tion with aboriginal cultures. It is, after all, only because of indigenous protests that Canadians, as a government and a people, have made even slight concessions in the field of aboriginal rights.

This is a minor criticism—more a difference of perspective than a reflection on scholarship. With only a few exceptions, Miller has gone as far as the literature would permit. The gaps that remain represent a challenge for the current generation of historians to shift away from well-covered ground and to look for those many topics, regions, and periods that remain essentially unstudied. J.R. Miller is to be congratulated for producing a first-rate survey of Native-white relations in Canada.

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**John N. Miner. *The Grammar Schools of Medieval England: A.F. Leach in Historiographical Perspective.* Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990. Pp. 355. $42.50.**

In the early 1960s the author of this book was one of only two supporters of the views of A.F. Leach—which had dominated the history of English schooling for decades—to defend these from strong criticism in the *British Journal of Educational Studies* (1955). This was seven years after the event but apparently encouraged a second, more general, defence of Leach's approach and interpretation by W.N. Chaplin, published in 1963. By that time, however, the criticism had gained influential support from historians at large which could be cited in a response that closed the matter. For the past quarter of a century, Leach's methodology and readings of English educational history have been set aside and there has been much new work, particularly on educational developments in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. During these same years, by his own account, John Miner concentrated on studying Arthur Francis Leach (1851-1915), the man and his writings, as opportunity offered in the interstices of university lecturing.

This meant relinquishing an earlier study of Latin teaching in the later Middle Ages but two chapters in the present book could be devoted to the subject, with several illustrations, on the ground that Leach did little about this aspect. On the other hand, efforts were bent to listing every article he did publish, however slight. Otherwise the book is somewhat repetitive, alternating the author's exposition and criticism of Leach's writings rather than placing those in historical perspective. The first part surveys the subject's work as a whole, goes through two main books and discusses his employment from 1884 settling endowed schools for the charity commission; a task which did much to concentrate his attention on Latin grammar schools, leaving aside teaching in the vernacular and vocational training or apprenticeship, the pattern

for most children. In the second part there is a move to discuss the "weaknesses" as well as strengths of Leach's research, not least the mishandling of monasticism, and in a penultimate chapter, "Leach in his historiographical context," the criticisms of others are summarized before setting out some general conclusions.

A member of the order Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes, founded by de la Salle at the turn of the eighteenth century, John Miner was legitimately critical of historians for their lack of interest in schooling. By the same token he developed a warm admiration for Leach's tireless involvement in the subject and, less understandably, for his vigorous and often contentious mode of exposition. While accepting that his subject had idiosyncracies and made serious errors, Miner seeks to explain why Leach held such odd views—admiration for the Anglo-Saxon church and Oliver Cromwell, for instance, detestation of the monks brought in by the Norman Conquest, and refusal to recognise the Renaissance—or to explain these away. While this rules out a clear exposition and assessment of the historical issues, it would seem to put a final nail in Leach's coffin rather than commending attention to his work by a new generation of historians, as at some points seems intended.

To summarize in a single chapter the sharp criticisms made by leading medievalists before and in 1915, then work through contributions to the history of education since 1955 which include active criticism of Leach, does not, of course, place the man's work in "historiographical context." After all, it was the reorientation of history at large, during the seventy-five years since Leach's death, that undermined a passive acceptance and impelled criticism of his interpretations and conclusions. A survey which informs readers at one point that *English Schools at the Reformation* (1896) "remains a seminal work on the economic and social dimensions of the Reformation" revolves within a world of its own. This was the study that initially made Leach's reputation, then destroyed it half a century on as major errors came to light.

The Reformation has been a problematic period largely because of the rift between medieval and modern history complicated by constant shifting of the frontier post, not to mention variant interpretations of the religious aspects. Counting the number of schools supposedly established or eliminated at different periods (whether because of deterioration of ancient ecclesiastical foundations or the heavyhandedness of Reformation dissolutions) has been a mode of checking up on and amending Leach's conclusions. But, leaving aside problems of computation, comparisons are valueless when the close of the Middle Ages is shifted from 1480 (as W.K. Jordan had it in his surveys of charitable bequests) to 1547, even 1560, enabling the count of "medieval schools" to be doubled to vindicate Leach's mode of assessment. Miner's survey concludes with acclaim for the single study on this pattern, one which indeed extended Leach's methodology by assuming a pre-Reformation "elementary school" for every mention of choristers or

children saying *De Profundis* (J.A.H. Moran, 1985). Unfortunately this is the only publication of the 1980s to find mention, although a lively discussion of the English Reformation has been in train for years. In short, almost alone in opposition to those who have worked to rescue the history of education from Leach, John Miner has sought to rescue Leach from his critics, not least in order to reinstate a claim that the clerical order presided over an extensive "school supply" on the eve of the dissolutions.

More to the point is an eventual recognition that Leach's work has been "superseded" by that of a medieval historian whose attention has been devoted to education these past twenty years, with a body of publications to his name which as a whole represent "a corrective of Leach." Nicholas Orme prefaced his *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (1973) with a model "obituary" of his predecessor and this study and his other books and many papers (one only is listed in Miner's bibliography) are now the generally recognized guides to the period. As for the Reformation, one of many recent publications to pass unnoticed is *The Reformation and the English People* (1984) by J.J. Scarisbrick. Writing as a Catholic, he throws fresh light on the confraternities and chantries concerned with schooling in the later Middle Ages, while also indicating where Leach mishandled the evidence; with an acknowledgement to the studies of Orme and "the major work by J. Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (1966)" since "the combined effect of these and other studies has been to discredit much of Leach's work, especially his *English Schools at the Reformation.*"

The point is made because Miner omits consideration of the book mentioned—bar inferring that it links school supply overmuch with lay and Protestant influences—presenting the 1955 *BJES* papers by the same author as if these were the crux of the modern criticism of Leach. Articles framed to shock the then educational world into a recognition of his fallibility could not, of course, *prove* any case against Leach; a decade of work was needed to embark on that course. On the other hand the points originally made, thirty-five years ago, did convince leading historians of the period whose views were reported in the 1963 response in the *BJES*. But Miner also omits all reference to this backing, and the early amendment of more than one textbook, to convey an impression that only historians of education have been involved in the modern challenge to a long- standing authority.

This is the more surprising given that a chief supporter of the criticism (besides the then rising young Tudor historian, G.R. Elton, and the veteran economic and social historian R.H. Tawney) was the great medievalist and historian of monasticism Dom David Knowles—once, it seems, Miner's adviser. Since Knowles had been impressed by the original criticisms his advice was sought about consolidating these and willingly given by one who had once expended much time wrestling with Leach's tangled thought and many contradictions, not to mention a style which alone bred distrust, as a letter to the present writer, dated June

1963, indicates. "His intemperate methods, though not of themselves invalidating his statements and judgments, which must stand and fall on accuracy alone, nevertheless are a psychological indication of a mind not wholly calm and judicial." Although he thought the new response to one still supporting Leach useful he felt sure "Leach's ghost will not be finally laid until someone has tackled the whole subject anew."

The subject has since been tackled in a variety of ways, down the years, to exclude the unquiet spirit of a maverick "medievalist," though grateful use may still be made of the product of extensive research when due care is exercised. Interestingly a new criticism has recently arisen, namely Leach's misreading of the post-Restoration years as educationally barren (Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England*, 1982), tabled by the leading historian of that period who complains that Lawrence Stone, whose "educational revolution" took off after the grounding of Leach, has in this case perpetuated the latter's error.

Even with the development of social history there remains much to be done before the treatment of education becomes fully integrated. On that central point, made more than once in the present book, there can be agreement. Insofar as this provides an overview of Leach's writings, accompanied by many warnings to the uninitiated of the pitfalls to be met in studying them, perhaps John Miner did all he could well do to commemorate the man he first rose to defend in 1962—another point not mentioned in his book, though the article is listed. There are signs that the book has been long in the making since judgements seem to be modified towards the close and the careful "conclusions" would not for the most part arouse dissent among the few students of the works of A.F. Leach still around. It is sad to learn from a publisher's note that the author died unexpectedly in 1987, before editing of the book was under way, so that there were many difficulties. One thing would greatly have assisted readers to co-ordinate treatments of the same matter in different places—a fuller index.

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**Charles Leslie Glenn, Jr. *The Myth of the Common School.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988. Pp. xi, 369. $32.50 cloth, $13.95 paper, U.S.**

To this evangelical Christian senior educational administrator for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the myth of the common school resides in the belief that this institution has operated as a force for national unity and civil harmony through the elaboration of a truly common set of social principles. Glenn takes for granted much of the revisionist critique of common school ideology: the common school did not produce literacy in the midst of ignorance, has not been