

tasks for which they were fit; millions of men were busied in sterile middleman or lawyer or customs official tasks or were not busied at all. A host of parasites fattened upon what little was produced. Such in brief was the explanation given in the first half of the nineteenth century by Fourier or Owen or Saint-Simon, with, of course, many individual variations.

In the second half of the century, Karl Marx made his great contribution to socialist theory, and shaped the course of the movement down to our day.

In the analysis which Marx made of the existing industrial system and its tendencies there are three points which must be noticed. They are, the materialist conception of history, the labor theory of value and surplus value, and the forecast of capitalist development.

*The Materialist Conception of History.* In common with other thinkers of his time, Marx opposed the earlier opinion which made history a record of individual feats and of conscious striving. The world had been moved by great social forces, and could not have advanced otherwise than as it had done. In this development, Marx continued, the chief force was class struggle, struggle for economic welfare. At bottom all history was to be explained in economic terms. All politics and war, all religion and art and science, depended in last analysis on the form of economic organization that prevailed, and changes in these spheres of life merely reflected economic changes. In his own words he championed "that view of the course of history which seeks the ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the modes of production and exchange, in the consequent division of society into classes against one another." Or somewhat more fully: "That proposition is, that in every historical epoch, the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch; that consequently the whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiting and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes; that the history of these class struggles forms a series of evolution in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles."