

REVIEWS

Paddy Hearsy, Review Editor

Margaret Gillett. *Readings in the History of Education*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Co. of Canada, 1969, 301 pp. Appendix.

The preparation of a book of Readings in the boundless realm of the history of education must be a colossal undertaking and a severe test in "decision-making." Here in this volume, Margaret Gillett states disarmingly in her Preface, is "a very small selection from the vast material that deals with the development of educational thought and practice throughout the world." That the selection should be so very well done marks a splendid achievement, an achievement that readers of this book, or those who consult it, will readily appreciate.

The author's name is well-known across Canada, and elsewhere, as also is her book, *A History of Education: thought and practice*, to which this new volume, as even a cursory comparison of content and intent of the two volumes will show, provides a suitable companion. They complement each other. They are both characterized by the same breadth of outlook and purpose, and the same erudite treatment, and they both reflect the same wealth of experience and

recognition of international dimensions in education. They both cover every important aspect of educational theory and practice.

In structure the book is well-conceived, straightforward and eminently effective. Not unexpectedly it provides sections of Readings that relate to the usually recognized periods of influence and advancement in the history of education from ancient times to our own disturbed, clamorous, contemporary period. It is noted, however, that while six of the eight sections fall in line with the main plan, the first and last, particularly the last, are different, "out of step" so to say; the first because while it is rooted in the wisdom of the ancients it ends, not inappropriately of course, with excerpts from Reports in 20th century Canada; the last because it is a unit, albeit with its own particular value, representing developments in Canadian history of education.

One wonders whether it might have been possible to "integrate"

(blessed word of educationists!) excerpts reflective of the history of education in Canada within the more widely representative sections, just as McLuhan for example finds a place in Section VII. This but illustrates, however, that the Editor of a book of this kind no doubt has intentions that are both declared and undeclared and has a right to sustain them. Both teacher and reader may be expected in any case to know, or come to know, that Canadian education is not a wholly independent chapter in the history of education. Indeed two of the purposes declared by the Editor in her Preface are "to illuminate some of the perennial ideas and issues in education," and "to suggest the relevance of the past to the present and future." Within her praiseworthy purview she has Canadian education and Canadian students clearly in mind.

As one approached each of the central six sections one was tempted to try to note beforehand from what sources the excerpts or quotations might come. Naturally there are outstanding writers and thinkers in each period who could not be omitted; perhaps naturally too the knowledgeable reader will find one or two of his favourites excluded while he can at the same time

welcome a number of pleasing surprises. Of the unexpected inclusions perhaps the most attractive of all, is the extract from Churchill's *My Early Life* (*Mensa! O Table!* — perhaps he would have fared better on *puella pulchra* as this reader did!) Also striking a reminiscent note is the appearance of the *Gaudeamus* (though unfamiliar in English). These and others serve to introduce the lighter and brighter element that critics of books on education seem generally to find wanting. Of the weightier, unexpected, and interesting, excerpts one may mention that from Peter Abelard's *Sic et Non*. And of course one is glad to find Kaufman's *Up the Down Staircase* and Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd* represented in Section VII alongside of extracts from Bestor and Bruner and the formidable Montessori and Dewey.

On the other hand, with one of the emphases in the book being placed on teachers and teaching, Mulcaster for example might have found a place in Section IV, as also might Elyot as an alternative to Castiglione; or in Section V one thinks of Joseph Priestley while reading from Franklin; or when the sides are taken in the Science — Humanities conflict in 19th century England, John Stuart

Mill might well have been regarded as a useful "mediator." But such comments present no criticism. They merely reflect this reader's reactions and they simply illustrate again the compulsion upon the Editor of a book of this kind to set limits to her selections and to select according to her own clear plan and purposes.

It is at this point perhaps that attention should be drawn to the fact that each section has been given its own very useful, relatively unobtrusive, explanatory introduction. These sectional introductions, along with certain excerpts that serve to link successive sections, assist in providing and preserving the desired continuity and coherence in the volume as a whole. In

addition there is an Appendix giving information about films, arranged in sections corresponding appropriately to the eight sections of Readings.

Without question this is a book of Readings that for many students of educational history and theory, apart from those who become advanced students and are not so much in a 20th century hurry, will find both helpful and attractive. Indeed it merits a chance to contribute to the development in students of a desire to consult the sources more fully and even, as the Editor clearly hopes, of a lasting interest in "the rich, varied and exciting study that is the History of Education."

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Frank H. Blackington III and Robert S. Patterson (eds.). *School, Society, and the Professional Educator — A Book of Readings.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968. 416 pp. \$5.45.

As a rule, books of readings are not inspirational documents, because of their "second hand" character or because they are constructed on the dubious premise that quality assembled is quality increased. To their credit, the editors reject the role of passive spectators whose only function is to introduce the material and then quietly withdraw to let the readings speak for

themselves. Rather, they are always in command of the situation, even to the point of advancing a theory of their own regarding the character and function of professional educators.

The underlining message of the book is that the teacher or teacher-to-be is first of all a professional person (defined as one who has "dedication to service of society in and through a special-