

Hail Columbia! Meet Zealandia!

THESE NEW ZEALANDERS, by Robin W. Winks; Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., 13/6. (Reviewed by D.G.)

IF New Zealanders want to roll up their sleeves for heated combat about yet another book written on these right little tight little islands they will find themselves shadow-sparring. Indeed, we may lack subtlety but are not guilty of the naiveté which we are quick to appreciate, as a rich joke, in others. In this, Americans have now come to replace the cherubic ineptitude once attributed to public school "Homies." They swarm over the world on their often specious occasions, delightfully bewildered that things everywhere are not as they are in Fingerville, S. Carolina, or Duckabush, Wash., or Deadman's Belch, or Angelbottom, Miss. earnestly observing that in India the women, unlike those at home, wear saris, and that Eskimos have no central heating in the Arctic twilight of the autumn (fall).

Observe then this well-meaning and rather endearing young Gulliver peering excitedly at us Lilliputians through an outsize enlarging glass and hastening to his notebook—expounding and explaining us to us, us to U.S., and U.S. to us in a never-boring feat of legerde-

main. Alas, after so much energetic research he loves us but he respects us not. We are human, but not quite beings. "A nation is not geography; it is not weather; it is not government; it is people." And after this aperçu of gratifying profundity (to quote one of our critics) he solemnly concludes that "about two thirds of the way of life in New Zealand appeals to him, and about one-third does not," which adds up to about three-thirds of an anthropological finding.

We know, most of us, that we are a pocket edition of a nation, and very smug, but it will come as an earthquake shock to learn a few simple facts:

The State of Colorado alone has 100 mountain peaks higher than Mt. Cook.

American trains are much larger, wider (they run on wide-gauge tracks, while all New Zealand tracks are narrow-gauge).

America does have two long rail tunnels which are longer than New Zealand's Otira Tunnel, however, though neither is much longer. One is in Washington, the other in Colorado.

Maori music is one of New Zealand's finest cultural exports to the world.

Street name-posting is very inadequate in most cities.

Your faucets (taps) are opposite as well—usually hot on the left, cold on the right.

As one walks in and out of New Zealand stores, he (sic, all through the book) notices that there are very few "juke boxes" or nickelodeons. They are very common in America—too common.



"We are human, but not quite beings"

If I quote these inconsequentialities it is at the expense of more serious apophthegms. But these little daisies brighten the greensward of every page, common-place like daisies and as disarmingly fresh.

The author "did over" New Zealand, inside out, within a year (though he assures us it would take 13 years for a New Zealander to do the same with the U.S. Pace our own writers and self-analysts, neatly disposed of in half a page, the Kid from Colorado has pinned us firmly but gently on the butterfly board.

Two nations separated by the same language, it does not appear that we

have much in common—less, in fact, than sentimentalists suppose. Just take this: "And I cannot admire him (the New Zealander) for his hypocrisy—his courtesy when he does not feel courteous." Well, well, well, and I always thought it was plain good manners. But Robin Winks is an indefatigable M.C. in a get-together one-man campaign, and his motives are noble. Fortunately his comparisons spare Americans no less than us, but we will stand as amazed to learn many things about them as to see ourselves through Mr. Winks's lenses:

American professors often use the same grammatical errors—they are concentrating deeply on the thought they have to express, not how to express it.

The American does not listen to the words of a popular piece; he listens to the music and the general sound of the voice, but he is seldom aware of what the words actually are.

I ponder this, and the book is entertaining for such exhaustive revelations. In his serious assessment of every minute detail of our national life, Mr. Winks is no less serious. It is idle to take him up: he generalises and particularises with the glorious candour of youth. Sometimes he must be right, sometimes wrong. He is wise beyond his years, old with the age of adolescence. In 166 pages he has given us New Zealand from N to Z, but there are other letters in the alphabet.

Robin W. Winks hailed here as a Fulbright Scholar from the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, U.S.A.

Buy with an
On the Nib...

Onoto is world
Famous for its Nib!

For over 70 years Onoto Pens have been recognised as the ultimate in fine English Craftsmanship... in design and precision. The Nib illustrated is a typical example of this perfection. When you buy with an eye on the nib you will always buy Onoto.

The British Pen Famous for its Nib
Onoto

FROM ALL LEADING STATIONERS & JEWELLERS.
SERVICED THROUGHOUT NEW ZEALAND.

Made by: Thomas De La Rue Ltd., London.
Distributors: Bennett & Thomson Ltd., Wellington.



NESTLE-LEMUR

Superset
WAVING LOTION



Shake or Comb it on!

For the smartest, neatest hair-set you've ever had, buy Nestle SUPERSET. So easy to use, so kind to your hair, Superset restores that light and bright youthful attractiveness. It's never "too late" to improve your hair with SUPERSET. 2/7 bottle. Made to the genuine American Nestle formula.

A "SUPER" HAIR SET
WITH
SUPERSET

N.Z. Distributors for Nestle-Lemur Co. U.S.A.:
Wilfrid Owen Ltd., 104 Victoria Street,
Christchurch.