

Smith, W. David, *Stretching Their Bodies*, (David & Charles, Newton Abbot, 1974).

It would be difficult for anyone writing a history of physical education in Britain not to acknowledge the contribution already made by McIntosh nor to be aware that his work will inevitably be compared with "*Physical Education in England since 1800*".

David Smith's contribution, while being indebted to McIntosh's work, presents his account in a rather different style, and includes new material from a wide range of social histories as well as from many new primary sources.

A particularly interesting feature is that the author has attempted to get away from a purely descriptive account, and has, whenever possible, endeavored to place developments within the changing social and economic climate of the time. By so doing he has produced a very readable book which is also extremely scholarly.

In choosing such a wide topic it is inevitable that there are omissions which some will regret. I believe too little attention has been given by the author to advancing his views on the instruments for change in the curriculum. In this respect George Newman, the first Medical Officer to the Board of Education (1907) placed great importance on his Inspectors and on the organizers of physical education which he encouraged, and exhorted the local education authorities to appoint. Their work, in the first half of this century, was fundamental to the development of the subject in schools, and I believe deserves a greater place in history of the subject than the author has given them. Similarly, the unique contribution made by women physical educationists has been neglected in a book which is sub-titled

"The History of Physical Education".

In addition to being a scholarly book, which is eminently readable, it is an excellent source book for official publications which in any way touches on physical education,

The notes and references are a splendid example of how this aspect of recording historical information can be used to illuminate the text.

Another feature of this book is that running parallel with the account of the development of physical education in England is a brief description, chapter by chapter, of developments taking place in other parts of Europe and in America. Because this comparative material is inevitably simple and of a general nature one might readily imagine it to be superficial comparing unfavorably with the main text. Surprisingly, this is not so as it is presented essentially to illuminate rather than stand on its own as additional research material. To those who know the detailed history of physical education in other countries there will inevitably be objections to some of the generalizations, but if they are accepted for what I feel sure the author intended, then I believe they serve a useful purpose.

The faults in this book, as I see it, are that it tells an incomplete story and too much emphasis has been put on official publications. Its virtues are that it is both scholarly and readable and the excellent bibliography will be of inestimable value to anyone carrying out research in this area. It is an ideal textbook for required reading in any course designed to study the history of physical education in England.

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