

de type féodal qu'il condamne par ailleurs; d'autre part, il confie à des capitalistes anglophones le soin d'exploiter les ressources forestières de sa seigneurie, de commercialiser l'agriculture et de prolétarianiser jusqu'à un certain point sa population, gestes qu'il réprouve par contre en tant que nationaliste de type agriculturiste et anti-capitaliste (p. 112).

Si le portrait est juste, il gagnerait toutefois à être mis en perspective. On verrait par exemple que le discours sur l'égalité des défenseurs du système seigneurial n'obéit pas à une logique différente de celle du discours sur la liberté chez les défenseurs du capitalisme. L'un et l'autre, en creux, fonctionnent à la défense de la propriété.

Le discours libéral aurait sur l'autre l'avantage de la transparence? Pas si sûr, car lui aussi, dans son postulat fondamental, doit recourir à l'idée d'intérêt général : « Vices privés, bénéfices publics », écrit Mandeville en sous-titre à sa *Fable des abeilles* (1714); et Adam Smith, l'auteur de la *Richesse des nations* (1776), pour concilier les égoïsmes particuliers et le bien commun, devra évoquer l'intervention ordonnatrice, peut-être bien illusoire, de la fameuse « Main invisible ». Aussi Marx écrira-t-il pour sa part :

Les économistes ont une singulière manière de procéder. Il n'y a pour eux que deux sortes d'institutions, celles de l'art et celles de la nature. Les institutions de la féodalité sont des institutions artificielles, celles de la bourgeoisie sont des institutions naturelles. Toute religion qui n'est pas la leur est une invention des hommes, tandis que leur propre religion est une émanation de Dieu (*Le Capital*, Livre premier, tome I, Éditions sociales, 1975, n. 1, p. 92).

Mais pourquoi évoquer tout ce grand monde? Pourquoi les amener avec soi dans la Petite-Nation, région dans le Bas-Canada, lui-même région de l'Occident? Pour dire qu'inévitablement ils y sont déjà de quelque manière, ne serait-ce que par les conceptions générales dans lesquelles baignent, qu'on s'en défende ou pas, les analyses historiques, aussi restreintes et détaillées soient-elles.

Et puis, après tout, qui parle lorsque Louis-Joseph Papineau, dans une lettre à son fils Amédée, écrit à la veille de « l'abolition » de la tenure seigneuriale? Il dit :

... nous sommes républicains sincères — quoique bien indignés de voir le Solliciteur Gen^l de la Reine Victoria installer le communisme en Canada longtemps avant qu'il puisse l'être en France et tous ses représentans royalistes et catholiques assez ignorans et immoraux pour violer impunément les droits de propriété acquis; sans hésiter, sans s'en douter; pour faire ce que pas un entre cent des représentans chez nos voisins hérétiques et républicains n'oseraient imaginer parce qu'ils sont instruits (A.N.Q., Collection Papineau-Bourassa, Boîte 7, 8 septembre 1851).

Est-ce le seigneur d'hier, le capitaliste de demain, ou plus généralement, comme si le genre avait plus d'importance que l'espèce, l'homme qui a de la fortune, du pouvoir et de l'instruction?

Malgré ces réserves et ces questions, un très bon livre.

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DONALD H. AKENSON, ed. — *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, Volume IV. Gananoque: Langdale Press, 1984. Pp. 338.

It is an almost invariable rule that a collection of this kind will be labelled "uneven". In this case the word is doubly apt; it describes not only the quality of the articles but also

the reviewer's ability to make sensible judgments about all of them. The opinions expressed here of Kenneth Kelly's work on commercial agriculture in India, of Professors MacPherson and Thompson on prairie agriculture in World War Two, of Barry Gough on corporate farming on Vancouver Island and of Professors Padolsky and Pringle on the dialectology of the Ottawa Valley are much less informed than the authors deserve, being based on states of ignorance varying from partial to total. Kelly and MacPherson and Thompson have contributed papers which seem sound and well researched. Gough appears to be making a fairly obvious point which he and others have made before. As for Padolsky and Pringle, presumably they know what they are doing. What they are doing isn't exactly history, rural or otherwise.

Taking the other articles in order, Robert E. Ankli and Kenneth J. Duncan, "Farm Making Costs in Early Ontario" does not make for a strong start. It wanders unduly, mixing together a number of themes that have little to do with the title and also mixing indiscriminately evidence drawn from primary and secondary sources. The authors' work raises suspicions about their grasp of the general historical context within which they are working. They seem not to be aware that there are official population figures for Upper Canada from 1824, nor that the Canada Company was not under the "astute management" of John Galt in 1840. Samuel Bealey Harrison appears as "Mr. Harris" and Col. George J. Grange, Sheriff of the Wellington District, as "a Mr. Grange". The paper ends limply, having concluded that R. L. Jones was right in the first place.

William L. Marr argues convincingly that, on another subject, Jones was wrong in believing that hardly any Ontario farmers rented their farms. Marr is able to show that in some areas of the province in 1871 tenancy rates went as high as 30 percent, though in others it was less than one percent. He refuses to speculate much about the reasons for the wide regional variation, which is disappointing since the different areas obviously represent differing conditions — length of settlement, land prices, transportation development and crops grown. What Professor Marr does do however, is to pose a series of hypotheses about the differences one would expect to find between tenant and owner farmers and then, using the census data, to test them. He gets predictable but meaningful and convincing answers about age, birth place and literacy and an unexpected answer about marital status. Tenants were more likely to be married than owners. This is good, clear, new, promising stuff.

The article by Robert S. Dilley dealing with the migration patterns of a unique group, the Mennonites of Waterloo County, is also a welcome contribution, in this case to the extensive literature on transiency and persistence. He demonstrates clearly, the work of Gagan and Katz notwithstanding, that transiency was not the inevitable fate of all immigrant groups and that ethnicity was not irrelevant to it. Darrell A. Norris in another look at migration, this time into his familiar stamping grounds, Euphrasia Township, has also produced a solid, useful piece of work and provides some further evidence with which to question the extent to which patterns detected in Hamilton or Peel County can be applied elsewhere. It is certainly fascinating to see Professor Katz's prize example of transiency, Wilson Benson, being figuratively stood on his head as a persister of twenty-two years' standing on a Grey County farm. A third fine paper dealing with immigrants is Glenn Lockwood's study of Montague Township and its mainly Irish settlers. Like Dilley and Norris he too takes issue with some of the work of Katz and Gagan, pointing out significant variations in patterns of indebtedness from those found by Gagan, questioning the existence in Eastern Ontario of a "rural crisis" period and in particular arguing the critical importance of ethnicity to an understanding of "the relationship of population and land in the past". His thorough study of the Montague Irish also raises some questions about the work of his editor, Professor Akenson. The Irish of Montague certainly adapted well enough to rural life but otherwise seem to have come awfully close to fitting the stereotype which Professor Akenson has argued, in *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, Volume III, is all wrong. The Montague Irish were not only poorer than their contemporaries but had lower ambitions,

were more willing to put up with an inferior standard of living and had, especially among the Catholic Irish, a much higher level of illiteracy.

With the article by Colm J. Brannigan the volume takes another unfortunate turn. Mr. Brannigan describes at length the circumstances surrounding a libel suit brought in 1844-45 by Rev. James Magrath and his family of Erindale against a local school teacher. He concludes that the judiciary's sympathies were with the establishment and that rural people were beginning to adopt "sophisticated methods of dispute resolution". Both of these conclusions may be true but they cannot be proven on the basis of one, possibly atypical case. There is certainly room for doubt about how typically "rural" the protagonists were. Were immigrant Anglican clergymen and merchants, or school teachers, "rural" in outlook just because they did not live in a large urban centre? This paper is vague both in its reasoning and its attention to detail. One of its central characters, the teacher, is never even positively identified. He appears variously as J. K. Dean, Reg. Dean, James K. Dean and Joseph K. Dean.

Brian Osborne and Robert Pike write to good effect of a "revolution" in post office facilities in central Canada 1851-1911. Despite a tendency to lapse at times into jargon — "private interpersonal communications" evidently means people talking to one another — they make a well-documented case for the importance of their subject and have some revealing things to say, based on their research, about differences between Quebec and Ontario society. This is a good initial run at a large and potentially fruitful area of investigation. Edward C. Gray and Barry E. Prentice also break some new ground in charting Ontario land prices "since letters patenting" (but alas only really since 1842). Their methodology, which they explain in full, looks eminently sensible as is their warning about not using the Abstract Index to Deeds as a source for price data. They suggest a variety of tentative explanations for land price changes over the years, all of which will need further investigation.

The last article in the collection is a useful compilation of the statutes relating to the territorial divisions of Eastern Ontario by Thomas A. Hillman. It could have been even more useful with a fuller introduction or some annotation of the statutes to help the uninitiated. What exactly is the difference between a village, a police village and "a town with no municipal status"? Why was it necessary for so many incorporations to be "confirmed" by the Ontario Municipal Board so many years later? Perhaps in promised subsequent papers Mr. Hillman will provide answers to these kinds of questions.

This is the fourth volume of *Canadian Papers* put together by Professor Akenson. It is a remarkable personal achievement. Each volume has been more ambitious than the last and none has failed to present new, interesting work. Perhaps though it is time for Professor Akenson to do some stock-taking. He might think a bit about the range to date of both authors and subjects. The same names have recurred as authors very frequently. Professor Ankli is making his third appearance in four volumes. Five others have appeared twice, including Professor Akenson himself. Is the pool of productive historians on rural subjects really so small and if so are they in danger of being stretched too thin? Geographically also the scope is narrow. Ontario articles have been increasingly dominant. Volume IV has nine-and-one-half Ontario articles out of thirteen, which even to an Ontario historian smacks of serious imbalance. Finally there is the question of quantity versus quality. Volume IV is much the fattest to date, but a few of the papers in it should not have appeared in print without further thought and further revision. A firmer editorial hand, or perhaps hands, are needed to make sure that *Canadian Papers in Rural History* keeps getting not only bigger, but steadily better.

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