

nor condemning past transgressions, it very effectively documents women's historical experience and by so doing charts necessary future directions for Canada to maximize the potential contribution of all its citizens.

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John Webster Grant. *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth Century Ontario.* Toronto, University of Toronto Press for the Ontario Historical Studies Series, 1988. 283 pp., illus., \$30.00.

In the popular imagination nineteenth-century Ontario has generally been regarded as an intensely religious society. School history books have taught generations of children that religion played a central role in the lives of the early pioneers. But, as John Webster Grant carefully indicates in this fascinating and well-written monograph, this was not quite the case. In fact, Christianity's hold on Ontario was not secured until the middle years of the century.

Grant begins his review of Ontario's religious history with an interesting account of the religion of the Indians. He continues to refer to the native people throughout the book, which is a refreshing change from the usual concentration on the white man's activities. Yet the bulk of the book is concerned with the growth of the various Christian denominations. For those familiar with Ontario's history all the old chestnuts are here. Once again we meet those jarring and flam-

boyant personalities—the Strachans, Ryersons, Charbonnels, and a host of others. The old quarrels—church-state relations, clergy reserves, social gospel—all make their appearance. The difference here is that Grant puts them in their place! Or to be more exact, he weaves them into an interpretative framework that sheds new light on these tired issues.

The religious development of Ontario, he argues, can be divided into two eras which roughly approximate to a division at the time of Confederation. The first period was basically an attempt to persuade the population to attend a church. It was an era of institution-building. According to the census data which Grant quotes this was a very successful effort. By 1871 only 1.2% of the people considered themselves (or perhaps dared to admit it) as not belonging to one denomination. It was largely the main denominations—the Church of England, the Church of Rome, the Presbyterians, and the Methodists—who benefited. Yet the road to glory was not entirely smooth for any of these groups. All of them were rent with internal struggles which the immigrants brought with them from their homelands. In an intriguing chapter entitled, "Echoes of Europe," he details these battles, how they affected the growth of each of these denominations, and how often these differences were linked to ethnic backgrounds. This description reflects one of the most valuable aspects of this monograph and that is the author's ability to link local events and episodes to similar movements in other parts of Western Christianity, especially in the

United States and Great Britain. Nowhere is this more evident than in his analysis of the emergence of Evangelical Protestantism as the major expression of Christianity in Ontario by mid-century. Its enthusiasm invaded all of the main churches (including the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church) and often led to disruptions and schisms. Its moral rigour issued in the various campaigns, such as the temperance movement and Sabbatarianism, to make Ontario a decent society.

By the time of Confederation the denominational pattern had become firmly established. After this point most of the old disputes receded and the churches began to expand their activities in new directions. A plethora of organizations emerged to capture the energies and enthusiasm of the laity. At the same time a more professionally trained clergy became the norm in most churches and they, in turn, led this outpouring of good works. Groups of every age and every interest seemed to appear overnight. It looked as if the church militant had finally triumphed.

However, appearances were deceiving. The corrosive forces of modernity were marshalling to lay siege to the Christian citadel. The growth of industrialization and urbanization, the questioning of the authenticity of the Bible, the writings of various independent thinkers, and other movements began to coalesce into a strident attack on the Christian basis of Ontario society. Nevertheless, organized Christianity, especially the Evangelical Protestant variety, was still strong by the end of the century

and its spokesmen strode confidently into the new century.

By the end of the nineteenth century Grant claims that a distinctive Ontario religious tradition had emerged "that was not duplicated elsewhere" (p. 233). Central to this tradition was Ontario's decision to eschew both the European model of an established church and the American scheme of complete separation of church and state. Instead, the approach worked out here was that while the various denominations "were all private corporations in law," nevertheless "in matters of morality and education their public standing received practical recognition" (p. 234). This pattern continued to have a profound effect on Ontario society throughout the following century.

What value does this book have for an educational historian? Generally speaking the author touches on educational issues only in a tangential way. Often there is a whiggish tinge to his comments about the emergence of public schooling and some of his references to the literature are out of date. Yet, as any educational historian knows, nineteenth-century people saw an intimate relationship between education and religion. Although Grant does not review the campaigns for public schooling and denominational colleges in detail, he does offer excellent insights into the political theologies of the various denominations and how these ideologies affected their stances on public issues. After all, many of the leaders of the campaign for state schools were adherents of Evangelical Protestantism and their morality spilled over into the

curriculum and the textbooks. School, church, and family working together would achieve the evangelical goal of a highly moral society.

Similarly, scholars concerned with the history of childhood and adolescence will find his sparse comments on the growth of church organizations for these age groups intriguing and tantalizing. Unfortunately, he does not elaborate on this topic, but obviously it is a potentially rich field for further research. Equally, his discussion of the intellectual challenges to Christianity which appeared in the last decades of the century should be of interest to students of higher education.

In sum, Grant has written an extremely valuable book. Religious history has not been well served by Canadian historians but, as Grant's references indicate, there are a number of younger scholars at work trying to correct this situation. Certainly this book has set a good example for them to follow.

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Richard Leclerc. *Histoire de l'éducation au Québec. Des origines à nos jours.* Sillery: s.e., 1989.

L'annonce d'un ouvrage au titre aussi ambitieux nous a accrochée. Aussi avons-nous été curieuse d'aller voir d'un peu plus près cette brève synthèse (131 p.) éditée à compte d'auteur et que la publicité présente comme un "instrument de référence complet et indispensable" permettant

d'acquérir "des connaissances fondamentales relativement au système scolaire québécois d'hier et d'aujourd'hui."

L'ouvrage est structuré selon un plan chronologique. Chacun des six chapitres couvre une période distincte de l'histoire scolaire du Québec: 1608-1759, 1759-1800, 1801-1866, 1867-1945, 1946-1975 et 1976-1989. Chaque chapitre est construit de façon identique. L'auteur débute par un rappel du contexte socio-politique du temps, puis fait état des principaux personnages et événements qui ont contribué au développement du système scolaire québécois. Un document d'époque complète cette présentation. À l'occasion, des thèmes particuliers tels que la fréquentation scolaire et la formation des maîtres font l'objet d'une attention particulière.

Au total, cependant, l'ouvrage retrace avant tout l'histoire des lois, des grandes enquêtes de même que des structures et des programmes scolaires. Rien de bien nouveau pour l'essentiel. D'ailleurs, l'auteur s'appuie en majeure partie sur les synthèses d'Auguste Gosselin, de Lionel Groulx, de Gérard Filteau et surtout de Louis-Philippe Audet. On se serait aussi attendu à ce qu'il tienne compte des récents travaux en histoire de l'éducation au Québec, notamment ceux de Jean-Pierre Charland, de Nicole Thivierge, de Nadia Fahmy-Eid, de Micheline Dumont, de Ruby Heap, d'Allan Greer, de Michel Verrette et de Marta Danylewicz. Cette lacune empêche l'auteur d'atteindre ses objectifs premiers, d'importants aspects de l'histoire de l'éducation mis