These criticisms, however, must in no way detract from the fact that for the history of Presbyterianism in the central and eastern part of the state this book is a very valuable contribution, interestingly written and indicating that the author has thoroughly mastered the theme as it relates to those areas. For the purposes of general history, wherein the whole of the history of all the churches is included, we now await an author who will not confine his researches to one denomination. Mr. Klett must have gathered many facts relative to such a general history. Why did he not incorporate them in this volume?

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Johnson Newlon Camden (1828–1908) was a splendid specimen of the acquisitive capitalist and entrepreneur of the post-Civil War period. Born into a politically potent family in what is now Lewis County, West Virginia, he spent two years at West Point, then took up the law. His business start was obtained as attorney, banker, land speculator, and oil producer, and narrowly escaped being blighted by the vicissitudes of the Civil War in western Virginia.

After the war he engaged successively or concurrently in oil producing and refining, lumbering, railroading, and coal mining. Camden's activities were of incalculable importance in exploiting West Virginia's resources for forty years, and their results are still to be seen in part in the grimy, decrepit coal towns and naked, gullied hills of that state. Camden was an early ally of the Standard Oil interests, and the monopolist's view of his mission is well portrayed by a quotation from a Camden letter to Rockefeller when they were buying up small refineries. "It almost makes me weep," wrote Camden, "to pay out money for this kind of junk, but as it is a part of our duty to mankind, I suppose it is necessary to carry it through without flinching" (p. 197).

Camden was from youth a leader of the conservative wing of the Democratic party and served twice in the United States Senate in the 1880's and 1890's. His interest in politics arose, at least in part, from his desire to prevent government interference with business. He did, however, oppose the railroads' rate discrimination against the short haul at the time of the Cullom Bill, probably because of tiffs with the Baltimore and Ohio over freight charges to the Camden interests. Certainly before long he was hand in glove in alliance with that railroad.
This book demonstrates impressively the author's familiarity with and practice of traditional historical method. Camden's economic and political activities are traced with a patience that often results in tediousness, while the reader is thrown into confusion by a mass of unimportant details. The account is as serene and undramatic and uninterpretive as though written by a man from Mars, nor can the author be accused of favoring Camden unduly on the evidence here presented. In fact Camden emerges as a man practically devoid of every instinct save his flair for business and politics. He must have been one of the most colorless men of his era; there were, apparently, in his life no daring forays, no dramatic coups, no palpitating on the edge of accomplishment. Even his crusades in defense of big business seem to have been conducted in the spirit of a student writing a term paper. We are left to judge that he led no family life, had no hobbies outside of tarpon fishing, possessed no intellectual or cultural interests, and was about as sociable as a Rocky Mountain sheep herder.

University of Pittsburgh Press


This book has already become the object of some controversy, as will, perhaps, always be the fate of books that essay to appraise anything so near to us as present local history. Especially is this liable to be true if the problems under discussion are of a social nature. A Social Study of Pittsburgh could not, therefore, expect to be greeted with individual acclaim.

It is, however, a book that merits very close reading by residents of this community who wish to understand themselves and their environment. From the historical viewpoint it will prove particularly illuminating if read together with the Pittsburgh Survey of 1908 and the Survey of the Pittsburgh Council of Churches, 1921. Though planned as a study of social work and social services in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, the authors have found it necessary, in painting the background, to include much material illustrative of economic and social life. In fact, all of part one, pages 3-346, a respectably-sized book in itself, is devoted to the "Social and Economic Background."

In most respects this first part is the pièce de résistance, so far as the profes-