

product of both technological advances — almost entirely from overseas — and local demand. The changing technology is described in a refreshingly simple and succinct way. Given that they were largely a state monopoly, demand for new telecommunications facilities was mostly channelled through bureaucrats and politicians. Despite some intriguing discoveries, for instance that such facilities were less likely to be opened during election years, this aspect could have been explored further. How strongly, and in what ways did people go about securing local services? The impact on telecommunications of major events, particularly the world wars, is well described.

There are some interesting observations on developments during the 1980s, before corporatisation. The oft-cited problems of occasional overloading of lines in Auckland and Wellington during the early years of the decade are explained, along with the actions being taken then to overcome them. More generally, readers are made aware of the vast amount of planning and investment being done to keep New Zealand, a primary-producing nation with declining terms of trade, up with the extremely rapid pace of technological change. In this area, as in so many others, corporatisation and privatisation have clearly built on, indeed fed on, the public expenditure of previous years.

There are the almost inevitable slip-ups. Samuel Morse died in 1872, not 1832, hence the adjacent photograph of him 'in old age'. It is Jim Gardner, not Gardiner, who writes in the *Oxford History of New Zealand*. In 1868 New Zealand Mean Time was established at 11 and a half hours (not 11 hours) ahead of Greenwich Mean Time. The book is presented quite well, but the standard of reproduction of the photographs, all from the Telecom Archives, is sometimes disappointing.

This is an official history and draws sparingly on the reminiscences of former employees or users of the system. Given more time and space the author might have considered providing more of this dimension, to give readers a feel of what it was like to work in the industry, and the difference that changing telecommunications made to people's lives. However, aside from the comparatively rare occasions when he feels compelled to speculate on some economic aspects, the story flows along smoothly. Moreover, there has been no previous official history of this area, aside from Howard Robinson's *History of the Post Office in New Zealand*, a more general work published in 1964, a very long time ago in terms of modern telecommunications. There was clearly a need for a more focused and updated account, and Tony Wilson has done the job very capably.

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Robert S. Ellwood, *Islands of the Dawn: The Story of Alternative Spirituality in New Zealand*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1993, ix, 285 pp. US price: \$32.00. ISBN 0-8248-1487-8.

John Garrett, *Footsteps in the Sea: Christianity in Oceania to World War II*, University of the South Pacific and World Council of Churches, Suva and Geneva, 1992, xvi, 514 pp. NZ price: \$40.95. ISBN 982-02-0068-7.

MANY NEW ZEALANDERS will feel that the historic Christian denominations are in heavy retreat in this country and many commentators have observed the apparently

secular nature of its society. Still, there are many indications that at least some of that 'secularity', when more carefully analysed, has actually taken the form of religious allegiances other than (or often additional to) Sunday morning attendance at cathedral or gospel chapel. Robert Ellwood's study is one of the few to consider at any length the alternative ways in which New Zealanders have invested their spiritual capital.

Ellwood, a professor at the University of Southern California, conducted much of the research for this book in 1988 while in New Zealand on a Fulbright grant. He begins with a brief history of alternatives 'From Nineveh to New Zealand', touching on Freemasonry, Swedenborgianism, Mesmerism, Theosophy and Spiritualism. The succeeding chapters are devoted to Spiritualism, UFO religions, Theosophy, other theosophical offshoots and the magicians of the Order of the Golden Dawn, before concluding with general observations about such cults in the Commonwealth at large. This produces some startling insights. Who would have thought that stolid, comfortable Havelock North would have been an international centre of magic through the work of the Golden Dawn and Arthurian devotees in its associated Order of the Table Round? New Zealand data are linked to some extent with other studies suggesting that Protestant British immigrants societies have been particularly fruitful breeding grounds for such cults, and New Zealand is the purest example of such a society. Thus, for example, Ellwood notes that there are 25 times as many Theosophists per capita here than there are in the United States. The explanation advanced is that the importation or innovation of nearly all aspects of a settler society permits pluralism by minimizing stigma attaching to non-establishment activities. In a religious reinforcement of Kiwis' self-image as sturdy individualists, this is tied to the 'I'd rather do it myself in my own way' pioneer mentality. Several other themes emerge clearly, such as the fellow-feeling between Spiritualism and Maori traditional religion, and the prominence in these cults of women. Although several were begun by men, many of their most important leaders were female, for example Lilian Edger and Geraldine Hemus in the Auckland Theosophist Lodge around the turn of the century.

Having noted the pioneering value of this work, there are, though, criticisms to be made, especially with regard to the limitations of this study. The 'alternative spiritualities' discussed in this book in any depth are limited to five, all manifestations of late-Victorian European preoccupations. Ellwood disclaims expertise or space to comment on Maori movements, and leaves aside the various expressions of Eastern religions which have flourished in the last few decades. Similarly, he makes very little comment on contemporary activities. Appendix II, 'The 1960s and After', is little more than a descriptive list of movements, many of Eastern origin, but with scant discussion of the New Zealand experience. We are left with meagre indication of how even the movements discussed at length, such as the Golden Dawn, finally ended up, apart from the author's personal searches for their modern descendants. Some of the groups listed had a mere handful of adherents — were they of much significance? There are too many typographical errors.

Robert Ellwood is an authoritative commentator on what are generally referred to as 'new religious movements' and has a wealth of contextual background into which to fit the phenomena he found in this country. Unfortunately, this background frequently takes up so large a proportion of the text that one often feels the subtitle could more accurately have substituted 'with special reference to'. Despite that caveat, this study is a revealing window into the colourful diversity that lies just beneath the apparently pallid exterior of New Zealand religiosity.

John Garrett, a Research Fellow at the University of the South Pacific and Pacific Theological College, has produced his second instalment of a projected three-volume history of the fortunes of the Christian religion in the South Pacific region, the first having been *To Live among the Stars*, which covered Christian origins in Oceania. The present

volume covers the twentieth century to 1940, which it further divides into periods before ('Colonies of Earth — and Heaven') and after 1920 ('The Colonial Captivity of the Churches'). These titles reveal the author's thesis that the missionaries of this period usually lost their earlier friendship with their Polynesian flocks, consciously becoming adjuncts of Empire and even creators of their own micro-empires.

Within the two broad chronological divisions, the region is surveyed geographically. New Zealand — combined with Tonga — earns two chapters. This arrangement assists coverage but hinders comparative thematic consideration. Within the New Zealand sections, the focus is exclusively on the progress of Christianity amongst Maori — rather than in Pakeha society more broadly — and upon several Maori prophets, especially Rua Kenana and Ratana. This book is a survey rather than a product of original research and, as such, provides an accessible introduction to the recent religious history of the Polynesian peoples of the South Pacific.

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'Be Ye Separate': Fundamentalism and the New Zealand Experience. Edited by Bryan Gilling. University of Waikato in conjunction with Colcom Press, Hamilton, 1992. 162 pp.

Godly Schools?: Some approaches to Christian Education in New Zealand, 1993. Edited by Bryan Gilling. University of Waikato in conjunction with Colcom Press, Hamilton, 1993. 185 pp.

A NUMBER of aspects of New Zealand fundamentalism, often hard to find in reference books, are treated here with great historical accuracy and analysis. Essays included in *'Be Ye Separate'* are John Stenhouse's perceptive treatment of New Zealand fundamentalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, contributions on the Social Activism of the New Right in the 1970s and 1980s, the New Life churches and fundamentalism in the Presbyterian church as evidenced in the Gearing trial by Jim Veitch. Other essays comprise the peregrinations of a fundamentalist periodical by the editor, Colin Brown's exploration of the controversial borders between fundamentalism, evangelicalism and conservative Protestantism, and an essay comparing the fundamentalism of the 1920s and that of modern times.

Godly Schools focuses on fundamentalist education. Five of the nine essays are on that theme. Even though one (Ruth Walker's) is quite critical of its educational philosophy, the other four give a basic ethos, whether manifested in its typical schools, such as Middleton Grange School, or the home schooling given by many parents.

Despite the value of the essays I kept asking myself what was niggling as I read? Lack of perspective? Context? As a series from a religious studies (not theology) department of a secular university lack of balance seemed more and more evident. It is a minor concern in *'Be Ye Separate'*. But to draw parallels with North America (which the volume does well) without assessing the fundamentalist mentality itself, the series lays itself open to criticism for lack of balance and perspective.

This lack of perspective shows itself more markedly in *Godly Schools*. The question may well be asked in a New Zealand context how sweeping is the change, how different