ceed with. Flatly the collectivist can deny, as I do now, that ambition is the universal passion, the universal passion is to please. This, under false conditions, has led to do evil to please the evil; but in time it will seek, not so much the quality of pleasing as the quantity who are pleased; it will seek the pleasing of the greatest number. This ambition to please and the powerful instinct for organization now being laid so deeply into our social fibre; the social intellect; the community conscience allied with collective property will soon and surely knock the stilts from under the aristocrat egoist of private property. The economical law which eternally forbids any creature to do a thing the difficult way after he has discovered the easier way, presses us all forward irretrievably to more collective production and most collective production, and to the necessary collective thinking, the amenities of collective sharing and the powers of the collective conscience. This has not been a pressure originating with machinery. Machinery was no accident. Sooner or later that was sure to come to this race which does the world's work most easily, for we move ever along the line of least waste, and the least resistance. The revolutionary lie opposing this world truth is the lie of the strenuous life, the lie which tells us that difficulties are the meat and drink which make souls. The race will get along without private difficulties, even if it must get along without private souls; and it may perhaps learn to do with its souls what it has done with everything else, unite them all into one great social quality.

We are no more making our laws but our laws are making our lives as ever they have done. There is a law around us unfolding us into a harmonious expression of itself through our myriads of brains and voices; it is the historical urge that has driven the race from ego to the family and through many other economic and political group units up to the final pair, the two economic revolutionary ultimates, capital and labor. And this law energy around the human family will go on accomplishing itself forever, until class no more shall own class, and all are one.

Peter E. Burrowes.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.

In Its Economic Epochs, Reviewed from the Standpoint of Historic Materialism.

TO people who rightfully may claim to represent the intelligence of this nation, the historic philosophy of Karl Marx is no longer a sealed book, since we have two English versions of Frederick Engels' work, "Die Entwicklung des Socialisms von der Utopie zur Wissenchaft"). This work, besides being the most instructive of all contained in English Socialist literature, gives an especially comprehensive and lucid exposition of the conception of history as discovered by the organizer of the International Workingmen's Association.

The theory of Marx presents itself as a philosophical view of the historic process in general, and we shall try to apply this theory as a means to bring about a better understanding of the very forces that are underlying and working out the development of the history of the United States. Put in the briefest terms the formula of the theory in question is as follows:

The economic structure of society, as given in the mode of production of the time under consideration, is the real basis upon which is built not only the political but also the juridical, the moral and religious and the philosophical superstructure—in a word, the entire ideologic superstructure.

The problem before us is to unveil the relations that may exist between the political and other phenomena as they appear on the surface of recorded history on the one hand, and the material and economic forces that are, according to the materialistic conception, supposed to be working at the bottom as the causal potencies in the process of making history on the other hand. In the light of this view we shall especially consider the causal agencies which were instrumental in originating the following great changes and events, namely:

(1) The separation of the American colonies from England and the revolutionary war; the establishment of American independence, and the foundation of the United States;

(2) The rise and decline of political parties, and the reasons of their demands as proclaimed in their platforms; the civil war and its apparent cause;

(3) The further development of the Republican and the Democratic parties; rise and decline of reform movements and parties; the labor movement; strikes and lockouts; spread of trades unionism;

(4) The most recent political development of the United

States; virtual repudiation of the Jeffersonian democracy; rise of an expansion policy that turns to adventurous pursuits on other than the American continents or islands; imperialism—the leading spirit in our foreign policy.

As will be seen from the foregoing propositions we shall confine ourselves in this essay to a consideration of the historical development only as far as the political phenomena of the economic causes are concerned. If thereby the other features of the social superstructure, the ethical and juridical, the philosophical and literary, receive no consideration here, it is due wholely to proper regard to the necessarily limited amount of space the editor of the International Socialist Review can allow the writer. It is obvious also that the same restriction must be observed in the presentation of the matter, as far as it actually goes, and that, accordingly, only a sketch of this entire matter is here attempted.

FIRST EPOCH.

AMERICAN INDUSTRIES UNDER FOREIGN BONDAGE—THE COLONIAL PERIOD.

The history of the North American colonies of England is essentially the history of economic repression on the part of the mother country. Very early the rule of the British bourgeoisie in their American possessions bore the stamp of modern colonial policy, the characteristic feature of which is the attempt to restrain the commercial and industrial life in a new country. In their economic development the colonies were not to advance to a degree that would enable them to supply their wants from their own markets alone; of course, solely with the view of compelling them to buy merchandise from their loving uncles in the old country and thus remain continuously victimized by a foreign system of vampirical exploitation. That such repression policy would become intolerable to the colonists requires no proof, as the pertinent facts are well known to the American readers.

It was a question of life or death for the American bourgeoisie, then in its infancy, to shake off the British yoke. This was primarily necessary only in the domain of commerce and material production, for there alone was it that England's colonial policy was most annoying and was to become finally unbearable to the people of this country.

Or, to express it more pointedly: the pioneer people of our nation had either to break the chains of coercion used by British capitalists, to force them to buy and consume imported English merchandise, and thus free themselves from the economic bondage as decreed by the laws on navigation and regulating trades,

or they would never rise to industrial and commercial independence and be able to advance their own material interests.

"Might makes right." That is the most pointed and accurate expression of an important, historically necessary fact; the condition it describes is an essential feature of the up-to-date social development. The saying is not less true and good because the ideologists of the middle class and the "me-too" Socialists of the humanitarian type so emphatically denounce it, by pouring over it their sickly sentimentalism. At that time, as to-day, the suffering and oppressed masses had but a more or less indistinct idea of this right-making power of might. As it was, the colonists saw themselves confronted by the imposing appearance of a political power used for economic purposes, and it was natural enough that they sought, as an antidote, representation in the London parliament with the object of freeing themselves from industrial dependence. It required the immanent dialectics of the conditions and things to impel the movement beyond the dead point of its originally naive aims and objects, and gradually to develop it to a really revolutionary struggle, in an effort for national political independence. And this political independence was in turn to become a powerful lever for the uplifting of economic independence; it was a mainstay to its protection. It was, in a word, for a great end the equally great means.

However, the leaders of the rebellion did not, at the beginning, see thus far, and that explains their cry, "No taxation without representation." Were this all that they desired, King George III. would have come off cheaply by granting them concessions over whose virtual worthlessness they could not have complained from the standpoint of fairness; for, no matter how liberal the allowance of seats in parliament might have been, the small population of the colonies would not have given the Americans, for decades to come, a sufficient number of representatives to make any effectual opposition against their oppressors, to say nothing of gaining a majority. In short, representation in parliament could not prevent the commercial and industrial activities of the colonies from being choked to death by further taxation and trade regulation from London, nor save them from being curbed to the extent of shutting out competition with the British imports.

And so we see, the slogan of "No taxation without representation" was practically senseless. To reach their goal, the American rebels had to deny the Westminster parliament every power of taxation over the colonies, and at the same time, stop all interference of police authorities in the fields of trade and commerce of the country. Although the rising bourgeoisie was not able to grasp immediately and radically the scope of the ex-

isting conditions it gradually dawned upon them, that in their groping after economic progress, it was just those British uncles who so flatly obstructed their path. The uncles should go.

And now comes the political history and says:

They had to go.

If now we take the sum total of the presentation given above, the contemporary political history easily explains itself as the revolutionary enforcement of purely material interests, that is, the interests of the propertied and ruling classes of that period.

And in perfect accord with the requirements of these interests, the essential contents of the whole political history of the thirteen colonies up to 1789 consists of one great national action, to-wit:

Rebellion against England; War of the Revolution for national independence; forming of the United States of America.

SECOND EPOCH.

COTTON'S KINGDOM AND ITS DECLINE.

"You dare not make war on cotton. No power on earth dare make war on it. Cotton is king."

Cotton, i. e., the interests of the Southern cotton lords; the interests that, for seven decades, constituted the governing power of the country.

The quotation is from a speech made by James H. Hammond, of South Carolina, in 1858, in the House of Representatives. It was a challenge from the Southern feudalism to the capitalism of the North. The former then strode with giant strides throughout the South and over the seas; the latter, still having a foothold only in the Northern States, toddled yet in its first steps.

Aside from rhetorical exaggeration, this assertion of Hammond's was quite correct at the time when it was made, and for two or three years later. Thereafter, however, things changed, and war was made on the cotton interests.

The second epoch in our historical review commences about the middle of the nineties of the eighteenth century, that is, at the time when the employment of the cotton gin in the South had become general, and it extends to the early sixties of the last century when Abraham Lincoln had been elected, and taken office. This election was the last word of a declaration of war on King Cotton's rule which, of course, was in the nature of an economic supremacy.

During this period the manufacturing trades remained in an infantile state of development, where primitive natural economy

still prevailed, and small progress only was made on the lines to the higher stage of the production of goods for sale. There were hardly any manufacturing industries of notable dimensions, and only towards the end of this period did the system of producing merchandise grow to a considerable efficiency. In agriculture, progress was faster, but, it was, at the outset, restricted to the domain of cotton cultivation.

However, looking back to the time before the application of the machine just mentioned, the difficulties then encountered in the harvesting of the product were extremely discouraging. The separation of the seed from the fiber was a very tedious and time-absorbing work when done by hand. So long as this was done by hand, the value of the labor incorporated in the cotton fiber was too high to permit of a satisfactory exchange in money for it. The labor of the slaves, cheap as it was, did not pay under such conditions. Thus, the use of slaves threatened to be confined to the work of domestic servants. For this purpose, however, there were already more than enough negroes in the country; 600,000 in the Southern States and 40,000 in the Northern. If besides using them for harvesting, the South was not also able to employ them in the work of separating the seed from the cotton, then the Southern ruling class were no longer interested in maintaining slavery. It was by one of those seeming paradoxes in the logic of events, that sometimes occur in the history of the world, that destined the inventive genius of a Yankee, Eli Whitney, of Massachusetts, to repair and strengthen the life of an institution, that the North afterwards, with Massachusetts at the head, had to destroy.

The results gained from Eli Whitney's "Cotton Gin" were already in their first consequences of more far-reaching significance than was any other technical improvement up to that time. With a tremendous bound this new machine not only changed the whole method of growing and cleaning cotton, but also that of working this raw material into cotton cloth, etc. And not alone this; the generally prevailing views, i. e., in moral, religious and philosophical ideas, in juridical conceptions, and lastly also in the politics of great centers of population, both in America and England, everything was revolutionized. For, now, with this new machine it was suddenly made possible for the labor of the slaves to produce goods which just met the market demands for a cheap clothing material, and so became salable in enormous quantities. In consequence of this memorable change in the means of production the labor of the slaves now became, what it had not before been, i. e., labor creating abundant surplus wealth for the slave owners, and thus the institution of slavery

turned from a source of disappointment into one of the invaluable treasures of the Southern dominating class.

Cotton cultivation had scarcely begun on a new and extended scale when the home market proved itself incapable of disposing of more than a very small part of the product. But, to make continuous headway in foreign markets, and especially to sell American cotton to the English manufacturers, still another requirement had to be obtained and, when given, had to be protected against certain antagonistic interests. That which the South most urgently needed was protection against—protective policy. She wanted free trade. For, the interests of the cotton planters and shippers imperatively demanded that the American vessels, after having conveyed cotton to Liverpool, should not return with empty bottoms, but be laden with return-freight, and particularly that these should consist chiefly of manufactured goods. In this way the cost of exporting cotton would be lessened by the corresponding expense chargeable to the account of importing industrial merchandise. Accordingly, the interests of the South demanded a free trade or low tariff policy which, like the head of Janus, showed two faces, the laughing face turned to herself whilst the tearful one would look to the North. On the other hand, it was just this factor of industrial return-freight which was responsible for the existence at that time of a mercantile marine that required no subsidies from the government. In short, a high tariff meant utter ruin for the planters and exporters of cotton under the then prevailing conditions. Finally, a battle royal ensued between King Cotton and King Cotton Goods, the latter term being taken to comprise the manufacturing interests in their entirety. In the factory, the labor of the slaves was so inferior to free labor, in skill and attention, as well as in intelligence used, that it could not profitably be employed; especially in the making of the finer grades of goods which alone were suitable for export. Consequently, King Cotton Goods—the manufacturing capitalist, had nothing to lose in the abolition of slavery; but, on the contrary, was compelled to center all his efforts in keeping his rival from further extending his domain; crush out the Southern tendency to free trade, and pave the way to a permanent establishment of the high tariff system.

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE EPOCH—A WAR BETWEEN KINGS.

During the whole of this period, the battles of the political parties seemingly turned only about the question of state rights, but at the bottom of this controversy was nothing but the struggle of the opposing material interests of different classes, in one word, a class struggle. This class struggle was operating as a relentlessly spurring economic impulse to political action. When we see that, in 1792, a law was enacted by Congress, prohibiting the

importation of negro slaves after the beginning of the year 1808, and that this measure received the consent of the Southern rulers, the seeming contradiction is easily explained by remembering the hopeless condition in the production of cotton as it prevailed before the cotton gin came into general use, and that the cotton planters, lacking then the possibility of separating the seed from the fiber without excessive cost, had well nigh lost all interest in the preservation of slavery.

As soon as the cotton gin came into operation, the whole political aspect changed. Thanks to the economic revolution which resulted from the use of this mechanical device, that is, from a new stage in the mode of production, the Democratic-Republican party, afterwards called the Democratic party, had already, in 1800, acquired so much economic power, and thereby, also political power, as to enable it to gain and retain the presidency and a majority in Congress, excepting for two interruptions as to Congress (in 1841 to 1844 and 1848 to 1852). Acting as the political bodyguard of King Cotton, this party managed to defeat every high tariff measure and effectually protect his interests against the commercial policy of the Northern manufacturers. Nor did the people of the North at this time take any stock in the idea of abolishing slavery, save in a few isolated instances. When the Abolitionists, with their purely ideological and humanitarian agitation came forward, it was not only in the South that they were denounced as traitors and unmitigatingly persecuted; even in the North they were driven from the public meeting halls and platforms by furious mobs, and as it happened to Lloyd Garrison in Boston, they many times had narrow escapes from being stoned or lynched. Then, after John Brown and his associates of Harper's Ferry, had been legally murdered by the combined powers of the Federal government and the State of Virginia, what did the Northern people do? What did the Republican party do or, at least, say? Under this name the party of industrial capitalism, the party of the manufacturing interests, had been formed in 1854. The Abolitionists, while they certainly did not fail to give the new party their support, amounted to practically nothing as a component part. So far was the Republican party even in 1860 from sympathy with the victims of Southern-Democratic class justice that their national platform, on which Abraham Lincoln was elected, contains a passage which is unequivocally directed against the invasion of Virginia by John Brown; the sentence reads: "and we denounce the lawless invasion, by armed force, of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes." Furthermore, when Congress empowered President Lincoln to issue the proclamation of September, 1862,

declaring all slaves in the rebel States as freemen and emancipating them from involuntary bondage, it was nothing more than a tactical measure in warfare. This proclamation was issued under the expressed condition that it should only take effect if the rebel forces would not have given up the fight prior to the date set.

Through the outcome of the war, the final result of this epoch was sealed with the blood of hundreds of thousands of men: it was the victory of the more modern form of exploitation of men by men; it was the ascendancy of capitalism "pure and simple" to the throne of political power; it was the inauguration of a new and higher slave-holding class to the position of the actual ruler of this country.

J. L. Franz.

(To be continued.)

EDITORIAL

The Impossibilist.

Who came first, the "Impossibilist" or the "Opportunist," is as hard to solve as the old problem of the priority of the hen and the egg. Each appears to be but a reaction from the other, and it is almost certain that neither could exist without its antithesis as an "awful example." Still it is not quite true to say, in hackneyed phrase, that they represent two extremes, between which lies the truth. There is no salvation in "meliorism" as such any more than in "extremeism." Only facts and their logical interpretation and consideration are certain, and these lead as oft to what are called extreme conclusions as to those commonly called moderate.

Impossibilism, like opportunism, cannot be reduced to a system. Both have as many manifestations as there are ways of illogical interpretation, insufficient knowledge, or willful overlooking of facts. They are rather tendencies or attitudes to be described than systems to be defined and explained.

At bottom Impossibilism seems to be mainly characterized by a sort of competitive contest as to "who dast go furtherest." In what direction the going is to be done is seldom clear, but from the condition in which many of its followers appear to be, it would seem that they generally went straight up.

Recognizing the absolute necessity and paramount importance of political organization, and disgusted with the disrupting, disintegrating tendencies of "unaffiliated" Socialists and "Socialistic" organizations, they jump at once to the conclusion, first, that the party, and, second, just the particular form of party organization to which they have become accustomed, is greater than the whole Socialist movement. They absolutely lose sight of the fact that the party is but a means to an end and must be altered as the conditions necessary to approach that end alter.

They become, not simply conservative, but reactionary, obstructing all attempts to change the form of organization to accord with economic development. Thus it often comes about that those who constantly and ostentatiously pride themselves upon their "revolutionary" attitude become the greatest obstacles to any forward movement—mere stumbling blocks on the road to progress. Lacking all ability to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials, they cling fast to old forms of activity, organization and agitation long after these have wholly ceased to be effective.

"Municipalization and nationalization have proven to be of little