

line. One of his remarks astonished me: there are more British born living in New Zealand than there are Maoris.

KEITH SINCLAIR

University of Auckland

1 D. Pitt, ed., *Social Class in New Zealand*, 1977, p.119.

German New Guinea—The Annual Reports; German New Guinea—The Draft Annual Report for 1913-14. Edited and translated by Peter Sack and Dymphna Clark. Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1979. 403pp., 170pp. Price: \$A29.00, \$A5.95 respectively.

WHENEVER a would-be editor embarks on a project such as this he knows he is obliged to state in his introduction the principles upon which the selection of documents was based as well as the general aims of the exercise. This Peter Sack (a German trained in law now at the Australian National University) has done with exemplary proficiency. The documents are those relating to the so-called 'Old Protectorate', omitting the less important material on the 'Island Territory'. This means in effect that we have a general official survey of what the Germans tried to do during their short tenure as colonial masters in mainland New Guinea as well as the Bismarck Archipelago. This rendition into English is intended for the edification of both the New Guineans themselves and for Western researchers, all of whom are expected to acquire a more just assessment of the German colonial record than the editor thinks they have at present. So far so good. But when an editor makes in his obligatory introduction gratuitous slights on Australian scholars in the field he detracts considerably from the merits of his own efforts. Assertions which are not backed up by substantial arguments (what are footnotes for?) reveal more about the writer than about those he is trying to put down. One bristles at the following: 'Moreover, western research into the history of New Guinea under German rule is still very much in its infancy, and interest is likely to wane rather than wax in the future. So far there exists not one thoroughly researched western version of the overall history of German New Guinea, nor is there anyone in sight who will produce such a history within the next ten years or so.' If Sack finds the not inconsiderable scholarly output of scholars such as Stewart Firth and Peter Hempenstall inadequate he owes it to the profession to state why. Sack's introduction would have been an admirable opportunity to engage in a reckoning with the existing western scholarship on German New Guinea whereby he could have indicated its possible strengths and weaknesses and suggested what might be the 'correct' line of approach. So what we have is a large book of documents the product of great strength and determination, but not explained or justified in a manner which a professional historian has the right to expect.

The usefulness of the Annual Reports of the German New Guinea Company which administered the area until 1898-99 and thereafter of the official German colonial administration is obvious. What the white masters tried to achieve, their

motives and goals, must be of central relevance to general history of New Guinea. However, the reservation that has to be made is that like all 'Annual Reports' they are already a severely edited version of other more detailed reports and as such cannot be regarded as providing anything like the full story. A closer image is provided by a number of other German official document series where the warts and wrinkles of administrative blunders are more frankly exposed. The editor, in his eagerness to instruct ignorant antipodeans, could have briefly drawn attention to the existence of these (e.g. *Allgemeine Verhältnisse* . . . , i.e. general conditions; *Militärpolitische Berichte*, i.e. the political reports made independently by German naval commanders who periodically visited the colonies, etc.). This little exercise would have set the Annual Reports in perspective, making the point that there are far richer veins of source material on German New Guinea. Indeed these have been and continue to be mined by the diligent and perceptive Australians, Firth and Hempenstall. Nevertheless, what Sack has accomplished is a worthwhile start. All praise, too, goes to Dymphna Clark who rendered the German officialese into very smooth idiomatic English, a daunting task indeed.

This professionally produced volume is furnished with a painstakingly prepared index, an extensive glossary of German and native titles and terms as well as a series of clearly drawn maps. The Draft Annual Report for 1913-14 forms the sequel to the first volume. As Sack recounts in his introduction he has produced an edited version of the material sent to Berlin from New Guinea for the last financial year just prior to the outbreak of war. For this reason that material was never collated or published by the Reich Colonial Office. A copy of the diffuse draft was located in the microfilm collection of German Colonial Archives for the Pacific now held in the National Library, Canberra.

Here again Sack merits great praise for his editorial work. He followed broadly the same guidelines as for the first volume so that we have an intelligible record of German activities for the final year of their tenure in New Guinea. It is divided into a General Report of thirty-seven pages, the reports of seven administrative districts, the reports of five different mission societies, and finally a section of special government reports and statistics on subjects such as population, head-tax and labour recruitment. Sack has indicated where he has encountered gaps in the record or when he himself left out items of lesser interest. These can be discovered by consulting the microfilm copy of the original. What has been selected and translated, though, is eminently useful and informative. The above reservations notwithstanding, the two volumes are a welcome addition to the growing body of knowledge on modern New Guinea.

JOHN A. MOSES

University of Queensland

Islands and Beaches. Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas 1774-1880. By Greg Denning. Melbourne University Press, 1980. 355pp. Maps and illustrations. Price: \$A26.00.

ISLANDS AND BEACHES is fascinating. The historian reviewer is perhaps qualified