

mercially aggressive Indians who had already leased considerable areas of Fijian land and were demanding more. In all this it was the British who were Sukuna's natural allies. He was in no hurry for independence.

Nevertheless, as Sukuna's life ended, Fiji was heading towards independence. Had he lived to see it he may not have been disappointed. For Fiji was led into independence, under a constitution that ensured Fijian control, by Ratu Kamisese Mara, Sukuna's New Zealand- and Oxford-educated nephew. It was Ratu Mara who chaired the biography committee which invited Deryck Scarr to write Sukuna's life and edit his papers. They have been well served. Scarr has displayed a sure understanding of the intricacies of Fijian history and custom, and a balanced judgment. Though clearly a warm admirer of Sukuna, he has resisted the temptation to produce mere hagiography. However, he is at times unnecessarily reticent. For instance, he fails to tell us that Sukuna got a second at Oxford. Not that Sukuna himself was ashamed of it — he does in fact refer to it in a speech to the Legislative Council in 1935. He had sat his exams after two terms, having resumed his degree after the interruption of war service. We have only to read some of Sukuna's reports in the *Selected Writings* to recognize the quality of his mind and the elegance of his prose. Once more the comparison with Ngata springs to mind, for he and Sukuna could write the King's English as well as any of their European contemporaries.

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*New Zealand: A Handbook of Historical Statistics.* By G. T. Bloomfield. G. K. Hall & Co., Boston, 1984. U.S. price: \$68.00.

STUDENTS of New Zealand history are always grateful for those publications which consolidate statistical series that would otherwise remain scattered through publications of the Registrar-General, the reports of government departments, year-books, census reports, and so on. For years I have cherished (to name some instances) *The Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony Period 1840-52*, Auckland University College, 1954; B. L. Evans's *Agricultural and Pastoral Statistics of New Zealand 1861-1954*, Wellington, 1956; and the broadsheet 'Statistical Summary of the Colony of New Zealand from 1853 to 1900' attached to the back of the early twentieth-century New Zealand Official Year Books. But there has never been any comprehensive summary in one publication of New Zealand statistics covering a wide range of topics and time.

Now the gap has been filled by G. T. Bloomfield's *Handbook*. There are very few gaps in the topics covered; although treatment of those two great contemporary drains upon public finances — education and public health — has somewhat summary coverage. Before each section of statistical tables there is a sound introduction with exemplary footnoting which provides guidance for further reading.

Admittedly, there are imprecisions; and rather too many 'literals'. For instance, Shortland was not renamed Thames between the 1871 and 1874 censuses (p.35): Thames was the name given at that time to the *merger* of Shortland with

Grahamstown. Greater care with proof-reading would have ensured, moreover, that pages 73-5 were accurately headed, that there were not cinema admissions in 1838-9 (p.ix), and that there was no dropping of the date column on p.116 on religious professions 1858-1976 which makes that table so baffling to the reader.

These, however, are minor imperfections in a work which holds its own in G. K. Hall & Co's estimable International Historical Statistics series. Bloomfield's book will certainly become an essential item in every public library in New Zealand, and should be a basic tool for any social scientist whose study of New Zealand demands an abstract of statistics which contains (as the author rightly claims) an 'outline [of] the major series of data' for that country.

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