

space (36pp.) is given to a single 'genealogy', mostly composed of myth, when an excerpt would have conveyed the flavour of the whole. As regards a considerable number of the documents, Laracy says that 'imperfections [of English] rarely obscure their meaning' (p.vi). That was not my experience. If Laracy knows what was intended by: 'all the Head men are head over the Gov. Orders' (p.91) and: 'Custom judge a man from Other man's babies' (p.139), he should provide explanatory notes. These are also needed with some of the translations, which read well but contain terms and references to customs that are left unexplained. In translating from 'Are'are, Father Geerts, a Roman Catholic priest, usually gives the meaning of vernacular words for plants and types of shell money, but leaves the reader to guess at the nature of the political offices being described and to wonder what is meant by the term 'virgin' (perhaps sister of a leader?) which figures so prominently in document B2. This is a case in which the note is positively misleading, as is, elsewhere, the apparently sporadic insertion of *sic* beside mis-spelled words. (Curiously, it is not used in a document written by an Englishman (p.151), who seems to have used 'discriminations' for 'recriminations'.)

Despite the many portions which are unclear, the book does indeed provide fascinating material on the aims and development of not only Maasina Rule but other movements in the Solomons. It also documents, critically but with understanding, official reactions not only to the movements but to the outsiders who took the part of the local people. Throughout, Laracy makes clear his admiration for Maasina Rule. One reason is its success in presenting 'demands that could only be satisfied by independence' (p.34), and he shows well what those demands were, how they were expressed, and why they provoked particular reactions from various groups. In addition, however, he admires its ideal of 'brotherhood' which gave the movement its name, and speaks of this as an example 'to sustain [the Solomons] in the task of nation-building' (p.35). Any reader would endorse Laracy's hope that the central aims of the movement will be perpetuated.

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*Gunboat Frontier. British Maritime Authority and Northwest Coast Indians, 1846-90.* By Barry Gough. University of British Columbia Press, 1984. Price unknown.

PROFESSOR Barry Gough of Wilfred Laurier University in Ontario, Canada, has written another of his excellent books for the series of maritime Pacific studies published by the University of British Columbia Press.

This book is as well written, as detailed, and as interesting as his *The Royal Navy on the Northwest Coast of North America 1810-1914* or his *Distant Dominion*, both about British Columbia and the Pacific. It is also a book which will provide many provocative comparisons with New Zealand experience. The dates of *Gunboat Frontier* ought to remind New Zealanders that, as a settled area, all of Canada west of the Great Lakes is much younger than New Zealand.

*Gunboat Frontier* is about the use of Royal Navy warships to control the associations of British settlers and the indigenous people. One of its themes is the importance of the generally assumed right of British subjects to protection. Of course British subjects included non-European people as well, and in both cases along with protection went control. This meant, at times, intervening in the constant wars between the Indian tribes in British Columbia, and especially intervening to protect or avenge settlers or fur traders who had been mistreated or killed by the Indians. In some few cases it was vice versa.

One of the main problems was that of distance. New Zealanders, who speak of themselves as a Pacific nation while too often not recognizing that Canada, the United States and Russia are equally so, might be surprised to find out that British Columbia has a Pacific coastline over 4000 miles long. Granted, it is heavily indented, but nonetheless the figure should make one pause. Besides this problem Gough deals capably with such topics as the Indian tribal setup, the clashes between natives and settlers, policy-making in London about the growth of the British Empire, and the policing of the frontier.

British Columbian events are certainly part of the experience of settlement by nineteenth-century British subjects in areas where there were potent native populations. There are many parallels with contemporary events in New Zealand, and this interesting Canadian book could be read with profit by historians studying the effects of settlement on the Maoris.

One effect which was much worse in British Columbia than in New Zealand was the indigenous peoples' acceptance of liquor. In British Columbia the liquor traffic not only involved controlling Indians but trying to prevent the traders from making profits from the degradation of the native peoples. As Professor Gough says, 'Generally, traders cared little for the effect of their liquid wares on the Indians'. Even so, the idea of the nineteenth-century Royal Navy as a body of temperance enforcers makes the mind boggle.

The major difference between the British Columbian experience and New Zealand settlement was the presence of the Americans just across the border. One thing made quite clear in the book is that the Canadian view that Canadian settlement was far more peaceful and had many less deleterious effects on native peoples than American settlement is quite justified. Certainly the British governmental officials who were responsible for the operation of the Royal Navy in British Columbia waters meant it to be so. As Gough points out: 'The British Government aimed at providing a regulating authority of law and local government, one which would provide for the eventual growth of political freedoms and traditions. The Colonial Office sought to develop a colony free from the lawlessness of the adjacent American Frontier. One intention was to protect the Indians by according them equal protection as British subjects under the law.' Shades of the Treaty of Waitangi!

The book is very detailed and besides being beautifully written is exceedingly well produced by the University of British Columbia Press. It has an excellent selection of good illustrations, and some of the ships and sailors shown knew the south-west Pacific well.

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