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The case of the Chemical Workers' Union not only illustrates the bitter and fanatical opposition of certain larger trade unions to this small organization but, more significantly, shows how these large unions have been able to exclude the Chemical Workers from the joint negotiating machinery of the industry. Those institutional features of industrial relations which enable this to be done may well be more restrictive in character and more damaging to the liberty of the subject than the closed-shop which attracts so much more public attention, and it is not the least of the merits of this work that it spotlights this problem. At the same time, the author argues convincingly that freedom of choice by would-be trade unionists has also been limited by the interpretation placed by the Disputes Committee on the Bridlington resolutions of the T.U.C. governing inter-union disputes.

The two breakaway unions studied provide quite contrasting cases. The United Clothing Workers' Union, a breakaway from the Tailors' and Garment Workers' Union in 1929, shows how racial, religious and regional differences between members of a union were exploited for political reasons by a well-organized minority movement. It also provides a graphic illustration of the difficulties facing such a breakaway organization which in this case led to eventual collapse. On the other hand, the case of the Engineering Officers' (Telecommunications) Association, a breakaway from the Post Office Engineering Union from 1945 to 1953, illustrates the disruptive tendencies which spring from marked differences in training, skill and status within a heterogeneous body of trade unionists. In this case, too, we see that the crucial obstacles to the new organization are non-recognition by the employer and the consequent exclusion from joint negotiating machinery.

Since internal tensions and conflicts within trade unions arise from heterogeneity of membership coupled with centralization of the decision-making process, Dr Lerner, rejecting homogeneity as unattainable and legislation as alien to British tradition, concludes that decentralization of some of the decision-making functions represents a practical solution of those basic problems of organization and government which, from time to time, have thrown up the breakaway union.

University of Birmingham

N. S. Ross

E. E. RICH. *The Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*. Vol. II. 1763-1870. (The Hudson's Bay Record Society. 1959. Pp. xv + 974.)

This enormous volume is, like its predecessor, written with great clarity. The subject has changed, from pioneering to the problems of competition and the gains of monopoly; lagging profits in vigorous competition from 1763 to 1821, high profits from the moment that near-monopoly was re-established in the latter year.

Existing by virtue of a royal, not a parliamentary, charter, the Company had to tread carefully even to retain its privileges; it could have no hope of extending them. The conquest of French Canada therefore opened a vast territory to unrestricted enterprise by British – or New England – independent fur traders. Allying themselves with the experienced French *voyageurs*, they poured resources into the fur trade. Like the French before them, but on a far larger scale, they carried their trade goods into the heart of the Indian lands, and the Company was driven to establish posts in the interior after 1774, abandoning its policy of buying furs only at its posts on the Bay. Nevertheless, it steadily lost ground to the new competitors. The independents themselves, however, found that unbridled competition was costly and dangerous

in the Indian lands to which the law did not reach. Almost from the beginning there were partnerships and amalgamations of interests; by 1776 the Northwest Company had come into being, and it gradually grew, changing its form as it swallowed opposition, until in 1805 it consolidated all fur trading interests on Canadian soil in opposition to the Hudson's Bay Company.

The independents and even for some years the Northwest Company had great success; in the early years of the nineteenth century that company was carrying on four times as much trade as its older rival. The Northwest Company had absorbed a crowd of vigorous and enterprising traders; it was willing to sell spirits to the Indians; and to secure trade its men were ready to beat, rob, kidnap and occasionally murder Hudson's Bay personnel, who generally submitted to these oppressions, losing face and Indian trade as they did so. This was partly temperament; the religious Scotsmen brought out by the Hudson's Bay Company to carry on a respectable trade were far removed in character from the roaring French-Canadian savages, the *voyageurs*. Moreover, the directors of the old Company they served were ever conscious that its special rights, such as they were, depended on a charter which might collapse before the parliamentary or legal challenge that vigorous action of any kind might provoke. So paralysed, it drifted downhill, abandoning regular dividends after 1782 and then slowly dissipating its great financial reserves.

Yet the Hudson's Bay Company had a strong position. Its bases on the Bay lay relatively close to the fur-bearing lands – a few weeks' journey from the inland posts. The Northwesters, on the other hand, had to face a tremendous journey, by lake, river and portage, to Montreal; two years, and sometimes three, were necessary to bring to London the returns for trading goods sent out. The Northwest employees had the defects of their virtues; they were undisciplined, wasted their stores and at times neglected the Company's affairs. For all its success in capturing trade, therefore, the Northwest Company lost some of its old vigour in time and became less profitable; and when in 1818 the Hudson's Bay trader Colin Robertson defied bullying and legal intimidation to break into the rich Athabasca region, in which the Northwesters had long retained a monopoly by superior violence, the profit vanished and the Northwest Company sought amalgamation with its rival. When this was achieved, in 1821, it was on terms which maintained the Hudson's Bay Company's name, methods, administration and directing personnel.

Monopoly and profit came back simultaneously to the fur trade. Great numbers of surplus employees of both companies, no longer needed to outface their rivals, were despatched to become farmers along the Red River; in Saskatchewan district, where the purge was sharpest, the 171 officers and servants brought into the coalition were reduced to 53 within four years. Governor George Simpson brought new standards of rigour into the carrying on of the business of the trading posts. In 1824 the ten per cent dividend was resumed, and this or a higher rate was paid for forty years. Though American competition grew, though the beaver was disappearing and the beaver hat becoming unfashionable, monopoly in Canada made the trade more profitable than it had ever been. Change was ultimately brought about by the settlement and political development of Canada in the middle decades of the century, raising entirely new questions about the Company's rights. In 1863 the control and direction of the Company passed into the hands of newcomers whose interests were primarily in land development; but in the new federal Canada created by the British North America Act of 1867 the property rights – however old-established – of an English chartered company could not be long maintained, and they were sharply cut back in 1870.

At this rather remote date the history ends. Can we hope that Professor Rich will

eventually have the opportunity to bring closer to our own day the work he has so magnificently begun? If so, perhaps the clear depiction of the policies, personalities and connexions of the central administration in London, which was a feature of the first volume but is much less apparent in this one, might be resumed. Even Sir George Simpson, 'the Little Emperor' in Canada, was merely a servant of the directors in London.

University of Hull

RALPH DAVIS

DOUGLAS HALL. *Free Jamaica, 1838-1865: and economic history*. (New Haven: Yale University Press. 1959. Pp. xi + 290. Map. \$ 5.00.)

Dr Hall has launched the new *Yale Caribbean Series* with a work of fine distinction and disciplined scholarship. He writes with authority of the efforts made to adjust the Jamaican economy to the challenge, first of emancipation and then of free trade. His command of material and narrative is masterly, and both comment and judgment are shrewd. His analysis is trenchant and persuasive: indeed it must be, for his picture of post-emancipation Jamaica is far from the orthodox one. Jamaican planters, he tells us, did not sit back, waiting for the British government to get them out of the mess into which its humanitarian and economic principles had pitched them: not only ex-slaves, but also ex-masters, showed an alert initiative and enterprise hardly paralleled in the island until the present post-war period. Moreover, he gives us substantial evidence and contemporary opinion to prove his case. Where the material is insufficient or wanting he tells us candidly: part of his persuasiveness is his honest self-criticism.

By contrast with accepted impressions of the old plantocracy, his opinion may seem a little too optimistic. From the same records that he uses it is possible to get an impression somewhat different from his. Metcalfe for one was not the most reliable witness, and the reports of the Special Magistrates were both parochial and subjective. The lack of the lesser and 'piccaninny' gangs, rarely profitable labour, was a doubtful loss under a free labour system. It is a somewhat facile assumption that Sierra Leonian immigrants would necessarily get on well with Africans brought from other parts of the West African coast. His regret for the abolished Assembly fails to take note of the narrow basis of the franchise, almost a *reductio ad absurdum* of representative government; and the record of Crown Colony government, particularly under Governor Grant, is surely not justly dismissed, as he suggests, by the reported conversation about jobs (p. 263). Nor incidentally is it true that Eyre was the prime mover in panicking the Assembly out of its life: the tactics are complex, but the departmental correspondence within the Colonial Office would suggest that the end result was not what Eyre had skilfully intrigued for. In general, however, his conclusions are both profound and illuminating, for his standpoint is sound and instructed. He tempers criticism with knowledge of contemporary social thought and breadth of comparative judgment. He distinguishes Jamaica from other colonial experiences (p. 254). He shows that the economic pattern of the island today was being set by these events which he is chronicling: the well-to-do middle class and the destitute labouring population. He scrutinizes with care generalizations elsewhere accepted and he submits them to strict analysis: he comments on, and gives reasons for, the increased incidence of petty larceny, for example (p. 196). It is a pity that he did not supply his readers with a map as clear and striking as his own summary of