

in Canadian education consistently manifested a fundamental and overriding desire to reconcile the ideas of the educational theorists with the realities of classroom practice. Influencing his thinking was his close association with teachers' organizations. Before coming to Quebec to assume the position of Associate Professor of English at Macdonald College, Dr. Paton was the president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. For fourteen crucially important years in the organization's history, from 1949 until 1963, he was the General Secretary of the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers. He left that post in 1963 to join the faculty of the College of Education, University of Toronto, where, from 1967 until his retirement in 1972, he was chairman of the Department of History, Philosophy and Sociology of Education.

The first of the two parts into which the anthology is divided is entitled "Issues in Education." In it he defines his philosophy of education, a philosophy that is essentially liberal and pragmatic but which is emphatically humanities oriented. To Dr. Paton, the main task of the school is to teach people to think.

Particularly notable in this first section are the thoughtful review of Hilda Neatby's *So Little for the Mind*, a review that is entitled "Dr. Neatby's Doctored Diatribe" and which is the best assessment of this all but forgotten condemnation of Canadian education that this reviewer can recall reading, and a timely essay, inspired by the Ontario MacKay Report, on moral and religious education. In "The Either/Or Syndrome in Educational Theorizing," Dr. Paton makes an eloquent plea for the educational middle ground, for an enlightened compromise between the extremes of traditionalism and those of progressivism, currently represented by the advocates of unbridled freedom in the schools.

The second part of the book, "The Professionalization of the Teacher," treats largely of the role

of teachers' associations in Canada. For a North American audience of the mid-70's, perhaps the most timely essay in this section is "Trade Union or Professional Association? The Canadian Experience." Dr. Paton places himself unequivocally in the camp of those who prefer the association to the union. He argues that the professional association, rather than the trade union, is more likely to concern itself with those issues that must be resolved if teachers are to enjoy truly professional status. His approach to education is characterized by *persuasion*, based upon knowledge and rational thought, and *compromise*, of the type essential to the proper functioning of democratic institutions.

Concern and Competence in Canadian Education provides a wealth of intellectual nourishment for those genuinely concerned with the problems and quandaries of contemporary Canadian education. Its approach is both sane and humane. It is exactly the type of book that one would expect from Jim Paton.

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D. G. Watts.
THE LEARNING OF HISTORY.
London:
Routledge & Kegan Paul,
1972.
117 pp. \$5.60.

These are difficult times for history teachers. Their subject is under attack from several quarters, not the least of which are disaffected students suspicious of all knowledge outside their own experience and time. Challenged by these dealers in "relevant" education, history teachers are on the defensive, so much so that it sometimes appears that they spend more time in justifying their subject than in actually teaching it. In striking contrast to the uncertain status of history in the schools is the revival of interest in

the past in the public mind. The popular success of the historical drama on television — "The Forsyte Saga" and "The National Dream" are just two examples — suggests that history is far from being a dead subject for many people.

Against this curious paradox, D. G. Watts, a teacher and writer of history in England, undertakes to discuss the means by which the teaching of history can be improved in the regular schools. Although the author's comments are intended for a British audience, they are of sufficient importance and merit to be of interest to history teachers everywhere.

The unique quality of the book is its investigation of the psychological aspects of learning history and the role played by history in developing the imagination and intellect of the pupil. Indeed, at times there is more Piaget and Dewey than Toynbee. In any case, the author's main thesis is that history is badly taught because its nature is badly understood and because teachers do not know enough about the pupils they are instructing. Watts maintains that history is part art and part science, that learning history is at once an emotional and intellectual experience. Once we accept this fact, an improvement in the teaching of history will result. According to Watts, the failure of history teachers to understand the character of history has caused them to err in their methods of instruction. For example, if the discovery approach has been less than successful in the teaching of history, claims the

author, it is because it was borrowed from the sciences. What works in science teaching does not necessarily work in history.

Sounding more like a child psychologist than an historian (the author is currently a Senior Counsellor with the Open University), Watts gives special attention to a discussion of the social development of the pupil, particularly his emotional and mental readiness to study and profit from history. His message: history teaching should be adapted to the youngster's stage of development. Arguing, for example, that inasmuch as youngsters in the 7-8 age bracket show a fascination for stories of conflict, heroes and villains, history teachers might well use this time for a study of Greeks and Trojans, or Romans and Carthaginians. Claiming also that studies show that pupils around fifteen are little interested in any history, Watts says that consideration should be given to dropping history from the curriculum in the lower secondary school.

It should be clear by now that Watts' book goes beyond that of "tips for teachers." The overall excellence of the work may be attributed to a writer who is at home in psychology as well as in history, and who has effectively arranged a marriage of the two. Prospective teachers and inservice teachers will find this book a gem. If there is a better work on the teaching of history, I am not aware of it.

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