

sionism' belongs equally to the American historiographical debates of the 1960s-70s. The title, *The One Best System?*, is itself a somewhat mysterious echo of David Tyack's history of urban education in the United States, published in 1974. Such engagement is refreshing in a field that for many years was notable for its lack of international or theoretical vistas. Thanks in no small part to Shuker's efforts, historians of New Zealand education can now relate their own work to a well developed 'radical' paradigm as well as to the received liberal view. Even so, it must be noted that in the United States 'revisionist' theory in the narrow sense that Shuker conveys has been under heavy attack for at least a decade and has lost much of its former dominance. New Zealand historians of education need now to be careful not simply to replace one outmoded and imported myth with another. It is clear also that a large agenda for research still remains. Shuker's concentration upon the role of the state means that local, regional, and community attitudes towards education continue to be neglected. Our understanding of primary education, of technical education, of universities, independent schools and informal agencies of education will similarly fail to be advanced by the present work.

The One Best System? is a major contribution to the history of education in New Zealand, one that deserves close attention from historians. It should find a prominent place in the literature for some time to come. But it should be addressed, like the work of Butchers and the Cummings, as a baseline against which other historians can direct in a critical manner their own experience and interpretations.

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Old New Zealand Houses 1800-1940. By Jeremy Salmond. Reed Methuen, Auckland, 1986. 246 pp. illus. NZ price: \$38.50.

THE NEW ZEALAND house has had its admirers and its commentators, but not until now its chronicler. Among the commentators are some well known names in New Zealand architecture. Paul Pascoe, Ernst Plishke, Gerhard Rosenberg and recently Sir Michael Fowler have each helped in their own way towards an appreciation of the development of the New Zealand house. Jeremy Salmond is the first, however, to study the subject in depth, and he has produced the definitive work on the vernacular New Zealand house.

Roy Worskett, Planner to the city of Bath, came here as guest speaker for the New Lives for Old Buildings conference in 1980. He startled many of us by advocating the listing and protection (as best our meagre conservation legislation allowed) of the ordinary and typical houses that make up the bulk of the inner areas of our cities and towns. It is from this time (though not under Worskett's sole influence) that the Historic Places Trust has been consciously classifying the typical house as well as the one that is special because of historical association or unusual architectural skill in its design.

Salmond's book provides ample justification for this policy. He has made a serious and disciplined study of what has been regarded as commonplace. In doing so he has drawn a full and coherent picture of the development of the New Zealand

house, of the availability of materials, the parts played by developing technologies and overseas influences, of the changing lifestyles and aspirations of New Zealanders.

The book is divided into three chronological sections: The First Houses 1800–1860; Victorian Villas and Cottages 1860–1910; and The Bungalow and Beyond 1910–1940. The first section deals with Maori houses to the time of European contact, local materials and the primitive first shelters of the colonists, and the second phase of more substantial cottages, their siting, planning, form and style. The account is drawn from contemporary sources and the buildings themselves where they still exist. The vulnerability of our pioneering structures is well shown by the recent loss of a building illustrated by Salmond — Jenkin's cottage in Otaki, believed to be the last wattle and daub building left in New Zealand. The technological value of this building was immense and the information to be gained from it not available from any documentary source.

Villas up to the time of the First World War are characterized in part by the mechanization of the building industry and the consequent availability of house components. Part two covers these technological advances, the new materials and methods of construction, and the plans and forms of the bay villa. The remaining built evidence here, of course, is vast and is drawn on in photographs and form diagrams.

The American origin of the Californian bungalow of the 1920s is vividly illustrated by the photograph of a Northcote house alongside an advertisement from the American *Bungalow Magazine* of 1914: the form of each is identical. Again in this section ample use is made of present day photographs. It is a much shorter section than the other two, and squeezes in a look at the Spanish Mission, English Cottage and International styles, and the State House between 1905 and 1945. This last is only three pages. In the evolution of the modern New Zealand house the State House of the 1930s is vital and, in the absence of a study matching that of the earlier periods, it may have been more comfortable to have stopped at the depression of the early 1930s.

All interests are catered for in this as in the earlier sections, for style, form and construction are far from being Salmond's only interests. Changing fashion, particularly with the wide-spread availability of electricity, is dealt with: 'The modern wife . . . won't have "mucky old ranges"', claimed a magazine in 1926 in promoting electric cooking. 'No longer need the tired housewife clean fire stoves, scrub saucepans and throw away unpalatable food.' And an aproned woman is shown beside a 'Laun-Dry-Ette' electric washing machine. This is one of the great strengths of the book — the consideration of social change and how this meshes with stylistic change. Too often architectural history fails to look beyond the latter.

The book is well designed. It is copiously illustrated with the author's photos and drawings, numerous early photos, pages from pattern books and catalogues, and contemporary advertisements, all drawn from a wide range of sources. It ends with a glossary, full references, an amazingly full bibliography, and an index.

Where do architects figure in this story? Hurst Seager and F. de J. Clere are quoted in the introduction and the contribution of architects through plan books — for instance those of G. W. Phillips from c.1909 — is covered. No single architect-designed house is discussed, although at least one that is illustrated (and I suspect several) was designed by an architect. What is waiting to be explored is the role some architects played in influencing popular taste. Seager in Christchurch and Clere in Wellington are two architects who, as early as 1903 in the case of Seager, were

foreshadowing the California bungalow's arrival in New Zealand. A number of other architects did less innovative work, perhaps improving on the standard builders' plans of the time or exploiting otherwise unseen opportunities. The tall one-room wide houses of steep inner city Wellington have all the hallmarks of the popular tradition that suit them for inclusion in Salmond's book, and they are included, yet an architect is known to have designed the best remaining examples of these buildings at 296 to 306 Tinakori Road. Was this architect's work imitative of builders' work or did he set a pattern for others to follow?

The best source of information on the New Zealand house is the artifact itself. Salmond devised his own New Zealand Houses Index and he photographed and researched some two thousand houses from all over the country with an emphasis (three hundred houses) on Devonport. This sample allows him to speak with authority on all matters of style, form, materials, and regional variation. He is the first person to do this for the ordinary New Zealand house. What is more, he has turned the statistical data and the vast amount of original research into a book of authority, fluency, and wit. We — ordinary New Zealanders — must be grateful.

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Taking the Waters. Early Spas in New Zealand. By Ian Rockel. Government Publishing, Wellington, 1986. 188 pp. NZ price: \$29.95.

THIS IS a frustrating account of frustrated enterprises. New Zealand's 20 or so spas, despite inflated promotions by politicians and local boosters, remained isolated, unprosperous, and rudimentary until the 1960s. The promised rich foreign valetudinarians never materialized. The community rejected as unthinkable the casinos which might have supplied the capital to render the spas glitzy.

Mr Rockel is authoritative on the physical settings of the various springs of mineralized waters and the early official decisions to exploit them, together with the often bizarrely designed and uncomfortable bath-houses and chalets that ensued from those decisions, but beyond this his book is disappointing. He seems incurious about the people who used the waters, both before and after European settlement. He mentions government balneologists and masseurs, but the origins and purposes of the rheumatic, gouty, paralysed, eczematous, consumptive, depressed, and dyspeptic sufferers who journeyed over rough roads to drink and wallow in the waters remain unexplained. The visitors remained too few, despite considerable government investment and enticement, to make the spas into independent ventures. Mr Rockel refers passingly to changes during the 1920s which gradually transformed the spas from therapeutic to pleasure resorts, and to further changes in the late 1940s and 1950s when they became sightseeing and leisure playgrounds, but again he leaves these alterations in behaviour unexplored. He also refers to the reservation of particular baths for particular races, and to differential accommodation and treatments by social class, as at Rotorua between 1921 and 1949, but he neglects the opportunity to pursue these issues so as to illumine the wider New Zealand society.

Therapeutics also changed over time: for example, mud-baths for consumptives were abandoned in favour of 'medical use of geothermal waters' for rheumatic