The first group posits a materialist account of slavery and abolition (and of empire and indeed of history itself); the second group is not really interested in slavery but locates abolition (and implicitly empire and history as well) in the realm of politics, culture, and ideology. Richard Huzzey belongs firmly in the second camp, including Davies, Drescher, and Eltis in his acknowledgments. There is not necessarily a problem with this. But the book perpetuates a polarization that might be unhelpful. Antislavery is conceived in *Freedom Burning* as born fully-fledged as a given ideological movement that then motivates and shapes policy. Although in the chapters on Africa and on indenture, Huzzey does register the presence of material interests and, in the former in particular, the nexus of commerce, Christianity, and civilization is undeniable, such interests are not permitted to play any role either in the initial take-up of antislavery by an expansive Britain prior to emancipation or in midcentury imperial expansion itself. His story is thus one of the progressive erosion of a self-denying tradition as it deteriorates into self-interest. Williams, who wrote expressively about the same issues and same period as Huzzey and argued for the essential unity of the pre- and postemancipation periods in terms of the relationship between antislavery and national policy, is dismissed in one line: "evidence of abolitionist protectionism . . . proves Williams wrong" (108), which comes within a page of the acknowledgment that "[a]nti-slavery protectionism never had a grip in the firmest antislavery constituencies" (107). In what I am sure is intended as a symbolic omission, Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944) itself does not make it into the bibliography of *Freedom Burning*. Nor does the joint work of Cain and Hopkins on the shaping of imperial expansion by financial interests: neither does Hobson nor, less surprisingly, Lenin. But neither Williams nor these latter theories of imperialism can simply be left behind as too stale and tired to consider if *Freedom Burning* is going to argue, as it does, for the disinterested nature of the original antislavery movement, for the subsequent "entangling logic" (144) of antislavery ideologies as the *primary* motive in imperial expansion, and for antislavery as "its own material motive" (164).

In the absence of economic and commercial motivations for empire—alongside others, of course—it becomes impossible to explain why and how antislavery deteriorated (not in force but in character) from its zenith at some indeterminate time before emancipation. If, however, an earlier, heroic period of antislavery purity was itself the construction of mid-nineteenth-century polemicists, and if British merchants had *always* "picked and chose when they wanted anti-slavery intervention by the state and when they disavowed it depending on their own interests" (140), not simply after emancipation as Huzzey believes, then perhaps the problem of such perceived deterioration becomes less troublesome, even if it does not go away. Huzzey's own conclusion on late nineteenth-century Africa, that "anti-slavery translated commercial interests into national interests" (174), is the case Williams made for the earlier era of abolition.

At the conference at St. Catherine's College in Oxford in 2011 to commemorate the centenary of Williams's birth, it was clear that there was no dialogue between the two sides: each was waiting for the other to stop talking in order to continue proceeding by assertion. It would be a shame if the coming generation of scholars, whose role in part is surely to seek to overcome the contradictions of earlier fixed positions, were drawn into the same refusal to engage.

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ALVIN JACKSON. *The Two Unions: Ireland, Scotland, and the Survival of the United Kingdom, 1707–2007*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. 464. $65.00 (cloth).
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This book, written by an eminent Irish historian based in Scotland, is very much of its time. The survival of the union with Scotland is uncertain, though that with Ireland looks less

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troubled now than in many decades. The author aims to "explain the survival of these two constituent unions of the United Kingdom" (8). A generation and more ago, Irish historians showed little interest in the Anglo-Scottish union of 1707, and Scotland featured little in the work of Irish historians. Comparisons of the two unions have been rare, with Albert Venn Dicey's work perhaps the most notable, especially given his status as a strident unionist polemicist. Alvin Jackson's conclusion is similar to Dicey's: a "capacious and flexible union" allows distinct institutions and patriotic sentiments to flourish within the components of the state while allowing for the development of statewide loyalties. Until half a century ago, the experience of these two unions suggested this was a winning strategy, but this permissive dualism now looks less successful in Scotland.

Scholars have long grappled with the conundrum, expressed by Walker Connor, one of the great scholars of nationalism, that nationalism "appears to feed on adversity and denial. . . . It also appears to feed on concessions" ("The Politics of Ethnonationalism," *Journal of International Affairs* 27 [1974]: 21). A historical comparison of these two unions offers the opportunity to confront this conundrum. Unionism is simply the term used here and elsewhere for state nationalism, and as with other nationalisms, it is a shallow, highly malleable ideology, capable of being constantly redefined and reinvented. Historians have debated the causes and nature of the origins of these unions, but whatever the origins, unionist nationalism had the opportunity to reinvent itself. What distinguishes the two unions is less to be found in their origins than in the reinvented trajectories of unionism in Scotland as compared with its Irish equivalent.

What emerges from this meticulously researched book is the importance of the original unions in setting the path of postunion politics. The path-dependent nature of the original unions was important, though path dependence is not path determinism. As the history of each union demonstrates, there were ample opportunities to change paths. But what has been at least equally important is that institutions and policies alone are less significant than the myths that grow up around these institutions. Ernest Renan, the nineteenth-century scholar of nationalism, famously observed that the essential element of a nation is that its citizens have many things in common but have also forgotten many things. The failure of unionism in Ireland was its inability or unwillingness to encourage people to forget. Indeed, unionism in Ireland in its crassest form seemed all too willing to encourage the selection of memories that were most detrimental to its own cause. Commentators who remark on the Scots' capacity to dwell on historic grievances against the English fail to place this into any serious comparative framework. Unionists were far more sensitive in ensuring that postunion Scotland was offered little to resurrect old memories and myths.

Jackson takes us through the evolution of the two unions, but the density of the detail often obscures the overall message. There is ample material here to build a number of theses. The conclusion draws out some well-trodden themes, but these do not so much emerge from the narrative as seem safe and uncontroversial. The emphasis throughout is on the role of elites, the implication being that history is shaped by key figures in key institutions rather than by wider societal and economic forces. The decline of empire is emphasized and welfare plays a part in this narrative, but overall those whose consent is central to understanding the success or otherwise of union are paid little attention. There are exceptions, including a splendid passage when the author takes us on a journey through Victorian and Edwardian Belfast, passing place names and public spaces that would have reminded inhabitants of unionism. This banal unionism was everywhere. If he is less sure-footed in discussing Scotland, then that is simply because any other expertise would pale in comparison to his encyclopedic knowledge of Irish unionist history.

There are other unions that make up the United Kingdom, and it might have helped to consider more than the two that are or have been most troubled. The author refers to Colin Kidd's description of unionism in Scotland as "banal" (*Union and Unionisms: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500–2000* [2008], 1) in earlier times, but there are other banal unionisms within these isles that might be set against these more troubled unionisms. Indeed, it seems odd to see the

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United Kingdom referred to as "union state" (7, 25) in these pages while the author makes much of the distinctions in origins and trajectories of the two unions under scrutiny. What emerges is less a coherent union state than a state of disparate unions, and that is after considering only two of the unions that contributed to the United Kingdom. This is conceptually important because it points to different dynamics that need to be explored, not to mention potentially very different futures.

This is an important book not least because of the timing of its publication. Unionism and Britishness are under scrutiny now as rarely before. This may be a book of its time, but it is likely to secure its place as a work that will be read well after the current political debates are forgotten or have become potent memories or myths.

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Spencer Jones. *From Boer War to World War: Tactical Reform of the British Army, 1902–1914*. Campaigns and Commanders series. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012. Pp. 290. $34.95 (cloth).
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This is a detailed and technical study of battlefield lessons learned as a result of the British army's bitter experiences during the 1899–1902 Boer War, now more usually referred to as the Second South African War. Jones makes a persuasive case that the skillful tactical performance of the British Expeditionary Force during the maneuver battles of 1914 was a direct consequence of reforms enacted in response to the earlier conflict. Much of the existing historiography, for example, the works of Tim Travers and Martin Samuels, has included some scathing judgments about the British army's preparation for combat in the opening decade of the twentieth century, pointing to a failure to develop a coherent doctrine for modern war and an alleged conservative reluctance to accept the growing threat of modern firepower. Others, such as John Terraine and David Ascoli, have asserted that the British Expeditionary Force of 1914 demonstrated considerable competence in field craft, marksmanship, and dispersed tactics as a result of its experiences in colonial small wars but have failed to demonstrate empirically the connection. Jones's work thus fills a gap. His research rests securely on archival sources, contemporary professional journals, and successive editions of drill books and training manuals, and he traces the sequence of events, reaction, and debate that took the army from the disasters on the veldt in the opening months of the South African War to the achievements of 1914: rapid and accurate infantry marksmanship; artillery skilled at concealment and developing techniques of indirect fire; cavalrymen, equally capable of fighting mounted and dismounted, and in striking contradistinction to their continental counterparts, who now knew how to care for their horses on campaign.

Having sketched out the broad outlines of the South African conflict, Jones devotes a chapter to the British army as an institution, focusing on its doctrine and ethos. Like others before him, he notes that the small, professional British army, called upon to fulfill a variety of roles, could hardly develop an effective, unified doctrine. Flexibility and versatility were required of a force that operated primarily as a colonial police force, acting against indigenous peoples in a variety of environments, but which might also be thrust into a European war against a highly trained enemy. This militated against the formulation of common doctrine and thus practice and levels of skill varied from unit to unit. As Jones acknowledges, this would remain a problem; indeed, during World War I, it would be dramatically amplified as a mass army of first volunteers and then conscripts was hastily raised under wartime conditions without a common doctrine. Overall, reform was most successful at war's lowest

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