

the corporations might even be charged with lobbying! Administrative cooperation has been effected through informal conferences, joint committees, exchanges of information, and the more formal methods of memoranda of agreement, letters, and written contracts.

Those who look with favor on the use of the corporate device in administration will not find much encouragement in these pages, for it appears that, insofar as federal-state relations are concerned, much the same problems arise irrespective of the form of organization. The fiction of a separate personality has not become a reality, since "Government corporations never quite lose their appearance of being the government of the United States in disguise" (p. 166). The blame for the failure of the government corporation to aid in mitigating the frictions of the federal system is apportioned among corporate administrators, Congress, the General Accounting Office, the Department of Justice, and the federal courts. But it is stated that the solution can be found only in an unambiguous statute which will outline clearly the relations between the government corporations and the states.

On the basis of these and other studies, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the corporate form of administrative organization has been employed in some instances primarily as a device to evade rigorous accounting controls. While the experience of certain government corporations indicates the usefulness of this device, it is clear that some corporations differ little from either the ordinary department or the independent establishment. Now that the birth rate of government corporations has declined sharply, would it not be in order to inspect the progeny more carefully with a view to delivering some of them into the hands of one of the ordinary departments or at least dropping the corporate fiction?

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The Most Powerful Man in the World. BY GLYN ROBERTS. (New York: Covici-Friede. 1938. Pp. 448. \$3.00.)

Here's a fat, closely-knit volume built around the life-story of a seventy-two year old Dutchman, Hendrik Augustus Deterding, knighted in Britain as Sir Henri Deterding. Glyn Roberts, the English author, dedicates his work to Ralph Fox, a young Eng-

lish Oxonian who had agreed to write the biography of Hendrik Deterding, but fell outside Madrid in January, 1937, while fighting for the Spanish government "against the invasion of Fascism."

Instead of *The Most Powerful Man in the World*, the title of Roberts' book might have been the three-lettered word *Oil*, for it is a story of oil and of imperialism produced by oil; a story of the substitution of oil for coal in production and transportation; a story of keen competition and rivalry between oil companies the world over; a story of political machinations in so-called international peace conferences interested primarily in the oil industry. The world knows little of many Teapot-Dome scandals.

Hendrik Deterding, born in Holland in 1866, was for thirty years a bank clerk or accountant. During the next forty and more years he persistently and intelligently pushed himself to the very apex of world power in the oil industry. Industrious, tireless, ingenious and ingenuous, Deterding, who would "shoot all idlers," set as his goal the control of the oil business throughout the world, and that goal he achieved. Working first with Kessler in the Royal Dutch-Shell Company with headquarters at the Hague, he later moved to London where he tied himself in with various English oil interests, and by indefatigable effort in economics and politics actually outshot John D. Rockefeller and the Standard Oil as No. 1 Oil Man.

Every line of this book is testimony to the fact that economics is the basis of politics. Deterding, though pretending to remain free from politics, has always been a political factor. His has been a crusade for capitalism. He has poured millions of dollars into the hands of Franco and the Fascist cause in Spain; has aided Hitler and the Nazi program in Germany; has admired Mussolini; and has given unstinted financial support to White Russia. Thanks to men like Deterding, Holland and Britain are now and will be henceforth inextricably allied commercially.

Roberts has made a valuable contribution to the history of oil (petrol) with sidelights on banks, finance, art, armies, navies, railroads, diplomacy, personalities, and politics. No ordinary person could produce a work of this quality and magnitude, for we learn much of hundreds of people in Baku, the Caucasus,

Georgia, Mosul, Ukrainia; Rumania, Mexico, Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela, California, India, China, and elsewhere. This is not a work of fiction, but of fact. Newspapers, books, travel, personal contact, observation, and every other conceivable source of information have been drawn upon. Names of strange places and people, with intelligible information about all, call for uncommon knowledge. The author wields a fluent, free, facile pen. His vocabulary, though at times "slangy," is very wide. His power of description and characterization is pungent and realistic.

In the closing lines the reader senses that Glyn Roberts, unable to forget Ralph Fox, is no advocate of dictatorship, fascism, or a capitalistic system which specializes in producing such figures as Teagle, Kessler, Rockefeller, Hoffmann, Gulbenkian, "the Talleyrand of Oil," and Deterding, "the Napoleon of Oil," the One-Man Trust.

It is a pity this book does not carry a table of contents and chapter headings, and especially maps and charts to illustrate the regions mentioned. An adequate bibliography is appended.

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American Politics: A Study in Political Dynamics. BY PETER H. ODEGARD and E. ALLEN HELMS. (New York and London: Harper & Brothers. 1938. Pp. xi, 882. \$3.50.)

Textbooks are usually dreary and bothersome affairs. A new one in political parties, however, is welcome at this time, especially a volume from so gifted a scholar as Peter Odegard. The chief textbooks in parties were written during the 1920's: Brooks, 1923, revised 1933; Bruce, 1927, revised 1932, 1936; Merriam and Gosnell, 1922, revised 1929; Sait, 1927; and Lewis, 1928. These books are largely outmoded because of the rapid change in party behavior as well as by so many important recent researches. The volume of McKenzie in 1938 is too elementary and pedestrian in style to fill the gap.

American Politics is not just another textbook, for the approach is original—a genuine attempt at the functional—and the arrangement of old material is fresh. The chapters on party history are models of condensation, perhaps too much so for students untrained in American history. American party history