Books in Review

natural progression. If the author means that the irony lies in his belief that the working classes took over what, in his opinion, was essentially a middle-class institution, it should be noted that the claim of middle-class dominance has not been proved satisfactorily. In fact, the evidence indicates that in the smaller centres of population and in rural areas there existed a marked working-class presence.

Bibliographers may wonder what significance this book might have for them. Admittedly, only some of the stuff of bibliography is here: paper, ink, and printing presses. Nevertheless, there are parallels to be drawn between the evolution of the Canadian newspaper and the history of the book in Canada; they share a common heritage. The bibliographic community cannot help but benefit from reading this latest offering by Paul Rutherford.

JOHN A. WISEMAN

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This large, handsome volume will appeal to a wide variety of interests, historical and bibliographical. It catalogues some forty-five hundred separately issued lithographs, showing all or major parts of American and Canadian cities and towns, published during the first hundred years of lithography on this continent. It also provides biographical and professional information about the more important artists and artist-publishers in this field and a detailed study of how they worked. John W. Reps, a city planning historian at Cornell University, first became interested in urban views for the information they provided about the evolution of American cities. His comprehensive and well-documented examination of this North American phenomenon has involved him in many other subjects, including nineteenth-century printing technology. The Canadian content, though small, is an integral part of the work: many American artists were active in both countries, and Canadian views were frequently printed in the United States. More than one hundred Canadian cities and towns, in all provinces except Alberta and Saskatchewan, were portrayed in one or more views, the most popular subject being Quebec City – not surprisingly, given its picturesque character and setting.

A small, introductory section of coloured plates whets the reader's appetite by demonstrating the range of styles and printing techniques involved. Despite the inevitable reduction in size, the lithographs illustrated here and in the larger section of black and white plates are reproduced with great clarity. Reps goes on to discuss how the artist worked, converting his sketches and any available maps of the area into an imaginary ‘bird’s-eye’ view. Two chapters on the history of lithography in America and its changing technology provide a useful survey of the subject, not only for the student of urban views but for anyone wishing to read more widely in the literature.
Subsequent chapters examine the ‘business of viewmaking’ how the views were promoted and sold, the cost of production and the size of impressions, and such sources of additional revenue as the sale of vignettes and lettering on storefront signs. In a hypothetical balance sheet the author demonstrates the income, expenses, and probable profits for a typical city view. These chapters add much to our knowledge of the commercial aspects of printing and the ‘business’ of popular culture in the nineteenth century.

Critical reaction, both contemporary and modern, is also examined. Comments in newspapers of the day were generally favorable, but the *Scioto Gazette* of Chillicothe, Ohio, in 1855 carried a satirical critique entitled ‘Owed to Portsmouth: ritten on Ceeing a “Vu” in cullers of that Sitty’ that began:

butiful sitty, I see the, i behold the,
Thow sitest upon the bank of a river;
i see thy chimlies & the rufs of thy houses;
They hav a fine air of delaedashun....

Until recently curators of public collections have regarded these views as ‘something of an embarrassment,’ but they are now more widely appreciated as examples of popular art of the Victorian era. Reps deals at length with the controversial question of their reliability. He concludes that while a few were clearly deceptive or fictitious, the great majority were ‘flattering, carefully posed, and retouched portraits’ that nevertheless contain a vast amount of accurate information. Through a series of examples based on a single city view, he demonstrates how they can be used for a variety of urban studies: architecture, town planning, engineering, commerce, and historic preservation.

The Catalog itself is arranged alphabetically by place within state or province, then by date. For each view the following information is given (where known): title, size, artist, lithographer, printer, publisher, features such as keys and vignettes, locations, and citations in catalogues and checklists. In compiling the Catalog, Reps has had to rely on information supplied by others, with all the difficulties and unevenness that implies. For a few artists, research by other scholars has made it possible to distinguish different states. Bettina Norton’s study of Edwin Whitefield has revealed three states of that artist’s view of Quebec City, the first (1852) printed by Endicott and Company in New York and the second and third (both from 1855) printed by Maclear and Company in Toronto, one of them issued by Whitefield from Maclear’s King Street address and the other from Quebec City. While some users may wish for more detail in the Catalog, its sheer bulk – over three hundred pages in triple columns – clearly makes that impractical. A separate index provides access by name and demonstrates at a glance the artists, printers, and publishers most active in the field.

Undoubtedly other views await discovery in small museums and private collections. The reviewer remembers with pleasure seeing the fine 1888 view of Dorchester, New Brunswick, with its border of twenty-five vignettes, exhibited in the Keillor House Museum in Dorchester (the only location in Reps). Who was Duncan Dunbar Currie, who published this and eight other New Brunswick and Nova Scotia views in Moncton between 1888 and 1890, and were these all the views he produced? Reps
admits that he has been unable to treat Canadian viewmakers as fully as American in his study. The challenge to document and analyse views of our own cities and towns remains for Canadian scholars.

ELIZABETH HULSE

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Books Received for Review


Lamonde, Yvan. L'Imprimé au Québec: aspects historiques (18e-20e siècles). Quebec: Institut québécois de recherche sur la culture, 1983.

