

J.A. Mangan (ed.), *'Benefits Bestowed'? Education and British Imperialism.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988). Illus., index, pp. 242. \$108.50.

Another volume in the 'Studies in Imperialism' series from Manchester University Press, under the general editorship of John MacKenzie, '*Benefits bestowed*?' presents the reader with a great deal of evidence about the role of education in the process of British Imperialism, much of it from refreshingly new viewpoints. In his introduction to the book, Tony Mangan states that 'Imperialism, both as a concept and a reality, has influenced the formal education systems of Britain and her imperial possessions, directly and indirectly and to a greater or lesser extent, for over three hundred years.' The eleven contributions in the volume focus on the period

between 1820 and 1953, with several chapters devoting themselves to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the impact of imperialism in education was particularly significant.

Overall, the book presents a wide cross-section of examples from around the Empire - areas singled out include Newfoundland, Ireland, New Zealand, and South Africa. The diversity of experiences discussed adds to Mangan's assertion that 'there is much still to discover about the past and present impact of British imperialism on the educational systems of Britain, dominion and colony and, by extension, on their societies and cultures'. His belief that this volume could provide an early stimulus for future studies of imperialism and education by scholars from various fields has surely been upheld.

The contributors present aspects of imperialism in various guises, and often the result is one of great contrast. The first two essays in the volume, by Richard Aldrich and Pamela Horn, respectively examine the development of history as an academic discipline on the one hand, and the clear propaganda influence of imperialism on elementary schooling prior to 1914. John Coolahan's entertaining essay on the ultimate failure of imperial education to control Ireland provides an excellent contrast to the reception the Newfoundland School Society received as related by Phillip McCann.

Religious friction is a major theme in several papers, and the contribution by Sherington and Conellan brings the Protestant and Catholic views sharply into focus in their analysis of Sydney Church of England Grammar School and Saint Joseph's College, Sydney. The anxiety experienced in New Zealand between the wars, and the patriotic response attempted by educational authorities, is well argued by John Openshaw in the most theoretical piece in the volume.

Donald Leinster-Mackay's examination of the private preparatory system in England reveals its central role in the process of imperial training for the upper-middle classes. The link between public schools and freemasonry around the Empire is the subject of Paul Rich's attention, and despite the attendant problems of investigating a highly secretive society, he has given the reader another link to consider in the chain of Empire.

The remaining three essays interested this reviewer the most. Deborah Gaitskell's highly original investigation of the education of

black girls in South Africa exposes not only the preconceptions of the authorities but also the real gender and racial restrictions operating at the time. She traces the changing destinies for schoolgirls as South Africa moved through a century of colonial status to achieve dominion status: 'domestic servant, peasant wife and mother, teacher, nurse, and literate though racially inferior worker'. At the beginning of her essay Gaitskell notes the relative dearth of research on women and empire; she has certainly redressed the balance with her significant contribution in this volume.

Patrick Dunae documents a unique response to the realities of emigration in his discussion of the Colonial College at Hollesley Bay, Suffolk. While the agricultural skills taught at the college prepared settlers to survive and perhaps prosper in their new countries, Dunae makes it clear that imperial symbolism and reverence for the Empire was central to the teachings of the programme. 'It was, in all senses of the word, an imperial institute.' He places the role of the college solidly within the framework of the public schoolboy's service to the Empire.

The concluding essay in the volume is its most argumentative. While admitting that 'the colonial experience will doubtless remain the subject of ongoing controversy because of its paradoxical or contradictory nature', Clive Whitehead presents an alternative interpretation of British colonial education policy which sees the goal as more than merely planned exploitation. His main disagreement is with the simplistic notion that colonial education was a deliberate policy to ensure European control. The points raised in Whitehead's essay magnify the appropriateness of the question mark in the book's title, and the volume as a whole has, as Mangan remarked in the introduction, contributed to a 'fuller and fresh reflection ... regarding the motives of the British educational imperialist'. If British involvement in a colony could be a double-edged sword, this thoughtful volume serves to alert readers once again to the pervasiveness and influence of British imperialism through education.

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