

Nationalism in Colonial Africa

by THOMAS HODGKIN.

(Frederich Mueller, 10/6)

Basil Davidson

Nationalism has had a bad press in recent years; and with reason. The intellectuals of the "Thirties had good reason to distrust it. Didn't Franco invade and crush the Spanish Republic in the baleful name of "the national idea"? Wasn't nationalism the last-ditch defence of a world which clung to the old categories of bourgeois thought, and refused to overleap its quarrels and unite? We saw the League of Nations driven headlong on the rocks of fascism and war: we saw the dictators, one by one, fish out their silly sodden symbolism of "young nations" and "old nations", and go about to smash half the world for this or that **nationalist** lunacy. Who could foresee that nationalism would become a rallying cry, in the 'Fifties, for untold millions of people in the colonial world?

It was once held, in the working class movement, that socialism could triumph in any given country only after that country had passed through a more or less prolonged period of capitalism. This idea emerged later, in connexion with the colonial world, as a statement that colonies could become independent only when they had passed through several stages of capitalist evolution, and acquired both bourgeois and working class. But in the "bourgeois stage" of this process of self-liberation there would be a period of "bogus liberation" when the native bourgeoisie would exercise power as a puppet of the imperialist bourgeoisie: thus there were some who held that India's independence in 1946 was only apparent, and they were much surprised when they perceived, after a time, that this was not so after all. The same attitude was present in some left-wing attitudes to recent constitutional advances by British colonial peoples in West Africa: these advances, it was held were fake and illusory — how could they be anything else, since they were more or less peacefully granted by the imperial power? And yet we now see that it was this attitude that was fake and illusory, and not the constitutional advances. Beyond any doubt, these constitutional advances in colonies such as Nigeria and the Gold Coast (now Ghana) represent genuine and even far-reaching gains for the cause of equality and independence. Clearly, we have to examine colonial nationalism a good deal more carefully than in the past. We shall find ourselves, otherwise, even further removed from understanding what the colonial peoples want and mean to have: and we are far enough removed, in this country as it is.

Now the matter might not be worth discussing if all that colonial nationalism meant was the cessation of imperial rule, an end to foreign garrisons, and the removal bag-and-baggage of invading bureaucrats. In Africa, at any rate, there is much more to it than this; although this is also part of it. Nationalism for many African peoples, perhaps for all African peoples, appears as the road to freedom and to progress not only because it leads to the end of imperialist rule, but also and above all because it conveys the necessary modern reorganisa-

tion of colonial societies. Nationalism, if you like, is a mode of birth into the modern world.

If it is true, as Thomas Hodgkin writes in his valuable study, that "the solid basis of African nationalism is the revolt against European colonial theory" (but even more, no doubt, against European colonial practice), then it is also true that "African nationalism differs from the nationalisms of India and China in that Africa exists as an idea only, projected into the future, not as an historic fact. There has been no single comprehensive civilisation, no common background of written culture, to which (African) nationalists could refer."

Of course, this point can be pushed too far. Hodgkin does not mean to deny that Africans have a history, even an important history, of their own; and he usefully opens his book with a clear reminder of the long historical background of a number of African societies. But when due allowance is made for that history — and the allowance should be generous, for the fact of pre-European and extra-European African history, as a living continuity, becomes yearly more apparent — it remains true that nationalism in contemporary Africa is a liberating idea primarily because it is an organising idea. It has much the same kind of value — stretching an analogy — for colonial peoples seeking their liberty as trade unionism had for a European working class still seeking means of self-defence, means of political action. The downtrodden peoples of Southern Rhodesia and the Northern Transvaal, for example, may later on discover they are the heirs of the ancient and enduring kingdom of the Monomotapa, that their ancestors traded with India and China long before the first Europeans rounded the Cape of Good Hope, that their forefathers were buried amid the golden splendour of Mapungubwe. But what they are groping towards **now** is not a restatement of their past so much as a modern notion of themselves: and this modern notion is inevitably a nationalist notion. Thoughtful men among the Ba-Venda do not say that they are heirs of the Monomotapa (although they may well know they are): they say they are members of the African National Congress, and it is in terms of building a multi-racial South African **nation** that they conceive their future.

This crystallisation of Africa into nation-states reflects the imperialist world that surrounds them, and therefore has a strong inevitability. Not for nothing has the time-honoured idea of a West African Federation, for example, withdrawn latterly before the practical struggle for self-government within **national** frontiers. Prime Minister Nkrumah of Ghana records in his autobiography how he and African leaders from the West African colonies, meeting at their West African conference in London in 1946, "had long discussions and planned, among other things, a movement for the Union of West African Socialist Republics". One of the objects of Nkrumah's victorious Convention

People's Party, according to its statutes, is "to support the demand for a West African Federation and of Pan-Africanism by promoting unity-of action among the peoples of Africa and of African descent." And on the morrow of learning, in 1956, that the imperial government would agree to Gold Coast independence in 1957, Nkrumah recalls, "I reflected on the long and difficult road on which we had travelled towards the goal of Independence. African nationalism was not confined to the Gold Coast — the new Ghana. From now on it must be Pan-African nationalism, and the ideology of African political consciousness and African political emancipation must spread throughout the whole continent, into every nook and corner of it."

Meantime, while this spreading process went on, the independence struggle in the Gold Coast rapidly became confined to the Gold Coast. Probably there was no other way: yet such was the dividing pressure of imperialism — British and French—in West Africa that the African political leaders of all these territories have appeared unable to concert even a small degree of common action. The independence campaigns of the Gold Coast have never been concerted with those of Nigeria: nor those of British Africa with French Africa. Willy nilly, for all their ideas about internationalism, African leaders were pushed further and further into a limited nationalism; and it remains to be shown how and when they will reverse their tracks.

For the truth is that this crystallisation toward nation-states is not simply a choice, a fashion, a passing political tactic. On the contrary, it is the product of all those many factors which have combined, these many years, into the African awakening of our day. It is the product of Imperialism. It is the product of the gradual disintegration of tribal society, of the undermining of old chiefly hierarchies, of the decay of subsistence agriculture, of the passing of tribal land tenure. It is the product of the growth of towns and cities, up and down Africa, into which the disturbed and dispossessed could pour: so that there is scarcely a great conurbation in Africa south of the Sahara that has failed to double and quadruple its pathetic "native slums" over the past few years. It is the product, in short, of the detribalisation and the urbanisation (and, increasingly, now, of the industrialisation) of many million Africans, driven out of the world of their fathers into the world of Europeans, but not admitted to that new world except on terms of helotry and hunger.

As Hodgkin shows, Dakar in Senegal has grown from 92,000 inhabitants in 1936 to 300,000 in 1955: Bamako in the French Sudan from 22,000 in 1941 to 100,000 in 1955: Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo from 27,000 in 1935 to 340,000 in 1955. Here in these seething conglomerations of shanties, huts, kerosene-tin shelters, canvas doss-houses, millions of Africans have forced an entry into the modern world. But they have brought with them not only their avid thirst for a shining multitude of ideas and things that the old tribalism of the forests and savannahs could not give them. They **have also brought** with them the strong vessels of their own

indigenous culture, their African consciousness, their sense of distinction and originality: and it is into these specifically African vessels that they pour the ideas and things of Europe. And it is here that the onlooker, deafened by this cataract of African energy and African talk, will become aware that emergent African culture — this mingling of their ideas with our ideas, this nationalism in Africa — will not be a poor thin copy of what others have already done. The apostles of nigritude may lose their way in myths and mysticism; it remains true that the nation-states of Africa will make their own original contribution to the sum of human wisdom.

Which is as much as to say, no doubt, that Africans will take their own way towards independence. One could offer some examples. In the Belgian Congo, the diligent and autocratic Belgians have long been labouring at the task of building "an African middle class": by which they have meant a more or less numerous body of Africans who would "side with them" in exchange for social, economic, and perhaps even political privilege. Yet it turns out that the nationalist movements of the Belgian Congo — perhaps one should say proto-movements, for they are still at an early stage — have recruited their most solid adherents precisely from these "privileged strata". The dilemma which is likely to present itself to a bold and thoughtful man of the Bakongo or the Baluba peoples — to name only two of the Congo's leading tribes — is not whether to "side with the Belgians" or to "side against them": his dilemma is whether he will give his loyalty — whether history will demand him to give his loyalty — to a Bakongo or Baluba nationalism or to an all-embracing Congo nationalism. He feels himself on the threshold of a new life, an altogether different life, certainly a better life. What will he find beyond?

It will be obvious to anyone who has given more than a passing thought to the numerous peoples of Nigeria, these last few years, that imperialism has had much less influence in this crystallisation process than most of us have previously believed. No doubt it has proved convenient to imperialism that the principal political movement of the 15 million people of Northern Nigeria has found itself in growing conflict with the principal political movements of the two southern regions. It may be convenient to imperialism that the Yoruba movement, in the south, is often in conflict with the Ibo movement. But nobody need question that these conflicts have deep indigenous roots — that they are, in fact, endemic to these old established societies and their newly-felt national consciousness.

But that is not to say that the policies of the imperial powers cannot and do not profoundly influence the immediate shape and texture of these emergent nation-states in West Africa and of nationalist movements in other parts of Africa. Conservative and Labour colonial policy has seldom differed in more than emphasis and detail: but that is not to say that the shape and texture of these new African nations and "nations" (for some of them are still early on the road) could not and would not be very different in the circumstances of a socialist

Britain. This does not mean that constitutional advances under a capitalist Britain are not real advances: in the position of today, every advance in African national consciousness is a step towards equality and independence. But it does mean that socialists in Britain owe it to themselves (as well as to others) to give much more serious attention to the colonial fact than they have ever been willing to give in the past. Unless we understand what is happening in the colonies, unless we have a sound appreciation of the meaning and potentialities of nationalism in Africa, we shall make a hash of our future ties with these peoples who are now becoming nations. We shall lose what chances we have — and already they are slender enough — of helping our natural political allies against our natural political enemies.

This need to think about the realities of colonialism is the principle reason why Hodgkin's book is valuable and important. Here in sensibly compressed form there are set forth in clear detail a great many of the "surrounding circumstances": the policies of the colonial Powers and their contradictions — as, for example, that Africans in the Belgian Congo may be engine drivers and skilled workers and so on but Africans in neighbouring Northern Rhodesia may not:

The Accumulation of Capital

by JOAN ROBINSON

(Macmillan, 1956, 28/-).

Since Keynes' General Theory, two books on economics have appeared in Britain that, in the reviewer's opinion, represent major contributions to economic science. These are Professor A. W. Lewis's Theory of Economic Growth and Mrs. Joan Robinson's Accumulation of Capital. Now at last we are seeing a convergence of economists from various quarters upon the problems of long-period economic change.

In what follows, I shall concentrate upon Mrs. Robinson's Accumulation of Capital. In it the author rings the changes upon three fundamental variables: population, capital and technical knowledge. (She makes clear the distinction, so rarely observed, between a change in technical knowledge and a shift from one technique to another within the range — she calls it a 'spectrum' — of techniques already known. Such shifts may occur in association with changes in the amount of capital per head or in the ratio of either capital or labour to natural resources). Of these three, changes in the amount of capital (due to changes in the rate of accumulation) are treated as the most significant. Population is considered for the most part as variable, but not according to known rules: at any given moment it must be taken as given. Natural resources again, in the short run, are given: in the long run they may be effectively increased through changes in technique. The accumulation of capital is the significant variable, in the sense that it is the one most closely related to social institutions and class structure.

The author proceeds from *thp* simplest assumptions — a quasi-Ricardian system with constant technique and two

the principal political parties and congresses (loosely organised parties of a nationalist nature) through which Africans are pressing with hopeful and ingreasing confidence for independence or equality of rights: the sects and churches and religious myths through which other Africans have sought to defend their identity and self-respect in the miseries of losing one world without being permitted to enter another. I should like myself to have seen a longer and more detailed discussion of the growth of secondary industry and of urban employment: meaning as these have the breakdown of the vicious imperial pattern of native reserves plus migrant labour, and thus the breakdown of many barriers to African freedom. And here and there it seems to me that Hodgkin has somewhat clogged his argument by preferring to call a spade a gardening implement instead of a bloody shovel. There is, in discussing the antiquated wretchedness of colonialism in Africa, a great and general virtue in strong simple words; for the subject positively groans beneath the circumambient apologetics of colonialists who know that they will smell a great deal sweeter under almost any other name. But these are minor criticisms of a valuable book which should be widely read, and widely discussed.

Professor H. D. Dickinson

classes: workers (who are assumed to consume all their wages) and entrepreneurs (who are assumed to re-invest all their profits). One by one, she introduces complications: a spectrum of technique, economic fluctuations within the long-term process of accumulation, finance, a rentier class (who consume out of profits), diminishing returns, the theory of prices, and international trade. Thus she works into her scheme practically the whole of the conventional content of economic theory. It is truly a work of architectonic scope. The argument is very close and is, in places, difficult to follow. But it is very rewarding. Not least of the reader's rewards is to find familiar topics put into an unfamiliar context, thereby acquiring new and greater significance.

Historians of economic thought have often suggested that the shift of interest away from dynamics and towards static equilibrium has been influenced (probably unconsciously) by political motives. Equilibrium is so much safer. Once you start enquiring where the economic system is going, you don't know what sort of disconcerting answer you are going to get. (A good example of this is that the Marxian law of the falling rate of profit is implicit, given that the accumulation of capital proceeds faster than the growth of population, in the Marshallian system of wages and profits equated to marginal productivities. But none of the orthodox economists recognised it explicitly. And when Keynes, on quite other grounds, suggested that there was a secular tendency for the rate of profit to fall, his respectable colleagues were surprised and pained). Cannan and Pigou tuned utility theory from a w-a-

pon to be used against the Marxian theory of value into a powerful critique of income-distribution under capitalism (a critique which the 'New Welfare' theorists of today are trying desperately to blunt the edge of); **but** their attack on capitalism was ethical rather than positivist. It was 'Capitalism is nasty'; not 'Capitalism is self-destructive'. Keynes' critique of capitalism was much more effective in this genre; but, being based upon short-period analysis, it was open to the retort that the flaws in the system were 'only' short-term defects, which would be eliminated 'in the long run'.

It would be untrue to say that Mrs. Robinson provides a critique of capitalism. Her work is too soberly analytical for that. But some of its implications are disturbing for the supporter of things as they are.

One important concept in her scheme is that of a 'Golden Age' — a period of history in which, to use her own words, 'technical progress is . . . proceeding steadily . . . the competitive mechanism working freely, population growing (if at all) at a steady rate and accumulation going on fast enough to supply productive capacity for all available labour, the rate of profit tends to be constant and the level of real wages to rise with output per man. There are then no internal contradictions in the system . . . The system develops smoothly without perturbations. Total annual output and the stock of capital . . . then grow together at a constant proportionate rate compounded at the rate of increase of the labour force and the rate of increase of output per man.' Much of her analysis is devoted to elucidating the conditions under which a 'Golden Age' can occur, and, more menacingly, to the consequences of these conditions not being fulfilled. The implications of this are that Golden Ages are of rare occurrence (perhaps the nineteenth century in Western Europe was one; perhaps the second half of the twentieth century in the United States will turn out to be one — it is too soon to say) and that in the absence of Golden-Age conditions we may expect falling real wages, unemployment, inflation, balance-of-payment difficulties, and various other evils. This is under capitalism, defined as an economy in which 'property is owned by a small number of individuals who hire the labour of a large number at agreed wage rates and organise their work (directly or through hired managers). The excess of the product over the wages bill then appears as income from property'. The 'rules of the (capitalist) game' are referred to often. It is shown that in many situations they lead to self-contradictory and destructive consequences. There are dark references to the paradoxes of 'the capitalist rules of the game' and to situations in which 'the rules of the capitalist game become unplayable', in which case there is the possibility of 'adopting a different set of rules'. What these rules might be is a subject that Mrs. Robinson does not deal with.

Orthodox economics has often been referred to by socialists as 'capitalist apologetics'. In a sense this is unfair. Economics is a description and an analysis: it neither praises nor blames. **But** in another sense the accusation is true. Every newspaper editor knows the prop-

aganda value of selection. By merely deciding what is relevant detail and what is not, a given event can be portrayed in a form which is purely descriptive — every word of it may be true — and yet it makes a definite emotional impression upon the reader. So with orthodox economics. Economists, belonging to the classes of society who are on the whole, satisfied with things as they are, choose unconsciously to study, out of the whole range of possible economic phenomena, those whose analysis yields pleasant results. This helps to explain the emphasis laid during the last seventy-five years on equilibrium economics — the balance of supply and demand in a static (or uniformly progressive) economy. On the whole the part of the capitalist system that makes the strongest appeal to the imagination as a harmonious and beneficial piece of mechanism is the price system, particularly if it is considered in its parts (micro-economically) rather than as a whole (macro-economically). The allocation of resources to different uses according to the relative pressures of money demand (assuming that money demand corresponds in some way to human needs) is a fascinating subject. The price mechanism is one of the most beautiful pieces of institutional organisation that social evolution has so far thrown up. Contemplating it is likely to engage one's sympathies for the form of society that has evolved it. The same hypothesis of unconscious bias explains the obstinacy with which the orthodox economists long clung to the assumption that the economy tends spontaneously to full employment, in spite of abundant evidence to the contrary.

But this state of affairs is changing. Either because the awkward facts of capitalism imperatively demand recognition, or because economists are no longer drawn almost exclusively from the comfortably-off classes, academic economics is beginning to range much more freely over the whole territory of economic phenomena. Since Keynes, the subject of booms and slumps is no longer segregated into a sort of ghetto called 'trade-cycle-theory' or 'economic fluctuations' (note the implication of those titles), but ever more vigorous attempts are being made to integrate it with the broad sweep of general economic theory.

As I have said, Mrs. Robinson's axioms and postulates are those of a 'capitalistic' society (as described by her); she does not concern herself with the economics of a socialist society. But much of her analysis is applicable **mutatis mutandis** to a socialist economy. The fundamental relations between population, capital and technique hold good under socialism as under capitalism. Even if wages and profits, considered as class-incomes, disappear, there will remain the distinction between workers' spendable income and the surplus that is retained by the planning authority for social purposes. And the relation between consumption (including social services) and capital-accumulation is not utterly different under socialism from what it is under capitalism. There is no doubt that Joan Robinson's brand of economics, although it is not socialist economics, is a very sound foundation upon which to build a workable system of socialist economics.

There are no explicit references to

Marx in this book. Nevertheless, Marx's spirit hovers over it. Many of the categories that Mrs. Robinson works with are closely akin to those of Marx. Her concept of social classes is very like the Marxian; wages and 'quasi-rent' play a similar part in her analysis to wages and surplus-value in Marx's; The schema of production and simple reproduction with which she starts are very like Marx's; so is her treatment of accumulation and of what Marx calls 'extended reproduction'. The attentive reader will note many points at which the sociological economics of Marx has deeply influenced Mrs. Robinson. This, in the reviewer's opinion, is as it should be. Marxism as a dogma is sterile; but Marx's outlook and methods, interpreted with intellectual flexibility and in the light of recent history, can enormously enrich and stimulate our social and economic studies of today.

THE TORMENT OF SECRECY

by Edward Shils

(Wm. Heinemann, 15/-).

Professor Shils' book is a study of McCarthyism. Other eminent scholars have written on the prevalence of witch-hunting in the United States, mainly from the angles of constitutional law or of classical liberal theory. Such attacks on McCarthyism have come from those who see its clear infringements of legality and who deplore the use of political and economic blackmail to suppress individuality and enforce conformity. Professor Shils would not disagree with the aims of such allies in the cause of decency, but would, I think, disagree with them in their analysis of the problem.

Professor Shils sees McCarthyism as a natural product of certain strains in the American democratic tradition, especially in the manner in which that tradition treats the idea of class. Here "class" must be understood not in the simple terms of capitalist-proletarian position but in the much wider and more complex sense in which the term is used by sophisticated American and British sociologists. Professor Shils is a prominent American sociologist, but he knows as much as we do about the British academic sport of manning the barricades to repel the jargoniers of transatlantic social science. He has lived with us; he knows us well; he can't be said to love us to excess or to approve our snobbery, lack of initiative and our acceptance of undemocratic social mores. But in comparing McCarthyism with whatever it is we have in England, we come out best. The "old boy" connection and the Establishment, the subtle flatteries **that won away the** political members of our political world to the world of deference, the joint committees, the dining clubs, the senior common rooms, from the Commons to the Lords and Boards and beyond — all this when added to the actual and largely accepted hierarchical structure of our political and social world, and to the fact that administration is efficient and political scandals comparatively rare, mean that there is little profit and little power in the business of patriotism in this country. In America McCarthy could terrorise the army, blackmail shipowners and insist that what the President said

about book burning be suppressed by the official **Voice of America**. In England the Empire Loyalists quietly lose their deposits.

The class aspect of all this is important. In Parliament both parties contain large numbers of conventionally well-educated people. Using class to mean social and professional educational status there is no class struggle between the two front benches and no class struggle between Wykehamist Ministers and Wykehamist civil servants, nor indeed much between Ruskin and W.E.A. backbenchers and University front benches. In contrast the Congressman is, in the popular mind, and sometimes in fact, an ill-educated bigoted time-server who, if he had any real talents would not be wasting them on the unedifying and unprofitable profession of flattering constituents, getting himself cheap rides and press publicity, and reading high school poems on "America" into the Congressional Record. For nearly one hundred years Congressmen have had something of this reputation, and so for most of this time have civil servants. But with the New Deal a new type of civil servant appeared in Washington — young, sophisticated, interested in theories, despising Congressmen, quick to answer under questioning, well educated, often at the Harvard Law School and frequently enough Jewish to arouse the anti-semitism latent in all professional super patriots.

Status anxieties (and the frustrations and aggressions resulting from them) are now an important rival to the constitutional theories of Freud in the literature of American psychology. In respect of the desire of Congressmen to injure the intellectuals in government and the arts, the status thesis is not unhelpful: here it is brilliantly handled by Professor Shils. Scientists suffered at the hands of McCarthy because they are (a) intellectuals, (b) because they have their own internal standards of judging facts and men, and (c) because they are the guardians of secrets. Secrecy, whether or not it is warranted drives the McCarthyites mad. Like all of us, they are intrigued by the knowledge that there are important secrets — they are incensed that the government will not turn them over for safe-keeping to Congressmen, so they probe into every possible (and impossible) aspect of the lives and thought of those who have the secrets in their keeping. For the sake of publicity they will sell truth or falsehood with equal even-handedness. Democracy, they declare, demands both total publicity and total secrecy — and the easiest road for them is via total conformity. Security on the other hand demands neither total secrecy, total publicity or total conformity. McCarthy contributed nothing to the security of the American Republic, on the contrary, his hectoring attitude towards the government departments, his character assassination and his leaks to the Press meant that of all the sighs of relief heard at his political eclipse, that of the Federal Bureau of Investigation was loudest.

What is the fundamental cause of all this? In Prof. Shils opinion it is native American populism, the traditional desire to form all Americans in the image of the folksy, patriotic, Christian, rural

or petit-bourgeois average Anglo-Saxon who dislikes the foreigner abroad and the thinker at home. Professor Shils' plea for the development of a genuine pluralistic community in which individuality is not under continual suspicion, and in which institutions like the Universities can tell State governments and Congressmen to keep out, will be sympathetically heard over here. In American terms it is a plea for conservatism and in consequence this is a book which the Left here will find both stimulating and provocative.

RICHARD PEAR.

JIM LARKIN: THE RISE OF THE UNDERMAN

by **R. M. Fox**

(Lawrence and Wishart 18/-)

When Sir Lewis Namier said that there were "two dozen Irelands" in nineteenth-century Europe, he meant national minorities under alien rule, and most of us on this island think of the "Irish problem" as a national one which found its "solution" in Home Rule. Mr. Fox's book reminds us helpfully that the gathering tension in Ireland before 1914, which made the future of the United Kingdom seem as insecure as that of the Empires of the Hapsburg or Romanov, had social as well as national ingredients: that linked with the struggle for self-determination went the fight for life of a labour movement, inspired on its political side by its connection with the cause of national freedom, and on its industrial side by the desperate poverty of the Irish workers.

The way in which nationalist and socialist aspirations were inextricably tied up with each other is clearly illustrated by the career of the labour leader, Jim Larkin (1867-1947). Although his Irish Transport Workers Union earned the reproaches of Sinn Fein leaders for concentrating on industrial rather than patriotic agitation, Larkin himself, invited to tell a London labour audience about the great dock strike of 1913, insisted that the "struggle for National Freedom in Ireland was more important than the 1913 Labour struggle" (which was "received in dead silence"). This duality of aims continued until Larkin left for America in October 1914. As Ireland began to fill with armed bands in response to Carson's challenge, he had insisted on his followers forming a working-class Labour Defence Force distinct from the general Irish Volunteer movement, but his patriotic efforts still earned the approval of such prominent non-socialists as Sir Roger Casement; and his career provides an interesting study of the rise to power of a bitter man who saw himself as a representative of millions victimised by both economic and racial oppression — a type of man whose role in history may be only just beginning.

Mr. Fox inevitably draws special attention to this aspect of Larkin's significance by devoting about half his book to the heroic strike-days of 1907 in Belfast and 1913 in Dublin, while he skips very briefly over Larkin's nine years in America and his later activities in the Dail, as a member of the Dublin Corporation, and as General Secretary of the Worker's Union of Ireland. Even in dealing with the events to which he devotes most attention, however, Mr. Fox does not always give more than a one-sided picture of the situation. The traditional and bitter mistrust between Irish Protestant and Catholic workers, which Larkin tried determinedly and with great success to overcome, is written off as "sectarianism", and although this is what it was, seen from the point of view of the class-war line-up which Larkin was trying to bring about, Mr. Fox's phraseology is too simple to describe such complex and deeply-rooted group attitudes; Larkin's achievement would seem greater, not less, if its background were more scrupulously presented. Again, Mr. Fox adopts without question Larkin's own view that the government acutely tried to split the Irish labour movement in 1913 by willfully misinterpreting the Dublin strike as a nationalist demonstration and sending troops to stir up trouble between Orange and Green factions of the working class; there is no evidence for this, and it seems at least as likely that the British civil and military authorities assumed out of sheer obtuseness and force of habit that the Dublin disturbances had nationalistic causes, and reacted in their traditional way.

Mr. Fox tries to take a wide view, so that his eulogistic tribute to Larkin succeeds in re-creating something of the atmosphere of the period; it is all here, the violent oratory at mass meetings, the brawls between strikers and blacklegs, the law-courts hopelessly prejudiced against labour leaders, even such titbits as the revealing assertion that the police "always made a dead set at any musical instruments when the strikers marched to a band". On the other hand the purpose nowadays of a book like this — apart from the understandable aid of performing an act of piety to a lost leader's memory — is not clear. The historian, even the social historian, will not have much use for it. And the times are surely past when the working class public, even the labour public, felt itself set apart from society in general and identified itself exclusively enough with the labour movement to form a market for this sort of party-literature; what it wants to read now is life-stories of men with less social purpose and more societal appeal than Jim Larkin — of sports-stars, war heroes, and band-leaders. The story of Jim Larkin will appeal, naturally, to those who knew him, and to those already committed to the ideas he stood for, but a wider public can only be reached by the Labour Movement if it realises that this particular **genre** of propaganda for socialism has no future. But as the creed of Socialist Nationalist Movements among impoverished colonial peoples 'Larkinism*' may have a new lease.

ROGER MORGAN,