

project more than a decade ago, following a swing through the country a couple of years earlier to identify a research site. Hatch is scrupulous in noting that the study must be read in 1981's historic present. A footnote (p.39) records that state agricultural policy has swung massively since then, eliminating the subsidies that underpinned much of the system he studied. The point could be extended. The rather flat prestige pyramid that he found (by comparison with California) was also an artifact of the command economy introduced by the first Labour government. One would need a restudy to check his conclusions.

But would a restudy tell us much about rural New Zealand? Hatch's initial survey sought a setting for a piece of research to put against his earlier work in California. Constructing that earlier work from hints in this book, the place seems to have had a rather simple structure, and an unclouded prestige order. Hence, one suspects, the attraction of south Canterbury. What would prestige rankings look like in the Waikato, or Bay of Plenty? We might expect that dairying, or horticulture, or sheep-beef farming, or complex mixtures of them, would give different patterns. Ethnicity would cloud the issue in a way that Hatch does not have to face: the word Maori appears neither in text nor index. When Hatch reports south Canterbury cockies telling him that they were not wealthy compared with farmers in other parts of New Zealand, one wants him to try telling that tale in Runanga, or Ruatoria, or Kaikohe.

Hatch's preference for simplicity extends to the explicit historical material in the book. In the usual manner of an anthropological monograph on an exotic people, he gives us an early chapter on local history. It employs the secondary sources that readers of this *Journal* would expect him to use, and it is commendably up to date. Due deference is given to the views of eminent scholars like Erik Olssen and Miles Fairburn, their work blended to a single, simple story of how the study district came to its (historic) present economic and social shape. What one misses here is any sense that this history is contested: that Olssen and Fairburn stand toe to toe, slugging it out for different versions of what the past should be understood to look like. In the manner of many of his respondents, Hatch's book is too *respectable*, too concerned to treat conflict as bad form.

One final puzzle. Hatch has read widely about New Zealand. He quotes what one might expect him to quote, with one exception. There is no mention of Crawford Somerset's two *Littledene* books. That is odd, for the study areas are not widely separated. More, Somerset considered many of the issues that Hatch studies. Whence, one wonders, this absence?

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Vanished Kingdoms: Irish in Australia and New Zealand, a personal excursion. By Patrick O'Farrell. NSW University Press, 1990. 309pp. NZ price: \$70.00.

'I AM WELL AWARE that some believe the Irish beyond any human criticism and unlikely to deserve divine.' So begins Patrick O'Farrell in his splendid study of the farthest-flung Gaels and their colonial-born children. The devotees of a flawless Ireland will find much to offend them in its 300 pages, not least O'Farrell's balanced arguments and formidable accuracy. The author of major works on the Australian Catholic Church and the Irish in Australia, he has developed ('personalised') some of his earlier themes in this story of his immigrant Irish family group. Set largely in South Canterbury and Greymouth, it is a tale

of settlers, brave people who risked much to find, and to make, a new place for themselves and their children. 'It is about the growth of a shared identity, shared with all comers, reasonably, and by choice.'

While examining the process by which the Irish became 'colonial', O'Farrell skilfully weaves several other strands through his book. These include a piercing analysis of the effect of Irish dominance over the Catholic Church in Australasia, and the corrosive influence of Irish politics on the assimilation process. He teases out the links between the Irish Catholic community and emergent Labour. Nor are the Protestant Irish neglected, as the author provides an illuminating contrast in case studies of the New Zealand Farrells and the Australian Andrews. The dominant notes in *Vanished Kingdoms* are complexity, ambivalence, regret — it is not light fare, but the author pursues his subject with a tenacity and an often painful honesty which makes for compelling reading. O'Farrell's strictures on the 'clerical thugs', whose Irish obsessions are seen as damaging and limiting colonial Catholicism, are balanced by a loving depiction of his former teacher, the Marist Brother Egbert.

Eileen Duggan, Pat Hickey, William Massey are other figures who flit across the pages of this book, whose author is himself Greymouth-born. He defends the term 'colonial' and 'Australasia' as avoiding inappropriate distinctions in discussion of the immigrant Irish and their destinations. There is a valuable lesson in O'Farrell's critique of his Australian colleagues: 'historians [who] took — still take — an English view of appearances, accept English priorities, reflect Protestant value-judgements. The sub-world of Irish Catholics had no real existence for historians who wrote from and about the walled gardens of the establishment.'

Two minor reservations. Does the author minimize the extent to which colonial clerics (including French ones) were captured by the idealized image of the island of saints and scholars? Even New Zealand-born prelates like James Liston and Matthew Brodie allowed their enthusiasm for Ireland to embroil them in bitter dispute with the enemies of Irish self-determination. Nor were the Marists quite the holy innocents, unsoiled by grubby ecclesiastical politicking, that he would have us believe. That they resisted the Irish secular invader for so long is proof of that.

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France and the South Pacific: A Contemporary History. By Stephen Henningham. Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1992. xvii. 292pp. Australian price: \$24.95.

DESPITE a well-known contrary opinion, it is doubtful if there has ever been a need for 'a really good 5-cent cigar'. An up-to-date, comprehensive, factual narrative survey of French rule in the Pacific is, however, a different matter. For the past decade the peoples and countries of the region have needed one. At last, in Henningham's book, they have got it. This is an important work, for while France impinges heavily on the sensibilities of the Pacific nations, even those which are not under its control, a language barrier inhibits understanding in the Anglophone neighbourhood of what is going on in the French territories. France's continued colonial presence is (like Rabuka's coup of 1987 in Fiji) an affront to the ideals of democracy embedded in the public philosophy of most of the South Pacific nations, while its continued nuclear testing is viewed by them as reprehensible.