

The author was faced with the problem of narrating highly technical matters without losing the reader along the way. He took editing advice with regard to "lucidity" and has included a glossary of those technical terms that cannot be avoided. Still, some of the definitions will probably be of little help to the layperson. To do better is probably not possible, but readers without some knowledge of engineering or geoscience will have to be patient and to be willing to look up various references.

As a corporate history, *A Dedicated Team* differs from most such works. It was written by a principal of the firm, a man who has other published books to his credit. He has been as objective as possible, but he has included too many of the minutiae of the business and professional practices of Kohn Leonoff for an audience other than employees, clients, and geoscientists.

Vancouver

JOHN KENDRICK

Pilgrims in Lotus Land: Conservative Protestantism in British Columbia, 1917-1981, by Robert K. Burkinshaw. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995. 353 pp. \$44.95 cloth.

Beyond the encounter between First Nations peoples and Christian missionaries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the impact of religion on the social and political life of British Columbia has largely been ignored by the province's historians. In *Pilgrims in Lotus Land*, Robert Burkinshaw begins to fill a large void in the historiography by examining the place of religion in an increasingly urban, multicultural, and secular society. Beginning with the evangelistic campaigns of French E. Oliver in 1917, Burkinshaw analyzes the growth of conservative Protestantism from a small group of evangelicals disillusioned with the increasing liberalism of the established mainline denominations to its current position as the religion of the "worshipping majority" among British Columbia's Protestants.

Burkinshaw's offers a multi-causal explanation of the success of conservative Protestantism in British Columbia that is sensitive to the socio-economic forces that have shaped the province. He argues that an active commitment to church planting and a lack of institutional restraints allowed conservative denominations to respond to the demographic changes that accompanied development and immigra-

tion much more readily than could the mainline churches. At the same time, an unwavering fidelity to a core set of traditional evangelical beliefs provided conservative Protestants with a clear sense of purpose and direction that contrasts sharply to the individualism and relativism that Burkinshaw believes afflicted liberal churches. According to Burkinshaw, the clarity of the conservatives' message and their dedication to traditional values proved increasingly popular as an antidote to the anxiety and ennui that accompanied urbanization, industrialization, and immigration. This conservatism was accompanied, however, by a willingness to embrace new technologies and to adopt new styles of worship, music, and evangelism. These innovations enabled conservative denominations both to attract new followers and to retain the younger generation to a much greater degree than the mainline churches. Challenging the frequent assertion that the endemic fragmentation associated with conservative Protestantism was a source of weakness, Burkinshaw contends that diversity was a strength, for it provided a wide range of choice for the religious consumer and thus permitted churches to attract a broader membership. He rejects the suggestion that conservative Protestantism in British Columbia was simply an extension of the fundamentalist movement in the United States, and he insists that the province's conservative churches were equally influenced by developments in Britain and elsewhere in Canada. Finally, Burkinshaw explores the important role conservative Protestants played in the election of the Social Credit party in 1952 and in its subsequent success.

Burkinshaw offers a compelling explanation of the complex forces that shaped the growth of conservative Protestantism in British Columbia. His interpretation suffers, however, from a triumphalist tone — a tendency to exaggerate gains and accomplishments — which is reminiscent of an earlier generation of church history. Although the groups he examines doubled in size during the period under study, they still constitute no more than 8 per cent of the total population. What Burkinshaw sees as a quite phenomenal success could equally be interpreted as a stunning failure, given conservative Protestantism's preoccupation with evangelism. While one in eight British Columbian's identified themselves with a conservative church in the 1981 census, more than twice that number claimed no religious affiliation whatsoever. The data presented in several of Burkinshaw's tables about church membership, attendance, and Sunday-School enrolment are also potentially suspect. Several tables are based, in part, upon such unsatisfactory sources as interviews with "church officials." And

he does not sufficiently address the high turnover in membership identified both by Reginald Bibby and by recent American studies of similar churches. At times, Burkinshaw's terminology is problematic. "Conservative Protestant" is used interchangeably with "evangelical" and "fundamentalist," and he tends to downplay the real theological divisions within the groups he examines. Burkinshaw's portrait of the so-called mainline or liberal churches, moreover, verges on caricature and fails to respect the diversity and complexities within these denominations. Although he cites Martin Marty's characterization of conservative Protestantism as an "anti-modern religion," Burkinshaw does not seriously explore the psychology of evangelicalism or fundamentalism. As a result, we gain little insight into the personality and piety of the people crowding into the churches described in his study.

Despite these shortcomings, *Pilgrims in Lotus Land* is an important book. Not only does it provide a wealth of information about the myriad of Protestant groups in the province, it also points to the important connections that exist between religion and social and political change. Burkinshaw's work calls out for comparable studies of modernism, secularization, and alternative spirituality in British Columbia.

University of Calgary

NORMAN KNOWLES

Sointula: Island Utopia, by Pamela Wild. Madeira Park: Harbour Publishing, 1995. 223 pp. \$28.95 cloth.

Over the years, British Columbia has been blessed by a goodly number of well-written local histories — and some not so good. *Sointula: Island Utopia* is a typical example of the former.

Pamela Wild, a former resident of Sointula, became fascinated with the obvious parallels between the turn-of-the-century utopian socialist settlement led by the Finnish editor, playwright, and politician Matti Kurikka (1863-1915) and the American "hippies" of the late 1960s who congregated on Malcolm Island in their flight from the Vietnam War, "civilization," and American persecution. Roughly two-thirds of the book concerns the utopian settlement which existed from 1901 until its acrimonious collapse in 1905 precipitated by economic difficulties and ideological differences. The rest of the book documents how the island recovered from the breakup of this com-