
Here for the first time one has a complete running account of the establishment and progress of the Presbyterian church in Pittsburgh from its earliest days until the schism of 1837 split it into the "Old School" and "New School" branches. Hitherto one has had to turn to scattered accounts, which have not always been in agreement; and much has remained buried in official church records, newspapers, and personal accounts. Pittsburgh Presbyterians and local historians will, therefore, give Dr. McKinney a hearty vote of thanks for straightening out the tangled story of the denomination; and unless new source materials are unearthed his history will long remain the standard work to which one will turn for determining "the facts" about the denomination—what preachers were in Pittsburgh and when they were there, when Sunday Schools were established and what they did, what the nature of the controversies that rent the church were, and so on. Dr. McKinney's training in both theology and history has equipped him admirably for dealing with such matters, and in this respect his work leaves little to be desired.

Though the book will thus be useful to Pittsburgh historians and antiquarians, it will fail to be of comparable value to students of American history as a whole. Local histories should perform a two-fold service: they should not only build up the history of a region but they should also illumine the general picture of American civilization. Dr. McKinney has missed a golden opportunity to do the latter, and it is largely because he has been too concerned with the chronological development and evolution of the church with which he deals. From the point of view of American history as a whole, in this reviewer's opinion, the chief interest in Pittsburgh Presbyterianism is the way in which it contributed to the social and cultural development of a frontier community that was rapidly developing into a metropolis. Dr. McKinney does not neglect this phase entirely, but he tends merely to give it
notice as he proceeds with his chronological development; and one fails, therefore, to see its basic significance. A chapter or chapters on the basic problems that confronted Pittsburgh Presbyterians throughout the period—problems of arousing interest, of ironing out factional differences, of finances; a chapter on the role of the church in promoting order and civilized living; a chapter on the influence of Presbyterians on education—such chapters would have been of interest to students of American history anywhere as illustrative of what went on in many a community. Instead, Dr. McKinney focuses his interest on Pittsburgh as such and on specific church leaders as such. In shifting his emphasis, he would not have had to abandon his admirable desire to clarify the story of Presbyterianism for his Pittsburgh readers, but he could have compressed that part into two or three chapters, though he may have had to use additional materials.

Such criticism is too often applicable to local histories, but Dr. McKinney's work is so superior to the general run of such histories that perhaps it is ungrateful to make it at all in his case. On the whole, he writes well, in spite of occasional lapses into verbosity and an over-appreciation of Presbyterianism. His careful scholarship is well attested by his footnotes. The appendices of statistical tables and graphs should be useful. A serious defect of the index is its almost complete lack of topical entries.

State Teachers College, Milwaukee

MARIAN SILVEUS


This volume of correspondence and other papers of General John Forbes is a fine example of intelligent sponsorship, skilful collecting, and editorial competence. We have not heretofore known too much about the central figure of this book, and the latter's appearance is consequently an event of importance. Although Forbes has never loomed quite as large in history as have some of his less able contemporaries, whose conspicuous failures have been their chief mark of distinction, and even though his connection with the American scene during the French and Indian War was brief, his name is indelibly impressed upon the history of Pennsylvania, and of the middle region gener-