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**Richard A. Jarrell. *Educating the Neglected Majority: The Struggle for Agricultural and Technical Education in Nineteenth-Century Ontario*. 418pp. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2016. \$37.95 (paperback). ISBN: 9-78-0-7735-4738-4**

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Richard A. Jarrell. *Educating the Neglected Majority: The Struggle for Agricultural and Technical Education in Nineteenth-Century Ontario*. 418pp. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2016. \$37.95 (paperback). ISBN: 9-78-0-7735-4738-4

It is a testament to the late Richard Jarrell's intellectual and academic breadth that he began his academic odyssey with a Ph.D. thesis on the Early Modern astronomer Michel Maestlin and ended with this fine-grained study of Canadian technical and agricultural education, seen through to posthumous publication by his widow Martha Jarrell. To say that this work is long-awaited and badly needed would be an understatement. We have been responding to and relying upon Robert Stamp's unpublished dissertation for going on half a century now. I would expect that this book, by the late long-time editor of this journal, will essentially restart the historiography on Canadian technical education.

The book is organized into pre- and post-Confederation periods, with the latter more clearly divided further into Ontario and Quebec and stopping short of the Royal Commission on Technical Education. While linguistic and confessional matters were not unimportant, the biggest factor influencing the different Ontario and Quebec cases seems to have been different rates and patterns of literacy. The careful delineation of the striking dynamic, almost dialectic, between formal and informal efforts in the areas of agricultural and technical education is a real strength of this book. The efforts of private groups to

disseminate new ideas and best practice in agricultural knowledge slowly drew in the State after 1840. While not the book's principal purpose, these stories help us better to understand the development of the colonial and provincial States, including the quasi-federalism of Province of Canada with its two Boards of Agriculture. Jarrell pushes back the involvement of the State through educational institutions and in partnership with private bodies supporting science and technology in economic development – even if not always successfully and always difficult to measure. Indeed if anything I think Jarrell is a bit “glass half empty” in his assessment of the earliest efforts.

By Confederation government support for agriculture was more advanced than for industry including technical support and education. But in fact, and this is another crucial strength of this book, the two (along with art education) were closely linked. Agriculture and industry were converging, from the mechanization of agriculture and the important implement industry to the industrialization of food processing, most notably with dairy farming and factory cheese making. It was the Agricultural Act of 1857 which gave rise to Boards of Arts and Manufactures in Upper and Lower Canada while Mechanics Institutes reported to the Department and later Commissioner of Agriculture. After Confederation the new Ontario quickly abolished the Boards of Agriculture and of Arts & Manufactures in favour of a single Bureau of Agriculture and Arts

The Canadian case was not the same as either the UK or the US though

drawing on both. Ideas circulated widely through the Anglo Atlantic world as they did among francophone regions. Although the Morrill Act was not a model, Canadians watched the emerging Land Grant Colleges with interest. The influences were not all one way; the Ontario College of Agriculture at Guelph became a North American leader, discussed and admired in the United States.

I have a few, if not objections, then at least concerns. Jarrell dismisses apprenticeship as declining but then makes several references to apprentices throughout this book, suggesting that reports of its death might be exaggerated. It would also be useful to know in this context about First Nations schooling. Similarly, girls and women make fleeting appearances in this book though they are hard to find using the index and gender is not fully engaged as an issue. Indeed Jarrell argues that in both provinces the feminization of

the teaching profession was an obstacle to the teaching of agriculture in rural (or for that matter urban) schools. But, as we do see if we pay close enough attention through this book, women were both sources and audiences for agricultural and technical education, mechanics institutes classes were open to women and women were certainly involved with art education. I would also put more stress on the significance of domestic science, under various names and guises, as a type of technical training for girls and women.

While at times this book reads like a frustrating tale of false starts and unrealized hopes this not my takeaway. Rather I think Jarrell is telling us that the campaign for technical education that bore fruit in early twentieth century had very deep roots, roots entwined in the fabric of nineteenth century Canadian history.

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