On the technical side of the profession, the committee's recommendations are twofold, first, in regard to materials, and second, with respect to the ways and means of study. The committee asks for the formation of union catalogues of the larger libraries, the making of a union check list of newspaper files, the compilation of calendars of materials for American history in the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Portugal, and South American countries as well as of those materials which are necessary for research in social and intellectual history, the development of a national library plan, and the training of archivists and curators. The better utilization of these technical materials may be secured, it is the belief of the committee, by rigorously excluding mediocre students from the graduate school, by providing more fellowships for first-year graduate students and larger stipends for traveling fellows, by accepting more freely credits earned under different faculties, and by exchanging professors more frequently among the better faculties. Publication difficulties must be met by securing funds that will make possible the production of researches that cannot be exploited commercially; scholars in all fields agree that there is a particular need for a monograph series that will present studies too large for the journals and too small for the book market.

At this critical moment in the life of American educational institutions when everywhere measures of retrenchment are the order of the day, it would seem that the administrative officers of colleges and departments might find some guidance in this diagnosis and these recommendations of the committee, so that economy may be made to contribute to the improvement of historical studies.

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RALPH E. TURNER

The Epic of America. By JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS. (Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1931. viii, 433 p. Illustrations.)

When a book on American history holds a place for months as one of the six best sellers in the non-fiction group, it would seem that the interest of the American people in their past has increased or the author has produced a remarkable book.
Perhaps both explanations are true. Mr. Adams is one of the very few people who combine great literary ability with genuine historical scholarship. He has written, not an outline history of the United States, but a vivid and unified interpretation of the development of the American people. His book is not political history, though politics are not left out; it is not economic history, though economic activities have a large part in it; it is just history in the broadest sense of the word. The effort is made to survey all the significant aspects of the American past and to note their manifestations in the different sections of the country. Of western Pennsylvania interest, for example, are references to ship building on the upper Ohio, emigration through Pittsburgh, the Cumberland Road, transportation from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, the early oil industry, the railroad strikes of 1877, the new immigration, industrial disturbances in the steel industry, and the career of Andrew Carnegie. There is little space of course for detailed exposition or narration, but the multitudinous incidents and events, ideas and personalities are woven into a unified interpretation by relating them to "that American dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank which is the greatest contribution we have yet made to the thought and welfare of the world."

The average reader of this book doubtless looks upon it as wholly the work of its distinguished author, but a few may realize that it is the product of the labors of the hundreds of scholars who have been engaged during the last half century in collecting, preserving, and making available the records of the past, in ferreting out the facts of American history from these records, and in presenting and interpreting them in monographs and comprehensive histories. Anyone familiar with American historiography can readily discover in the book evidences of the influence not only of such leading historians as Turner, Osgood, Channing, and Rhodes, but also of obscure writers of doctoral dissertations that are never read except by other historians. This is not to the discredit of the author of course. No one man can write a history of the United States from the sources. The author of such a book is fortunate if he has done original research, as Mr. Adams has, in some phases of his subject. For the rest he must rely upon the work of others, and the quality
of the result will depend upon the extent and quality of such work and the care with which he makes his selections. Mr. Adams' interpretations are his own of course, and few scholars will agree with all of them; the book contains some minor errors of fact, as a result perhaps of following careless guides; but it is much nearer to the truth and the whole truth than it could have been if it had been written a generation ago. If one of the objects of history is to enable a people to understand itself, then the production and widespread reading of such books as this one and the Beards' *Rise of American Civilization* would seem to be the culmination of the historical process. Not every worker in the field of history can write such books, but even the most humble of them may make his contribution to the edifice of knowledge upon which they rest.

*Western Pennsylvania Historical Survey*  
SOLON J. BUCK

*The Penns of Pennsylvania and England.* By ARTHUR POUND.  

As its title indicates, this book is not a biography of William Penn only, but of the family of which he was the most eminent representative. The Penn cycle begins in 1642 when William Penn, the admiral, first came into prominence, and closes with the death of the Reverend Thomas Gordon Penn in 1869, when the male line became extinct. Somewhat more than half the space is given to William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania; about a hundred pages are devoted to his father, the admiral; and the remaining fifty pages are taken up with a description of the later members of the family, none of whom rose to distinction.

Mr. Pound's book does not pretend to be a work based upon laborious research into the sources, or even upon a very wide use of the secondary materials available. It adds nothing to our knowledge of either Admiral Penn or of his distinguished son, though it sums up in convenient form the main facts relating to them and their descendants. Nor does it make any special contribution to an understanding of conditions in colonial Pennsylvania by way of additional facts or new interpretation. It is a book for the general reader rather than for the scholar.