

Richard Aldrich and Peter Gordon. *Dictionary of British Educationists.* London: Woburn Press, 1989. £25.00 cloth, £12.50 paper.

This publication, by two members of the faculty of the Institute of Education, University of London, provides an accessible guide to the careers of some 450 British educationists in a compact volume of 272 pages. In their choice of subject, Aldrich and Gordon restricted themselves to deceased British educators whose main careers took place after 1800. Each person is allotted between fifteen and thirty lines of text, into which is compressed details of his or her place of birth, education, career, and specific accomplishments, plus a notice of biographies or autobiographies. The term "educationist" is interpreted rather widely to include a number of politicians, philanthropists, poets, novelists, and philosophers considered to have had some impact on educational theory or practice.

The best way to review a compilation of this kind is to attempt an analysis of the entries. In doing so, several things are immediately apparent. In the first place, the subjects are overwhelmingly male—only about 15% are female. Secondly, some 80% are English—the Scots, Irish, and Welsh contributing the remainder, roughly in proportion to their populations. The social origin of the subjects is overwhelmingly middle class; 15% could be classed as aristocratic, and just over 10% as plebeian or working class. The remaining three-quarters fall into one

or another grade of the amorphous mass known as the middle class.

Educationally, the public (i.e. independent) schools and Oxbridge are dominant. Over half of the subjects (56%) attended the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, despite the fact that for at least half the time-span of the volume nearly 40 other universities came into existence. Only about 15% of the educators attended other universities, mainly London and the Scottish institutions. Again, a majority of educators were educated at public schools (37%) and grammar schools (21%). A mere handful received their early schooling at dame, elementary, or board schools. Those educated at universities were almost entirely on the humanities side; in fact the phrase "first class in classical moderations and literae humaniorum" occurs with monotonous regularity. Scientists and medical practitioners are few—only 8% of the total.

Not surprisingly, the majority—55%—of all the subjects of the volume found a career in some aspect of educational administration—whether as chairpersons or members of commissions and committees, administrators in national or local government bodies, heads of colleges, government inspectors, or directors of educational organizations of various kinds. Another 13% exercised direction over education as politicians. Only a small minority (14%) spent their lives wholly or mainly in the classroom, and a similar small proportion could be classed as educational theorists, in the sense that

their theories were influential in changing practice.

On the evidence of this dictionary, the typical educator of the period was English, male, Protestant, public school and Oxbridge-educated, with a career in administration. To a large extent this reflects the composition and function of the ruling class of the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries. It is interesting to see the extent to which the classically educated middle and upper class controlled the educational system in a period which saw the rise of public education for the masses. The view that British education has suffered from a lack of scientific and technical orientation, not to mention a distrust of theory, also finds confirmation here.

But do the entries accurately reflect the situation in the profession? It is largely the socially visible and publicly eminent who rate biographical notices at their death, and in British society—and by extension in the education system—these have usually been members of the upper social ranks. Their contribution to the development of education is not necessarily greater, however, than the labours of more humble practitioners. If I have a criticism of this volume it is that it leans too heavily towards the Establishment and the mainstream. Though the editors have noticed some less orthodox educationists, I feel that more could have been included. The greatest lack, of course, is that of classroom teachers, and though most laboured in obscurity, the literature must contain obituaries and notices of a sufficient number to form a representative selection.

Another category for which space might have been found (to the exclusion of some of the marginal entries) is that of progressive and innovative educationists who supplied much of the dynamic for change inside and outside the state system. I have in mind those associated with the origins of the monitorial system and the development of the infant school movement, the kindergarten, and the Montessori schools, not to mention the inventors of many of the nineteenth-century "systems," educational activists connected with the labour and trade union movements, members of the New Education Fellowship, and the theorists and principals of the progressive schools of the inter-war period.

Despite these criticisms, I found this an interesting and useful compilation which will be of great value to both students and teachers. Can we hope for another volume from the same hands, bringing together less well-known and non-mainstream educationists?

Phillip McCann
Memorial University

G.A. Rawlyk, ed. *Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988. Pp. xii, 130. \$24.95 cloth, \$12.95 paper.

The field of Canadian religious history has exploded with numerous major scholarly works during the past decade, and Canadian Baptist history