

Union became one of the focal points of current affairs education and the tone was aggressively pro-Soviet.

Mackenzie concludes that "the broadly reformist and left-wing ideological framework within schemes such as ABCA operated in World War Two can be seen as part of a shift in the political consensus" (p. 221). It is nevertheless striking how successful left-wing ideologues were at delivering their message within the army against the wishes of those who were trying to prepare it for battle.

This is a fine book. It is carefully researched, clearly written, and sensibly argued. At \$70.00 you are unlikely to buy it but it is worth a trip to the library.

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**Patrick Touher.** *Fear of the Collar: Artane Industrial School.* Dublin: The O'Brien Press, 1991. Pp. 176. £9.95 paper.

Here is a book that will stop you in your tracks, assuming that you are reading it while taking a stroll. *Fear of the Collar* is a gripping first-hand account of a childhood spent in Artane Industrial School, a well-known Dublin institution. Artane was founded in 1870 shortly after the Irish Industrial Schools Act became law. It lasted for a century—until 1969 to be exact—and was known as the country's "most feared school." For it was under the direction of the Irish

Christian Brothers, the notorious Catholic teaching order. The Brothers' reputation for brutal discipline, dogmatic religion, and a fondness for pederasty is of course well deserved, and this book only serves to confirm beyond doubt what legend and criminal convictions have already established.

Patrick Touher was sent to Artane in 1950 at the tender age of seven. He knew nothing about the place and had no idea how long he would stay. Upon arrival he received a "miraculous medal"—perhaps an omen that miracles would be needed to survive the ordeal ahead. Like hundreds of others before him he was quickly initiated into what he called "a world full of intrigue, a boy's world, a world of black and white, black habits and white collars."

In accordance with the industrial school model developed in the nineteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic, Artane was designed to be self-sufficient. It had its own farm and numerous workshops—bakery, shoeshop, forge, etc.—which enabled it to produce everything required to feed, clothe, and house its population of 900 boys and staff of 100. Of course much of this work was done by the boys and the older ones acquired trade skills which were supposed to lead to gainful employment upon their release at age sixteen.

Work formed an integral part of a rigid routine which began at 6:30 a.m. when the boys were shaken out of bed to be marched to the toilets and on to Mass by 7:00. An unappetizing breakfast of bread and tea followed and then the day was divided into spells of

academic and manual work interspersed with brief periods of recreation. There was little relief from this dreary schedule, save the comfort of sleep and the Saturday afternoon movie. Some of the physical conditions were reminiscent of Dickens. For example, rats were everywhere: "every day you would see them, if not in the kitchen, or in the playground, then in the toilets."

The boys learned the standard primary/elementary curriculum of the day, which was served up with the peculiar mixture of nationalist fervor and Catholic guilt for which the Brothers were renowned. History lessons conducted by a Brother known as the Cowboy, for instance, often degenerated into a lusty chorus of "The Bold Fenian Men," the Brother banging the desk with his leather strap to keep the beat.

The Artane boys developed their own slang and everyone had a nickname. Some of Touher's fellow inmates were Fishface, Janjar, the Fixer, Quickfart, and Skin-the-Goat. He was named Collie because he liked cauliflowers.

The Brothers, too, had nicknames, assigned to them by the boys. They were a sadistic lot, as some of the names indicate, and they seemed to relish inflicting savage beatings, especially on the bare buttocks. Each one of them carried about a thick leather strap, nicknamed the blackjack, with which they could lash out at their charges when they had the inclination—which was often. Some even had pieces of metal sewn into the ends of their blackjacks to increase the effect as they walloped hands or buttocks.

One Brother, Hellfire, acquired his name from his habit of bringing photographs of flames into the classroom, saying that they had been taken in Hell. According to Touher, he "would roast the arse off you for damn all." Another, the Apeman, belted anyone who was not out of bed in time or was not tackling his chores with the alacrity expected. Driller the Killer, described as "an outright child-basher" and "a bloody terror," made the daily military drills a nightmare. He never hesitated to take down a boy's pants on the parade ground, bend him over, and beat his backside in full view of the entire school. Frequently, the trashings were so bad that the victims required medical attention. Macker the Smacker, who became principal of Artane in 1954, once beat a boy with such severity that the victim's face swelled up "like a balloon." The Lug broke a boy's arm by hitting him with a broom handle. Another lad at the receiving end of a hurly stick, wielded by a Brother known as Teddy Boy, had to be taken to the infirmary and was never heard of again! His crime: playing soccer, a forbidden "foreign game." Hurling, a true Irish game, was of course strongly encouraged, as the beating, perhaps fatal, was designed to show.

Floggings were a regular part of the day and were administered in every context—dormitory, playing field, workshop, or classroom. Indeed brute force was an integral feature of the Brothers' approach to teaching, convinced as they were of the innate depravity of youth. One Brother, the Sheriff, awarded minor errors in spelling and mathematics with a hard slap

across the face. Another, Joey Boy, was utterly intolerant of bad spelling and grammar and beat the youngster with unrestrained glee for infractions of this kind. The Bucko, who taught algebra, offered the following inducement to learn: "I will beat you black and blue until you get the whole thing right." Anyone who has ever attended a Christian Brothers' school will instantly recognize the cat-o'-nine-tails pedagogy. It is true that Touher writes that even in his day "Artane was slowly, very slowly changing," and that some Brothers "were gentler" and were capable of generosity and acts of kindness. Still, the overwhelming impression he provides of Artane's discipline is one of wanton cruelty, savagery, and sadism.

There was sexual as well as physical abuse. The Sting liked to fondle boys' genitalia while beating them on the bare buttocks. Macker the Smacker had a similar inclination. These Brothers took advantage of the fact that the young orphans knew nothing about sex. It usually was not until many years later when the boys had left Artane that they realized what had happened to them. There are strong echoes here of Newfoundland's notorious Mount Cashel Orphanage, also run by the Christian Brothers.

In spite of the almost consistent terror the boys kept their spirits up with their fantasies, games, and pranks. There was resistance too. Sometimes older boys would gang together and threaten a particularly obnoxious Brother. Others scaled the wall and escaped, causing the Saturday afternoon movies to be cancelled for those who stayed behind—a great depriva-

tion. A mass break-out planned for 1956, however, failed to materialize. What a pity.

By 1958 Patrick Touher was sixteen years old and it was time for him to leave. Eight tough years had accustomed him to the routine and rituals of Artane and, while he longed for the moment of his release, he feared it too. He feared that life in an institution had not prepared him for the outside world, and he was right. He set out on his birthday, alone, with new clothes and a few pounds in his pocket, to a job in a bakery arranged for him by the Brothers. Although he had worked in the Artane bakery for two years, he found that the bakers' union would not recognize his training. Consequently, his wages were a pittance and he was forced to emigrate to earn a living. It took years to shake off the alienation of institutionalized life. He eventually learned about sex and, later still, to relate to women. His experience was probably typical.

*Fear of the Collar* is a chatty, often amusing, personal memoir and as a result its significance may be overlooked. Its importance lies in being one of the few first-hand accounts of life in an industrial school and scholars probing this neglected aspect of the educational past should take note.

Artane was not, admittedly, a typical school, but it was in many ways a caricature of Irish education at its worst. All the brutality, regimentation, and fanaticism that it so vividly exhibited were also to be found in other schools but in lesser measure. Of course, it could be argued that the schools should not bear the brunt of all the blame as their imperfections were

only reflecting the political, religious, economic, and legal inadequacies of the wider Irish society. Small wonder that, even today, Ireland is one of the few countries that has failed to sign the United Nation's charter on the rights of children.

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**Rosemary R. Gagan.** *A Sensitive Independence: Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient, 1881-1925.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992. \$39.95.

Popular perceptions of women missionaries, Rosemary Gagan informs us, have for too long been dominated by stereotypical images either of the plain and earnest but unlovable spinster, or of the romanticized heroine. In *A Sensitive Independence: Canadian Methodist Women Missionaries in Canada and the Orient, 1881-1925*, Gagan provides an important corrective to these images. In a well-researched exploration of the backgrounds and experiences of the workers of the Women's Missionary Society (WMS) of the Methodist Church of Canada, she makes a significant contribution both to our understanding of the context of Canadian women's missionary work and, more generally, to the history of professional women in Canada.

Like many studies currently emerging under the mantle of social

history, the book employs a collective biographical approach in investigating the experiences of Methodist WMS missionaries. Also in keeping with current scholarly interests, the author implements the social categories of gender and class in her analysis of these women's experiences. More significant, however, is the way in which Gagan places religion at the centre of the everyday lives of Canadian women at the turn of the century. This centrality, which many historians are only now beginning to appreciate, adds an important dimension to her analysis.

The study examines the social framework which led to the creation of the Methodist WMS, and various aspects of the missionary enterprise carried out by Canadian Methodist women. Beginning with a discussion of the early history and development of missionary work in Canada, Gagan goes on to investigate the demographic characteristics, backgrounds, education, professional training, and religious convictions of the more than 300 women employed by the WMS. She combines this discussion with a very useful overview of the higher education, training, and employment options available to Canadian women during the period, after which she moves to a thoughtful exploration of the possible sources of motivation which might have led women to the decision to become missionaries. Gagan then goes on to describe the Methodist WMS missions in Japan and China, noting in particular the effects of the changing political and social context on the work undertaken in each field. In Japan the emphasis was