

Written with a fond understanding of the frailties of the American political process, the book has many of the attributes of a good yarn, including perceptible movement and a discernible beginning, middle, and end. Nevertheless, since scholarship consists also of minutiae, the reviewer must look for faults and report even minor ones. In my overseas location I have been able to make only a limited check for accuracy, but the results were a bit disconcerting. For example, TR's biographer appears as "Herbert" rather than Henry F. Pringle (p. 202) and the source given for Bryan's daily average of speeches in 1896 (p. 86) can hardly be correct. Calling 1893 "the worst depression in the nation's history" (p. 10) is probably only evidence of inexact expression, but even the most tolerant reader may wonder about statements in the same paragraph that Bryan "had gone unobserved by most commentators on national affairs" but that he had "attracted nationwide attention with his speeches" (p. 50).^{*} Then, too, while the book's documentation is exhaustive to the point of including M.A. theses and papers read to learned societies, the best source is not always brought in nor do footnotes always appear at the most applicable spot. But they are, mercifully, at the bottom of each page of text, and the bibliographical essay at the end provides a fine general evaluation of sources.

The impression remains that in this book a skilled young scholar has contributed admirably to his field. More works like this growing out of doctoral dissertations would go far toward settling discussions on the value of that traditionally required "contribution to knowledge."

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Federal Conservation Policy, 1921-1933. By Donald C. Swain. *University of California Publications in History*, Volume 76. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963. Pp. 221. Illustrations, bibliographical note, notes, index. Paperbound, \$4.00.)

This book deals with the idea of conservation, particularly the history of the movement in its American aspect during the administrations of Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover. Swain devotes a chapter each to the federal administrative and conservation policies touching the commonly recognized resources of water, timber, soil, wildlife, minerals, and natural beauty. A final chapter posits the Republican era as a prelude to the New Deal. The author attempts "to establish the direction in which the sprawling federal conservation program was moving during the 1920's and to indicate those facets of national resource policy which contributed to the progress of the conservation movement" (p. 8).

The author has utilized much unpublished material in the National Archives, the Library of Congress, and the records sections of the departments and bureaus of the federal government. His research reveals that the 1920's were productive years for conservation in

^{*} After this review of *The Whirligig of Politics* was completed an errata slip covering several points, including one mentioned here, was received from the publisher.

America. Indeed, Swain concludes that it was in that decade that the foundations for subsequent New Deal conservation achievements were laid. True to his scholarly interest in the evolution of science in America, Swain carefully notes the growth and emphasis upon scientific research in almost every facet of conservation. He documents the struggle leading to the acceptance of principles of multi-purpose resource planning and how it went hand in hand with increased federal reliance upon science.

Perhaps the most interesting point made—but one on which the author fails to capitalize—is the leadership role in the progress and achievement of any worthwhile venture. Swain observes Harding's and Coolidge's utter lack of anxiety in matters of conservation and comments upon the ambivalent attitude of Hoover. But in this vacuum of executive leadership appear Gifford Pinchot and his successors William B. Greeley and R. Y. Stuart on the one hand and Stephen Mather and his alter ego Horace M. Albright on the other. This is, to borrow a phrase from Shakespeare, "a paradox that chastens as it mocks." Swain is at his best when writing about the foresters' commitment to utilitarian conservation and the parkmen's to preservation. The reader becomes vividly aware of the high devotion and ceaseless energy of Greeley, Stuart, Mather, and Albright on behalf of their respective causes.

Once the historian discovers that in the administrations of three American presidents—Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover—there existed on the part of the chief executive no conservation leadership, then there is room for further comment. It is not enough to observe that "Nevertheless, the Park Service bureaucracy attained its success while operating within the pattern of Republicanism" (p. 142). In such an atmosphere of executive unconcern and laissez faire we can be thankful for men of vision like Stephen Mather and Gifford Pinchot. But, the next moment we must observe the waste of human and monetary resources in the pointless struggle between the forest and park services. Pinchot speaks of forestry and conservation as if he had a monopoly on its concept. Indeed, the words which Pinchot repeatedly stated, "Conservation means the greatest good to the greatest number for the longest time" (p. 7), are a paraphrase of the definition of his theoretician W J McGee. No less wrong, the preservationists speak of conservation as if they alone possessed its wisdom. Conservation is many-sided. Herein lies the difficulty. Thus, it never was a question of exclusiveness. And an interested Republican or Democratic chief executive should embrace a conservation philosophy which includes Gifford Pinchot and Stephen Mather. Furthermore, it is the President's task to make them appreciate the opposite viewpoint and work together for the good of the nation.

From 1921 to 1933 not only was there uneven bureaucratic leadership, but there were also sporadic attempts by congressional leaders to oppose the Republican chief executives. Professor Swain concludes his interesting and important monograph: "Contrary to widely held opinion, the national conservation program did not deteriorate in the 1920's. It expanded and matured" (p. 170). Yet when the vigorous conservation leadership rendered by the two Roosevelts is recalled, some followers of Clio would be tempted to dwell upon what might have been.