(volume xviii), when it spanned thirty-nine pages, devoted to reviews of forty-one titles and mentions of another sixteen. The present volume contains reviews of some forty-four items. Here is a measure of the growth of bibliographical activity in Canada during the past decade! These issues of the Society's *Papers* also form a useful record – with informed appraisal – of works of bibliographical interest during the period, which will likely be of historical and literary, as well as bibliographical, value in the years to come. Needless to say, this has been possible only because of the tremendous efforts of reviewers from coast to coast, some of whom have been dedicated regular contributors from the beginning. I cannot miss this last opportunity to thank all those who have helped so agreeably and skilfully in evaluating the bibliographical output of this country year by year, and to urge you to continue this invaluable service by supporting David Kotin.

The position of Review Editor is associated with many satisfactions. Not the least amongst these is keeping in touch with old friends and colleagues and making many new ones, as well as keeping abreast of bibliographical publication in Canada. I am sure I speak for a wide circle of readers in welcoming David Kotin to this position of Review Editor, and in wishing him the recompense of many new friends and happy associations under his new responsibilities.

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An Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Medical Periodicals, 1826-1975.

[Compiled by] Charles G. Roland and Paul Potter. [Toronto]: The Hannah Institute for the History of Medicine, [1979]. xvii, 77 p., 'free of charge to those applying to the Institute for it and whose possession of the book it is felt will promote the cause of, interest and research in, the History of Medicine'

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The bibliographic work of Roland and Potter, who hold the Jason A. Hannah Chairs in the History of Medicine at McMaster University and the University of Western Ontario, resumes the efforts of H. Ernest MacDermot. His 1934 *A Bibliography of Canadian Medical Periodicals with Annotations* (now long out of print) had about 130 entries. Roland and Potter offer 212 entries, not merely because of increased activity in Canadian medical publishing since 1934, but because the compilers chose 'to rectify errors and omissions present in the earlier book' during the process of updating it.

Correction of MacDermot's work would not be problematic had it been confined to the supplying of previously missing information and emending faulty details. A quick scan of the two lists, however, reveals that MacDermot's second entry (*Action canadienne française*) does not appear at all in Roland and Potter's work, and that raises

the question of definition. On what basis has this title been excluded? How many others have been dropped, and for what reasons?

Neither MacDermot nor Roland and Potter offer any definition – beyond that implicit in their titles – of the scope of their coverage. They do seem to employ different understandings of what a medical journal is, though. MacDermot had a special section, for instance, for dental journals, while no dental titles are to be found anywhere in Roland and Potter's work. Some attempt to be explicit, even if only about their differences from MacDermot, would have made the later work more valuable. As it is, one is left to assume that a Canadian medical journal is anything that appears in their list. It is unfortunate that asking questions about definitions which operate on the principle of 'a rose is a rose is a rose' imputes deficiency where, it may be argued, none exists.

The compilers of *An Annotated Bibliography...* have provided us with a great deal of information. Following each title is a frequency of publication note, information about the numbering of volumes and issues, place of publication, and inclusive dates for dead titles – on-going publications, of course, have open entries. Where known, editors' names are given with the period of their editorial responsibility in volume numbers. Annotations accompany many of the entries. In some cases, the note is a quotation from the journal in question – often a statement of its goals; in others, the compilers have provided several paragraphs of comment on the history of the title or a note on its character or readership. Some titles have no annotation of any kind, or merely indicate the source of reference to a title unavailable for consultation. An index of editors' names, a geographical index, and a chronological index to the entries appear at the end and greatly enhance the work's usefulness.

The new bibliography is least helpful in its attempt to offer locations and holdings for titles listed. The last line in each entry is for symbols of libraries holding the title. Comparison with locations given for some of the titles also appearing in the *Union List of Scientific Serials in Canadian Libraries* indicates that Roland and Potter have been highly selective in showing libraries holding these titles. In the case of newer publications, the locations line often contains the paradoxically unhelpful notation, 'Many'. Their disclaimer of any intention to be exhaustive about locations is also unhelpful.

Furthermore, the dagger which is intended to indicate 'substantial' holdings of a title at any location has been employed erratically. Check, for example, holdings of the *Canadian Hospital* at OTCHA (now OCHA) or of the *Dalhousie Medical Journal* at NSHDM as they appear in the *Union List of Scientific Serials in Canadian Libraries*. Note next that Roland and Potter do not use the dagger where it ought to have been used in these cases. The reader of *An Annotated Bibliography...* should be warned not to rely on locations and holdings information provided by the compilers.

These weaknesses recognized, it must be said that the appearance of this new list of Canadian medical periodicals will be a welcome spur to activity in an aspect of our history which has been, until recently, much neglected. Roland and Potter's work will be a useful source of reference for the history of Canadian medical publishing.

TOM FLEMMING

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