

to the growing role of the universities in the community. There are articles by staff from five universities.

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Blue-Water Rationale: The Naval Defence of New Zealand 1914-1942. By I.C. McGibbon. Government Printer, Wellington, 1981. 446pp. N.Z. price: \$45.00.

THIS IS a good book with a needlessly obscure title. The 'blue-water' strategists argued that the defence of the British Empire depended on the command of the sea. This would be achieved by the main fleet, which could sail anywhere and thus deter an enemy or, in the last resort, destroy his fleet. The central idea of New Zealand's defence policy in the period covered was that the Dominion's security depended on the deterrent and destructive power of the British fleet. New Zealand therefore contributed, in its small way, to British naval strategy.

McGibbon has written the best book to appear yet on New Zealand defence policy. He does not pretend to write a history of the New Zealand Division of the R.N., though he summarizes the main developments. He does not set out to cover the whole of defence policy, but he manages to include the main landmarks in air and army policy. His main concern is the Dominion's contribution to, debates over, and, eventually, doubts about, the strategy of 'Imperial Defence'.

New Zealand's contributions began with the New Zealand Division of the Navy in 1913-14, the activities of her seamen on the *Philomel* 1914-17, and the revived Division from 1921. Massey was disappointed when Jellicoe's proposal for a new Pacific Fleet of sixteen capital ships to match Japan's was turned down in favour of building the Singapore Naval Base, which was to service the 'main fleet' if it were needed in the Pacific. Nevertheless New Zealand contributed £1 million towards the cost of the base and continued to support the strategy long after the rise of Hitler and Mussolini made a two-ocean conflict possible. However McGibbon shows that from 1932 to 1933 a few New Zealand planners were increasingly worried about the 'period before relief' of Singapore, but they were never able to produce an alternative strategy. Even after Labour came to power in 1935 to seek 'collective security' through the League of Nations and the building-up of a separate New Zealand airforce, the Imperial strategy was not abandoned. While the impact of air power led to the evolution of a 'regional effort' in the South Pacific to defend Fiji and to provide reconnaissance among the islands, the new air force was also designed to fly to Singapore and supply pilots for the defence of Britain. With the army geared up for expeditionary forces all three services, on the eve of World War II, were still intended for 'Imperial Defence'.

McGibbon has written an accurate, detailed and scholarly account of this theme and provides a lot of material on such matters as the naval treaty system and the imperial conferences. He gives the lie to the suggestion that New Zealand defence policy was 'made in London'. Far from accepting British direction uncritically, successive prime ministers, chiefs of staff and, more especially, Carl

Berendsen had their own views, even though they were unable to evolve an independent system of security. There are sixty-one photographs of great interest and variety, an excellent bibliography and a most useful appendix reproducing the text of eleven important documents.

The work began as a thesis, and the book, though much expanded and revised, still has too much of the 'feel' of a thesis. There are too many parenthetical footnotes and too many slabs of verbatim quotation from the sources. The reading is somewhat heavy going. A more subtle problem (inherent in a work of this kind) is the matter of focus. The reader must switch frequently from New Zealand to London (or Washington or Geneva) and in some of the passages relating to disarmament negotiations or imperial conferences, New Zealand seems to be a long way away.

Altogether this is a solid contribution to a neglected, and now somewhat unfashionable, topic. The Government Printer is to be commended for the excellent, sturdy, buckram binding, and perhaps commiserated-with over some blurred pages produced by the new computer technology. And why reduce the margins for the index? The book also indicates what a wealth of material on defence and international affairs awaits researchers in the National Archives.

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Growing Together. Letters Between Frederick John Cato and Frances Bethune, 1881 to 1884. Edited and Introduced by Una B. Porter. Queensberry Hill Press, Carlton, 1981. 516pp. Aust. Price: \$65.00.

THE PUBLICATION of these letters, in the largest modern volume I have ever seen, is an act of family sentiment. Una Porter is the daughter of Fred Cato and Fanny Bethune who carried on a courtship by correspondence across the Tasman for three years. Shortly before her millionaire father died he produced a hat box containing the 350 letters that now comprise this book.

It is a rare experience to witness the growth of a human relationship—even for as short a period as three years. We know little about colonial courtship customs, expectations of marriage or even the lives of people in their early twenties. The letters of Fred and Fanny provide evidence about such matters in abundance, although their particular version of these experiences is probably unique to themselves.

Both young people came from colonial families: Fred's Wesleyan family had been on the Victorian gold fields and ended up as struggling Gippsland farmers: Fanny's Presbyterian father was a preacher and teacher who had lived a hard life securing congregations around Otago before retiring to Invercargill. The children met in 1881 in the Standard 6 class-room of Central School in Invercargill where they were both teaching. Towards the end of 1881 Fred was to declare his love and then depart for Melbourne to make his way in the grocery business. Fanny held back from saying 'yes' for six months, but clearly had met her 'partner in life'.