

Robert J. Scally. The Origins of the Lloyd George Coalition: The Politics of Social-Imperialism, 1900-1918. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1975. Pp.xii, 416. \$19.50.

This book is a credit to the author who wrote it, but no credit to the system in which it was written. "Publish or Perish" has become "Publish and Perish", since historians will publish, too soon and in haste, while history perishes. Scally is intelligent, hard-working, writes well, and is familiar with much of the published materials, but he has gone to the manuscript sources only for footnotes to support the established view of English politics in the period covered. His one innovation is increased emphasis on Milner's role in this period, but this is based on Gollin's books (1960,1965) and not on adequate search in the manuscripts. His general interpretation reflects a rather uncritical reading of Bernard Semmel(1960) and G.D. Searle(1971), modified only by a four-year extension in time and slight shifts in emphasis derived from journal articles of uneven quality, mostly from the HISTORICAL JOURNAL. Relying on Gollin, he realizes that Milner's associates played important roles in this period, but he produces no evidence to support this and knows nothing of their activities before 1900, when their methods of operation were established. For Scally history began in 1900. He believes that Social Imperialism began with the Fabians ("the first to instruct the Liberal-Imperialists in the crucial interlocking, and the political possibilities, of imperial

and domestic policies", p.104), and that the Fabians gave this new idea to Milner, to the Tariff Reform League, and to the Compatriots, through the Coefficients. This is putting the cart before the horse with a vengeance. Scally seems to regard Milner's associates as economic imperialists and states that "business interests" provided "not only the financial prop but a good portion of the membership" of the Compatriots, all of which is untrue and shows his ignorance of the origins of social-imperialism in the 1870s. Has Scally never heard of Jowett and of John Ruskin's influence on Toynbee, Milner, E.T. Cook, Cecil Rhodes, W.T. Stead, and General Booth, or of the inaugural lecture to the Slade Professorship of Fine Arts at Oxford (8 February 1870) where so much of this began (E.T. Cook, Life of John Ruskin, II, 202-3)? Apparently Scally does not know that Milner was always a social imperialist, read German treatises on national economics from Friedrich List on, gave lectures on socialism in 1882, and was a chief founder of the first settlement house, Toynbee Hall (of which he was again chairman of the council, in all the busy life of 1912-1914, raising funds to support it).

Like Semmel, Scally over-emphasizes the role of the Webbs (74-81), believing that they had a "strategy of permeation, the political style of the Fabians", when in fact the Webbs were so parochial, self-centered, and authoritarian that they ^{even} had trouble permeating the labour movement. It was the Milnerites who were permeating the Webbs in 1902, as they were permeating the press, the academic world, including the London School of Economics (Hewins and MacKinder both became paid retainers of Milner's associates), high finance, public office, social welfare, the labor movement, political decision-making, and the writing of history about these things.

For example, Sally says (p.30), "The policy of Chamberlain and Milner in the Cape was not primarily expansive but defensive." That is exactly how the Milnerites such as Cook on the Daily News, Spencer Wilkinson on the Morning Post (as drama critic, no less), and the Shaw-Bell-Buckle-Amery combination on The Times wanted Sally to see it. The Milner version of South African events became "history" in Wilkinson's British Policy in South Africa (1899), Cook's Rights and Wrongs of the Transvaal War (4th edition 1902), Iwan-Muller's Lord Milner and South Africa (1902), numerous writings of Edmund Garrett and of Charles W. Boyd, W.B. Worfold's Reconstruction of the New Colonies Under Lord Milner (2 vol. 1913), Amery's "TheTimes" History of the South African War (7 vol., 1900-1909), I.D. Colvin's Life of Jameson (1922), Basil Williams' Cecil Rhodes (1922), and Garvin's Life of Joseph Chamberlain (3 vol., 1932-35). In many cases Milner supervised, revised, and financed these writings, and arranged favorable reviews when they were published. Today much of this version has been replaced by the work of Drus, van der Poel, Marais (1961) and Le May (1965), but Sally is still permeated by the Milner version.

The same is true of other matters, such as the National Service League which Sally sees (p.81) being "attractive" to the Coefficients, "Amery, Dawkins, Maxse, Milner, and Henry Birchenough", when these were all Milnerites (two of ancient vintage, old roommates of Milner's from the 1880s), who had been working for Milner to establish national service (not just "military" service, as Sally mistakenly modifies Amery's letter on p. 111), along with Wilkinson and others, long before Lord Roberts "founded" the N.S.L. in 1902. Roberts was the head that the public saw, but, as Gen. J.E.B. Seely wrote in his memoirs, Dawkins was its "life and soul" (Adventure, 1930, p.92-93), and, after Dawkins' death, the money came through Milner. These men agreed with Milner's

views, were his disciples, and were richly rewarded by him: Dawkins with the top salaried position in private business in England, Birchenough with the presidency of the British South Africa Company; Wilkinson with a professorship at All Souls College, Oxford, and Amery with a great career in public life.

Scally, like most students of the political history of this period, ignores the real elements of political power: (1) how candidates are nominated in parliamentary constituencies; (2) how elections are financed; (3) how editors of newspapers and journals are recruited and financed; (4) how directors of corporations and financial houses are named, even when they own not one share of stock; (5) how professors are selected; and (6) how men obtain non-elective public offices. Americans have difficulties here because these are done so differently in England from the practices in this country. But they are essential, as the historiography of this period shows.

English political history of this period was originally written in terms of the struggle between two sides in a two-party parliamentary system. It soon became clear that the parties were really coalitions of several blocs and that the two-party system was a myth. This approach culminated in Peter Rowland's two-volume study, The Last Liberal Government, 1905-1914 (1968, 1971), which states this situation and identifies five parties in the Parliament of 1906-1910 (p.31).

In the meantime, historians began to study the blocs within the parties (Mathews, The Liberal Imperialists or H.V. Emy, Liberals, Radicals, and Social Politics, both 1973). However, it soon appeared that these were merely parliamentary blocs, subject to the party whips, with weak constituency roots. At that point, instead of going into these roots, historians turned to the study of smaller groups or "leagues", frequently dinner groups, both within and outside formal party structures, some

of which wanted to operate "above the parties" or to form a new "Centre Party" from a coalition of blocs from the existing parties. Such groups, which are the subject of Sally's book, include the Fabians, the Liberal League, the Coefficients, the Tariff Reformers, the Compatriots, and coalition efforts such as that of Lloyd George in 1910. Like Semmel and Searle, Sally links these movements to a so-called "Policy of National Efficiency"; this is self-defeating because the term is rarely defined, and, as Campbell-Bannerman said, "Efficiency? Who's against it?". Semmel broke new ground with this idea in 1960, but it is now exhausted as a way to explain non-party political cooperation in this period. It was only a rationalization at the time and ceased to win such cooperation as soon as real political factors entered the picture (such as access to office, as with the Relugas compact). By ignoring the real sinews of political action, Sally cannot judge the significance of the groups he discusses and does ^{not} notice that only one of the six groups was not ephemeral, because only one, the Tariff Reformers, were concerned with controlling access to parliamentary seats and to office by controlling constituencies. On that basis, the tariff reformers took the party away from the Cecils in two years, and, interrupted by the need for ^a coalition in 1914-22, took the party to defeat on the tariff issue, under Milnerite influence, in 1924.

Sally's neglect of the real issues, for which his fellow historians are as guilty as he, shows in his belief (pp. 112-3) that the Liberal-Imperialists were in a better position in 1905 to take over the Liberal party than the Tariff Reformers were to replace the "Cecil monopoly" of the Conservative-Unionist leadership. He is puzzled that it turned out otherwise.

When political parties are absent, or as fissiparous and distrusted as in England in this period, political power is reduced to patronage;

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this must be studied by analysis of individual personal relationships to discover who is patron and who is client. This worked very well for Ronald Syme (THE Roman Revolution, 1939), has been advocated by Lawrence Stone for the 17th century, and forms the basis for the Namier school of 18th century English history. It cannot be done by going to the archives to pick up a few footnotes to embellish a pre-conceived picture of how the events of any period hang together. Professor Hexter has made an uproar by condemning the Master of Balliol for this practice in 16th century history (TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT, 24 October 1975), but the practice is now widespread in all fields, especially in recent history where the manuscripts are so numerous.

A historian can prove anything if he is allowed to pick the evidence he will consider. A true picture must consider all the relevant material, and relevance can be determined only late in the task after examination of most of the evidence. This is a harsh truth for a young historian under pressure to publish. Sclally examined a few boxes of Milner's papers and a few dates in the diaries; fifteen years ago I read all the diaries^{for 1893-1925}, working day and nights seven days a week, before I started a chronological search of the other papers. But I was not under compulsion to publish before I knew the subject.

Compulsion to publish, however, cannot excuse the numerous factual errors in this book, all avoidable by use of standard reference books. Sclally has Harcourt (p.154) and Dawkins(159) still alive in 1910; believes that Harcourt was a peer and forced Rosebery's retirement before 1898 (31-32); identifies Albert Earl Grey, Governor-General of Canada, as Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary (135); calls Sir E. Tennant Asquith's "son-in-law" and Alfred Lyttleton Balfour's "personal secretary"; he believes that the election of 1906 was held in 1905 (four cases on 113,124), that P.H. Kerr (Lord Lothian) was "a young Conservative" (349),

that R.H. Brand and Fred Perry were Canadians (355), that Bonar Law replaced Churchill at the Admiralty in 1915 (255), and that Milner's "bitter personal resentment against Parliament" for censuring him in March 1906 was expressed in a letter written to Parkins in July 1905 (107). There are several other errors of dates (223,227,228,254), and the index is worthless, listing only names but omitting three-quarters of those mentioned and only about half the cases of those listed.

20 February 1976

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Professor Robert F. Byrnes
AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW
Ballantine Hall, Indiana University
Bloomington, INDIANA, 47401

Dear Professor Byrnes:

Here is my review of Scally's ORIGINS OF THE LLOYD GEORGE COALITION, but, as you see, far over the allotted length. Were I to review this work in fewer words, I would destroy this young man's reputation (which has already taken a beating in the review in last fall's issue of HISTORY: REVIEWS OF BOOKS). The only way in which I can explain how such an able and apparently hard-working man did such a poor book is to place him and his book in the context in which it was produced. It is time some one in this field pointed out what is going on and showed how it must be remedied. If you have to cut it, try to keep this problem in mind, although I hesitate to push this task on your hard-working shoulders. If you want to hold it up for a later issue of the review, I do not object.

Sincerely yours,

Carroll Quigley

Carroll Quigley
Professor of History

Personal postscript:

I believe your department is interviewing this month for possible employment W.D. Rubinstein, who is my first choice to replace me in this field here at Georgetown. I have a number of diverse fields, but my replacement will be expected to cover only modern England. I think Rubinstein is one of the most promising and you would be lucky to get him. If your department wants him, I know that Georgetown cannot compete with what Indiana has to offer, but Rubinstein looks good to me, not only in his publications but especially because he has been working with Harold Perkin, who in my opinion, is just about the best man (although not well known like some others) in this field. I am retiring this May to finish some books which I have been working on for years. If you look in Who's Who, you will see that I have been rather busy, and, as a very thorough researcher, cannot finish some of the big projects I have on the stocks until I can get full time for the effort. Best personal wishes.

C-2.