

considered themselves to be the spiritual heirs of Henry Alline, pushed Alline's gospel to its Antinomian breaking point. In the process, they threatened the already fragile underpinnings of the Baptist Church in the colony. Eventually, Dimock abandoned most of his New Dispensationalism; but he never abandoned his old friend Harris Harding — the last of the New Dispensationalists.

Levy could have also made much more effective use of the many Dimock letters to be found in a variety of collections in the Acadia University Archives. These often evocative, personal and morbidly introspective letters throw much new light on the young, impressionable Joseph Dimock.

Despite its flaws, Levy's *Diary of Joseph Dimock* is an important first step in the publishing programme of the Baptist Heritage Series. But the book is more than this. It is also a valuable primary source for the early history of the Baptist Church in Nova Scotia and of the Second Great Awakening.

G. A. RAWLYK,
Queen's University.

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ROBIN FISHER. — *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia 1774-1890*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977. Pp. xviii, 250.

The importance of *Contact and Conflict* has been underscored by the award of the Macdonald Prize. Originally a Ph.D. dissertation, it is an ambitious undertaking which has been extensively researched and professionally put together. The book examines race relations in British Columbia from the arrival of the maritime explorers to the consolidation of a settler society, and the author emphasizes that it is about "culture contact" and not "so-called Indian history" (p. xiii). Unfortunately Fisher seems not to be familiar enough with the anthropological literature to have avoided what he calls the "implicit tendencies toward ethnocentrism in a study of this kind" (p. xiv). There is a neglect of Indian reactions which are only comprehensible in the context of their cultures and religious beliefs. Or perhaps certain Indian responses as well as other contact themes receive little attention because they cannot be easily reconciled with the interpretation of race relations so forcefully expounded in the book. *Contact and Conflict* argues a case as much as it tells a story.

Fundamental to this case is the division of Indian-White relations in British Columbia into two distinct phases: the "fur trade frontier" and the "settlement frontier", the latter including miners, missionaries, administrators, and farmers. The fur trade frontier, Fisher claims, "brought only minimal culture change" (p. xiv) and was based on inter-racial tolerance and co-operation. But with the arrival of the settlers the Indian and his culture were overwhelmed in the rush for his land. For the fur traders the Indian was like a partner; with settlement he became a nuisance, fit, the newcomers thought, either for assimilation or for the other fate of "inferior races" — extinction.

The fur trade-settlement dichotomy imposes a comprehensible order on the vast amount of material presented, but it is also the source of certain weaknesses. Crucial aspects of contact, notably the effects of disease, do not fit into either category and hence their importance is underestimated. And while the "fur trade frontier" is a useful concept, the notion of a "settlement frontier", combining as it does such diverse and antagonistic elements as miners and missionaries, is too unwieldy and leads to oversimplification. There

is another problem with the methodology. The use of archetypes — Duncan as the settlement frontier missionary, Trutch as land-grabbing “colonialist” (p. 162) — encourages the neglect of complexities. An obvious example of this is the failure to look at the work of the best known of the French Catholic missionaries, A. G. Morice. He was as determined to preserve the fishing and trapping economy and to keep out material civilization as Duncan, an Anglican, was to transform Indians into industrious Victorians.

There are no comparable lacunae in the treatment of the fur trade. The old image of the Indian as a passive object of exploitation is erased, and in its place is drawn a bold and convincing picture of native trappers and traders rationally pursuing their own interests. Less convincing is Fisher's assertion that the culture change generated by fur trade contact was minimal and that the traditional culture remained “intact” (p. 47). A brief list of innovations, most of them cited by Fisher, suggests otherwise: certain tribes became more sedentary or came together in larger villages around forts; European technology was adopted for economic and artistic purposes; crops were grown, sometimes commercially; and some chiefs gained unprecedented power and wealth. True, these changes were voluntary and even “creative” (p. 48), but no stone age culture could possibly emerge “intact” from prolonged and intimate contact with modern Europeans.

From the premise that there was no challenge to their culture, Fisher goes on to claim that the fur trade Indians had no reason to embrace new religious beliefs. He does admit, however, that cults with important Christian components spread with “startling rapidity”, but no explanation is given. Nor is any mention made of the millenarian nature of some of the prophecies or of their similarity to the Melanesian cargo cults. Clearly Fisher has overlooked the profound psychological or spiritual shock of contact with men bearing a marvelous new technology and its riches. A number of anthropologists have studied the British Columbia Indians' religious reaction to the fur traders and have offered interpretations useful to historians of culture contact. Hilary Rumley, for example, believes that the arrival of the traders upset traditional notions about the spiritual origins of wealth and power, and that Indians who participated in Christian rituals expected this to create spiritual equality between the races and thereby give them access to the Europeans' goods and power.

Without considering such explanations, Fisher argues that only the effects of settlement were sufficiently disruptive to provoke serious interest in Christianity. Missionaries were successful on the settlement frontier because they offered a way of coping with it: new values, new skills — a new culture. William Duncan's career, so well described in the book, is presented as typical of the missionaries' commitment to “alter Indian society totally” (p. 120). The ambivalence of the French Catholic attitude to complete acculturation is not explored. As the Catholics converted more than half of the Province's Indians, the scant attention given to them is unfortunate. The role of disease in the spread of Christianity is also neglected. Fear of epidemic disease and not the presence of settlers and miners, as Fisher claims, was the most pressing reason for conversion. The number of recruits for Duncan's Christian community soared after smallpox struck, and Morice owed most of his influence to the protective and curing powers attributed to his sacraments.

The book's consideration of economic and political change is more comprehensive. The analysis of the Indian's economic irrelevance and his powerlessness in the world of the miner and the settler is sensitive but not sentimental. Equally fine is his examination of the “shabby treatment” (p. 204) of the Indians by the settler-dominated Colonial and Provincial governments. The point is made that the Indians gained more from the rather despotic rule of Douglas, the old fur trader, than from settler democracy. The intolerance of the settlers is seen as stemming in large measure from the rise of pseudo-scientific racism in Britain. The fur traders' more positive perception of the Indians was not as subject to metropolitan influences, but was “more a product of life on the frontier” (p. 74). This might be true, though the traders were raised in a more humanitarian age than that which produced the settlers, and this presumably influenced their attitudes. Everywhere in the

Empire race relations were more harmonious in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries than they were later. This was particularly true of India, which underwent no transition from a trading to a settlement frontier.

David MULHALL,
Dawson College.

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MARJORY WHITELAW, ed. *The Dalhousie Journals*. Ottawa: Oberon Press, 1978.
Pp. 212.

While lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia from 1816 to 1820 Lord Dalhousie travelled across the province and briefly toured the other mainland colonies in British North America. His *Journals* consist largely of descriptions of the places he visited and the people he met on these excursions. Since comparatively few British or European visitors came to British North America during this period and even fewer went to the Maritimes, this book is essential reading. Unfortunately, it is not a particularly valuable example of the *genre*. Some of the detail in the book is interesting and occasionally one finds a vivid or striking passage but Dalhousie was neither an unusually graphic nor exceptionally acute chronicler.

The political historian will find the *Journals* very disappointing. The dust jacket boldly proclaims that the book provides us with "a unique record" of the "day-to-day work of a colonial governor". In fact, if the *Journals* were the only record that we possessed of Dalhousie's administration, we would be justified in assuming that colonial governors did not have very much to do except ride around the countryside. Clearly Dalhousie did not intend to write an account of his political and administrative activities. The *Journals* were simply "little memos. of our passtime in this distant corner of the world, separated from all relations and friends" (p. 43). There are, however, occasional references which reveal Dalhousie's utter disdain for the members of the Nova Scotia Assembly and especially its Speaker, S. B. Robie, "a man of no fixed principle in any subject" (p. 170). By the time that Dalhousie left the colony his relationship with the Assembly was rapidly deteriorating and he advised his successor, Sir James Kempt, to begin "with a firm hand" (p. 189). Fortunately, Kempt was too sensitive to follow Dalhousie's advice. Meanwhile, Dalhousie went to Lower Canada. As the *Journals* show, he had already formed an unfavourable opinion of the Lower Canadian Assembly and he was soon locked into a bitter conflict with the latter which resulted in his censure by a Select Committee of the British House of Commons in 1828.

Dalhousie's years in Nova Scotia were not entirely unproductive. He enthusiastically promoted the development of agriculture and some of the more interesting sections of the *Journals* deal with this theme. Dalhousie's travels also brought home to him the need for a thorough reform of the land-granting system and as a product of the Scottish educational system he was very critical of King's College at Windsor. Yet Dalhousie only dimly comprehended that life in the new world was inevitably different from life in the old. Most visitors to Nova Scotia during this period were critical of the land use patterns in the region, but, as Graeme Wynn has convincingly argued elsewhere, these patterns often made sense if understood within the wider economic circumstances of the period. Similarly, Dalhousie was convinced of "the advantages that appeared to me would result from a system of Proprietors of extensive tracts granting to new settlers long leases, or life rents" (p. 61), although wherever this system was tried it created as many problems as it solved. While