

to evolve, these religiously inspired traits are ‘characteristics that in many ways continue to define the region today’ (p. 147).

WHEATON COLLEGE,
ILLINOIS

JEFFREY W. BARBEAU

Protestant children, missions and education in the British world. By Hugh Morrison. (Religion and Education.) Pp. vi + 122. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2021. €70 (paper). 978 90 04 47103 0
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In this slim volume one is confronted by a topic of unusual importance for recognising the connections present among Christian missions, children and the British Empire from the early nineteenth century through to the first part of the twentieth century. Even though the role of children in promoting Christian missions has been largely overlooked, children offer an important window into the dynamics of culture, race, economics, politics, nationality, citizenship, empire and religion that was dynamic and contentious. Based on over a decade of researching and writing about the topic, Morrison’s work brings together a vast array of primary sources that reaches beyond the British Isles and considers the whole of the British imperial world from Canada to New Zealand. The children’s missionary movement, as Morrison argues, was primarily educational in terms of the purpose and the content of what children encountered. Education linked together children living across the vast expanse of the British world. He also affirms that children mattered in the missionary movement and that they made personal sacrifices to help those in need in faraway places. Although there is much complexity in examining the role of children and missions, the educationally-minded rhetoric, the illustrated periodicals, imperially rooted ideas of citizenship and emotional engagement were all important pedagogical techniques for fostering a sensitivity to missions in children. By examining these key elements in his analysis of the children’s missionary movement, Morrison contends that a more holistic understanding of the history of children’s religious lives in the modern era can be ascertained.

Morrison organises his study into six chapters. The first chapter reviews the historiography and outlines the nature of the book. The following four chapters are thematic and examine children’s support of missions, children’s periodicals and pedagogy, notions of citizenship and missions and the ‘emotional turn’ related to children and missions. The concluding chapter notes the educational ideas and strategies that were essential to the children’s missionary movement and how children experienced an interpersonal enculturation into communities that affirmed their denominational, religious, political, national and even imperial citizenship. Naturally, contexts mattered a great deal and some children found themselves oriented toward entrenched colonial and imperial prerogatives that caused them to view missions from a distinctly metropolitan perspective while others remained subjects, even if they too supported the missionary movement from the periphery, since they were seen as primarily receivers of missionary efforts. For children, missions remained an emotionally conceived project that was constructed as part of their religious education that was promoted by well-intentioned

adults. Accordingly, there were no differentiating lines between Christian missions and religious practices for children. Instead, the two realities intersected and enlivened one another in their hearts, minds and activities.

One of the ways in which that Morrison chooses to explore the historical material in the thematic chapters is to provide a case study of the theme. For example, in chapter iii, which addresses missionary periodicals and pedagogy, he examines *The Break of Day*, a children's missionary periodical that began publication in 1909 under the direction of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church. Morrison notes that *The Break of Day* was distributed to children through Sunday schools and in mission communities, including to the North Island Māori. The aim of the magazine was to educate children about the various missions of the Church whether they occurred as home missions or in India, China or elsewhere. The magazine depicted the lives of non-Western children of similar age whose lives were affected by Presbyterian missions, while also sharing stories of missionaries as ordinary people doing philanthropic or evangelistic work in extraordinary locales. Morrison recognises that knowing what child readers gleaned from the pages of the periodical is difficult to ascertain. However, the magazine was an engaging pedagogical tool that brought young readers into contact with the broader world, the work of their denomination and encouraged them to be lifelong supporters of missions whether they became missionaries or not.

Although Morrison notes that historians today may find much of what they encounter in the children's missionary movement problematic, his study offers a much-needed re-examination of children's involvement. He roots his analysis in contemporary historiographical and theoretical trends that help to shed light on the experience of children in relationship to the methods that teachers, who were usually women, used to inculcate an enthusiasm for missions. This volume is also a corrective to the simplistic stereotypes of missionary collection boxes and tormenting children with the idea that the tragedy of lost souls rested on them. Instead, Morrison reveals a much more complex environment that was rich with nuances, conundrums and enlivened by the resourcefulness of the young proponents of missions. Children were encouraged to respond at the local, the national and the global level and to act as cultural, economic, political and spiritual influencers. Children were not simply receivers of an agenda but also responded independently out of their own desire to do some good in the world. Morrison also makes clear that using a 'many-hued educational lens' reveals that the involvement of children in the Protestant missionary movement was fraught with all sorts of intricacies that historians need to consider (p. 96). In Morrison's view, this will result in a fuller account of the religious lives of children that does justice to their history. On this point, Morrison has himself succeeded. This is an important book that offers many compelling observations that will help historians think more deeply about the nature and role of children's education in forwarding Christian missions.

BIOLA UNIVERSITY,
LA MIRADA,
CALIFORNIA

DARIN D. LENZ