

oriented thought for its attempts to defend a moral economy that never existed. He argues that Republicans, who were small farmers and artisans on the make, were the group most responsible for capitalism. They wanted new banks and credit far more than Federalists.

This is a valuable collection and an excellent introduction to current thought on the early national economy.

HOWARD B. ROCK, professor of history at Florida International University, edited *The American Artisan: Explorations in Social Identity* (1995).

*The Corporate City: The American City as a Political Entity, 1800–1850.*

By Leonard P. Curry. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997. Pp. xix, 299. Tables, illustrations, notes, index. \$75.00.)

This volume is the first of a projected series of four in which Leonard P. Curry intends to document the development of American urbanism between 1800 and 1850. Curry defines urbanism as a set of political and population patterns, expanding public services, and an environment of opportunity and innovation that distinguished American cities from nonurban areas. Focusing on the fifteen largest American cities as of 1850, Curry's investigation is shaped by his commitment to what he terms comparative methodology. "The comparative method," Curry contends, "demands that comparable data be collected without conscious reference to a theoretical concept" and results in "a product that presents far more data and is likely to give considerably less attention to the elaboration of a theoretical construct" than other methods achieve (p. xiv).

Curry keeps his promise to present data in *The Corporate City*. In chapters loaded with details that will deter all but the most determined readers, he examines city charters, municipal finance, elections and the makeup of city government, street patterns and city planning, city relationships with county and state governments, and city sponsorship of commercial development for all fifteen cities in his sample group. Most of his findings reinforce what urban historians already know: that suffrage grew more democratic; that officeholders still came from the ranks of the economic elite; that the nation's largest cities supported the Whig party between 1836 and 1850; that cities designed after 1680 modeled themselves on Philadelphia's pattern of rectilinear streets; that "the city as a political entity became an instrument of support for the commercial community" (p. 239). Nevertheless, the weight of empirical evidence Curry piles up adds some insights to familiar themes. For instance, he observes that while urbanites expanded government authority, they simultaneously limited its exercise by spreading responsibility among numerous officials. Thus city dwellers demonstrated both "the imperative need for order and corporateness" (p. 30) and their suspicion of concentrated power. In his exploration of "urban mercantilism," Curry makes the valuable point that city government in the first half of the nineteenth

century favored commercial ventures over industrial development. On a larger scale, Curry's research demonstrates the close relationship between private economic interests and urban politics.

There are certain other advantages to Curry's encyclopedic approach. Scholars seeking details on topics such as changes in city charters will find profitable information in this book. Curry also includes sixty-seven useful contemporary city maps. Nevertheless, there are also disadvantages to his comparative methodology. Without significant context or thematic signposts, the deluge of statistics and tables becomes numbing. Only the most intrepid, fact-starved specialist will be willing to wade through most of them. Moreover, there is a static, abstract quality to the book. As his subtitle indicates, Curry presents the city as an "entity," not as a three-dimensional place where people lived and worked. Perhaps the future volumes in this series will remedy that shortcoming; for now, Curry's achievement is mixed.

THOMAS R. PEGRAM, associate professor of history at Loyola College in Baltimore, Maryland, is the author of *Battling Demon Rum: The Struggle for a Dry America, 1800–1930* (1998) and *Partisans and Progressives: Private Interest and Public Policy in Illinois, 1870–1922* (1992).

*With Charity for All: Lincoln and the Restoration of the Union.* By William C. Harris. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997. Pp. x, 354. Endmaps, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$37.95.)

The facts of Lincolnian reconstruction are not difficult to discover. But for many historians the facts have not been the main interest. They have instead been concerned with Lincoln's ultimate aims because of the light those goals might shed on his motives. The post-World War II school of Reconstruction historiography has been dominated by scholars with an intense, even agonizing, interest in those motives—agonizing because their quest to show that Lincoln was a dedicated equalitarian has had to confront many obstinate facts that are difficult to reconcile with this particular canon of their faith.

William C. Harris does not belong to this school, although he certainly does not shrink from asserting what the Great Emancipator had in mind, including what he would have done if he had survived the war. The president, he says, "did not think of reconstruction policy primarily as an instrument for winning the war or securing white support for black freedom. For Lincoln, wartime reconstruction was designed to initiate the restoration of civil self-government in the South, a process that had a high and immediate priority for him . . ." (p. 2).

The author also dismisses the theory that Lincoln wished to create an alliance of old Whigs and Republicans that would form a political majority in the postwar nation. He has not, he says, found