used came initially from overseas, principally from Europe, they rapidly developed or selected types to suit local conditions. Those new types, like the Corriedale sheep and Akaroa cocksfoot, were sometimes then used extensively in other parts of the 'new world' and even in Europe itself.

The last two chapters in the main body of the book (Star and Brooking; Brooking and Star) argue that the development of state-funded scientific research and a powerful Department of Agriculture from the early twentieth century disrupted the pattern of 'farmer-centric' development. In the interwar period of 'the grasslands revolution' the 'experts' apparently succeeded in replacing careful farmer observation and experiment with a drive to maximise production through the restriction of pasture to perennial ryegrass and clover, encouraged through the massive use of phosphatic fertiliser and heavy stocking. I suspect that this picture of something close to agricultural totalitarianism may be somewhat overdrawn, at least for the interwar period. Relevant to this are some problems with Table 10.1 on p.187, 'The origins of phosphatic fertiliser' used in New Zealand at various years between 1920 and 1958. Unfortunately the figures relate only to imports of rock phosphate rather than phosphatic fertilisers overall. This has the effect of greatly exaggerating the growth in the use of such fertilisers over the period, especially in the interwar years. It also distorts the percentages of the totals coming from 'Australia and rest of world', most seriously for the interwar period, which is the focus of the chapter. The intention of the table is to back up a rather careless claim by Damon Salesa that 'Nauru produced almost all of the phosphate that proved key to the domestic New Zealand agricultural revolution – the "grasslands revolution" of the 1920s and 1930s',[1] while recognising the contribution of Ocean Island and the Tuamotu Islands. In fact, thanks largely to continued use of basic slag on New Zealand farms, Belgium supplied thirty-four per cent of New Zealand's import tonnage of phosphatic fertiliser in 1929 and Nauru only twenty-three per cent. New Zealand's almost total reliance on Pacific phosphate was essentially a post-World War Two phenomenon.

However, I would stress again that *Seeds of Empire* is an outstanding contribution to New Zealand's burgeoning rural historiography, with insights that should interest global historians everywhere. It is to be hoped that the somewhat eye-watering price will not limit distribution of this landmark collection of essays.

1. Quoted on p.186, from D. Salesa, 'New Zealand's Pacific', in G. Byrnes (ed.), *The New Oxford History of New Zealand* (Melbourne, 2009), pp.162–63.

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J. Burchardt and P. Conford, eds, *The Contested Countryside: Rural Politics and Land Controversy in Modern Britain*, London, I B Tauris, 2008, viii + 212 pp. 9781845117153.

This volume emerged from a conference held in the early 2000s and, as Jeremy Burchardt notes in his thoughtful introduction, it attempts to give historical context to some of the current controversies bedevilling the British countryside. And these controversies have broadened and deepened over the past thirty years as the old and comfortable relationship between farming and government has given way to a situation wherein numerous and often disparate interests vie for the attention of policymakers. In sketching out the history of agricultural support mechanisms, Sir John Marsh draws attention to environmental issues and the other non-market 'goods' demanded by an increasingly vocal public. The point is echoed by Simon Miller whose essay on the genesis and recommendations of the celebrated Scott Report (1942) argues that the time has come to consider seriously the 'equally legitimate' interests of production and amenity. This, of course, is well-tilled territory and wholly understandable given that farming at present contributes less than one per cent to Britain's gross domestic product. Yet, as Alun Howkins insists, in his elegant chapter on the rural idyll, the countryside remains at the very essence of English culture. After all, visitor perception studies reveal, to the point of tedium, that whether they be rich or poor, black or white, British or foreign, tourists cherish above all the rich and varied textures of the *farmed* countryside of these islands. There is bush and scrub aplenty in the Serengeti and abundant bog and forest in Amazonia. A well-farmed landscape should be capable of accommodating both the requirements of non-farming interests and those various country sports which have long played pivotal roles in the rural economy and its conservation. In exploring the many complex and sometimes contradictory threads associated with the Countryside Alliance and changing countryside agenda, Graham Cox implicitly echoes this point. Paul Brassley, meanwhile, in an admirable essay on the historical background to livestock diseases and the efforts of governments to understand and control them, hints at the sometimes profound differences in the perception of disease and its consequences between the biological and social scientist.

As the general economy has grown, so the overall contribution of farming to gross domestic product has declined. A decade or so ago, it was held by some that despite progress in the field of molecular biology which had led to the creation of genetically-modified crops and other technologies capable of dramatically increasing agricultural productivity, the future of farming lay in organic systems. Yet at present a mere four per cent of Britain's agricultural area is devoted to organic farming, while funding for organic research is becoming ever more difficult to secure. I yield to no person in my admiration for Philip Conford's pioneering work in the difficult and sometimes controversial field of organic history. His chapter once again links the origins of the movement to the deeply-held Christian beliefs of some of the early enthusiasts. But however fascinating the history of the movement, I cannot help thinking that the flame which burned briefly and brightly is doomed to flicker and expire. The principles are plausible and the social objectives admirable, yet it is hopelessly unrealistic to argue that organic production is even remotely sustainable in a country with a population in excess of sixty million. A pity, but there it is. Only the sensitive application of science and technology will yield a countryside contributing both to food security and the non-farming requirements of society at large.

The creation of a dynamic countryside may go some way towards alleviating the alleged problems of rural poverty and social exclusion highlighted in Paul Milbourne's review

of academic approaches towards the subject. Inevitably, of course, there are *lacunae* of rural poverty. But while household surveys and the analysis of census data can tell us a good deal, one sometimes has to suspend disbelief when confronted with definitions of 'poverty' and 'social exclusion'. Berkeley Hill's chapter on various aspects of farm incomes and European policies rightly draws attention to the Farm Business Survey which, in 2011, celebrated its seventy-fifth birthday. But like so many other survey-based instruments of policy, the Farm Business Survey fails to tell the whole story, especially when household expenses and even luxury purchases can be quietly obscured on the negative side of a balance sheet. Headlines in the farming press deploring the fact that in a given year farm incomes have dramatically declined, need to be taken with more than a pinch of salt. Survey data is usually indicative of trends, but little more.

Much of the material here has appeared elsewhere in slightly different guises so that while it offers useful context for further debate, it contains little in the way of new insights. The book is wholly Anglo-centric and despite its title contains little reference to the other nations of Britain. Nowhere do we learn of the views of landowners and farmers and their workers in respect of 'the contested countryside', which prompts the suggestion that an academic conference giving voice to those whose job it is to nurture our landscape might serve a useful purpose. Should this take place and the proceedings be published at a price in excess of fifty pounds, one can only hope that the publishers will be able to print a text free of typos and of the bizarre absence of apostrophes afflicting the first chapter of the present book.

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Kathryn J. Cooper, *Exodus from Cardiganshire: Rural-Urban Migration in Victorian Britain*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2011. 249 + xiv. 9780708323991.

Kathryn Cooper has produced a highly-detailed and well-constructed volume offering a number of fresh perspectives on the migration and emigration patterns and networks characteristic of Cardiganshire in the nineteenth century. Using data from the census and a variety of other sources, she discusses the origins, occupations, age structures and residential distribution of those leaving the county for the industrial areas of south Wales and the haberdasheries, gardens, mills and building sites of London, Manchester, Liverpool and elsewhere. This is complemented by a consideration of the funding, promotion and mechanics of emigration to North America, usually by way of the port of Liverpool. Apart from those who were fed up with the tedium of rural drudgery and sought a more vibrant social and cultural life, most were driven to leave the county of their birth by the combined effects of land hunger, agrarian depression, the decline in the fortunes of the lead mining industry and the overall lack of employment opportunities as the nineteenth century wore on. So it was that hundreds of small farmers, labourers