

Another reform was the sharp demarcation between the upper division and the lower division clerks who performed merely mechanical work, copying, indexing and the like. In the early 1880s the rude mechanicals banded together and presented two petitions to the Treasury, the second with 1500 signatures from various offices. The Treasury attitude was stiff, though there was a hint of more opportunities of promotion and the agitation led to a new inquiry under Sir Matthew Ridley. The book has a chapter on the Crown Agents and the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission which reveals one or two curious details about the Crown Agents' services in raising New Zealand loans.

Altogether it will be a very useful reference book for all who work on the colonial history of the period. The style is unpretentious but readable and commendably free from jargon. Dr Blakeley has a certain tendency to repeat points in almost identical words and occasionally to use quotations twice. He also has a misdirected affection for the word 'prestigious' and even 'prestigiously'. But these are minor blemishes in his scholarly book.

W. P. MORRELL

*University of Otago*

*Henry Labouchere and the Empire 1880-1905* By R. J. Hind. University of London Historical Studies XXXI. Athlone Press. 1972. xii, 271 pp. U.K. price: £4.50.

It is a sad fact, considering the substantial contribution which they make to the output of historical monographs, that Ph.D. theses rarely turn into satisfactory books. So often there is a curiously dated air about them, the result of the historiographical vacuum in which they appear to have been left suspended since the author completed his original doctoral research. And the format is too often cramped and stilted, reflecting somebody's idea once upon a time of what might constitute a 'good Ph.D. topic'.

Dr Hind's new book on Henry Labouchere is unfortunately very typical of the Ph.D. thesis-turned-monograph. A really interesting, even exciting, work is discernible within it, waiting to be released, but the stifling Ph.D. format has been left clamped down.

In 1968 two books were published which throw considerable light on Labouchere's attitude to the Empire — Bernard Porter's *Critics of Empire* and Jeffrey Butler's *The Liberal Party and the Jameson Raid*. Had Dr Hind taken these into account, his own thinking on Labouchere might have been very profitably revitalized; but there is no reference to either in his book, not even in his bibliography.

Henry Labouchere, Radical M.P. for Northampton between 1880 and 1905 and outspoken critic of 'forward' policies in the Empire, is probably worth a book. (He has actually had two devoted to him already, but one was a rather unexciting 'official' biography by A. L. Thorold in 1913 and the other Hesketh Pearson's entertaining but light-weight *Labby*, published

in 1936 — and not listed by Dr Hind in his bibliography.) But he never held office and he had very little direct influence over the formation of policy. It is highly doubtful whether his record can really stand the elevation of only a portion of it into the substance of a full-length study or the attempt to make him appear as a serious and weighty thinker on imperial questions. Once again the Ph.D. format has thwarted the emergence of a satisfactory book. Dr Hind has obviously worked his way through virtually all the extant Labouchere manuscript material (and engaged in a very thorough but fruitless quest for the Labouchere papers themselves), and it seems a great pity that he could not have gone the whole hog and written a complete political biography.

As it is, every letter, however trivial, seems to be cited. Each main section begins — as is supposed to be appropriate in a Ph.D. thesis — with a rather tedious summary of imperial or Irish history, and then Dr Hind launches into a very detailed catalogue of Labouchere's statements and actions relating to imperial or Irish affairs. Analysis is left mainly to a very jumbled concluding chapter. The result is that Dr Hind achieves the not inconsiderable feat of draining almost all the wit and personal idiosyncrasy away from 'Labby' and leaving the reader even more at a loss to understand why anyone took any notice of him. It was surely a great mistake to treat someone like Labouchere in so ponderous a manner.

In a sense, 'Labouchere and the Empire' is a non-subject; but that is perhaps the chief interest of the whole story. His attitude was almost completely and systematically negative and cynical. He wanted Britain to have as little to do with Empire as possible. Thus he consistently refused to demonstrate concern over the welfare of the non-white inhabitants of the Empire or of areas which might be added to the Empire if such concern became an influence over official policy. Or else he would try to show that any kind of imperial intervention only harmed such people. Humanitarian arguments he regularly dismissed with cynicism as mere cloaks for baser, more mercenary motives. He wanted to have nothing to do with any emotions which might encourage a greater readiness in Britain to assume imperial 'responsibilities'.

One of the most fascinating, even if not adequately worked out, aspects of Dr Hind's work is his assessment of the personal basis to this cynicism. A basic theme in Labouchere's attacks on imperialism was the allegedly sinister influence of 'great financial conspiracies' and large capitalist enterprises, such as the British South African Company. He was very ready to make allegations of speculative and stock-jobbing motives behind imperialist policies. Dr Hind shows that these were very much criticisms from inside. Labouchere himself was intimately involved in speculation and stock-jobbing and really knew what he was talking about when he made such attacks. He was the poacher turned gamekeeper. He employed his own articles in the Press for the purpose of raising and lowering the value of shares, and was prepared in 1882 to support British intervention in Egypt when he himself happened to be a 'bondholder'. Having sold his bonds, he then reverted to his normal opposition to intervention. Dr Hind suggests that it was his awareness of his own motives that caused Labouchere to be so cynical about other people's high-minded justifications for British intervention.

Clearly, like so many militant crusaders, Labouchere was fascinated by the very kind of behaviour which he was so ready vehemently to condemn. He talked the language of morality in attacking imperialism, but there was a moral emptiness, an all-pervasive corruption, in all his attitudes and activities. We can see this, for instance, in connection with one of his favourite arguments, that the time and money devoted to the Empire ought instead to be concentrated on urgently needed domestic reforms, improving the condition of the people, and so forth. But the question which Dr Hind never gets around to answering is whether Labouchere really was at all concerned for social reform at home. In fact, the evidence is that he was not and that this criticism of imperialism was also entirely negative and a moral void. In this respect, Dr Hind's decision to focus on the artificial subject of 'Labouchere and the Empire' and not construct a picture of the wholeness of Labouchere as a Radical politician becomes even more unfortunate. It hinders our understanding even of his position on imperial matters.

Labouchere represented a debased version of the great nineteenth-century Radical-individualist tradition. He took little part or interest in organizations of any kind and relied instead for his political influence on what he could achieve as an individual, raising issues in the Press or in Parliament or offering his services as a go-between. He became a rootless factor in the political scheme of things, used to carry messages and do the intriguing and ferreting for more 'respectable' politicians. People were constantly telling him 'secrets' in the confident expectation that he would then put these into circulation. He coveted this kind of political role, but it was not one in which there was much dignity. The cynicism with which he invested the motives of the 'imperialists' was returned upon himself with interest, and he became an irritant, a gadfly, and a sometimes useful go-between, but never a man whom anyone trusted.

D. A. HAMER

*Victoria University of Wellington*

*A Great View of Things: Edward Gibbon Wakefield.* By June Philipp. Nelson, Melbourne, 1971. 113 pp. Australian price: \$1.95.

*Edward Gibbon Wakefield in New Zealand: His Political Career 1853-1854.* By Peter Stuart. Price Milburn, Wellington, 1971. 195 pp. N.Z. price: \$2.50.

THE BASIC objectives of Dr Philipp's short study of Edward Gibbon Wakefield are twofold: a clear statement of Wakefield's ideas about empire and colonization together with an assessment of their originality; and an analysis of the extent to which these notions penetrated imperial thinking and policy making, especially during the years 1830-32.

The book begins with a brief character sketch portraying a talented, energetic, unstable and unscrupulous individual, a doubtful ally who could become a vindictive opponent. Then follows an outline of the traditional