

Alan W. Jones.

LYULPH STANLEY: A STUDY IN EDUCATIONAL POLITICS.

Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1979.

194 pp. \$8.50.

Edward Lyulph Stanley merits only the briefest mention in histories of English education these days. A founder of the National Education Association, a member of the London School Board almost uninterruptedly from 1876 to 1904, and an ardent controversialist, Stanley stood firm against the enlargement of influence of voluntary and denominational groups upon the national educational system, attempted to extend public support to continuation schools, and energetically pursued implementation of reforms of educational organization. Yet because his greatest accomplishments were administrative rather than theoretical, and because he was on the losing side of the conflict between locally-based and centralized authority in education, he has been largely ignored of late.

The purpose of Jones' monograph is not to rescue Stanley from an ill-deserved obscurity, nor yet to detail his life. There is, of course, a great deal of Stanley in the book. The chapter headings are a summary of his career, and the text is peppered with references to his published and unpublished writings. Yet Jones' true aim is to provide an examination and analysis of the major educational issues of the day. The career of one man thus becomes a *leitmotiv* organizing and unifying any number of otherwise discordant strains.

After limning Stanley's familial and intellectual background, Jones successively explores Stanley's early years on the London School Board, his service on the Cross Commission, the struggle for a national system of education, the development and reorganization of English education in the crucial period 1897-1904, and the years of Stanley's eclipse, 1903-1925. Virtually every educational issue of the period comes under scrutiny: provision of facilities, educational finance, teacher training, curriculum development, abolition of fees, etc. The weight of the book, however, a total of forty-five percent of the text, is devoted to the years 1888-1904, concentrating on the problems of the tension between ad hoc and centralized authority, and of the conflict between the proponents of church school and board school.

From the synthetic viewpoint, Jones' book is quite successful. Organizing the book around Stanley's career is of great value in focusing on some of the most urgent educational issues of the day, even if a bit more narrowly than is desirable. From the heuristic viewpoint, it is almost an embarrassment of riches. Jones has consulted an enormous number of published and unpublished primary sources and studies, and has provided copious documentation, a fine index, six figures, and a lengthy appendix listing schools opened by the London School Board during Stanley's Chairmanship of the Statistical Committee. But from the analytic viewpoint, the book is close to disappointing. The treatment is almost entirely descriptive, and the concluding four-page assessment contributes little

insight into either Stanley or the issues with which he grappled. On balance, scholars and intelligent laypersons alike will find Jones' book a readable and informative guide to most of the key educational issues in late Victorian England.

Joseph M. McCarthy
Suffolk University

Frank R. Vellutino.
DYSLEXIA: THEORY AND RESEARCH.
Cambridge, MA., MIT Press, 1979.
427 pp. \$21.00.

This is a book that theorists will spend several years arguing about: the selection of articles used for review; the particular criteria set down for defining a good selection of subjects; the choice of theories used as ways of managing the data; and so on. If you are looking for a means of getting a handle on the topic of dyslexia, you could do little better than to read this book. Vellutino is a competent collector and reviewer of much of the careful work that has been done in the past years on trying to define dyslexia. You will note that even in this book dyslexia is still defined by exclusion — what it is not — rather than by what it is.

Vellutino presents his book in three major sections: definitions of dyslexia; four theories of the source of dyslexia; and an integrative summary with suggestions for further research.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the years of talk about individual differences, the search for a single cause or syndrome continues. The major difficulty, for those of us who view our major task as teaching children, is that such attempts lack environmental validity — the findings of such controlled studies always seem to get lost in the mass and mess of uncontrolled variables of the real world. Clearly extrinsic factors, which are carefully excluded from the controlled studies, probably have more impact on a child's behaviour than do most of the assumed intrinsic factors. This is the old problem of statistical versus practical significance come to the surface again.

Which brings us to what I see as the most interesting part of the whole book: the last five pages. Vellutino speculates on recommendations for remediation and ends up with a plea for direct, precision teaching of reading in a full language setting. Teach phonics, but do it in a linguistic setting — syllables and words; *and* teach language enrichment, but do it in relation to word forms, pronunciation, grammar, and usage. Note well that this is not a book on the teaching of reading. There are several recent books on the teaching of reading that expand and detail the same message as Vellutino's and which would be of more interest to most elementary or remedial reading teachers. But that this