WHY THINGS HAPPEN TO HAPPEN

By JOHN M. WORK

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"What's So and What Isn't"

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What do you suppose would happen if the law of gravitation did not exist?

Things would be just as likely to fall up as to fall down.

There would be no stability.

Nothing would stay put.

We would not build any houses, because they would be just as likely as not to rise from their foundations and sail off in the air.

In fact, we could scarcely do anything.

All would be uncertainty.

But the law of gravitation does exist. It dictates that material things shall remain on or return to the surface of the earth, unless the attraction of the earth is overcome by some greater force.

We have seen this law operate so much that we have the most complete and unlimited confidence in it.

We rely upon it absolutely.

We rely upon it every day and every hour and every minute.

I rely upon it as I write this. I rely upon it to hold me in my chair. I rely upon it to hold the paper in the typewriter. I rely upon it to hold the typewriter on the cabinet. I rely upon it to hold the cabinet on the floor. I rely upon it to hold the floor in its place in the building. I rely upon it to hold the building on its foundation. I rely upon it to hold the foundation in the earth. I rely upon it to
keep the earth steadily in its course. I rely upon it to hold
the atmosphere about the earth, giving me air to breathe.
I rely upon in thousands of ways all the time.
And so do you.

It is quite impossible for us to realize the utter chaos
which would reign if this law did not exist.

The fact that it does exist enables us to forecast the
future to some extent and act accordingly.

For example, we erect buildings knowing that the law
of gravitation will ordinarily keep them stable. They
will not drop up into the sky. Only in exceptional cases
will gravity be overcome. We take chances on these
exceptions. We know by experience that they are suffi-
ciently rare to make it feasible for us to proceed with
our plans. And we know that the exceptions are not vi-o-
lations of the law, but the application of superior force.

If we did not have this law to rely upon, we would not
erect buildings. It would not be worth while.

Our reliance upon this law enables us to forecast the
future so far as it goes. We can proceed with the affairs
of life with the certainty that, in so far as this law affects
them, it will always be on the job acting uniformly in the
same way.

People relied upon this law before it had a name. They
knew something about its operation and acted accordingly.

But our superior understanding of it enables us to take
advantage of it to a greater extent, and to forecast the fu-
ture in this respect to a greater degree.

Our knowledge of it enables us to forecast the future
along the lines of its functions.

THE AID OF CERTAINTY.

Suppose we did not understand the laws that govern
steam.
In that case, we would not build any railroads. There would not be a single steam engine or steamboat in existence.

Or, suppose that steam were not governed by any laws. Suppose it were a haphazard thing. Suppose it acted in one way at one time and in another way at another time. If that were the case, we would not think of taking chances on it. There would not be a railroad in existence. There would not be any steam power used in any industry.

But, it so happens that steam is governed by laws and we have discovered what those laws are and how they operate.

As a result, we can rely upon steam. We know what it will do and what it will not do. We are therefore able to forecast the future to that extent.

We can go ahead building railways and introducing steam power in the industries, with perfect confidence that steam will draw the trains as usual and run the machinery as usual.

Again, suppose we did not understand any of the laws that govern electricity.

In that case, we would not have any telegraphs, or telephones, or electric railways, or electric lights, or electric motors, or electric automobiles, or any of the numerous electrical appliances now in use.

Or, suppose that electricity were not governed by any laws.

Suppose it were a haphazard thing. Suppose it acted in one way at one time and in another way at another time. If that were the case, we would not think of taking chances on it. There would be no electric lights, electric power, or electrical appliances in use whatsoever.

But, it so happens that electricity is governed by laws and that we have discovered what some of those laws are and how they operate.
As a result, we can rely upon electricity just in so far as we understand these laws.

To that extent we know what it will do and what it will not do.

We are therefore able to forecast the future to that extent.

We can go ahead putting in electric lights and electric power, and manufacturing electric cars and electric appliances, knowing that electricity will act in its accustomed manner.

There are many other ways in which our knowledge of natural law enables us to forecast the future and to act with confidence in the results of our acts.

Just in so far as we are ignorant of natural law, we are compelled either not to act at all or else to act blindly and trust to luck.

In so far as we discover natural laws and apply them, just to that extent we are able to act with the consciousness of certainty instead of the confusion of uncertainty.

THE BEWILDERMENT OF UNCERTAINTY.

I want to call attention to one exceedingly important respect in which most of the people are still floundering in uncertainty because of ignorance of natural law.

The majority of human beings at the present time do not know of any natural law governing society.

It has seemed to them that things just happen to happen, in a haphazard manner.

Therefore, there has been utter bewilderment as to the meaning of past events. Also as to the significance of present conditions. Also as to whither past events and present conditions are urging us.

Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, no intelligent theory on this subject had been formulated. We had made real progress in discovering the natural laws governing inorganic matter, but when it came to natural laws governing society we seemed to be stuck.
It is true that previous to that time there was a sort of a theory—one which still persists in the minds of many of the people.

It was the great man theory—the theory that history is made, institutions shaped, etc.,by great men sent into the world for the purpose of lifting humanity to a higher plane.

Far be it from me to pluck a single leaf from the laurels of any truly great man. Great men have had a vast influence upon the history of the world.

But, while it is true that they have made history, it is also true that history made them.

That is to say, they never have an appreciable effect upon the course of events unless the conditions are ripe. They do not make the conditions. They merely take advantage of them.

How the conditions come to be ripe, the great man theory does not explain.

In other words, the great man theory is altogether inadequate. It is as unsatisfactory as the definition given by the small boy who said that the spinal column is what keeps people from having legs clear up to the neck.

THE ECONOMIC LAW.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels discovered the natural law which is the main factor in governing society.

Briefly stated, this is the law which they discovered: The mode of making a living is the main factor in determining the nature of social institutions, the course of events, and the character and opinions of the people.

Unfortunately, this law has several names—none of which are entirely accurate.

It is sometimes called economic determinism. But that smacks of fatalism.
It is sometimes called the economic interpretation of history. While this is its most accurate name, it nevertheless throws out the impression that this law applies only to the past, whereas it also applies to the present and the future.

It is sometimes called historical materialism, or the materialistic conception of history. These are also open to the objection that they throw out the impression that this law applies only to the past. And both of them are open to the much more serious objection that they confuse this law with the philosophy of materialism.

These two latter names have done this law much damage, both among its adherents and others. They have caused it to take on unwarranted meanings in the minds of many of its adherents. And they have prejudiced others against it.

The word materialism has acquired a meaning which makes it impossible to use it in this connection without running the risk of creating a confusion of thought and a misconception as to what is meant.

The word materialism belongs to the anti-religionists. Materialism means the theory that matter is the central ultimate reality. It means that mind is merely an attribute of matter. It means that there is no such thing as spirit. It means that there is no such thing as mind separate and apart from the material brain. It means that death ends all. It means that there is no God.

These things may be true or they may not be true.

That question is entirely foreign to the law which we have under consideration.

But, when this law is called historical materialism, or the materialistic conception of history, it is likely to be understood to mean that mind is an attribute of matter, that there is no such thing as spirit, etc.
As I do not want to encourage misconceptions, I will therefore call this law the economic interpretation of history, because this seems to me the most nearly accurate of its various names. For short, let us call it the economic urge. This is not only short, but it is also more accurate than any of the accredited names.

**STATEMENT OF THE LAW.**

I am now going to make a few quotations from Socialist classics—and, as they are written in scientific language, I don't want you to throw up your hands in holy horror and conclude that all the rest of this book is going to be as dry as dust. Bear with me for a few minutes and I promise you that you and I shall then have a jolly good time rollicking through history hand in hand with a hop, skip and jump, peeping into all sorts of funny places to see if this law will poke its head out and say “boo” to us.

The law of the economic interpretation of history was stated by Marx, in his book, “Critique of Political Economy,” as follows:

“In making their livelihood together, men enter into certain necessary involuntary relations with each other, industrial relations which correspond to whatever stage society has reached in the development of its material productive forces.

“The totality of these industrial relations constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which the legal and political superstructure is built, and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond.

“The method of producing the material livelihood determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general.

“It is not men’s consciousness which determines their life; on the contrary, it is their social life which determines their consciousness.

“At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the
old conditions of production, or, to use a legal expression, with the property relations under which these forces have hitherto been exerted. From forms of development of the productive forces, these relations turn into fetters of production. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic basis, the whole vast superstructure undergoes sooner or later a revolution.

"In considering such revolutions, one must constantly distinguish between the industrial revolution, to be carefully posited scientifically, which takes place in the economic conditions of production, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophical, in short ideological, forms wherein men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. As little as we judge an individual by what he himself thinks he is, just as little can we judge such a revolutionary epoch by its own consciousness. We must rather explain this consciousness out of the antagonism of men's industrial life, out of the conflict existing between the forces of social production and the relations of social production.

"A form of society never breaks down until all the productive forces are developed for which it affords room. New and higher relations of production are never established, until the material conditions of life to support them have been prepared in the lap of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets for itself only such tasks as it is able to perform; for, upon close examination, it will always be found that the task itself only arises where the material conditions for its solution are already at hand or are at least in process of growth."

In other words, the mode of making a living is the main factor in determining the nature of social institutions, the course of events, and the character and opinions of the people.

LIMITATIONS OF THE LAW.

Marx and Engels did not claim that the economic factor is the sole factor in human affairs.
What they did claim is that the economic factor is the dominant one.

Engels expressed himself on this point as follows:

"Marx and I are partly responsible for the fact that the younger men have sometimes laid more stress on the economic side than it deserves. In meeting the attacks of our opponents it was necessary for us to emphasize the dominant principle, denied by them; and we did not always have the time, place or opportunity to let the other factors, which were concerned in the mutual action and reaction, get their deserts."

Again he said:

"The factor which is in last instance decisive in history is the reproduction of actual life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. But when anyone distorts this so as to read that the economic factor is the sole element, he converts the statement into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase. The economic condition is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure—the political forms of the class contests, and their results, the constitutions—the legal forms and also all the reflexes of these actual contests in the brains of the participants, the political, legal, philosophical theories, the religious views—all these exert an influence on the development of the historical struggles, and in many instances determine their form."

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

The best way to make it clear that the economic urge is indeed a law—that economic conditions are the main factor in shaping the affairs of societies and peoples—is by illustration.

In making such illustrations, one could go back to the beginnings of history.

But I shall not take you on any long excursions into ancient history. Partly because I know you would go to sleep if I did. Partly because our knowledge of ancient conditions is at best so vague that the connections between
the economic causes and their effects cannot be traced with anything like the same vividness with which they can be discerned in more modern times where we are well acquainted with the conditions.

Modern times are crammed full of overwhelming proofs of the existence, validity and potency of this law.

The very discovery of America is one of the proofs.

To say nothing of a long train of economic causes which led up to it, the immediate object of the expedition which resulted in the discovery of America was to find a short cut to India for the commerce of Spain.

A short cut for commerce.

An economic cause.

The effect of the discovery of America upon the history of the world has been so great that it is altogether incalculable.

And it was due to an economic cause.

It was due to the economic urge impelling the Spaniards to try to find a better way to get their products to market—a better way to help themselves in their process of making a living.

THE PEOPLING OF OUR COUNTRY.

The immigration to the United States from other countries, from the earliest times to the present, has been due to economic causes.

Of course, there were a few hundred, or perhaps a few thousand of the many millions, who came here to escape religious persecution.

But they are merely the exceptions that prove the rule.

The vast millions upon millions of people who have come during the entire period since these migrations began have been lured by the prospect of bettering their economic condition.

The report spread over the earth that in this country it was easy to make a good living—that there was a good chance to rise out of poverty.
Long ago, these reports were half true.

They ceased to be true several decades ago, but were still diligently circulated. They were circulated by immigration companies whose economic interest led them to do so, in order to secure passengers to bring across the ocean. They were circulated by capitalists whose economic interest led them to do so, in order to have a surplus of wage workers and thus beat down or keep down wages. They were circulated by Americans abroad who took delight in fooling the natives, or who merely indulged in the prevalent American habit of exaggeration.

For, the United States is the classic land of exaggeration. We exaggerate in our work, in our play, in our love, in our hate, in our wealth, in our poverty—in everything. Of course, Europeans also sometimes exaggerate. But they have no right to do it. They have no right to infringe upon our special prerogative in that manner. And, in fact, they do not infringe upon it very much. Ian MacLaren said that American jokes were so vast, so stupendous, that a Scotchman could only listen to them in bewilderment. So, when a Scotchman hears about the man who leaned down from the steps of the limited to kiss his wife on the platform at South Bend, Indiana, and the train went so fast that he kissed a stranger woman on the platform at Toledo, Ohio, he can only open his mouth in speechless amazement. And when an Englishman hears how one of our mineral springs made a man's liver so strong that when he died they had to take it out and kill it with a club, he does not know exactly whether to marvel at the potency of our mineral water or to set the narrator down as a lunatic. But, in these instances, the exaggeration is conscious and premeditated. On the other hand, we constantly exaggerate unconsciously and as a matter of course. This is well illustrated by the fact that we call our country America, pompously ignoring the fact that there are a dozen or more of other countries in America besides the United States. One morning I rode into Chicago on a train on which one of the passengers
was a woman with three small children. Two young men were sitting near her. When the train stopped, one of the young men helped the woman and her children off. As he left her and started to walk up to the waiting room, I heard him say to his companion, “I always pity a woman who has to travel with four hundred kids!” He was in earnest. His companion did not smile, nor look upon it as a joke, but agreed that it was too bad. I am sure that neither of them realized that it was exaggeration. But, in reality, the number of children stated was just three hundred and ninety-seven more than the woman had. That is the way many of our people talk habitually.

Exaggeration, conscious and unconscious, without wrongful intent, was undoubtedly one of the factors in leading immigrants to this country. But it was a minor factor.

In the later decades, the chief stimulus of immigration was the misinformation diligently circulated by steamship companies and capitalists.

But, in any event, the immigrants, whether led by designing misstatements or by careless exaggeration, came because they thought they could better their economic condition.

And who can estimate the effect which this has had, upon our institutions, upon the institutions of other countries, upon the course of events, upon the actions, feelings, morals, and beliefs of the people, etc., etc.?

These effects are beyond calculation. All we can say is that they are sweeping, enormous.

And they are due to the economic urge, pressing people on to try to find better living conditions.

THE INTRODUCTION OF SLAVERY.

The introduction of chattel slavery in the United States was wholly due to economic causes.

This institution did not just happen to come into existence.
It was not due to mere cussedness.
Of course, it is hard to call beings men when they engage in such an infamous business as catching people and enslaving them. One feels like calling them monsters, or so-called men, or some other name that will attempt to relieve the human race of responsibility for them. Yet, they were no worse than the capitalists of the present day who take for themselves most of the earnings of the working masses. Economic interest is the cause in both cases.

Africans were lured or forced upon the slave trading ships and brought to this country solely because it was financially profitable.

It was profitable to those who owned the slave trading ships.

It was profitable to those who purchased the slaves when they arrived.

The causes of the introduction of this "peculiar institution" were therefore entirely economic.

And it is unnecessary to remind you that chattel slavery made history in this country.

THE REVOLUTION.

The United States rebelled against England for economic reasons.

The Declaration of Independence enumerates two or three dozen reasons for rebellion, and they are practically all economic reasons. Some of them do not so appear on their face. But, it only requires a casual glance at the causes back of them to reveal their economic basis.

England had almost entirely prevented the colonies from engaging in commerce with the rest of the world.

Taxes were imposed upon the colonists without their consent.

Troops were quartered upon the people.

Trial by jury was denied.

Legislatures were dissolved.
A multitude of new offices were created and swarms of officers were sent over "to harass our people, and eat out their substance."

And many other tyrannical acts of a like character were performed by England.

These were not separate and unattached deviltries.

They were perpetrated by England for the purpose of helping her to enforce her despotic economic measures against the colonists.

England prevented the colonies from trading with the rest of the world, not because of pure unadulterated malignity, but because it was to her economic interest to have all the benefit of the commerce of the colonies herself.

The whole power of the British government was used for the purpose of draining the wealth of the colonies into England.

It was this—these economic reasons—this economic urge—that caused the colonies to rebel.

The very existence of the United States as a separate nation is therefore due to economic causes.

**THE CIVIL WAR.**

The civil war in this country was due to economic causes.

The financial interests of the North were antagonistic to financial interests of the South.

Not that there was no disinterested and unselfish devotion to the cause of abolition. There was a great deal of it. But, even this unselfish devotion had its roots in economic conditions. That is to say, the unselfish abolitionists were endeavoring to abolish an economic condition.

For, chattel slavery was an economic condition. It was the economic condition in which about four million black people then lived, just as wage slavery is the economic condition in which a majority of the people, both white and
black, now live. It was also an economic condition which closely affected the lives and financial interests of millions of people besides the slaves themselves.

It was to the economic interest of the slave holders to retain chattel slavery. Or, at least, they thought it was. And they followed what they believed to be their economic interest.

It was to the economic interest of the rest of the nation that chattel slavery should be limited to the Southern states and not be permitted to spread farther.

So the war came on. And, while on, chattel slavery was abolished altogether.

The war was therefore caused by economic conditions. The tragedy of it is beyond words. The far reaching effects in many directions are beyond calculation.

And all due to the economic urge.

HISTORIC EVENTS.

What have we discovered so far in our excursion? We have found that certain epoch making historic events have been due to economic causes.

The discovery of America.
The peopling of our country.
The introduction of slavery.
The revolution of 1776.
The civil war of 1861.

These are the landmarks which stand out most conspicuously in the history of the United States.

Were we so inclined we could go back into the history of the human race and find that practically all the great epoch making events therein have been due to economic causes.

We would find that changing methods of making a living caused ancient barbarism to merge into the first stage of civilization—chattel slavery.
We would find that basic economic changes caused ancient chattel slavery to merge into the feudal system.

We would find that basic economic changes caused feudalism to merge into capitalism.

We would find that, although personal ambition, and hatred, and love, and religion, etc., were considerable factors, yet the economic conditions, the method of making a living, the economic needs and desires of the people— the economic urge—was at the bottom of the great events of history.

In short, what is true of our own country in this regard is also true of all other countries and of the whole of civilization.

But we shall not stop here, although we have proved our case. Let us return to our own country and note some further illustrations of the truth of the economic interpretation.

POLITICAL PARTIES.

Political parties, and the principles and policies for which they stand, are due to economic causes.

This is true of the political parties of all countries.

But we are more familiar with the parties in our own country. So we will confine our examination to them.

With a few minor exceptions, the political parties in this country have always represented the economic interests of certain classes or groups of the population.

The federalist party, led by Alexander Hamilton, represented the economic interests of the rich merchants and other capitalists who were grouped on the Atlantic coast in those days.

The first republican party, led by Thomas Jefferson, represented the economic interests of the farmers and pioneer settlers.

The first republican party afterward became the democratic party, led for a time by Andrew Jackson. It also
represented the economic interests of the farmers and pioneer settlers. But, as time went on, it came more and more to represent the economic interests of the slave holders of the South. For some time previous to the civil war, it had ceased to represent the economic interests of the farmers and pioneer settlers and came to represent the economic interests of the slave holders solely.

The Whig party represented the economic interests of the Northern capitalists, and also of the farmers and pioneer settlers in so far as they were interested in free soil. It represented the interests of the capitalists mainly, however, and neglected the interests of the farmers and pioneer settlers to such an extent that about the middle of the nineteenth century they proceeded to form another party, which they called the Republican party. It also represented the interests of the Northern capitalists to some extent.

After the civil war was over, the Republican party ceased to represent the economic interests of the farmers and pioneer settlers and came to represent almost exclusively the economic interests of the great capitalists of the North, whose wealth and power and influence were increasing rapidly.

The Democratic party still represented the economic interests of the South mainly. And it was as backward and out of date as the section it represented.

The Greenback and Populist parties represented the economic interests of the debt-ridden farmers who were in the grip of the money loaners and the capitalists in general.

Political parties are the reflections of economic conditions.

They are like pictures thrown upon the curtain by a stereopticon.

Each phase of the economic situation throws its own reflection upon the political curtain in the form of one or
more separate and distinct political parties. Or, sometimes one party represents more than one phase. This can only be done when there is something in common between these phases. Where two classes have opposite interests—as the capitalist class and the working class—it is impossible for one political party to represent both, though there are two parties which falsely pretend to do so—the Republican party and the Democratic party.

When a particular phase of the economic situation becomes of minor importance, the corresponding picture fades. That is, the party wanes.

When an economic phase disappears, the picture disappears. Or, if it does not disappear, it comes to represent some other phase. In that case, it is a moving picture.

For example, there are some short-sighted people who say they are going to stay with the Republican party because it was in the right in 1860.

They do not realize that the present Republican party did not exist in 1860 at all.

The Republican party of 1860 was largely the reflection of the economic interests of the farmers and pioneer settlers of the North. They wanted free soil in the new states. They were therefore opposed to the extension of chattel slavery.

When chattel slavery was abolished, that economic phase was ended.

The republican party—the reflection of that economic phase on the political curtain—therefore faded and died.

That is, it died so far as its representation of that economic phase was concerned.

Of course, its name remained.

So does the name of George Washington remain.

We have quite a few men whose names are George Washington.
But they are not the real George Washington. They merely bear his name.

So with the Republican party.

It ceased to represent the economic phase which it had been representing and came to represent another economic phase.

Its name and its great prestige were seized upon by the capitalist class. It came to represent almost exclusively the economic interests of that class. It represents the economic interests of that class today.

And any man who stays with the Republican party of today because the Republican party of 1860 was in the right is just as short-sighted and illogical as a man who would insist that one of our present day George Washingtons is the father of his country.

He is just as illogical as a man who would cheer the picture of a heroic rescue, and then cheer the picture of a brutal murder, just because both pictures were on the same film.

The picture has moved.

The capitalist class is so acutely alive to the fact that it must control the political power if it is to continue to control the economic power, that it endeavors to control all political parties except the one whose very object is to abolish capitalism and introduce Socialism.

The capitalist class therefore has more than one reflection on the curtain. It has two reflections—the Republican party and the Democratic party.

The Republican party reflects mainly the economic interests of the larger capitalists. There is, however, a so-called progressive wing to the party. This so-called progressive wing is made up of smaller capitalists and business and professional men. To this extent, the party also reflects the economic interests of these people.
In 1896, the Democratic party in addition to representing the economic interests of the South, which it had done for a number of decades, came to represent the economic interests of the small capitalists and little business men who were in the agony of being swallowed by the trusts. It also reflected what the debt-ridden farmers believed to be their economic interests. It therefore took over the function of the Populist party, and the Populist party faded away and gradually disappeared.

By the year 1900, the big capitalists had made considerable inroads upon the Democratic party, but it still largely represented the same economic interests that it represented in 1896.

In 1904, however, the Democratic party ceased to represent that phase chiefly, though it still represented it to some extent. It was captured by the big capitalists and reflected their economic interests mainly.

It still reflects the economic interests of the big capitalists chiefly. But it also represents the economic interests of the smaller capitalists and business men to a large extent.

Neither of these parties represents the economic interests of the great working masses who constitute the majority of the people. They both pretend to do so, but it is merely a pretense for the purpose of catching votes and retaining power. The economic interests of the capitalist class and the working class are antagonistic. It is therefore an impossibility for any political party to represent the economic interests of both of them.

The Socialist party represents the economic interests of the great working masses—the wage workers and the farmers—all the disinherited who are exploited out of most of their earnings and deprived of equal opportunity. It represents the economic interests of about ninety per cent of the people. As fast as they come to realize this fact they leave the other parties and give their adherence to the Socialist party.
We have seen, therefore, that all political parties of any importance are due to economic causes, and that they reflect economic interests.

It is the economic urge that causes their formation.

It is the economic urge that causes people to flock to them and sweep them into power.

It is the economic urge that causes them to pass laws that vitally affect the lives of the people.

**LAWS AND ORDINANCES.**

The bills and resolutions considered and passed by congress and by the various state legislatures are usually due to economic causes. Also the ordinances and resolutions considered and adopted by the various city councils.

The statutes of these various bodies are crammed with illustrations of this fact.

Watch the proceedings of congress, and you will find that day after day it devotes its attention to revenue bills, currency bills, pension bills, appropriation bills, and other bills arising out of the economic conditions.

The bills that are to the interest of the economic phase that is reflected by the party in power have a good chance of adoption.

Those that are to the interest of some other economic phase do not have a good chance of adoption.

Therefore, at the present time, bills that are to the interest of the capitalists have a good chance of adoption. They are adopted unless they are so rank that their sponsors fear to pass them, lest it should result in more people flocking to the Socialist party.

Bills in the interest of the working masses have small chances of adoption at the present time. A few minor ones are adopted, however, because they are scared out of the capitalist parties. They adopt them out of fear lest more people will flock to the Socialist party in case they are not adopted.
Watch the proceedings of any state legislature, and you will find it engaged in considering bills and resolutions arising out of economic conditions, just as congress does, only on a smaller scale.

Attend the meetings of any city council, and meeting after meeting you will find it devoting its attention to ordinances and resolutions about paving, sewering, streets, alleys, telephone poles, licenses, sidewalks, bridges, franchises, etc. Only exceptionally does it take up anything not based on economic conditions.

The laws and ordinances adopted by all these bodies intimately affect the lives of the people, the institutions of the country, and the course of events.

And they are nearly all due to the economic urge.

LITIGATION.

Nearly all the litigation going on in the courts arises out of economic conditions.

There are a few exceptions, but, as usual, the exceptions merely prove the rule.

A man, a company, or a corporation, sues another for money said to be due. Or to compel the carrying out of a contract involving money or property. Or for damages for breach of contract. Or for damage to the person. Or for damage to reputation. Or for damage to property. Or to enjoin someone from interfering with property.

The suits which involve money, property, or pecuniary damages, make up the bulk of the civil docket. All such suits, of course, are economic. They arise out of economic conditions.

The criminal cases are largely economic also. All of the cases of theft, burglary, arson, and other property crimes, are economic. And most of the cases of assault, murder, and other crimes against the person, arise out of economic conditions.
Even the divorce cases are usually due to economic conditions.

Most law suits are not very far reaching in their results.

But, taking them all in all, they have a vast effect upon the lives and happiness of the people and upon the institutions of the country and the course of events.

Now and then a case arises which affects the interests of the whole people, or a large portion of the people.

The Dartmouth College case profoundly affected the course of industrial events. The ruling class had control of the supreme court and got the decision it wanted.

The Dred Scott case affected the whole nation. The slave holders had control of the supreme court and got the decision they wanted. It helped to bring on the civil war, with all its multitudinous consequences to the lives and joys and sorrows of the people, the institutions of the country, and the course of events.

The income tax decision affected practically every citizen, directly or indirectly, and made it necessary to amend the constitution.

Decisions upholding the capitalists as against the workers have profoundly affected the interests of the millions of wage workers. They are due to the fact that the capitalists have control of the courts and therefore get the decisions they want. Of course there are exceptions. The rising Socialist vote sometimes scares decisions out of the courts which they do not want to make.

CODES OF MORALS.

The prevailing code of morals is largely due to economic causes. The same is true of past codes of morals.

By morals, or ethics, I mean the opinion of the people as to what is right and wrong.

What the people consider right and wrong in their treatment of each other—that is their code of morals.
There are a great many of our ideas of right and wrong which we inherit from the past—both from the proximate past and from the remote past.

There are a good many ideas of right and wrong which are common to all classes of the people.

But there are various ideas of right and wrong which are imposed upon the people by the ruling class—the capitalist class—because it is to its economic interest to do so.

Whatever is to the economic interest of the capitalist class—that the capitalist class considers right, and it tries to impose that idea upon the rest of the people.

Whatever is against the economic interest of the capitalist class—that the capitalist class considers wrong, and it tries to impose that idea upon the rest of the people.

The code of morals of the ruling class is always the prevailing code until that class reaches the stage where it is about to be conquered by another class.

During the first centuries of civilization, when chattel slavery existed all over the civilized world, chattel slavery was considered right. Chattel slavery was at that time to the economic interest of the ruling class—the masters—and they therefore considered it right and tried to impose that idea upon the rest of the people. As soon as chattel slavery became unprofitable, it was considered wrong. The same phenomenon was repeated in the United States in more recent times. In the South, where chattel slavery was profitable, it was considered right. The ruling class of the South imposed that idea upon the rest of the Southern people. They did it successfully. Even the churches of the South vehemently defended chattel slavery. They claimed that it was a divine institution. The common whites of the South, who did not own any slaves, were so thoroughly imbued with the idea that slavery was right that they actually went to war in large numbers and gave up their lives and limbs by the thousands to defend
the idea. In the North, where chattel slavery was unprofitable, it was considered wrong. It actually was wrong for other reasons than economic. A few of the Northern people were against it for other than economic reasons, as I pointed out before. But, the reason the bulk of the Northern people believed it to be wrong was because chattel slavery was against their economic interest.

When the ancient system of chattel slavery merged into the feudal system, a new code of morals, suited to the new economic conditions, came into being. The ruling class—the feudal lords—considered everything right that was to their interest. They considered everything wrong that was against their interest. They imposed these ideas of right and wrong upon the rest of the people.

But when, inside the feudal system, the trading class began to rise, it began to evolve a moral code of its own, based upon its own economic interests. As the trading class grew in numbers and importance, this code gradually overcame the code of the feudal lords.

Finally, the trading class, now known as the capitalist class, became the dominant class. The feudal system merged into the capitalist system. And the capitalist code became the prevailing code.

At the present time, the capitalist code of morals is still the prevailing code, although the rising working class, with its new code, based upon its economic interests, is gradually substituting its code for the capitalist code.

THE CAPITALIST CODE.

The capitalists consider it wrong for workingmen to try to get higher wages and shorter work days.

They consider it wrong for workingmen to try to get better conditions of labor.

They consider it wrong for workingmen to try to get the full value of their labor.

They consider it wrong for workingmen to strike for better conditions, higher wages, and shorter work days.
They consider it wrong for workingmen to vote for their own interests.

They consider it wrong for workingmen to try to get congress and the state legislatures to pass laws favorable to labor.

They consider it wrong to agitate for any laws that would interfere with vested rights.

They consider it wrong to agitate for any laws that would interfere with property interests.

They consider it wrong for unions to make rules that unite workingmen together instead of leaving each one at the mercy of the capitalists.

They consider it wrong for workingmen to form unions at all.

They consider it wrong to criticise the courts for infamous decisions against workingmen.

They consider it wrong to agitate for collectively owned municipal utilities.

They consider it wrong to agitate for collectively owned trusts.

They consider it wrong to advocate that money should be issued by the nation only.

They consider it wrong to call attention to the bad conditions existing in the industries.

They consider it wrong to try to remedy these conditions in any way.

On the other hand, they consider it right for capitalists to own the industries which the working masses have to use in order to make a living.

They consider it right to pay the men who do the work only a fraction of the value of their labor.

They consider it right to keep the rest themselves.

They consider it right to take what belongs to others, provided it is done on a big scale.
They consider it right to send detectives among the workingmen to break up their unions.

They consider it right to hire abandoned wretches to scab on their fellow workers who are striking for a decent living.

They consider it right to use the courts, the police, the militia, and the regular army, to prevent workingmen from gaining a decent living.

They consider it right to hire thugs to stir up violence during labor troubles, in order to create public sentiment against the workingmen.

They consider it right to trump up false charges against the officials of working class organizations, and put them in jail, in order to prevent the members of the organization from gaining a decent living.

They consider it right to throw every legal obstacle in the way of workingmen securing better working conditions.

They consider it right to make a struggle in the courts to nullify every law passed in the interest of the working masses.

They consider it right to live off the labor of others.

They consider it right to own the places where the masses have to live, and to charge them enormous rent.

They consider it right to own the things which the masses have to eat and wear, and to charge them enormous prices.

They consider it right to corner the wealth, and thus keep the masses of the people in poverty and bar them out from the higher things of life.

Obviously, the reason the capitalists believe these things is because their economic interests lead them to do so.

The capitalists impose these ideas upon the rest of the people.
They take every means of emphasizing them, so that the people may be led to believe, or to continue believing, that they are true.

The capitalists own most of the daily papers—though the Socialists are gradually making inroads upon them in that regard—and in the capitalist dailies it is always taken for granted that the capitalist code of morals is correct. By all manner of insinuating methods these papers impose that code upon the people.

The capitalists control most of the churches—though the Socialists are also gradually making inroads upon them in that regard—and in the churches controlled by the capitalists it is always taken for granted that the capitalist code of morals is correct.

The capitalists control most of the schools—though the Socialists are also gradually making inroads upon them in that regard—and they use the schools for the purpose of imposing the capitalist code of morals upon the rising generation.

The capitalists use every available means of spreading the idea that the present legal property rights, which enable the few to rob the many, are sacred.

They teach honesty, because it is to their interest that others should be honest, although they themselves use every dishonest method that will enable them to gouge the masses out of most of the value of their labor.

They teach truthfulness, because it is to their interest that others should be truthful, although they themselves use every kind of deception that will help them to succeed in their schemes of robbery. They proceed on the assumption that a lie is "an abomination unto the Lord and a very present help in time of trouble."

THE SOCIALIST CODE.

The rising working class also has a code of morals. It is constantly encroaching upon the capitalist code.
The working class code of morals—which may as well be called the Socialist code, for that is what it is—also springs from economic interests. It springs from the economic interests of the working class.

Of course the Socialist code is not a completely new code, but it differs from previous codes in certain vital respects arising out of economic conditions.

The Socialists consider it wrong for private individuals and private corporations to own industries which others have to use in order to earn a living.

They consider it wrong for capitalists and their satellites to live off the labor of others.

They consider it wrong to prevent the passage of laws favorable to labor.

They consider it wrong to make industrial slaves of children.

They consider it wrong for a workingman to violate the solidarity of his class by scabbing.

They consider it wrong for congress, the state legislatures and the city councils to pass legislation which is against the interests of the working class.

They consider it wrong for the courts to render decisions that are against the interests of the working class.

They consider it wrong for money to be issued by private corporations, the banks.

They consider it wrong to use the courts, the police, the militia, and the regular army, to prevent workingmen from getting a decent living.

They consider it wrong to hire thugs to stir up strife during labor troubles.

They consider it wrong to trump up false charges against labor officials and put them in jail in order to cause strikes to fail.

They consider it wrong to throw legal obstacles in the way of the workingmen securing a decent living.
They consider it wrong to corner the wealth and thus keep the masses of the people in poverty and bar them out from the higher things in life.

They consider it wrong for private parties to own the places where the masses have to live and charge them more than cost for the use of the same.

They consider it wrong for private parties to own the things which the masses have to eat and wear, and charge them more than cost for same.

On the other hand, they consider it right for working-men to try to get higher wages and shorter work days.

They consider it right for workingmen to try to get better conditions of labor.

They consider it right for workingmen to strike for better conditions, higher wages and shorter work days.

They consider it right for workingmen to vote for their own interests.

They consider it right for the workingmen to try to get congress and the state legislatures to pass laws favorable to labor.

They consider it right to agitate for laws to improve the conditions of the working masses, no matter if they would interfere with vested rights.

They consider it right to agitate for laws that would interfere with the property interests which make the masses of the people the slaves of the few.

They consider it right to call attention to the bad conditions existing in the industries.

They consider it right that the useful workers should receive the full value of their labor.

They consider it right that the industries now used by the capitalists for the purpose of exploiting the masses out of most of the value of their labor should be collectively owned and controlled, in order that all the people may receive the full value of their labor and have access to the higher things in life.
Of course there are dozens of other ideas of right and wrong that grow out of those which I have mentioned.

The Socialist code of morals is constantly encroaching upon the capitalist code.

The capitalist code is still the prevailing code.

But the Socialist code is gradually supplanting it.

NOW WHERE ARE WE?

Again, let us take stock and see what we have discovered thus far in our excursion.

We have found the following extremely important events, institutions and conditions due to economic causes:

The discovery of America.
The peopling of our country.
The introduction of chattel slavery in this country.
The revolution of 1776.
The civil war of 1861.
The ancient system of chattel slavery.
The feudal system.
The capitalist system.
Political parties.
Laws and ordinances.
Litigation.
Codes of morals.

This is amply sufficient to demonstrate the truth of the assertion which we started out to prove—that the economic urge is the main factor in shaping social institutions, the course of events, and the character and opinions of the people.

But, let's go ahead with additional proofs, until they are heaped up and running all over the premises.

Nobody shall be allowed to escape believing this truth for lack of superabundant demonstration.
WESTWARD HO!

Not only the filling of our country with immigrants from other countries, but also the movement of the people gradually and persistently from the Atlantic to the Pacific, spreading out over the entire expanse of the nation, was due to economic causes.

In colonial days, the settlements skirted the Atlantic coast. They penetrated but a short distance back from the coast into the interior.

But, there was a gradual penetration of the interior. The settlers kept pushing a little farther westward, and a little farther westward, year after year, and decade after decade.

The frontier—the border—was pushed constantly, little by little, toward the west. The Indians put up a fierce but hopeless struggle against this inevitable absorption of their domain. They were gradually overcome. The frontier was pushed westward until it was pushed into the Pacific Ocean—or went up in blue smoke—or whatever you like. Anyhow, it disappeared. It ceased to exist, for the entire country was settled. Not that it would not contain many times as many people. But it has practically all been settled after a fashion.

The immigrants from other countries have not as a rule been the prime movers in this process. As they had torn up their home roots and were foot loose, it might be supposed that they would have been. But they as a rule settled in the cities. Some of them, however, did go to the frontier.

But, the prime movers in the process were those who were already living farther to the eastward and who pulled up stakes and moved west.

Why did they do this?
They had all the power of inertia to keep them where they were.
They had all the sacredness of home and birthplace and the old folks and the old friends, to keep them there.

Why did they do it?

In my travels, I have witnessed heart-rending scenes of parting at depots when families were leaving for the West or Southwest. I will give you a typical instance:

The household goods had been duly stowed away in a freight car. Also the teams and farm machinery. The immediate necessities were packed in valises and bundles on the platform. Relatives and friends had congregated to see them off. Women were sobbing softly and bidding one another to take good care of father and mother, or the baby, as the case might be. Men, with that foolish something inherited from the days of chivalry causing them to imagine that tears are unmanly, were speaking brave words with drawn faces, dry eyes and broken voices. From far in the distance there broke upon all ears a wee slight sound, almost like the cooing of a dove—two long coos and two short ones—the incoming passenger train whistling for a crossing. It sent a chill of despair over the group. The moment of parting was almost at hand. The sobs and caresses of the women increased. The drawn faces of the men became paler. Again the sound came, louder this time, a mile nearer. Curling smoke could be seen silhouetted against the sky. It grew larger and larger. Then the train swung round a bend and appeared in full view, rushing madly forward splendid, irresistible and heartless. A rush of steam was seen, and then it let out a piercing scream and began to slow down for the station. At this signal, arms were wrapped about loved ones, heads were pillowed on shoulders and breasts, the last caresses were given, and the train steamed away, carrying broken hearts with it and leaving broken hearts behind.

I have described this scene before audiences in some of the newer states—such as Idaho and Oklahoma—and the tears that came into some of the eyes before me proved
the realism of it. They knew. They had been through it. The description took them back to the old home, the old folks, the old friends, the old associations.

Why did they leave?

It meant heartbreak and homesickness and separation from those they longed to see. Often it meant separation for life.

Why this apparent trifling with things that were sacred?

Why did they tear their heart strings loose and go away?

There is only one explanation. They believed that they could better their economic condition. They thought they could get homes of their own. They thought they could get more of the necessities and comforts of life, and give their children a better education and a better chance in life, and so forth.

In other words, it was the economic urge that pushed the frontier from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

THE HUNTER TYPE.

The different types of people who live and have lived are and have been molded by the economic surroundings.

Again, we could go back to the beginning of history and prove our point with every type of people that has ever existed. All of them have reflected their economic surroundings.

But we will content ourselves with an illustration or two from our own country.

There was the hunter type.

A good example of this type was Daniel Boone.

Daniel Boone was a child of the frontier, a product of the border. He loved the border. He loved the silent forest. Solitude had no terrors for him. When people began to settle around him too thickly, he moved into the forest again.
It was in 1767 when he made his first move. He went from Pennsylvania into the virgin forest of North Carolina.

In 1769, he pushed on into Kentucky, which was then a hunting ground of the Indians. The savages did not look with pleasure upon any white invasion of their hunting grounds.

There Boone hunted and trapped. There he founded the village of Boonesborough.

His border life was one of constant danger. His rifle and hunting knife were his most intimate companions. His encounters with the savages were many and bloody. He learned their ways so well that he could beat them at their own game. One day when he was attacked by two stalwart braves, and they and he were behind trees trying to get a chance to shoot, he maneuvered so artfully that he drew the fire of both of them. Then, before they could reload their rifles, he proceeded to kill one of them with his gun and the other with his knife.

The Indians called him the Great Long Knife. They had good reason to do so, for he ran his long knife into many of them.

Three times they captured him, and he was in deadly peril of being burnt at the stake with all the tortures they could devise. But three times he escaped.

Once his escape was due to the fancy of an old woman. She had lost her son in battle and she wanted to adopt Boone to take his place. So, instead of burning him at the stake as they had intended, they adopted him into the tribe—the Shawnese. They pulled all his hair out but a scalp lock. They took him into the water and thoroughly scrubbed him to wash out the white blood. Then they daubed him with paint. He pretended to like this treatment. He appeared so perfectly satisfied that they gradually gave him considerable freedom. They allowed him to hunt alone, but they carefully measured his ammunition, so that he would not have enough to get away on. He cut
the bullets in two. He used a short allowance of powder. He accumulated bullets and powder in this way and hid them in the woods. Selecting an opportune time, he made a dash for liberty. He ran most of the time for five days and nights, with the Indians in hot pursuit, and reached Boonesborough in safety.

By 1802, people became too numerous around Boonesborough. So he moved on westward into the forest.

A few years later, people became too thick around his new abode. He then pushed on west of the Mississippi River. He built a cabin on the bank of the Missouri River, some fifty miles up from St. Louis.

He was eighty-five years of age, and a mighty hunter still, when Washington Irving and his comrades, bound for the Pacific coast, stopped to see him.

As the expedition left him and started up the Missouri, destined to meet many adventures in crossing the trackless plains, penetrating the virgin forests, and climbing the snow-capped mountains, the old man stood on the river bank and gazed after them, wistfully, his border heart longing to go with them. But he was too old.

He hunted and trapped until he died of old age.

He was a product of his economic surroundings. The way he made his living was what made him.

Such a man could only be produced on the border, alive with game and alive with savages.

He and his type are dead. The possibility of producing such a man as Daniel Boone, died when the border died.

THE PIONEER SETTLER TYPE.

The hunter type was the first and farthest on the frontier.

He was followed by the settler type, the pioneer type.

The early settlers were unlike any other class of men and women that have ever existed, here or elsewhere.

In some respects—their sturdy qualities—they resembled the hunter type.
But they were not rovers.

They brought their families into the new region and settled down. They built their little cabins in the woods or on the prairie. They carved clearings out of the woods, cleared away the brush and stumps with infinite labor, and tilled the soil. Or, they broke the prairie sod with their oxen and breaking plows.

Primitive, deprived of nearly everything that savored of civilization, seldom seeing their distant neighbors, their lives were solitary.

When a wandering member of the human family came along, he was welcomed with open arms. Such as they had was set before him with joy. They were transported with pleasure to have an opportunity to talk with him.

As the settlers increased in numbers, the little school house appeared. The children learned the three R’s. And there was the literary society on winter nights. And the spelling school. And the settlers and their wives and babies went—as well as the school boys and girls. There was a rough gay time. And they hated to go home—for their lives were isolated.

Now and then, a family blew itself. By working hard, they managed to get the work well enough in hand to go and visit a whole day with a neighbor’s family a few miles distant.

But most of their lives were spent in arduous toil. Simplicity could scarcely have been carried farther. Hardship was their daily lot. It made its due impress upon their appearance, their manners, their speech, and their thoughts.

They were stoical, enduring the most exhausting labor and the most stringent deprivation like martyrs.

I have in mind two persons of this type—a young man and a young woman.

They lived in a little cabin on the naked prairie, with neighbors few and far between.
One midwinter day when there was a fierce blizzard raging on the prairie, in which the husband could not have lived to go for a doctor, or even for a neighbor's wife, the most epochal juncture that ever comes in a woman's life came to that young woman.

And, under those frightful conditions, with a fortitude never surpassed by the renowned heroes whose names are emblazoned in the halls of fame, that young woman went down into the valley of the shadow of death and met and conquered fate. If she had not, I would not be here to write this.

They were types of the sturdy pioneers.

The way the pioneers made their living was what made them. They were the product of their economic surroundings.

They have done a great deal to engender and to foster the spirit of liberty in this country.

THE PLAINSMAN TYPE.

One evening I was billed to speak at a country school house on a mesa twenty-five miles up from a little village in a valley in the Rocky mountains.

For the benefit of those who are not familiar with mountains, let me say that a mesa is the flat top of a mountain range. Some mountain ranges have mesas on top of them and others haven't.

This one was below the timber line. It was a fertile region peopled with farmers, bears and mountain lions.

It took us most of the day to drive up. The whole neighborhood came to the meeting. When it closed and we started to go, a drizzling rain was falling and it was pitch dark, so dark that I could not see my hand before my eyes.

We—two residents of the valley and I—borrowed a lantern, fastened it to the dashboard of the buggy, dropped off the mesa, and started down the canyon.

To our left was the mountain.
To our right was the mountain torrent.

At some places the road between them was wide. At others it was very narrow.

With the aid of the lantern, we made our way, slowly and tortuously.

A few miles down, we passed a horse with a bell on it, grazing by the road side. We thought it belonged to some farmer and had wandered away from home.

A little farther down, at a point where the space between the mountain and the torrent was very narrow, our team suddenly brought up with a jerk.

We peered forward between the horses into the gloom, by the light of the lantern, and we saw a rope stretched clean across the highway.

I had been on a train one section of which had been held up a few nights before just out of Leadville, and robbers were fresh in my mind. When I saw that rope, I fully expected that the next instant I would be looking into the business end of a six shooter.

But no such event occurred.

We investigated and found a man lying across the road, snugly wrapped in a blanket and tarpaulin, sound asleep.

He was a cowboy—a plainsman.

When night came on and he wanted to go to bed, he did not look for a house or hotel. He went to bed wherever he happened to find himself, rain or shine.

He had stretched the rope across the road to keep his horse from wandering down the canyon, knowing that he would not wander up very far for the reason that it was up hill.

We woke him up. He rolled over out of the way and we took down the rope and passed on.

That man belonged to a type that is rapidly disappearing.
Disappearing because the economic conditions are changing. The methods of raising cattle are changing. They have entirely changed in most parts of the country.

Of course, there will be men who drive cattle just as long as beef is used for food.

But not the typical plainsman.

He is the product of his economic surroundings.

As they fade away, he fades away. He lives in the movies—and soon he will live nowhere else.

THE WAGE WORKING TYPE.

What is the reason a majority of the people of the United States who are engaged in gainful occupations are wage earners?

Is it because they think it is perfectly delightful to work for capitalists and get gouged out of most of their earnings?

Not at all.

It is because the economic conditions compel them to be wage earners.

A hundred or so of years ago, when there was comparatively little labor saving machinery, when gigantic centralized industries were impossible, when wealth was not concentrated in the hands of a few, when the tools of industry were simple and inexpensive, the prevailing methods of making a living caused most people to work on their own hook.

Therefore, there were comparatively few wage earners at that time.

The scarcity of wage earners was wholly due to the economic conditions.

At the present time, the economic conditions are entirely different. Wonderful labor saving machinery has been developed. This machinery makes it necessary for men to
work together instead of working separately. It makes gigantic industries necessary. A comparatively few capitalists have secured the ownership of these industries.

The masses of the people are compelled to hire out to these few in order to get an opportunity to earn a living at all.

They are literally compelled to be wage workers to keep from starving to death.

Their lives are bound up in the economic conditions.

THE PRESS.

The policies of the newspapers are based upon economic conditions.

The Socialist papers reflect the economic interests of the working class.

The capitalist papers reflect the economic interests of the capitalist class.

The business office is the pulse of the capitalist paper. Every other feature is regulated thereby. Any deviation of the editorial policy of the paper from orthodox capitalism is immediately felt at the financial end.

Under such circumstances, it is really amazing that we get as much truth from the capitalist papers as we do, although we certainly get little enough.

They are bound and gagged by the system.

When a capitalist paper speaks ill of capitalists or their interests, it is usually merely another way of saying that the publisher has gone on a strike for higher bribes. For, the capitalist papers make the capitalists pay up for their support, in numerous ways, sometimes by even putting them on the payroll. And the papers give the capitalists full value received.
Never a strike occurs but the capitalist papers report the matter as if the wage workers were disturbers who must be watched carefully lest they break out in riot and anarchy.

It is necessary to read the Socialist papers in order to get the truth about anything that concerns the workers. A person who confines himself to the capitalist papers, not getting any news of the world except what he gets through them, does not possess the necessary information to come to a logical conclusion on any public question. Such a person shuts the door to the real world in his own face—the world where the sham and the tinsel are stripped off and the truth laid bare. In order to read the truth, he must read the papers wherein the truth is to be found.

Anyone who cares to investigate can easily discover that the capitalist papers constantly report the skirmishes in the class struggle between the working class and the capitalist class in a manner favorable to the capitalists and prejudicial to the workers.

As a rule, it is the capitalists and their hired thugs who are in fact guilty of violence, and the stirring up of violence, during strikes.

Yet, the capitalist papers make it appear that the workers are the ones who use violence or stir up violence.

Now and then, the workers do commit violence. But it is exceptional. And when they do, it is usually because they have been goaded to it by the thugs hired by the capitalists to do so. But, usually, they do not even fall into that trap. Knowing that the police, the militia, and the regular army, are at the beck of the capitalists, the workers usually adopt a strict policy of peaceableness, and non-resistance even when attacked. And they usually live up to that policy almost to the letter. They know that to do otherwise would be disastrous. It would bring
wholesale slaughter upon them, and it would alienate public sympathy from them.

Yet, the capitalist papers, in practically every strike of any size, give out the impression that the workingmen are lawless.

Often the capitalists and their henchmen practice the most inhuman barbarities upon the strikers and their helpers and sympathizers. They have sometimes declared martial law when there is no occasion whatever for it. They have deported strikers from their homes. They have issued the most infamous injunctions. Often they put the strikers in vile bull pens. Often they deny the strikers the right of free speech. Often they deny the strikers the right of peaceful assemblage. Often they deny the strikers the right of trial by jury. Often they make wholesale arrests of strikers without warrants, knowing that they are guiltless of any wrong, but for the deliberate purpose of breaking the strike by retiring some of the ablest strikers from circulation and putting the union to as great expense as possible. These outrages have occurred time after time.

Yet the capitalist papers throw out the impression that it is the workers who are lawless, instead of the capitalists.

With a lordly sweep of their blood-stained hands—stained with the blood of those whose lives have been blighted, deformed, crippled and shortened by working long hours for wretched wages—and also with the blood of those whose lives have been brought to an untimely end by the mercenary neglect of safeguards in the industries—the capitalists cast aside all constitutional guarantees and deny the strikers the most fundamental rights.

And yet, in spite of all this, the capitalist papers prejudice the minds of thousands of the people against all strikers as being lawless.
They turn the facts right around and cause thousands of people to think that the lawless capitalists are law abiding and that the law abiding strikers are lawless.

As we have already seen, they also constantly take it for granted in their columns that the capitalist code of morals is true. They thus make a constant effort to impose that code of morals upon the people.

In short, the economic urge controls the press.

**ARMIES AND NAVIES.**

War preparations, as well as wars themselves, are due to economic causes.

Why are all the great nations constantly building battle-ships?

Why do they constantly keep standing armies drilling, ready for carnage?

They do these things in order to protect their foreign commerce and foreign opportunities for investment. Also in order to have troops on hand to help the capitalists to win strikes. Economic reasons.

Under the present plan of doing things, the industries are owned by capitalists, and by combinations of capitalists called corporations and trusts.

The work of the industries is done by the workers. They receive a fraction of the value of their labor. With this fraction they are only able to buy a fraction of the total product of the country.

The capitalists and their satellites are not able to consume all the balance.

They therefore find it necessary to seek foreign markets for it.
Other nations are in the same fix. They, too, are on the capitalist basis. Their workers receive only a fraction of the value of their labor, and are therefore only able to buy a fraction of the total product. So, all nations in which the capitalist system exists are after the foreign markets. They are also after foreign opportunities for investment for their surplus capital. And they want to protect the investments which they already have, in colonies and elsewhere.

These conditions bring the nations into competition with each other. They are likely at any time to lead to complications that will result in war.

These are the reasons for the existence of navies. And they are among the potent reasons for the existence of armies. The capitalists of the various nations desire to be prepared whenever this competition leads to war.

It is, therefore an economic matter.

And the wars themselves, when they do occur, are due to economic causes.

The Boer war was fought over territory and commercial and industrial advantages.

The war between Japan and Russia was fought over territory and markets.

The war in the Balkans was fought over territory and markets.

The Spanish war was fought over territory and markets.

The Philippine war was fought over territory and markets.

The Mexican civil wars have been due to desire for economic reforms.
The European war was fought over territory and commercial supremacy.

Territory and markets, being interpreted, means investments and markets. For, the capitalists of the various nations want the various colonies and other attached dependencies for the purpose of exploiting them and wringing every dollar possible out of them by means of investments.

We have already seen that another potent cause of the existence of armies is the fact that the capitalists want them to assist in winning strikes. This also is an economic cause.

So, the economic urge is what impels nations to prepare for war and to go to war.

THE TRUSTS.

The trusts are due to economic causes.

It used to be thought that competition was the life of trade.

Maybe it was at one time. But that was some time ago. It was at an early stage in the development of the capitalist system.

The capitalists discovered some years ago that competition is the death of trade.

By competing, they merely knifed each other. They kept each other from making money. They drove each other into bankruptcy.

So, they began to cast about for some better method of doing business. Some method which would relieve them of the uncertainties of competition, and also of the expense of competition. Some method which would permit them to expend their energies in gouging every dollar possible
out of the working masses, instead of wasting their time fighting each other.

A bright idea came to them.

That bright idea was combination.

By combining, they would cease to fight each other, and confine themselves to gouging the working masses. The uncertainties and expense of competition would be eliminated.

They proceeded to put the idea into practice.

Our fine crop of trusts is the result.

The economic urge led to all of them.

THE LABOR UNIONS.

Why have the most intelligent workers organized themselves into labor unions?

Why have they not remained unorganized and just let each workingman deal with the employer single handed?

Because it is to the economic interest of the workers to organize into unions.

They used to be wholly unorganized. Each workingman dealt with the employer single handed. In doing so, he found that he was at a dreadful disadvantage. He had to have employment in order to live. If he asked for higher wages, or shorter hours, or better conditions of labor, the employer could and did decline the request at once. And he had no recourse. He simply had to stand for it and take his medicine.

Such experiences on the part of thousands and thousands of workers set some of the wiser ones to thinking.

What they thought was that if the workers would put their heads together and make collective bargains with the
employer, and collective demands upon him, they would have greater power and much more probability of getting their demands granted

No sooner thought than done.

Or, rather, started.

For the process has been slow. But it has also been persistent. And it has accomplished a great deal for those who have gone into the unions.

The economic urge has therefore been the one thing that has led or driven the workers into the unions. They have gone into them to better their living conditions.

TO SUM UP.

Now, where are we?

We have found the following extremely important events, institutions and conditions due to economic causes:

The discovery of America.
The peopling of our country.
The introduction of chattel slavery into this country.
The revolution of 1776.
The civil war of 1861.
The ancient system of chattel slavery.
The feudal system.
The capitalist system.
Political parties.
Laws and ordinances.
Litigation.
Codes of morals.
The westward migration.
The hunter type.
The pioneer settler type.
The plainsman type.
The wage working type.
The policies of the press.
Wars, armies and navies.
The trusts.
The labor unions.

I could go on indefinitely giving additional illustrations. But this is superabundantly sufficient evidence to prove the statement which I started out to prove—that the economic factor is the chief factor in shaping social institutions, the course of events, and the character and opinions of the people.

PINNED TO THE EARTH.

It may be asked why the economic factor is the most potent factor.

The question is a pertinent one, and it is easy to answer. Again, let me illustrate.

At a social gathering in a certain small town one evening, the young people were telling hair-raising ghost stories. The girls began to congratulate themselves on the fact that they did not have to go home alone, for they said that they would not dare to.

But, one young woman made fun of their fears and stoutly asserted that she was not afraid of spooks. To test her courage, a young man offered her a silver dollar if she would go alone to a newly made grave in the cemetery near by and return.
She accepted the challenge. It was decided that she should take a table fork with her and stick it in the grave to prove that she had really gone there. She took the fork and departed. The rest of the young people enjoyed themselves by indulging in many jokes about the creepy time she would have in earning that dollar.

But their merriment was brought to a sudden end by a blood-curdling shriek from the direction of the cemetery. They ran to the rescue and found the young woman lying across the newly made grave in a dead faint. When they had carried her to the house and brought her around again, she told them in terror stricken tones that when she stuck the fork into the grave, something like a hand came out of it and seized her skirt, so she screamed and fainted.

Then the young man who had lifted her from the grave explained that she had run the fork through the hem of her dress and pinned herself to the ground.

Now—as soon as your hair has had time to settle—I want to call your attention to the fact that all men, women and children are pinned to the earth.

They are pinned to the earth with something that is not so tangible that you can seize hold of it like a table fork.

But it is something infinitely more powerful.
They are pinned to the earth by their physical needs.
They literally must have food, clothing and shelter.
Without food, clothing, and shelter, they would die.
Without food, clothing, and shelter, in abundance, and obtained with reasonable ease, it is impossible for them to improve their minds or avail themselves of the higher things of life.

Food, clothing and shelter are of first importance.
Remember, I do not say of greatest importance. They are not of greatest importance. Mental, moral and spiritual things are of greatest importance.

But food, clothing and shelter are of first importance. First in point of time. We literally have to get them before we can accomplish anything else.

The fact that food, clothing and shelter are absolutely necessary to sustain human life is the reason why economic conditions are the dominant factor in shaping institutions, the course of events, and the character and opinions of the people.

If the people could live without food, clothing, and shelter, economic conditions would probably cut mighty little figure.

But, since they can not live without them, they simply have to yield to economic conditions in order to live.

WHAT OF IT?

I have demonstrated beyond all possibility of doubt that the main course of society is molded and fashioned by economic conditions.

Now you want to know what of it.

That is also a pertinent question and easily answered.

We saw at the outset that our knowledge of the natural law of gravitation enables us to forecast the future along the lines of its functions.

We also saw that our knowledge of the natural laws governing steam enables us to forecast the future along the lines of its functions.

We also saw that our knowledge of some of the natural laws governing electricity enables us to forecast the future along the lines of its functions in so far as we understand those laws.
In the same manner, our knowledge of the dominant natural law governing society enables us to forecast the future of society.

It enables us to understand the past.

It enables us to understand the present.

And it enables us to forecast the main outlines of the future.

This economic law, this natural law—the economic urge enables us to understand the causes of thousands of historical events which formerly looked as if they just happened to happen.

We now know that the events occurring in society are chiefly caused by the prevailing economic conditions.

This gives us the key to history.

It just hangs up an electric light over history and illuminates it.

It also enables us to understand how we got into the perplexing economic dilemma in which we now find ourselves.

There are vast numbers of people who are utterly bewildered by this dilemma.

They cannot understand how it happens that we now have widespread poverty in the midst of plenty, when it did not use to be so in this country.

They cannot understand why the people are now divided into classes when there did not use to be any clear and distinct class lines in this country.

They cannot understand why it is that a few egregiously rich men now own the vast bulk of the wealth, when it did not use to be so in this country.

They are bewildered.
They cannot see why it is so.

But the man who understands the economic interpretation is not perplexed.

He knows that these things are simply the natural outcome of economic development.

WHITHER ARE WE HEADED?

The reason we Socialists take the trouble to call attention to the economic urge is because it points right to Socialism.

That is what of it.

The economic urge makes it perfectly clear that society is developing right into Socialism.

Let us see just how this is.

A century or so ago, the tools used in the industries were simple and inexpensive. There were no great labor saving machines to speak of. That being the case, there was no occasion for people to work together in large groups, as they do now. Great industry was an impossibility. Great industry with vast hordes of people working together can only exist when there is great machinery to work with. So long as industry was carried on by hand work with simple tools, it was inevitable that most men should work separately, each producing his own product and carrying on his own affairs.

But when machinery began to be invented and introduced, all this began to change—to change because the economic conditions were changing—because the simple tool was giving way to the machine. When the machine began to take the place of the simple tool, men began to work together, because that is the only way machine production can be carried on. Instead of each worker producing his own product and carrying on his own affairs, as had been the case when the simple tools were in use, the workers
now had to hire out to the men who owned the great industries.

The men who owned the industries also found that they could not carry on their business alone. So they formed partnerships. Then corporations. Then trusts.

At first, the owners of the industries usually took an active part in their management.

But, as the industries have grown greater and more centralized, most of the owners do not take any active part in their management. They play the role of pure and simple capitalists, investing their money in the industries, drawing incomes from their investments, and doing nothing whatever to earn their incomes.

The workers, on the other hand—who, while they owned the simple tools, had been their own bosses and could work when they pleased, where they pleased, and how they pleased—and sell their product and enjoy the proceeds of it—when the simple tools were competed out of existence and laid on the junk heap and their places were taken by the more efficient machines, the workers found that their former independence had faded away and that they were now dependent upon the owners of the machines for an opportunity to earn a living.

They found that the employers' interests were opposite to their own.

They found that it was to the employers' interest to gouge them out of every penny possible.

They found that it was to their own interest to get just as much of the value of their labor as possible.

They found that in dealing separately with their employers they were helpless.

So they united on the industrial field. Or some of them have. The labor union is the result.
And they united on the political field. Or some of them have. The Socialist party is the result.

So, we see that on account of this economic change—this change from the simple hand tool to the labor saving machine—this change from small industry to great industry—we have developed into a condition where two hostile classes face each other in a bitter class struggle.

On the one hand is the capitalist class—owning the industries—wealthy—proud—insolent—drunk with power—riding rough shod over the rights of others.

On the other hand is the working class—scourged but not licked—always coming up smiling—learning from its defeats—constantly gaining in numbers and in ability—an invincible giant who has permitted himself to be defeated so far, but who, as soon as he comes to a realization of his power, can win the struggle with ease.

The workers are fast learning that the capitalists are useless—that they are parasites.

They are fast learning that the men and women who do the necessary and useful mental and manual work are entitled to receive the full value of their labor.

It is to their economic interest to get the full value of their labor.

They will get it.

But, how?

They cannot get it by going back to the condition where each one worked on his own hook—for the reason that industry is now carried on with great machinery which one person cannot operate. The only way industry can now be operated is by many people working together.

So, in order to crowd out the useless capitalist—or rather to crowd him in and make him earn his own living instead of fleecing them out of the bulk of their earnings—
it is necessary for them to own the industries together.

It is necessary to have the collective ownership and control of the industries.

And that is Socialism.

THE NEXT STEP.

If economic conditions did not have any effect upon the human race—if the economic urge were not a reality—if people could and did act just as if there were no economic conditions—then we would be unable to forecast the future in this manner.

But the fact that the affairs of the human race are mainly based upon economic conditions—the fact that the economic urge is a reality—enables us to see plainly that Socialism is to be the inevitable outcome of the present economic conditions and their due development.

Just as our knowledge of the law of gravitation enables us to build a house with confidence that it will stand on its foundation—so the dominant law of society—the economic urge—enables us to work for Socialism with complete confidence that we are proceeding in harmony with natural law and therefore it is a certainty that success will crown our efforts.

This law is a powerful engine of propaganda for Socialism.

As soon as a person realizes its truth, he at once recognizes that Socialism is not a phantasm, but a materializing fact.

He also realizes that Socialism is not away off in the future, but that it is the next step.

If this law did not exist, Socialism would be a utopian dream.
Since this law does exist, Socialism is a scientific certainty.

It does not enable us to forecast the details of the future, but it does enable us to forecast its main outlines.

You have the necessary data which enables you to tell in the main outlines what you are going to do tomorrow. You cannot tell the details, but the data in your possession enables you to forecast the main outlines.

So with society.

Because of this law—the economic urge—we have the necessary data which enables us to tell the main outlines of the tomorrow of society. We cannot tell the details, but the data in our possession enables us to forecast the main outlines.

THROW THE DOORS OPEN!

We Socialists recognize that the material conditions must be remedied first.

Not that we place them first in point of importance.

Far from it.

We want to solve the material problems in order to release the human race from bondage to material things.

We want to solve the material problems in order to open up the way to the higher things of life.

Capitalism locks, bars and bolts the masses of the people out from higher things of life.

Socialism will remove the locks, bars and bolts, and throw wide open the doors to the higher things of life for all the people.
THE ONLY WAY

ORGANIZATION

THE ONLY WAY we'll ever get Socialism is by working for it UNITEDLY. It's folly, to be a little Socialist Party all by yourself, making a little jab at the enemy here, giving a little slap there, registering a diminutive kick elsewhere.

If we are to ever overcome capitalism; if we are ever to win the world for the workers, we must grow strong by UNITED action—the disciplined and well organized action of thousands upon thousands of workers, all thinking, planning, working toward one and the same end.

As an individual you can continue to snap at the heels of capitalism until doomsday. And what will it profit you? You'll get kicked occasionally, that's all.

But as a unit in the world-wide ORGANIZED attempt to end capitalism and bid it a glad farewell, you and the rest of us TOGETHER can hit telling blows.

The only way is—ORGANIZATION. Join the Socialist Party. Pay dues and attend meetings regularly. Face Forward! Fall in line! Keep in step with the millions of Socialists who have consecrated their lives to make living WORTH WHILE.

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