extends from Cape Breton to Florida, and is conceived of by some writers of the seventeenth century as possessing a towered city. Scholars of past generations were inclined to associate this name Norumbega with the mediaeval *Norwegia* or *Norvegia*, Norway, in the belief that in some way the early explorers of America possessed some vague knowledge of mediaeval Norwegian activities in this quarter. The belief is accepted by Mr. Goodwin, and he marshals the evidence with great care and assiduity, without, however, doing anything to explain the possible connection.

Neither author nor publisher has spared pains and expense to make the book attractive, with its heavy glazed paper and abundance of excellent illustrations. Nova Scotians will be interested especially in the axe found, or acquired, by the prospector Nolan at Cole Harbour, Guysborough Co., in 1938. It is beautifully reproduced here, accompanied with the translation of the alleged runes that it bears inscribed on the side, *Engr fathi aelae*, Eng inscribed (this axe to) Aelu. This is the rendering of Olaf Strandwold, in the merits of whose art public confidence declines in something like direct proportion to the number of documents he has deciphered and read. The axe, after all, may be

French. The region of its discovery was much frequented by French fishermen before the cession of Acadie to Britain. And the "runes" may be nothing more than decorative designs coupled, perhaps, with a trade-mark.

A. D. FRASER

MODERN LIBRARY EDITION OF BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON.
New York. Price in Canada, \$1.75.

The purchase of this book will be an occasion of great joy in the present for its appealing format; the binding, paper and type are exceptionally attractive. This purchase will be a joy of anticipation for recapturing the words of Johnson. Here is a compression in one ready volume of material spread out in leisurely fashion through several by other editors and publishers. For instance, Birbeck Hill required four volumes, and then added two more volumes with miscellaneous matters, appendices and index. This Modern Library Edition has efficiency for a day when efficiency is required; the book would be a welcome companion on an airliner journey.

Samuel Johnson would be the last person to depreciate the physical effort needed in all literary work. Consider how he represents himself as tugging at the oar. Well has the effort of this volume's editors been repaid.

One could wish, however, that a text other than Malone's Sixth Edition had been chosen for reproduction. When allusion has been lost to modern readers, they want more than their money's worth in the way of foot-notes to instruct and to amuse. Also for desultory reading, an index might have been added. Johnson had much contempt for an index smatterer. A smatterer, however, places more value on the key than on the treasures to which it opens the door.

Cerf and Klopfer, editors of this concise volume, are to be complimented on a difficult task well done.

D. D. G.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. By Carl Van Doren. Viking, New York (Macmillan, Canada), 1941, pp. XVI, 534.

This volume, which is based largely on documents of the British Secret Service in the Clinton Collection of the University of Michigan, is a distinct contribution to the literature of the American Revolution. It is concerned mainly with the treasonable activities of Benedict Arnold, but it covers also other minor conspiracies. Dr. Van Doren establishes beyond question that Arnold was not moved to sudden treachery by personal pique, but by ambition and hope of personal gain. Arnold is revealed for the first time in his true colours—a dashing but undisciplined soldier, incurably romantic over possibilities of

sudden wealth, and unscrupulous about the means of attaining it, vain, and devoid of loyalty to any cause but his own apparent interests.

The book throws light not only on Arnold but also on the "fifth column" activities of both sides, and on the political motives which undoubtedly affected the military activities of the British forces. It is competently done, carefully documented, effectively and clearly written despite the wealth of detail. The subject-matter is far from savoury, but the history of any revolution is not all a collection of golden deeds. The book will no doubt at once take its place as an indispensable source book of the revolutionary period.

R. A. MACKAY

PAINTED ARROWS. BY MARY WEEKES. NELSON & SONS
Pp. 262. \$2.00.

Though born in Nova Scotia, Mrs. Weekes has become an authentic chronicler of the Old West of unbroken prairies and buffalo herds. In 1935 she gave us *Round Council Fires*, a collection of tales of the Indians and prairies, designed primarily for boys. Four years later, she published a real "find": the life story, as told to her, of Norbert Welsh, an old trader of the prairies: *The Last Buffalo Hunter*. In that book, primarily for adults, Mrs. Weekes gave us not only an interesting story, but also valuable documentary material. Now she has written a very successful boys' tale. Paul Savard, son of a French-Canadian prairie trader of the early 19th century, is old enough, when the book opens, to make his first trip with his father across the Indian country. He has a fine saddle, and an even finer horse. Soon he meets Dying Loon, an Indian lad of his own age. From that moment there is not a dull line in the tale. Paul is taken prisoner by a skulking Blackfoot Indian, and in the months that follow he learns much of the topography and the lore of the great plains. Every chapter has its own adventure, but woven into the fiction are delightful sketches of Indian life, lore, and character. Then, too, very unobtrusively Mrs. Weekes makes the reader appreciate animals; the relation between Paul and his horse Flash is something every lad should understand. The book is delightfully illustrated. Here is a book that can be read with delight and profit by any normal boy or girl in the early 'teens.

B. M.

MOBILIZING CANADA'S RESOURCES FOR WAR. BY A. F. W.
Plumptre. Macmillan, Toronto, 1941. XXIV, 306.

As consultant for Canada with the Office of Price Administration in Washington, Professor Plumptre has had special opportunities for observing Canada's economic war effort. This volume is an account of the first two years. The transition from a peace economy to a war economy is far more than an overnight task for any country, and it

was especially difficult for Canada because of her industrial unpreparedness. Moreover, until the military collapse on the continent in 1940, Canada was generally regarded as a base for raw materials by the imperial authorities, and was discouraged from expanding industrial production for war purposes. Yet Professor Plumptre concludes that the speed of transition was remarkable. At the end of two years of war, about one-third of all production was for war purposes, though the transition to a full war economy was as yet far from complete. Canada was then far ahead of the United States, though behind Great Britain.

Professor Plumptre concludes that the least satisfactory part of the war programme has been the organization of labour. This he feels has been due partly to the government's failure to appreciate the immensity of the problem involved in organizing the national labour force, partly to the failure of the government to secure the confidence of labour, partly to the desire of some labour leaders and some industrialists to exploit the situation to further class interests.

The book is broad in scope, and is organized topically rather than chronologically. It falls roughly into these divisions: the employment situation (both of labour and of capital) at outbreak of war, and the measures taken to mobilize these for war purposes; an examination of war expenditures (including aid to Britain and aid from the United States) in monetary terms and in terms of the national income; an examination of wartime controls, including monetary and tax policies, and controls over prices, wages and commodities.

The definitive study of Canada's economic war effort cannot as yet be done, and Professor Plumptre makes no pretence of doing it. His book is, however, the first extended survey to appear in print; it is explanatory rather than critical. It should be compulsory reading for every citizen who presumes to pass judgment on our war effort.

R. A. MACKAY

CANADA IN WORLD AFFAIRS: THE PRE-WAR YEARS. Oxford University Press, Toronto.

This volume is intended as the first of a biennial survey on Canada's external relations to be published by the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. The book is divided into four sections—Politics, Economics, International Law and Diplomacy, Documents. The first section is by Professor F. H. Soward, and covers Canadian opinion and policy from the Italo-Ethiopian crises to the outbreak of the war. It is based largely on speeches in parliament, official documents and periodical articles. Within these limits it is a highly competent and interestingly written survey. The second section is by Professor J. F. Parkinson, and contains an analysis of Canada's trading position in the late depression years, including an examination of the balance of payments, an account of the economic rapprochement with the United States and the revision of the preferential agreement with the United Kingdom. Mr. Parkinson's conclusion

is that recovery in Canada's export trade during these years was largely due to recovery in her principal markets, the United States and the United Kingdom, rather than to tariff tinkering which "may influence the regional distribution of the national income," but "cannot be expected to create the conditions of domestic prosperity". The third section, which is by President N. A. M. MacKenzie except for a short chapter by Mr. L. J. Burpee on the activities of the International Joint Commission, is largely a digest of cases, treaties and statutes, but includes also a list of international conferences at which Canada was represented. The Documents section is well selected, and will be very useful for reference.

While the book will take rank as an indispensable reference work, it suffers from the division of labour. In a period when economic considerations were a paramount preoccupation of diplomacy it is surely arbitrary to divide the subject of Canada's external policy into Economics and Politics.

R. A. MacKay

I SAW FRANCE FALL. By René de Chambrun. New York. William Morrow & Co.

A principal interest of this book arises from the fact that its author is Pierre Laval's son-in-law, and may be assumed—since he refers so deferentially to that remarkable person—to be reflecting his father-in-law's ways of thought, about which he should have somewhat intimate knowledge. M. de Chambrun is by profession a lawyer. He gives a vivid account of how, at the opening of September, 1939, a summons to report immediately for military duties broke in upon his legal practice, and how he discovered soon by personal experience the unfitness of the French military machine to meet the attack which had been challenged.

The story is told with an air of engaging frankness. It is, of course, the party of Leon Blum that is here charged with a major responsibility for the national disaster. The writer narrates his conversation with the President of the French Republic, who told him to ask his father-in-law about how France had been led to her doom, remarking that Pierre Laval knew a great deal about it. I think that de Chambrun shows less than his usual gift of humor in telling us this about Laval's special knowledge. The reader is likely to understand, and to endorse, the remark in a sense very different from what the author intended.

Here is a book of the hour. It shows, what we need to see, how the case can be most plausibly presented for what we now call "Vichy". The men who desired that France, in September, 1939, should add one more to the mounting list of violations of her plighted faith have here a dexterous advocate. That she should have betrayed Poland as she had betrayed Abyssinia and Czechoslovakia, because such men as Leon Blum, in their cooperation with "Communists"—who in turn were directed from Moscow—had ruined France's fighting strength, is a proposition put forward by one who knows how to engage the reader's interest as well as it can be engaged for such a shameful doctrine. We know that the real weakening of France resulted rather from the obstinate folly of Marshal Petain, who now accuses others of the faults

which were his own and which they vainly implored him to correct in time. But M. de Chambrun never hints at this.

Possibly he is quite sincere, and has himself been deceived by the arts of his adroit senior relative. That he is a descendant of Lafayette is an item of news one would rather not have to record about him. That his book should be fundamentally deceptive reminds us once more how, as in the classic case of King Solomon, a matrimonial adventure may corrupt the mind.

H. L. S.

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE. By Sinclair Ross. Reynal and Hitchcock.

Here is a book of very different character from that noticed above. Nothing about the war: just the diary of the wife of a Canadian clergyman in a prairie town, about the interests and incidents, parochial and domestic, of the scene in which her own and her husband's lot was cast.

Mr. Ross has written a book one reads to the end, although there is practically no developing plot. That, in itself, is a testimony to his art. I took time to read every word of it, though my reading time is rather well filled up. But the psychology of this wife's diary was hard to leave without seeing the upshot.

The clergyman in the piece was not one to adorn the doctrines of the Church. That the prairie towns, and other towns, of his country owe an enormous debt to the work and influence of the class here presented in an unfavorable example, is a truth which I hope to see a novelist of the skill of Mr. Ross present in a later book. Here, I think, is a first novel. The writer has a literary edge which he has whetted in a somewhat banal exercise—known by the unsavory American name "debunking". It tempts the beginner, but there is nothing else now quite so threadbare in novel-writing as attack on the clergy. Mr. Ross will do, I trust, yet, with equal finesse, a job better worth doing.

H. L. S.

MISSION TO MOSCOW. By Joseph E. Davies. Simon & Schuster.

Here is a book of the first importance, for all who would inform themselves of life and policy in Russia during the years just before this war broke out. How important it is to get the truth on that subject, and how difficult the search for it has been, we understand too well.

Mr. Davies was American ambassador to Moscow in the critical period of the last "Purges", and to many a reader the most significant part of his book will be the account he gives of what then took place. He does not in the least share the opinion widely prevalent abroad at the time, that those executions of men very conspicuous in Soviet Russia for a long period were the outcome of counterfeit trials: that, in the familiar American idiom, they were "framed" for doom because of their dissent from the Stalinite policy. Mr. Davies believes that the trials were quite honest, that the verdict of "guilty" was reached by judges faithful to their judicial responsibilities, and that the men sentenced were indeed conspirators for an armed revolution against the State. Moreover, far from agreeing in the common guess that these



IF MERCURY COULD TALK—
"Just going for some Sweet Caps"

SWEET CAPORAL CIGARETTES

"The purest form in which tobacco can be smoked"

mass executions greatly weakened the fighting capacity of Soviet Russia, he believes that they provided the greatest safeguard against attack. He quotes with approval the remark by Molotov, that the reason why no "Fifth Column" has been active in Russia lies in the energy with which men of Fifth Column purpose were weeded out in time.

Certainly if Soviet Russia was enormously weakened for military purposes by what was then done, the imagination reels at attempting to judge what her powers of attack and defence would have been if this handicap had not been imposed. I do not attempt to judge between such apparently authoritative witnesses as Mr. Davies and Mr. Max Eastman, who differ so sharply about the truth of the "Confessions" obtained from the men on trial in the Purges. But one cannot help being impressed by the testimony of the American ambassador, who was present with other disinterested listeners from foreign Embassies when the cases were heard in Court, and who says that the great bulk of foreign Embassy opinion agreed with the Court's judgment.

I have chosen just the most sensational part of this book for notice. It should be read from beginning to end. Here is a witness, of first-hand knowledge, without any intelligible prejudice, and who writes with clearness of what he saw. His topic, too, is one on which we cannot know too much.

H. L. S.

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