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This book has been a long time in the making. The papers of Cecil Bisshopp Harmsworth, First Baron Harmsworth, came up at auction in 2008. Harmsworth had corresponded with a wide range of well-known individuals and letters he had received from luminaries such as Winston Churchill and W.B. Yeats were naturally attractive to bidders. Therefore, the collection did not remain wholly intact. Happily, however, the University of Exeter's bid for Harmsworth's extensive diaries was successful. Subsequently, the University acquired further tranches of documents that had remained unpurchased at the original sale. It may be said that although incomplete, the Harmsworth Papers that have now been deposited in the University Library's Special Collections are both substantial in volume and valuable in terms of the light that they cast on twentieth-century British politics and society. We understand that Harmsworth's wife Emelie also kept a diary: it may still exist but sadly we failed to track it down. It would probably provide a very interesting complement to Cecil's.

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