Beef Stew: Take very good Beef, and slice it very thin; and beat it with the back of a Knife [or beetle]; Put it to the gravy of some meat, and some wine or strong broth, sweet-herbs a quantity, let it stew till it be very tender; season it to your liking; and varnish [garnish] your dish with Marygold-flowers or Barberries. 1669.

And for extra good measure Chapter V has many items of interest and use, such as how to concoct a furniture polish, “which will leave a good gloss and not rub off.” For the modern hostess who wishes to serve something delicate and different, there are candied flowers, Rose Drops, Calendula Conserves or Tansy Pudding. Many more intriguing recipes are given, to challenge our skill and vary our menus.

The author, Dr. Alice Cooke Brown, is a professor of American History at Green Mountain College in Poultney, Vermont. Her husband, John Hull Brown, compiler of a companion volume, Early American Beverages, is a nationally known portrait painter, writer and illustrator of children’s books.

Illustrations are facsimile reproductions of the engravings that appeared in 1849 in Dr. W. Beach’s The Family Physician.

Early American Herb Recipes is much more than a collection of illustrations and herb recipes. It affords a fine historical account of our early colonial housewife's duties and way of life. We can read it with interest, pleasure and benefit.

Valencia, Pennsylvania

SIDNEY DUERR


As recently as a mere half century ago, had it been published then, this book doubtless would have been accepted as a canonical demonstration of the soundness and sanctity of the notion that historical materialism with all its involvements of Marxist dialectics explains the American Revolution. But now, in an era when socialism has been tried out and rejected in favor of militant capitalist nationalism, in the United States as well as in the Soviet Union, the experienced reader probably will be comfortably skeptical of the dogma of pounds and
pence as the major causes of British imperialism and the American defeat thereof in two wars.

What Professor Sosin has done is a monumental study of the activities of the architects of British colonial policy in the Eighteenth Century and the endeavors of American agents to influence those activities and that policy in the direction of accommodation and compromise. He regards the American representatives as a lobby. How successful they were on occasion is proved by his finding that:

In the summer of 1769 Joseph Sherwood, Robert Charles, (Benjamin) Franklin, Henry Eustace McCullough and (Dannys) DeBerdt called on the Secretary of State for the American Department (Wills Hill, Earl of Hillsborough). . . . (He) assured them that the ministry had laid aside "every idea of raising revenue in the colonies, for the service of government," and was resolved to repeal the duties on paper, glass, and painters' colors and undertake every "reasonable and proper measure" to remove the "jealousies, fears and apprehensions of the Americans."

Professor Sosin then reports that all "the administration" expected to salvage was "the dignity of government" and that therefore "the tax on tea would remain as a symbol of Parliamentary authority." But he continues: "In an effort to exert pressure on the ministry for a total repeal of all the duties, . . . Franklin wrote to America . . . , urging that the colonists persist in their non-importation agreements."

However, it was not only money that the Pennsylvania "lobbyist" had in mind. The "political situation" back home was at least partially his motive for advocating continued support of the boycott of taxed products.

As late as January 1775, Lord North's cabinet publicly offered an "olive branch" to the angry Americans. Professor Sosin unqualifiedly says: "Taken in conjunction with other terms offered Franklin by (William Legge, Earl of) Dartmouth during private, informal negotiations, this approached home rule for the colonies."

The London lobby of which Franklin was a member might have succeeded if purely economic considerations had been the issue. But the merchants and the agents themselves were the targets of lobbies not predominantly prompted by profit motives. Consequently, "A valuable opportunity to save the cause of Anglo-American union was lost," as Professor Sosin believes. "Both sides were unwilling to retreat on the issue of sovereignty." Lord North presented "to the House of Commons" one hundred and forty documents relating to the situation in Massachusetts in particular and America in general. All were intended to prove that a rebellion actually existed in the colonies . . . The imperial government would not recognize the Continental Congress.
But North declared eventually — and in vain — that he "only wanted a formal acknowledgment by the colonies; 'if they would submit, and leave to us the constitutional right of supremacy, the quarrel would be at an end.'"

Edmund Burke next "submitted his own plan of conciliation, a return to the situation before 1763." Then, "the British mercantile community fared little better when it sought to remonstrate in favor of the Americans . . . . That same day the House . . . rejected a petition from the London merchants . . . . It was one of several from the trading and manufacturing towns of Bristol, Liverpool and Glasgow."

The "nation of tradesmen," in fact, was by no means anxious for war. Professor Sosin gives it as his judgment that: "Had it not been for the issue of Parliamentary authority, the agents and merchants might have been able to bring about a resolution of any dispute on practical terms . . . ."

Major causes of the American Revolution, it follows, were not mainly economic, certainly were not exclusively in line with the Marxist theory. They were, rather, a combination of numerous dynamic imponderables, including basic differences between involved populations in both the Old World and the New, conflicting civil liberties, religious principles and practices, contrasting moral and ethical customs, varying rules concerning property, different views regarding citizenship and administrative authority, and other divergencies which Professor Sosin does not discuss. What he has accomplished in this volume is a liquidation of a super-market theory of a series of important events in American history. Incidentally, he has cleared John Hancock and other Boston patriots of being nothing but vandals.

*Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania*

James Waldo Fawcett