

been at heart an Asquithian Liberal—and as things stand currently, he looks like ending up as a Liberal politically. Meanwhile he has achieved what eluded Asquith, the Chancellorship of the University of Oxford.

The principle theme of his book is that Baldwin eluded most of the great issues of his own day, and preferred essentially minor ones where his talents could show themselves to the best advantage—the Abdication being thought more worthy of the Prime Minister's attention than the darkening scene on the Continent.⁹ The exception lay in the field of industrial relations and in Baldwin's genuine wish to prevent an unbridgeable gap being created between organised labour and the institutions of the State. On that there can be little disagreement.

On the other hand, while it is true that Baldwin preferred Labour to take office while in no position to do much harm, it would need more argument than Mr Jenkins has found space for to uphold his thesis that Baldwin definitely wished to see a two-party system restored, with Labour as the alternative governing party. That is not the kind of thinking that Conservatives go in for, seeing that they regard themselves as the natural party of government all the time. Baldwin, as Mr

⁹ Mr Jenkins indulges in the interesting speculation that if Edward VIII had remained on the throne and continued to indulge the fascist and Nazi sympathies which Jenkins ascribes to him, Churchill might have had to intern his Sovereign.

Jenkins points out, was a master of the House of Commons when in government—no post of “Leader of the House” was needed or contemplated before Churchill, except when the Prime Minister was a peer—but not in opposition.

The crisis of 1931 is central to Mr Jenkins's argument. Had Baldwin not been indulging in his passion for holidays abroad, and had Neville Chamberlain not been in charge of the Party's fortunes at the crucial time, Mr Jenkins believes that there would have been no National Government and that the crisis would have been resolved by the creation of a new Conservative or Conservative-Liberal government. The fact that the National Government did come into being was from Mr Jenkins's point of view a catastrophe, since it destroyed the new balance of political forces built up in the 1920s. To prove that this was the case Mr Jenkins would have to suggest that the errors in subsequent British policy, whether in the foreign or the domestic field, would have been avoided by a Conservative administration. It is hard to see why this should have been so. Alternatively, he must give reasons for believing that the 1935 election might then have returned Labour to office, presumably on the “swing of the pendulum” argument.

Such musings are permissible but they do not clarify our understanding of Baldwin. This biography can be read for pleasure and the occasional malicious aside. But it does not get one much further. The formidable nature of Baldwin's political gifts—so lacking in Rab—is stressed but nowhere explained.

The Stone In My Palm

The stone
In my palm,
Smoothed by the waves
Of centuries
Not seas,
In colour green:
Unfathered by light:
Smaller than a hazel-nut,
A lone world in miniature,
Heirloom to shadow,
Once lay in the gift
And power of Caesar.

When Trajan
Gave that stone
About AD 100,
Words were engraved upon it
Not feelings, showing that Caesar,
Through caprice or love
Gave to a man of Greece, Actean
Shipped and bought,
What should have been his right
The birthright
Need and spirit of any man—
Freedom.

John Hales-Tooke

Books Encountered

Life in the White Man's Grave: A Pictorial Record of the British in West Africa. By PHILIP ALLISON. Viking, £14.95.

Achingly evocative prints, cartoons, and photographs assembled and annotated by a veteran British forestry expert who spent his working life in south-western Nigeria. Rimmed in white like old snapshots, with the text printed on grey, these recall the booklets for old BBC Schools broadcasts. Nostalgia, *Schadenfreude*, History, and post-colonial guilt.

Constitutions in Democratic Politics. Edited by VERNON BODANOR. Gower, £29.50.

Twenty essays, based on papers given at a conference at the Policy Studies Institute in 1986. Contributors include S. E. Finer, Ghița Ionescu, Geoffrey Marshall, and Roger Morgan, who writes on "the European Community". The editor stresses change and development against static analysis.

The Secret Servant: The Life of Sir Stewart Menzies, Churchill's Spymaster. By ANTHONY CAVE BROWN. Michael Joseph, £19.95.

Massive (800-page) study by an author whose reliability has sometimes been questioned, and whose book has attracted attention from the Treasury Solicitor. It repeats some well-known stories (the Venlo incident, Ultra) and allegations (the betrayal of "Prosper"), Eastwards disinformation, links with Canarias), and suggests that Philby was disinformed too. To be read warily.

Forbidden Knowledge: The Paranormal Paradox. By BOB COUTTIE. Lutterworth Press, £9.95.

A "reluctant sceptic" investigates seances, Uri Geller, astrology, telepathy, etc., with a magician's expertise. So far, he has found natural explanations, or part-explanations, for every case. The most interesting parts are the gaps. These include the place where the index should be.

The Dilemma of Style: Architectural Ideas from the Picturesque to the Post-Modern. By J. MORDAUNT CROOK. John Murray, £25.00.

The second part of the subtitle is mildly misleading: anyone expecting an assessment of fashionable neo-Georgian will be disappointed. But the Professor of Architectural History at London University gives full value for money in his intertwining of taste and technology from Romanticism to New Brutalism.

Talking Across the World: The Love Letters of Olaf Stapledon and Agnes Miller, 1913-1919. Edited by ROBERT CROSSLEY. University Press of New England, £18.00.

A touching piece of social history in the letters exchanged by the philosophical teacher and his future wife between 1913 and 1919. He spent the war years with the Friends' Ambulance Unit, while she supported conscription. Some of the letters foreshadow his Wells-like later writing, notably *Last and First Men*.

White Boy Running. By CHRISTOPHER HOPE. Secker & Warburg, £10.95.

Stunningly vivid, funny, and sad, this combines a return trip to South Africa (in 1987, after some twelve years' absence) with memories of "growing up absurd" there, in "an asylum where the inmates are in charge". Hope's adventures and stories show that the events in his novels are simply versions of the truth.

Hollywood Goes to War: How Politics, Profits, and Propaganda Shaped World War II Movies. By CLAYTON R. KOPPES and GREGORY D. BLACK. I. B. Tauris, £17.50.

Painstaking account of how the Office of War Information persuaded all major studios (partially excepting Paramount) to toe the patriotic line, sometimes with dire results such as *Mission to Moscow* (good old Uncle Joe) or *Mrs Miniver* (Greer Garson as a democratic middle-class Lady Bountiful). Some of the plot summaries are a riot.

1791: Mozart's Last Year. By H. C. ROBBINS LONDON. Thames & Hudson, £12.95.

"It may prove difficult to dissuade the public from the current Shafferian view of the composer as a divinely gifted drunken lout, pursued by a vengeful Salieri", writes Professor Landon: but his book is more than an anti-*Amadeus*. With fine illustrations and apt musical quotations, it freshly documents the life and the last great works—*Requiem*, *Flute*, and *Tito*.

The Hereditary Bondsman: Daniel O'Connell 1775-1829. By OLIVER MACDONAGH. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.95.

An Irishman, now Professor of History at the Australian National University, the author disclaims writing a "life and times"; but his biography is also a study of modern Irish culture and nationalism. He plans a second volume to cover 1830-1847.

Seeds of Bankruptcy. By DAVID MARSLAND. The Claridge Press, £12.95.

A sociology teacher at Brunel University attacks his discipline for "querulous sniping at liberal democracy and a consistent inclination to underplay the oppressive character of totalitarian societies". Many sociologists, he says, blow on the market, neglect the entrepreneur, pander to bureaucracy, exaggerate inequality, and undervalue work. Heinz Kiosk, this is your life.

The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture. By FRANCO MORETTI. Verso, £24.95.

Jane Austen, Balzac, Charlotte Brontë, Dickens, Flaubert, Goethe, Stendhal . . . the great *Bildungsromanciers* meet subtle and scholarly gaze, exposing their assumption that "the biography of a young individual was the most meaningful viewpoint for the understanding and the evaluation of history". Then psychology dismantled the individual; sociology stressed the collective; youth revealed its narcissism. And the form died. Discuss.

Passion and Cunning and Other Essays. By CONNOR CRUISE O'BRIEN. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £18.00.

Lively, combative, sometimes breathless articles on (and often against) such subjects as Pope John Paul II, South Africa, Ireland, Rousseau, Robespierre, Norman Podhoretz, and Zionism. His testy polemics are invigorating because seldom predictable.

Visions and Blueprints: Avant-garde culture and radical politics in early twentieth-century Europe. Edited by EDWARD TIMMS and PETER COLLIER. Manchester University Press, £29.50.

Richly detailed authentication of a familiar story, but with unexpected twists. "The paradox", write the editors, "is that the poets frequently did attempt to provide blueprints for a new society, while the politicians were often predominantly inspired by imaginative visions."

1688: Revolution in the Family. By HENRI and BARBARA VAN DER ZEE. Viking, £14.95.

Delightfully written tricentenary account of the "Glorious Revolution", concentrating on the four royal protagonists—James, Anne, Mary, and William—and making a seemingly dull tale a human historical drama. The authors are the former London correspondent of *De Telegraaf* and his English journalist wife.

The Global Fix. By BEN WHITAKER. Methuen, £7.95.

Timely pocket edition of what Cape in hardback last year called *The Global Connection*: a brilliantly comprehensive, fair-minded, and thoroughly argued study of narcotics production, trade, and abuse, with tough discussion of what can and cannot be done. Production and trade, it suggests, will continue as long as demand: our main failure is on the causes of abuse.

R.M.