



Editorial

THIS YEAR we devote our special issue of the *New Zealand Journal of History* to discussions of Miles Fairburn's *The Ideal Society and its Enemies*.

Since its publication in 1989, the book has attracted much attention. It has been warmly acclaimed by some reviewers and roundly criticized by others. The first edition quickly sold out and a second edition was published in 1990. We received a critical essay on it by Rollo Arnold, before we received Alan Ward's review essay. We published both in our issue for April 1990. Fairburn wanted to answer Arnold's essay and we were continuing to receive other essays that commented in some way on *The Ideal Society*. So we decided to put them together in a special issue of the *Journal*.

However, we also decided that Fairburn's theories needed to be examined in a wider perspective. So we invited contributions from two historians of other New World societies: Clyde Griffen from Vassar University in the United States, and John Hirst from La Trobe in Australia. We are grateful to both of them for their responses. At the other extreme, Fairburn's theories need to be tested by a closer examination of particular localities or communities in New Zealand. We print three essays in these categories: by Raewyn Dalziel, who looks at the kinship relations of the first generation of New Plymouth settlers; by Caroline Daley, who discusses the Hawkes Bay community of Taradale; and by Duncan Mackay, who examines the kauri timber workers.

Then we sent the essays to Fairburn and asked him to comment on them, and the earlier essay by Arnold. We print his lengthy reply little altered except, for reasons of space, by a severe reduction of the notes. So it becomes a finale to this issue of the *Journal*, though we doubt whether it will be the final word on the nature of community in New Zealand history.

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