
For the past ten years there has been a noticeable quickening of interest in local and state historical studies designed to shed new light on phases of our national development. Mr. Sullivan's neat little book is an outgrowth of such interest and ably attests to the fact that the state or local historian has a role to play no less significant than that of the national historian with his broad scope and sweeping syntheses.

The author's purpose is simple and direct; he purports to show how the workingman emerged as a determinate force in the American community between 1800 and 1840 by focusing his attention on the Pennsylvania local scene. His method is equally simple and direct. After introducing the reader to the Pennsylvania industrial setting with its many attractions for wage earners, he describes the various laborer types, the abominable working conditions under which they toiled, the abuses of employers, the atrocious exploitation of child laborers, the early attempts at trade unionism, and the role labor played in the Jacksonian political scene. All in all, the author brings to this task a fair balance (only from time to time does his pro-labor bias creep through) and a good sense of proportion. His prose is neither elaborate nor involved; not brilliant, but steady and clear.

Perhaps the most unique contribution of this volume (at least to this reviewer's mind) was the section devoted to labor and politics in the Jackson era. By utilizing such examples as the Working Men's Party of Philadelphia, the Working Men's Party of Pittsburgh and the Working Men's Party of Dauphin County, the author casts serious doubt on recent oft-repeated claims (i.e. Schlesinger, Age of Jackson) that eastern labor elements were among the strongest supporters of Jacksonian democracy. The author shows that in Pennsylvania these labor groups were dominated by anti-Jackson sympathizers who voted more consistently for the Whigs than they did for Jacksonians. Jackson's strongest support came from rural and agricultural sections of the state.

The author's use of such primary source material in the form of manuscript account books is to be commended. There is little question that some real spadework was involved. Moreover, his extended use of contemporary materials, such as newspapers, indicates a thoroughness
of research which cannot be dismissed lightly. His many tables of statistics and statistical appendixes will prove valuable to the expert although they may not endear him to the general reader.

The major weakness of the book lies in the bibliography. Only here does one get a glimpse of “dissertationitis.” A critical note on sources would have been better than a mere listing of the various materials used. Furthermore, one wonders whether 115-125 footnotes per chapter are necessary to buttress Mr. Sullivan’s claim to historical accuracy.

But these are petty details. *The Industrial Worker in Pennsylvania* is a solid piece of work. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is to be congratulated on its good judgment.

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