

A CENTURY OF URBANIZATION IN PENNSYLVANIA, 1840-1940

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FOR a century or more American civilization has moved farther and farther away from the ideal of an agricultural state. Many people believed with Thomas Jefferson in 1800 that great cities were "pestilential to the morals, the health, and the liberties of man"¹ and favored legislation to maintain the United States as a nation of planters and small farmers. Each succeeding federal census, however, reveals the growing significance of the city.

The trend toward urbanization has been especially marked in Pennsylvania. In 1840 only 17.9 per cent of the people of the state lived in cities or other incorporated places of 2,500 or more; by 1940 the percentage had risen to 66.5.² Moreover, the commonwealth today contains more cities and towns than any other state in the Union.³ By 1840 the dominance of agriculture in Pennsylvania was over. For the past hundred years the state has been taking on an urban and industrial character.

The literature having to do with Pennsylvania municipalities is extensive, and there is still a great deal of undigested material locked up in the records awaiting its historian. Many a battle for democracy has been lost or won at a council hearing or in a municipal election. In a paper of this length one can only scratch the surface. What I shall try to do is: first, describe in general terms the growth of Pennsylvania cities during the past hundred years, indicating some of the conditioning factors; and, second, enumerate and describe briefly the more important problems which have accompanied this development.

¹ Thomas Jefferson to Doctor Benjamin Rush, September 23, 1800.

² U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 16th Census of the United States. 1940 Population, Second Series, Characteristics of the Population. Pennsylvania, p. 9.

³ *Pennsylvania, A Guide to the Keystone State* (New York, 1940), p. 6. The *Municipal Year Book* for 1942 places Pennsylvania first in the number of urban places over 5,000 with 215. New Jersey comes second with 122.

The student of nomenclature will find much to engage his interest in the wide variety of Pennsylvania place names. The names of such cities as Erie, Shamokin, Mauch Chunk, Tamaqua, and Kittanning are of Indian origin. Lancaster, Reading, Newcastle, Carlisle, and Somerset are as English as roast beef and plum pudding. Altoona, so the story goes, was named after a town in Schleswig-Holstein, and Charleroi is the godchild of a famous glass-building center of the same name in Belgium. Philadelphia, Lebanon, and Bethlehem are of Biblical origin. Washington, Waynesboro, Pittsburgh, Greensburg, and Butler were christened in honor of leading public men. A majority of the cities—such places as Harrisburg, Johnstown, Allentown, Wilkes-Barre, and Chambersburg—were named either after their founders or after some early settlers.

Most of the larger places in Pennsylvania in 1840 were local distributing centers offering simple types of manufactured goods in exchange for agricultural products. Comparatively few were what today would be called manufacturing centers. Many were river towns. During the boom times of the early thirties Pennsylvania had launched an extensive canal-building program, which eventually linked Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and ramified in a number of branches paralleling the upper Susquehanna, the Lehigh, the Delaware, and the Beaver Rivers.

Then as now the metropolis of Pennsylvania was Philadelphia, laid out according to a rectangular plan by William Penn in 1682. From about 1750 to 1810 she had been the leading city of the country in population as well as in other respects. The Quaker City had been the cradle of American independence, the seat of the constitutional convention, and for six years the national capital. She had been the first important center of American medicine, likewise of the theater and the fine arts. In 1840 her population was nearly a hundred thousand, and she was still growing rapidly. On her northern fringe were three satellite towns as large as many a county seat—Frankford, Germantown, and Manayunk. In what is now West Philadelphia there was a small settlement of about a hundred and fifty houses which marked the beginning of an important suburban development.

Philadelphia was still the leading manufacturing center of America in 1840. Textile manufacturing, paper making, brick manufacturing, and metal processing were the leading industries.

Shipbuilding was on the decline. The most promising new industry was the manufacture of steam engines. A geography of Pennsylvania published in 1843 stated with some evidences of local pride:

So eminent is the character of our locomotive steam engines, that they are not only sent to most parts of the United States where rail roads have been constructed, but when the traveller in Russia, Austria, and even in England, examines with admiration the locomotive engine which has drawn him with extraordinary velocity and safety over the rail roads of those distant countries, he finds the word *Philadelphia* engraved upon its side.⁴

The streets, or carriageways, as they were often called, were about fifty feet wide and were paved with rounded pebbles embedded in gravel. Even at that time the dwelling houses were remarkably alike. Most of them were three stories high, faced with red unpainted brick, with doorsteps and window sills of white marble from the quarries of Montgomery and Chester Counties. "It is a handsome city, but distractingly regular," remarked Charles Dickens after a visit in 1842. "After walking about it for an hour or two, I felt that I would have given the world for a crooked street."⁵

Pittsburgh, the second city of the state, had in 1840 a population slightly in excess of twenty-one thousand.⁶ In pioneer days the Forks of the Ohio had been the site first of Fort Duquesne and later of Fort Pitt. Early in its history the settlement around the fort became a transshipping point for the wagon traffic which came over the Forbes Road and for the river traffic on the Ohio. Potentials for industry were at hand in the extensive bituminous coal deposits of the Allegheny plateau. Pittsburgh lacked a primary iron industry in 1840, for iron ore of good quality had never been found in the vicinity. The city's rolling mills and foundries were kept busy, however, converting the pig iron and bar iron of the Juniata region into the various implements used in the

⁴ Charles B. Trego, *A Geography of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1843), p. 325.

⁵ Dickens, Charles, *American Notes for General Circulation* (New York, 1842), p. 39.

⁶ The population statistics for 1840 are taken from summaries published in the Sixth Census of the United States (Washington, 1841).

forges and on the farms of the West. Already Pittsburgh was widely referred to as "the Birmingham of America."⁷

The "iron city" had soon spanned the two rivers on which it was located. Along the north bank of the Allegheny was an independent municipality called Allegheny City. On the opposite shore of the Monongahela was a string of small boroughs now included in the South Side. Pittsburgh's urban and suburban area was roughly shaped in the form of a triangle extending about four miles along the three rivers. Most of the houses were of frame construction, an easy prey for the great fire of 1845, which nearly brought the history of Pittsburgh to a sudden end.

Except for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Pennsylvania had in 1840 no city of more than ten thousand. Lancaster with 8,417 inhabitants, Reading with 8,410, Harrisburg with 5,980, Easton with 4,865, and York with 4,779 were the largest of the provincial towns.

Lancaster, the center of one of the richest agricultural districts in America, had been laid out by the Mennonites in 1718 and called Hickory Town until 1730. During the colonial period it had been the largest inland city on the continent, and from 1799 to 1812 it had been the state capital. In 1840 it was a place of some consequence with facilities for manufacturing rifles, ploughs, cook stoves, stagecoaches, and a variety of other products.⁸

Reading too was a manufacturing center. It had in the past been celebrated for its woolen hats, boots and shoes, and stoneware, but shortly before 1840 a fundamental change in the character of its industry was brought about by the introduction of establishments for rolling iron, making nails, and manufacturing engines. Most of the factory products of Pennsylvania were usually sold in the counties where they were made; the national and international markets of a later day were unknown.

Harrisburg, the state capital, served as a market center for a comparatively wide territory. Its location at the junction of two important routes of travel, the Susquehanna River and the Great Valley, was a highly favorable one.

⁷ Leland D. Baldwin, *Pittsburgh, The Story of a City* (Pittsburgh, 1937), p. 221.

⁸ An interesting volume on the early history of Lancaster is William Frederic Worner's *Old Lancaster, Tales and Traditions* (Lancaster, 1927).

Easton, at the eastern end of the Great Valley, was likewise an active trading center. It was there that the Lehigh Canal joined the Delaware River and made connections with the Morris Canal of New Jersey. Large quantities of anthracite, lumber, and grain were concentrated at Easton for shipment to New York and Philadelphia.

In 1840 Pennsylvania was on the threshold of the railroad age. A number of short lines had already been built in the eastern part of the state connecting Philadelphia with New York and Baltimore and with the anthracite coal fields by way of Reading and Pottsville. Harrisburg had spurs running to Lancaster in one direction and Chambersburg in the other. Thus far there was not a single mile of railroad in western Pennsylvania. After 1840 the Pennsylvania Canal and its sister canals were gradually abandoned, and highways became relatively less important. Many of the towns along the highways fell into decay, but, since the railroads frequently followed the old canal routes, some of the towns along the old waterways prospered. Johnstown, for example, located at the junction of the Portage Railway and the western branch of the Pennsylvania Canal, had a vantage on the main line when the Pennsylvania Railroad was built and became one of the largest cities in the state.

The railroads excited bitter jealousies. In 1846 a Pittsburgh newspaper, excited by the impending defeat of a railroad bill, served notice on Philadelphia that if her representatives persisted in their attempts to defeat the measure, the hatred of the entire western part of the commonwealth would be aroused. "Opposition to Philadelphia will become a part of the settled policy of the west," wrote the editor, "overriding even state partialities and party lines."⁹ In 1864 a Philadelphia paper peevishly commented, "It is astonishing how like that of the dog in the manger is the spirit of the interior towns and cities of this State toward Philadelphia. They oppose every measure no matter how beneficial if likely to redound to the interest of the State metropolis."¹⁰

But Philadelphia could not be diverted for long from her traditional hostility toward New York. New Yorkers liked to call the

⁹ Pittsburgh *Daily Gazette and Advertiser*, March 17, 1846.

¹⁰ Philadelphia *Inquirer*, December 19, 1864.

Quaker City slow, and occasionally Philadelphians countered with some such jibe as this:

Your Money or Your Life—A Moral for Country Merchants. A Pittsburg merchant, and a member of the councils of that city, was robbed in New York on last Monday of four thousand five hundred dollars. He had gone there to buy goods and was robbed while spending the night with some "friends." So the story is told in the newspapers. This gentleman, although so inhospitably treated, may be thankful that he did not lose his life in addition to his money. That is the style in the "metropolis" just now. He would have been much worse off if his legs had been found in a Brooklyn dock, his trunk in a New York dock, his arms over in Williamsburg, and his head down at Governor's Island. . . . The moral of all this is that Pittsburg merchants and all other merchants from this State had better give New York a wide berth, and purchase their goods in Philadelphia, where we are somewhat more careful of the money and lives of strangers.¹¹

Once the railroads had been built, mining and manufacturing furnished the dynamics for urban development. By 1840 Carbon-dale, Mauch Chunk, and Pottsville, in the anthracite region, were already boom towns. Pottsville, the largest of the three, had grown out of several competing towns laid out by rival adventurers and merged in 1828. Speculation in town lots in the mining center ran riot, and deeds passed from hand to hand as readily as currency.¹² Soon, however, the center of coal production shifted northward to the Wyoming valley.

Slocum Hollow, leading village in the new boom section, possessed in 1840 but five dwelling houses, a schoolhouse, a cooper-age, a sawmill, and a gristmill. That year a group of men led by George Scranton and his brother Selden were attracted to the valley by the lure of its mineral riches. They acquired many thousand acres of coal land near Slocum Hollow and renamed the place Harrison, then Lackawanna Iron Works, Scrantonia, and finally Scranton. After the completion of the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western railroad in 1853 the town grew rapidly.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, October 28, 1864.

¹² Sherman Day, *Historical Collections of the State of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1843), p. 607.

By 1870 its population was thirty-six times what it had been in 1850. Today its 140,000 people make it Pennsylvania's third largest city. Hardly less spectacular than the rise of Scranton was that of its neighbors, Wilkes-Barre and Pittston.¹³

Titusville, Franklin, and Oil City were products of petroleum. What is now Oil City was in 1859 the site of a sleepy village named after an Indian chief called Cornplanter. The boom created within a year an oil-splashed city replete with banks, stores, and mills. Other "red-hot" communities were abandoned when the oil gave out. Some were obliterated by fire, always a hazard near the wells.¹⁴

The lumber towns of northern Pennsylvania resulted from large-scale operations undertaken shortly after the Civil War. They grew up along the rivers at points where log booms were built to catch the floating timber as it came downstream. Williamsport, on the west branch of the Susquehanna, was popularly called "the Sawdust City." It became the greatest lumber town in Pennsylvania. When the forests were cut away, it turned to manufacturing with considerable success. Other lumber towns were not so fortunate.

Representative of railroad towns is Altoona, laid out in 1849 by the Pennsylvania as a railroad-repair center. Its rate of growth has been steady, and it is now in size the ninth city in the state.

Probably the greatest urban phenomenon in Pennsylvania of the hundred years between 1840 and 1940 is the rise of Pittsburgh to a population of nearly seven hundred thousand. By 1858 she had through connections by railroad with both New York and Chicago. About this time she forged ahead of Philadelphia in steel production and soon was on the way to unquestioned supremacy in that field. Her growth was rapid during the sixties and seventies, and it continued so until about 1910, when her population curve leveled off in accordance with the general trend.

The expansion of Pittsburgh followed the typical urban pattern. In 1840 the choice residential district was along Penn Avenue in the vicinity of what is now Joseph Horne's department store. In the course of time the encroachments of business and

¹³ "Two Pennamite Towns, The Beginnings of Scranton and Wilkes-Barre," *Harpers Weekly*, May 18, 1912.

¹⁴ Paul H. Giddens, *The Birth of the Oil Industry* (New York, 1938), pp. 169-181.

industry drove the upper classes from their massive brick mansions to points farther removed from the center of town—to the bluff upon which Duquesne University is now located, to the north side of the Allegheny along Ridge and Western Avenues, and in some cases as far out as Sewickley and Oakmont. The middle class did not participate in the early suburban movement. Commuting, possible only by railroad or private carriage, was too expensive. The construction of street-car lines to outlying sections later brought about the development of a circle of predominantly middle-class suburbs such as Wilkesburg, Aspinwall, Mount Oliver, Crafton, and Ingram. A still more extensive suburban movement began about 1910 with the appearance of the automobile and the accompanying road-building program. At first the mill workers clung to the part of the city on the edge of the downtown business district, but gradually they began moving into the older middle-class districts. Slum areas grew up in the zone of transition between the business district and the East End and in certain sections of the North Side and South Side. One of the worst was the notorious "Strip District" extending from Eleventh Street to Thirty-fourth Street along the Allegheny River.

Throughout the past hundred years the urban centers of the state have struggled with problems in some degree common to cities all over the world. The plateau towns, of which Pittsburgh and Johnstown are good examples, suffered from cramped locations. Many of them were situated in deep, narrow valleys which permitted no casual expansion into the hinterland. Houses were built tier on tier, and streets were narrow and circuitous. Little effort was made to give intelligent direction to city growth.

At first city folk depended on foot power and horse cars to take them from place to place. The latter offered a minimum of elegance and comfort. The cars were small, dirty, and poorly ventilated. In winter a layer of straw was spread on the floor to provide warmth for the passengers. In Philadelphia the expression G.O.P. (Get Out And Push!) was applied to some of the lines because of the fact that the horses were often too weak to drag a heavily loaded car up grade.¹⁵ Cable cars were tried out

¹⁵ W. Wallace Weaver, *West Philadelphia: A Study of Natural Social Areas* (Philadelphia, 1930), p. 102.

in the eighties with generally unsatisfactory results. Electric cars and buses have done a great deal to make possible the suburbanization of the twentieth century.

Not until after the turn of the century was much attention given to city planning in Pennsylvania. In the beginning the chief consideration was external beautification. After the completion of the new capitol in 1906 Harrisburg was transformed into one of the most beautiful capital cities in the country. In 1913 the legislature authorized the creation of a planning commission for Philadelphia. Subsequent legislation permitted zoning on the part of all cities and boroughs. Unfortunately large-scale planning requires large-scale public housing, which up to the present time has been consistently opposed by private interests.

The housing problem has long been acute. The most unobserving tourist is familiar with the rows of miners' shacks monotonously alike throughout the mining regions of the state. In some cases the lack of any legal limitation on the sale of mineral rights independent of titles on surface land has led to the undermining of cities and dangerous cave-ins such as occurred in Shenandoah less than three years ago. The housing situation in the larger cities has been becoming worse for some time. Before 1900 Philadelphia was often spoken of as the city of homes, an appellation supported by a claim current at the time of the centennial that Philadelphia had more houses in proportion to its population than any other city in the world.¹⁶ In recent years the boast has lost some of its meaning. A contemporary novelist in describing the Philadelphia of the nineteen thirties remarks:

Instead of houses pitched each in the middle of its plot Philadelphia had become a crawling dampness of congestion. Land rapidly became so valuable that the town invented both the bandbox house and the alley; the latter a narrow street without sunlight or sanitation cutting through the serried residences of the rich. . . . South, east, and north the alleys spread, until half of Philadelphia became alleys, which it still is.¹⁷

¹⁶ Raymond E. and Marian Murphy, *Pennsylvania, A Regional Geography* (Harrisburg, 1937), p. 138.

¹⁷ Maxwell Struthers Burt, *Along These Streets* (New York, 1942), pp. 199-200.

Surveys conducted by the Russell Sage Foundation in 1908 and by Philip Klein of the New York School of Social Work in 1935 have drawn attention to similar conditions in Pittsburgh. Klein reported that thirty-three thousand citizens of Allegheny County lived in homes unfit for habitation. One out of every four houses had neither bathtub nor shower, and one out of every six lacked an indoor toilet.¹⁸

In the eighteen seventies the picturesque volunteer fire companies gave way generally to public fire departments. When the great Chicago fire of 1871 broke out, the Pittsburgh fire department traveled all the way to Chicago by rail to help check the raging flames. The larger cities had public waterworks before 1840, but there were no adequate precautions to insure purity of drinking water. Until a modern filtration plant was installed in 1907,¹⁹ Pittsburgh had the highest typhoid mortality rate in the state. In recent years factory operations along the rivers have contaminated the water, making it necessary for cities to go upstream for their supply or else dose their residents with increasing percentages of chlorine and other disinfectants. Johnstown and Altoona have made use of mountain reservoirs.

The problem of flood control has been a costly one for many Pennsylvania cities because of their location in steep, narrow valleys and because of the rapid run-off which is characteristic of the Pennsylvania terrain. The disasters sustained by Johnstown in 1889 and by Pittsburgh in 1936 were only the most costly of a long series of such tragedies. In the past cities, unaided by state and national governments, have been powerless to cope with this problem.

In spite of the ancient vaudeville joke that Pittsburgh is the best laundry town in the world, the smoke difficulty is by no means limited to that city. Most other industrial centers which use soft coal for fuel are similarly plagued. To be sure, the topography of Pittsburgh's river valleys limits the free circulation of air and thus intensifies the nuisance by preventing the smoke from being readily carried away. Several attempts to regulate the problem before 1911 were nullified by the courts because of the

¹⁸ Philip Klein, *A Social Study of Pittsburgh* (New York, 1938), p. 200.

¹⁹ Frank E. Wing, "Thirty-Five Years of Typhoid," *Civic Frontage*, "The Pittsburgh Survey" (New York, 1914), pp. 63-86.

absence of an enabling act,²⁰ a situation which has since been corrected. In recent years the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research has taken an active part in making surveys of smoke conditions in order to provide data for effective regulation.

The increase in the services performed by city governments has both focused in sharper perspective the weaknesses of municipal administration and complicated its tasks. From the very beginning city government in Pennsylvania has been under the supervision of the state government, usually expressed in the form of special legislation.²¹ Before 1840 this was usually a beneficial arrangement, for the system was flexible enough to allow each municipality to have the form of rule that it desired. The mayor-council type was universal, and in the eighteen thirties and forties the mayor and aldermen became elective officers in accordance with the democratic tendencies of the times.

After 1840 special legislation became increasingly objectionable. The corrupt use which the legislature made of its power stimulated repeated complaint. Laws intended to benefit interested parties were openly bought and paid for. Cities acquired new charters independently of the knowledge or wishes of those most directly concerned. The volume of special legislation was so great that it was physically impossible for legislators to investigate the merits of each bill. In the case of larger cities much of the legislation had to do with granting exclusive privileges to corporations. A member of the state constitutional convention of 1872 said in reply to a speech from the floor:

No man knows better than he does the wishes of the people of Philadelphia and that the legislature has utterly refused to listen to or recognize the councils of the city. . . . Our streets are taken from us and handed over to private corporations. The city councils with almost entire unanimity entreat the legislature not to do it; but the legislature is silent. So it is with almost everything that is asked from the legislature of Pennsylvania which

²⁰ Henry Obermeyer, *Stop That Smoke!* (New York and London, 1933), pp. 199-200.

²¹ An enlightening study of municipal government in Pennsylvania is Raymond Stanley Short's *The Development of Borough and City Government in Pennsylvania*, an unpublished doctoral dissertation submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Pittsburgh in 1930.

has the endorsement of the councils of Philadelphia. To ask is to be sure to be refused.²²

The new state constitution of 1873 put an end to the practice of passing special laws. It also provided that in the future no city of less than ten thousand might be incorporated. For the purpose of legislation cities were promptly divided into three classes—the first including all cities of over three hundred thousand, the second those between a hundred thousand and three hundred thousand, and the third those between ten thousand and a hundred thousand. Since Philadelphia was the only city in the state with a population of more than three hundred thousand and Pittsburgh was the only one to fall in the second class, the right to enact special legislation affecting the two largest cities of the state was in effect retained by the legislature. Nevertheless, the courts sustained the classification law. Later efforts to increase the number of classes were defeated. Because of the cumbersome form of government prescribed for third-class cities many large boroughs refrained from asking for incorporation. As late as 1913 there were only forty-two boroughs in Pennsylvania having a population above the minimum requirement for city status.²³

Both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh during the past hundred years have been struggling for good government. Municipal corruption in Philadelphia was a by-product of the spoils system of the Jacksonian era. After long years of misrule a popular revolt broke the power of "Boss" Jim McManes and the "gas ring" and resulted in the Bullitt Act of 1887, a model city charter for its day, which provided for a strong mayor. A quarrel between McManes and Matthew S. Quay, the state "boss," had given the reformers their opportunity. Once the rift was patched, however, the bosses joined forces to hamstring the new charter. When Lincoln Steffens visited Philadelphia looking for data for his now famous series of magazine articles on municipal corruption, he pronounced the city "corrupt and contented."²⁴ The reform period was over. The glow of high resolve had faded from the sky; only apathy and hopelessness remained. "Boss"

²² *Debates of the Convention to Amend the Constitution of Pennsylvania 1872-1873*, vol. II, p. 401.

²³ *Chicago Daily News*, January 22, 1916.

²⁴ Lincoln Steffens, *The Shame of the Cities* (New York, 1904), p. 195.

Martin gave way to "Iz" Dunham and he in turn to "Stars and Stripes" Ashbridge. Boies Penrose and William S. Vare continued the succession.

Today "the City of Brotherly Love" is virtually bankrupt because of many years of corrupt administration. Two of her most vital services, water supply and fire protection, are in danger of breaking down. Recently, so the story goes, a house in one of the suburbs burned to the ground while the firemen raced about the neighborhood trying to find a hydrant that would function.²⁵ At the end of Mayor S. Davis Wilson's term of office in 1940 the city applied to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for a loan and obtained it only after pledging all revenue from the municipally owned gas works for seventeen years. A similar attempt to finance a new water system failed. It has even been proposed that the city sell Independence Hall, the nation's birthplace.²⁶

Pittsburgh's record is not much better than Philadelphia's. Corruption started there with the railroads and ultimately found its master architect in "Chris" Magee, a product of several generations of American ancestry. Magee, a man of magnetic personality, was an earnest student of ring methods. When the Tweed ring was overthrown in New York during the seventies, he made a special trip there to find the weak points in Tammany methods. Magee's ring remained in control until after 1900 in spite of the efforts of such reform leaders as David D. Bruce and Oliver McClintock. Since then there have been brief interludes of reform, and the resurgence of the two-party system within the past decade has been a hopeful sign. But the replacement of the party in power by another does not help matters greatly so long as the system remains unchanged.

By 1900 the old mayor-council form of government had pretty thoroughly discredited itself. The bicameral council had proved unwieldy and susceptible to manipulation and fraud. In 1911 it was abolished in all cities of the second class, and a unicameral council of not less than five and not more than nine was substituted. Under the old system the combined councils of the city

²⁵ Marquis Childs and John Coburn Turner, "The Real Philadelphia Story," *Forum*, vol. 103 (June, 1940), p. 291.

²⁶ Alan Frazier, "Philadelphia: City of Brotherly Loot," *American Mercury*, vol. 47 (July, 1939), p. 275.

of Pittsburgh had at one time contained one hundred and fifty-five members. After considerable preliminary agitation a law was passed in 1913 by which twenty-nine cities of the third class (all the large cities in Pennsylvania except Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Scranton) were placed under the commission form of government.²⁷ In 1919 Philadelphia obtained a unicameral council.

Further attempts to bring about reforms in municipal government have not progressed far. Three years ago a movement was under way to secure a new charter for Philadelphia with proportional representation and a city manager. On April 6, 1939, Joe Pew and Jay Cooke, the local Republican bosses, met with fifteen party leaders and issued an announcement that they were instructing the legislature to kill the charter bills.²⁸ Efforts to introduce the city-manager plan in Pittsburgh have met with the same fate.

In the case of both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh the duplication of functions and the conflict in jurisdiction of city and county governments are serious impediments to political reform. Each city is sadly in need of a consolidation of all the governmental units in its metropolitan area. In Allegheny County there are a hundred and twenty-six separate governmental units—four cities, sixty-nine boroughs, twenty-four townships of the first class, and twenty-nine townships of the second class—a larger number than that of any other country in the United States.²⁹ Opposition to the movements for a Greater Philadelphia and a Greater Pittsburgh comes from job holders and taxpayers in outlying suburban areas. Considerable antagonism was created around Pittsburgh in 1907 by the "rape of Allegheny" (the forcible annexation of Allegheny to Pittsburgh).

The process of urbanization is likely to continue in Pennsylvania, although at a decreasing rate. Between 1930 and 1940 six of the ten largest cities in the commonwealth actually lost ground.³⁰ The peripheral gains registered in some metropolitan areas suggest a shift from urbanization toward suburbanization.

²⁷ *Laws of Pennsylvania*, 1913, No. 367, pp. 568-631.

²⁸ *New York Times*, April 8, 1939.

²⁹ Dwight MacDonald, "Pittsburgh: What a City Shouldn't Be," *Forum*, vol. 100 (August, 1938), p. 55.

³⁰ Philadelphia, Scranton, Reading, Wilkes-Barre, Altoona, and Johnstown. Pittsburgh, Erie, Allentown, and Harrisburg registered gains of from 0.3 to 4.7%.

Some of Pennsylvania's cities have been repeatedly criticized because their cultural achievements have not kept pace with their material gains. Philadelphia has been accused of basking in the reflected glory of her colonial past, and Pittsburgh has been blamed for being unappreciative of work that does not pay dividends. In both cities rigid social barriers have excluded people of many races from free participation in civic affairs. There are signs that influences from without are breaking through this wall of self-imposed isolation. The Slav, the Italian, and the negro are coming into their own. Another century of urban development in Pennsylvania has begun.