

reveal the extent to which legislators' intentions were realized in the day-to-day administration of their policies.

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Provincial Perspectives. Essays in Honour of W.J. Gardner. Edited by Len Richardson and W. David McIntyre. Published by Whitcoulls for the University of Canterbury, 1980. 149pp. N.Z. price: \$12.95.

THE LIMITED range of outlets available for the publication of historical research in New Zealand includes the occasional *festschrift*. Over the last two decades W.P. Morrell, W.T.G. Airey, J.C. Beaglehole and F.L.W. Wood have been among the historians honoured in this way. Now they are joined by W.J. Gardner who, while perhaps not quite as well-known to the general public as some of those just mentioned, has over the years earned the deep respect of his fellow historians in New Zealand for his contributions to the academic study of regional history.

In view of the considerable inadequacies of this volume, it is perhaps time to raise some questions as to the purpose of a *festschrift*.

In the first place, a *festschrift* honours an historian and commemorates his contributions to the discipline. In this respect, *Provincial Perspectives* falls short in several ways. The most serious is the lack of a bibliography of Gardner's writings. As is the case with most New Zealand historians, these are scattered in many places. If an historian's influence is considered significant enough to be commemorated in a book, then surely the editors owe us the duty of informing us where we can find the written sources of that influence. It is particularly strange that they should have allowed W.H. Oliver in his introduction to have casually mentioned various pieces by Gardner without telling us, even in footnotes, where these are located. One would also have appreciated the publication of more articles embodying the results of research supervised or influenced substantially by Gardner. The reader will find great difficulty in gauging from the contributions any clear measure of his influence on historical research and writing.

It is also regrettable that so many of the articles in the book are by authors whose views on the subjects covered have been published recently in book form or are shortly to be published. It is, for instance, hard to understand why space was given to what would appear to be little more than a summary by Professor McIntyre of the analysis of Henry Sewell's Canterbury career which he has just given the world at considerable length in his introduction to the Sewell journals. What one misses is a feature which gave great value to, for example, the Airey *festschrift* (*Studies of a Small Democracy*) or the University of Canterbury's other recent collection of historical essays, *Miners and Militants*—the publication of material, by research students in particular, that otherwise would not easily or quickly have found its way into print, given the limited number of publication

outlets in New Zealand. To have published a work of this kind would very suitably have honoured a man whose influence has been felt especially in the area of research supervision.

It is also a highly misleading reflection on the extent of Gardner's influence on New Zealand historiography that the editors should have assembled such a miscellaneous collection of items and issued it under the title, *Provincial Perspectives*, as if it represented the current state of understanding as to the meaningfulness and value of the 'provincial' unit of study in New Zealand history. The contributors show very little awareness even of the existence of a problem here. An opportunity has been lost to compile a work that would have honoured the historian by demonstrating in an explicit way the ongoing usefulness of the 'provincial' approach to New Zealand history of which he has himself been so strong a practitioner and advocate.

This volume consists of six essays. Russell Stone contributes a piece on the political opposition in Auckland in the Crown Colony period—very useful and entertainingly written, although it is by no means clear why it is in this book. W.D. McIntyre writes on Henry Sewell. Roger Robinson gives a brief commentary on Samuel Butler, celebrating an apparently hitherto little-noticed aspect of the novelist, namely his strenuous athleticism. Butler emerges as remarkably akin to Robinson himself—and indeed to Gardner and his running associates in the Canterbury History Department. Butler was, says Robinson, 'no pale scholar', and that might well be the motto for the Canterbury tradition commemorated here. Stevan Eldred-Grigg writes at rather greater length than in his recently-published book about the female members of the families of the landed gentry in Canterbury between 1880 and 1910. Len Richardson throws some light on the complex struggles within the Blackball Miners' Union in the 1920s. The only paper which tries to raise wider issues concerning colonial or frontier society is 'Gold Rushes of the Pacific Borderlands: A Comparative Survey', derived from a lecture given by P.R. May not long before his death.

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A Southern Gentry: New Zealanders who inherited the earth. By Stevan Eldred-Grigg. A.H. & A.W. Reed, Wellington, 1980. 192pp. N.Z. price: \$16.95.

THIS IS a critical study of the great South Island landowners and the 'aristocratic tradition; which is revealed as 'yet another . . . unprepossessing' aspect of New Zealand's past. A South Islander himself, Dr Eldred-Grigg believes that New Zealanders have been too optimistic over their history, and his style recalls the polemical vigour of nineteenth-century pamphleteers. For him, the South Island was 'a frontier of capitalism', in which gentleman colonists, 'overwhelmingly English and almost completely upper class and upper-middle class' in origin (p.75), rose to power through their control of land. They bought or leased vast estates, and invested additional capital in mortgages, town property and local