

(compared very unfavourably with Sweden and Denmark) and equal pay (in which the 1971 Commission is seen as severely hampered by its terms of reference). Dr Sutch concludes with a programme designed to bring about equal opportunity for women — most of the planks would not only help to achieve this but would enable both sexes to live a fuller and richer life.

Dr Sutch clearly has a cause. I am not sure whether he still holds the view he once held that women are superior to men (cf. p.x and p. 231), but he is dedicated to the creation of an environment where there is equality of opportunity for women and men. A sort of hybrid between Russia and Scandinavia appears to be the model to which he turns.

His book could have done with much more careful editing. For example, Sidney Webb's name was spelled with an 'i' not a 'y'; Mrs Fawcett on p. 37 appears incorrectly as Mrs Fawatt on p. 35; p. 36 accepts Helen Blackburn citing a meeting in 1868 as the first (in Britain) addressed by women whereas Sutch himself refers to earlier meetings on p. 20; John Redmond is Redmand on p. 60; p. 94 the National Agricultural Labourers' Union is incorrectly called the National Union of Agricultural Workers; p. 119 New Zealand becomes prosperous because of 'rising overseas prices for small farms'. Such errors are grist to the critic's mill.

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*The Majesty of Colour: A Life of Sir John Thurston. Vol. I. I, the very Bayonet.*

By Deryck Scarr. Australian National University Press, Canberra. 1973. xxx, 370 pp. No price stated.

SIR JOHN THURSTON was a very able man and this is a very able book. Dr Scarr's researches have been exhaustive. He has combed the National Archives of Fiji, the Public Record Office, various missionary records (some of them in the Mitchell Library), Thurston family papers and many other private sources. When Dr Scarr's promised second volume appears, there will not remain much to be found out about Thurston. But there will still be room for differences of interpretation. It is claimed in the 'blurb' that Dr Scarr 'came to challenge the accepted views of Thurston as man and politician'. Accepted by whom? By the European planters at the time, no doubt; but this was balanced by the favourable view of the Colonial Office. Two writers of theses, ungenerously referred to by Dr Scarr, also take a favourable view. Dr Scarr's *bête noire*, to judge from a note on p. 346, seems to be the late Professor G. C. Henderson; but as this work of his remains unpublished, it is difficult to regard it as embodying the 'accepted view'. The present reviewer, who has not seen Henderson's manuscript, does not feel that his own judgement of Thurston has so far been substantially altered by Dr Scarr's work, whilst admitting that many facts in it are new to him.

No attempt, however, will be made in this review to follow Dr Scarr through the forest of detail in which he involves his readers. The undergrowth of Fijian politics is bound to be confusing at times and makes it difficult to disentangle Thurston's personal contribution to them. When Dr Scarr comes to the visit of the Goodenough-Layard Commission in 1873, the crucial episode in this volume,

the narrative is easier and the writing better, perhaps because Dr Scarr has found another target for his invective in the person of Commodore Goodenough. The unfortunate commodore, who fell a victim to the poisoned arrows of the Santa Cruzians little more than a year later, is portrayed as a racist and a snob. Thurston was unquestionably an abler man than either of the two commissioners, but the fault in the negotiations between them was not all on one side. Thurston played his cards very close to his chest: it is hard to see why he should not have said quite openly that he favoured annexation but only with safeguards for the Fijians. And Dr Scarr's statement that 'puzzled historians, who have universally, and crudely, supposed that if Goodenough so blatantly wrecked independent Fiji Thurston's was the fault' is, to put it mildly, a distortion of the facts.

It might also be thought at times that this book is not merely a biography of Thurston but also a tract against 'racism'. No one would deny that authors are entitled to write tracts against racism. But in the reviewer's opinion, historical scholars should be wary of all these 'isms'. Dr Scarr talks of 'the strain, so deep-rooted in the Anglo-Saxon's psychology, which allowed none of the rights of man to coloured men'. Burke did not 'know the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people'; but Dr Scarr, it seems, does. No doubt many of the Europeans cared little for the Fijians and would gladly have turned them into a race of agricultural labourers. But they were never in a position to impose such a system on Fiji. This was in part due to Thurston's courage and skill as an administrator and his influence with the chiefs as a 'pilot-fish' in troubled seas — a much more apposite translation of the Fijian words than the curious title Dr Scarr has chosen for this volume. But there was also the question of numbers. Dr Scarr has taken the planters' talk too seriously.

The reviewer has noticed only one error of fact in this book. South Cape is not 'the tip of the South Island' (p. 9) but, as a glance at a map would have shown, of Stewart Island. The book is an important contribution to historical knowledge, but from time to time it left a bad taste in at least one reader's mouth.

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