

measures into Britain. In the latter country, however, W. A. Smith and his brigades' movement, backed by the Churches and other powerful influences, successfully resisted such designs. Between the two extremes of Brigades and Cadets the Scouting movement steered a somewhat ambivalent course until the changing post-War mood made 'internationalism' a more acceptable theme. But, although the conscriptionists were initially successful in both Australia and New Zealand, public agitation and a strong religious and working-class reaction soon ameliorated the earlier more draconian measures.

As 'at home' in Britain, therefore, youth movements at our end of the Empire—the 'comrades beyond the seas'—proved just as susceptible to experimentation and manipulation as agents of social action and change or, at the very least, acted as barometers of the age. In New Zealand further research will undoubtedly show the social significance of these experiments and of others like the country's own peculiar indigenous Bible Class movement, which arose at the same period and exhibited, too, a strong social relevance and influence. Of that movement one writer has said:

... in little more than one decade [circa 1904–1914] a Youth Movement, indigenous to New Zealand, bursting with vitality, had sprung up and established a strong organisational system in which warm fellowship prevailed and scope was afforded to the idealism and energy of youth.⁷¹

Indigenous 'independence' might, it could be argued, be seen as one mark of the New Zealand achievements in youth work experimentation over these four decades.



Girl Guides on parade at Basin Reserve, Wellington, during one of Baden-Powell's visits to New Zealand. (S. C. Smith Collection) Photo Neg. 45468½