India: Minto and Morley are alone mentioned. Curzon is mentioned, but not Lord Ronaldshay (now Lord Zetland)'s standard biography. Nor is there any mention of the best up-to-date textbook, T. G. P. Spear's *India* in the University of Michigan *History of the Modern World.* Altogether the selection is most erratic.

The last essay in the volume, Professor Joseph Jones's 'Commonwealth Literature: Developments and Prospects', perhaps hardly concerns us here; but the present reviewer would have preferred fewer names and more interpretation if the essay was to be included at all. There is in fact an overlap with some of the earlier essays.

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Thomas Munro and the Development of Administrative Policy in Madras, 1792 - 1818: The Origins of 'The Munro System'. By T. H. Beaglehole. Cambridge, University Press, 1966. 183 pp. U.K. price: 35s.

THE Indian administrative system with which Sir Thomas Munro is associated was characterized above all by *ryotwari:* the land revenue settlement was made directly with the peasant. No *zamindar* of the Bengal landlord variety was to have a place between government and the cultivator. There was to be the maximum of administrative freedom for the man on the spot; Munro's district collector was to have both executive and judicial functions. In the exercise of these functions he was to follow Indian precedents where possible and to take full advantage of the available reservoir of Indian administrative talent. 'The main evil of our system', Munro once asserted, 'is the degraded state in which we hold the Natives.'

It is this last aspect of Munro's policy which is of immediate interest today. In this new study Dr. Beaglehole makes some judicious remarks on the subject. Munro has to be seen in his context: he has affinities with the twentieth-century 'liberal', but he was certainly not a twentieth-century man. In the nineteenth century, of course, one of Munro's main contributions was to the cult of 'paternalism', in India and beyond; his ideas on the role of indigenous peoples in 'colonial' situations were largely forgotten. Yet much of Dr. Beaglehole's book is devoted not to these matters of broad principle but to the intricacies of revenue policy. This is as it should be in a book which deals with Munro's activities in the years before his appointment as Governor of Madras in 1820. Most of Munro's time in these years was spent in the saddle, or in his tent, patiently dealing with revenue business. Dr. Beaglehole shows us first how Munro obtained many of his ideas through working with Alexander Read in the Baramahal. We then see how Munro's experience of the indigenous system of peasant proprietorship which he found in Kanara, the first district of which he was head, consolidated his opinion in favour of *ryotwari,* and how he sought to apply his theories in the districts ceded by the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1800. Some most useful pages examine Munro's influence, during a period of leave in England, on the deliberations which produced the notable 'Fifth Report' of 1812, and on the changes in the outlook of the home government which followed this report. It would appear that the role of Munro at this time has been exaggerated; Dr. Beaglehole shows that a most important part was played by James Cumming, head of the Revenue and Judicial Department of the Board of Control.

This is a succinctly written volume; the documents are mastered and the argument develops briskly and unfalteringly. The felicitous style matches the production of the book. And Dr. Beaglehole is uncommonly fair. He never credits Munro with more than his due: both Read in the Baramahal and Cumming in his office in London emerge from this book as important figures in their own right. Dr. Beaglehole's brief concluding chapter is excellent. While inevitably it owes something to the brilliant early pages of Dr. Eric Stokes's study of *The English Utilitarians and India,* in places it provides a most valuable corrective to Dr. Stokes's generalizations.

Yet one has a feeling that it is a pity that Dr. Beaglehole limited himself to a book with only 140 pages of text. One would like to know more, for example, about Munro's early life. We are told simply that he was 'well educated'. But was he not educated at the old college of Glasgow, the home of Adam Smith and John Millar and that extraordinary flowering of later eighteenth-century Scottish thought? Dr. Beaglehole's brevity may also mean that some readers will feel that he has not delved quite deeply enough into the indigenous background to Munro's administration. South Indian *panchayats* (village councils), for example, do not receive a great deal of attention, though there is a hint that they might not have been 'as widespread and flourishing immediately before the British assumed control as Munro suggested'. One would like to know more, too, about the degree of resilience, in the face of the British impact, of other indigenous centres of power, such as the caste. Dr. Robert E. Frykenberg's recent study of *Guntur District, 1788 - 1848,* would lead one to suspect that there is still a good deal to be said on this matter. Dr. Beaglehole's book, then, appears to lack what might be described as an 'anthropological' dimension. But, certainly, to what he has written Dr. Beaglehole has brought grace and considerable analytical skill. Let us hope that Dr. Beaglehole has more in store for us on the Madras Presidency in the early years of British rule.

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Southeast Asia Past and Present. By Nicholas Tarling. Melbourne, F. W. Cheshire, 1966. 334 pp. Australian price: $5.55.

PROFESSOR Tarling's fourth book is something of a milestone in the development of Southeast Asian studies in Australasia. That a scholarly condensation of current historical knowledge on the whole field of modern Southeast Asia should be written in New Zealand and published in Australia for an Australasian readership is a measure of the intense interest which is now felt towards the 'Near North'.

The specialist historian is apt to regret that the nature of that interest is such as to produce further general reviews rather than the detailed monographs which he needs, especially in the many fields more or less neglected during the colonial period. Since the publication of the existing general histories (Harrison 1954, revised 1963; Hall 1955, revised 1964; Pearn 1963; Cady 1964; and now Vandenbosch & Butwell 1966; plus a recent plethora of general studies of Southeast Asia in the post-war period), extremely little has been added to our understanding, still less our knowledge, of Southeast Asian history. Nevertheless it is always interesting to see how another historian views the whole vast canvas, what themes he is able to draw from it, what periodisation he chooses, and how far he is able to