BOOK REVIEWS


A history of Pennsylvania for the high-school age has been greatly needed; indeed, except for Dunaway’s History of Pennsylvania, suitable for college students, no one-volume work has been produced in recent years. Fortenbaugh and Tarman have done for the high-school student what Dunaway did for the college student. Yet the book being reviewed is not by any means too juvenile to be enjoyed by mature minds. The authors have followed the modern educational trend—shall we say fad?—of dividing the book into units; yet they have not lost that most important element, chronology. The divisions, or units, are five. The first three deal with the political developments in the region during the early period of the aborigines and of the Dutch, Swedes, and English; the second deals with the political history of the province; the third deals with the political growth of the commonwealth. The fourth unit takes up the economic growth from 1609 to the present. The last unit describes the religious, social, and cultural life of the commonwealth from the days of the first Dutch and Swedish immigrants. About one-fourth of the 592 pages of text deal with this last interesting unit.

In the description of early political affairs the Indian assumes an important role. One sees that the Six Nations were disliked by the conquered tribes of Pennsylvania; yet the alliance between the Six Nations and the English was an important reason for the early safety of the Pennsylvania settlers. This reviewer is disappointed to find that once again Braddock’s defeat by the French and Indians is stressed more than Forbes’s victory, and that the battle of Loyalhanna during the important Forbes campaign is not even mentioned. After all it was in western Pennsylvania “at the junction of the three rivers” in 1758 that one of the most important English victories of all time occurred—a victory that had international repercussions and that greatly helped to make the North American continent a home for the English-speaking race.

The story of Pennsylvania’s own “Public Works” during the middle of the eighteenth century is clearly and concisely told. That the majority of the
voters wanted to sell these public utilities was not entirely due to the fact that canal traffic was bowing to the swifter iron horse. When the Pennsylvania Railroad bought the main line of the canal system, including the famous portage railroad, it was expected that both the public treasury and the public morals would be greatly strengthened.

The authors are perhaps not as well acquainted with western Pennsylvania as with the remainder of the "five little worlds" within our commonwealth. Stephen Foster was born in Lawrenceville (not Lawrenceburg), which was then a suburb long since a part of Pittsburgh. Ethelbert Nevin was born in Edgeworth, which for purposes of indentification ought, perhaps, to be designated as a suburb of Pittsburgh. And although the Pittsburgh Symphony did disband in 1910, it has been gloriously resurrected through the untiring efforts of Mrs. Benjamin Thaw and other music-loving residents. Under the baton of Fritz Reiner this new Pittsburgh Symphony is now favorably known in the music world.

The book's binding is of a cheerful color, the format pleasing, and the choice of type could not be better. The pictorial map on the inside cover is intensely interesting. The many other maps aid the reader. Despite the list of counties in the appendix we wish there were a map giving the names of the sixty-seven counties whose boundaries are so clearly shown. The many illustrations are splendid. The introduction to each unit, the factual synopsis, and the student's bibliography at the end of each chapter will aid him greatly. The general bibliography will be of interest to teachers and other readers. All in all, this book is one which a student should enjoy as a text or as supplementary material, and when he lays it down his parents will doubtless pick it up.

Peabody High School, Pittsburgh

Lily Lee Nixon


In The Powder Keg Mrs. Buck has added another to her series of books for young people, of which Moccasins in the Wilderness and Rifles Beyond Fort Pitt were the first.

The Powder Keg has the same directness of treatment and writing as the earlier books. The characters and incidents are historically accurate, and where Mrs. Buck has created incidents, like Matthew Vane's capture of the Indian thief and his nursing of his young friend Bill Brown through Bill's attack of