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Dale, Edmund H., editor. *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*. Western Geographical Series, Volume 18. Victoria: University of Victoria, 1980. Pp. xx, 238. Maps, illustrations, tables. \$4.00

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nomination of their first Toronto workingman...." (p.243) True, Clarke *had* been a printer at the *Globe* and got arrested for his role in the 1872 printers' strike for the nine-hour day, a fact he never allowed the electors to forget. But here is what Henry J. Morgan's *Canadian Men and Women of the Time* (1898) has to say of Clarke:

In 1877 he was chosen managr. and ed. of *The (Orange) Sentinel* and subsequently became sole proprietor of that journal.... He is a High Sch. trustee, and President of the Gold Ring Consolidated Mining Co., and of the Excelsior Life Ins. Co.

A representative Toronto workingman, this?

Kealey has a good deal of interest to tell us about the origins of organized labour in Toronto, but we are far from receiving any demonstration of the emergence of a clear and distinct sense of class consciousness amongst the mass of workers. Evidently they were still ensnared by the ties of lodge, party, ethnicity, and religion which often crossed the class divide in nineteenth-century Canada. His case is all the less persuasive because of the abrupt and unnatural ending of the study in 1892. He argues that the period was chosen "in order to capture the working-class at its conception," (p.xiv) but even in the history of organized labour, 1892 is a year without evident significance. Why not carry the story forward to 1902 when the American Federation of Labour captured the allegiance of most skilled workers with a political programme very different from that of the Knights of Labour? Much still remains to be written on the history of the Toronto working class.

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Dale, Edmund H., editor. *Regina: Regional Isolation and Innovative Development*. Western Geographical Series, Volume 18. Victoria: University of Victoria, 1980. Pp.xx, 238. Maps, illustrations, tables. \$4.00.

Few historians would dispute the utility of thoughtful collections of articles about our urban centres. Cities are too complex for proper consideration in traditional monograph fashion, and most historians are ill-equipped to deal satisfactorily in narrative form with the multiple aspects of urban development. Still fewer historians would dismiss as unimportant a collection of essays about Regina, whose place in the historiography of the urban west is as isolated as its geographical location. Yet even those who are accustomed to receiving their urban history piecemeal, and who are attracted to an article or two in this new gathering, will find the volume as a whole to be unimpressive. Its theme (as expressed in the subtitle) is forced, its organization plainly careless, and its purpose ambiguous.

In a short preface, the editor exhibits a serious case of geographer's distress as he notes that Regina "has no recognizable nodality, none of the site factors that geographers associate with the early development of urban places." Instead, Regina has "revealed an innovative spirit that has sought to compensate for its [sic] small size, geographical isolation and monotonous terrain," and thus the volume "emphasizes, not exhaustively and

not so much urban structure [sic] as the continuing successes of local attempts to carve a city out of an area deficient in those site factors that are conducive to urban growth, except for an agricultural hinterland of rich, but flat, clayey soil." This said, and with a title in hand, the editor confusingly confides that "even if all the essays are not comfortably linked by the central themes, their [sic] subject matter should at least add their contribution to the study and appreciation of Regina." A less ingenious apology for this motley assemblage is difficult to conceive. The real tragedy, however, is that some essays of importance in their respective fields will realize only obscurity because of their inclusion in this mixed-blood collection.

Many of the essays do pay homage, however uncomfortably, to the tenuous link between geographical isolation and the spirit of innovation. In too many instances, this faithfulness to a debatable slogan plays havoc with the evidence presented and seems to betray an ignorance of comparative works. For example, in an otherwise serviceable introduction to the history of the city, J. William Brennan writes that "its very isolation fostered a spirit of innovation in Regina. Streets and sidewalks, banks and shops, newspapers, professional services, churches, schools, parks and entertainment all had to be created." Since when have these ubiquitous features of urban development been seen as "innovations"? What we have here is what one of my mentors used to call a 'semantic swindle' and similarly spurious comments that can be found in other essays add nothing to the worth of the volume.

Inept organization is far and away the book's worst failing. After beginning correctly with Brennan's overview, the editor pays little attention to thematic or chronological consistency. Had he followed Brennan's article with J.L. Moser's laudatory examination of town planning in the period 1903-1946, and then with R.S. Clarke's damning piece on the same theme in the post-war years, he would have provided the reader with a much-needed historical perspective and a fine debate on the true significance of innovation in Regina's development. When read back to back, the Moser and Clarke essays form the volume's single most redeeming feature.

The remaining essays, dealing as they do with case studies of unrelated aspects of Regina's growth, might have formed a second section against which to test the Moser and Clarke arguments. In these articles, Lauretta Roset deals with student perceptions of the rest of the nation and uncovers an appalling parochialism; Cesar Caviedes details the modern functional structure of the city and reaffirms its dependence on agriculture and government; R.D. Cullimore discusses the water supply problem of this semi-arid area and offers suggestions for future supply strategies; and Edmund H. Dale documents the history of Wascana Centre, whose greenery does much to enhance the city's appearance and desirability as a place of residence.

In the final analysis, the book lacks focus. While there is nothing wrong with, and much to commend, an inter-disciplinary study of a single theme, a hodge-podge like this serves only to diminish the integrity of the series of which it is a part. Even though reasonably priced, this volume is no bargain.

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