

To some extent the deficiencies outlined above are a consequence of Dalton's method. He has dutifully ploughed through a mass of official papers — despatches and Colonial Office minutes, New Zealand Parliamentary Papers and Debates, and the private papers of some politicians — but he has seldom looked beyond this material to examine Maori and European opinion, as recorded by mission papers, the newspapers, and in the Maori Affairs archives (mentioned in the bibliography, though seldom in the footnotes).

Yet for all the criticism that Dalton's book will provoke, it will remain a useful contribution to British imperial and New Zealand history.

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A History of Canterbury, Volume III: 1876-1950. By W. H. Scotter. Christchurch, Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., 1965. N.Z. price: \$4.20.

ALTHOUGH one may doubt the validity of provincial as distinct from local or national history, as indeed both Mr. Gardner and Dr. Scotter seem to do themselves (pp. xviii, 429), the publication of *A History of Canterbury*, Volume III: 1876-1950, brings to the interested reader a mine of information which it would be difficult to obtain elsewhere.

After introductory comments on the changing nature of Canterbury provincialism, and on the transition years 1874-8, the book is divided into four periods: 1879-95, 1896-1914, 1915-35, 1936-50. In each of these sections, the author has attempted to describe the principal economic, political and social developments of the time. The result is only a qualified success.

The economic chapters are thorough, illustrating the theme of the emergence of Canterbury as a leading pastoral district of New Zealand. Useful maps, tables and appendices give the book added value as a reference work. The sections dealing with political issues are less satisfying.

Dr. Scotter has certainly not upheld an artificial distinction between provincial politics and national developments. Instead, he has tried to reveal the attitudes of Canterbury politicians and public towards matters of national concern. Unfortunately, he tends at times to give so much provincial detail that the national perspective becomes obscured. This practice is particularly noticeable in Chapter VI, 'Canterbury in Colonial Politics: From Hall to Reeves'. The political struggles of later years are better described. T. E. Taylor is regarded as 'the most devastating, if erratic, critic of government in New Zealand's parliamentary history' (p. 280). G. W. Forbes undergoes historical reassessment. From being 'New Zealand's most improbable premier', he emerges as a 'first class parliamentarian, skilful in debate, imperturbable under attack, always able to gauge the feelings of the House' (p. 425). And for Canterbury political history, 30 November 1949 is attributed a significance comparable to Reeves's success on election night, 1890 (p. 457).

When the author's attention is focused on local government, the results are rewarding, the incidence of rural localism being particularly well described. An interesting feature of the post-1915 period that Dr. Scotter emphasizes is the activity of a large number of organizations concerned with the war, with unemployment and even with local projects such as that

of the River Improvement Society which aimed to convert unsightly drain outlets into 'artistic waterfalls' (p. 369).

One of the major criticisms levelled against Volume I of this series was the failure of the authors to impress upon the reader what life in Canterbury really was like. Although Dr. Scotter has managed to give a more balanced account, his treatment of social developments is disappointingly selective, especially his final chapter carefully entitled 'Aspects of Canterbury Social Life'. He includes some interesting details on nineteenth-century conditions and there are glimpses of social malaise during both depressions. But much is omitted.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Gardner notes that the truest Canterbury is perhaps a private and personal one, best found in the work of poets such as William Pember Reeves, Ursula Bethell, Allen Curnow and Denis Glover (p. xxiv). However, apart from stating that attention to the arts and to education are characteristic of Canterbury social life, Dr. Scotter does not show us this personal side of the province. Instead we are referred to essays in the forthcoming Volume II. Although this may prove to be an unjust criticism, it is difficult to envisage how a book dealing ostensibly with 1853-76 will be able to remedy the deficiencies for the twentieth century. The author of Volume III has chosen to concentrate instead on the predominance of religious bodies as the distinctive feature of Canterbury society.

On balance, however, this book is a valuable addition to New Zealand historical writing. The author does suggest some avenues for future research which it is a pity he felt unable to pursue himself (pp. 24, 110, 143). At times detail has been added at the expense of readability. But above all, Dr. Scotter's survey is a detached one. At no time does he show signs of approaching the heights of extravagant provincialism attained by the *Lyttelton Times* in 1918, when Canterbury was described as 'the most fortunate of . . . provinces, the most progressive, the most earnest, the best in which to labour, and the best in which to live' (p. 365). Dr. Scotter deserves credit for a scholarly monograph.

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The Colonial Empire: A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century.

By D. K. Fieldhouse. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966. 450 pp.
U.K. price: 63s. N.Z. price: \$7.90.

MR. FIELDHOUSE'S new book was written for a German series, Fiechen's *Weltgeschichte*, and published in German before this English addition appeared. This is the age of series and Weidenfeld and Nicolson are running two in double harness, for the Universal History to which the volume before us belongs is obviously not identical with the History of Civilization, of which Sir Ronald Syme is editor. Let us hope their horses do not bite one another.

Mr. Fieldhouse had a formidable task. Not only is the subject enormous, but its limits are not easily defined. What is a 'colonial' empire? At what point, if any, can Russian expansion eastward be said to have taken this form? The Russians say, at no point, and thus exclude themselves from the ranks of the colonial powers. Mr. Fieldhouse does not let them get away with this. As he says, 'Siberia was a settlement colony