

successful in regard to any other Bill, but it was a signal failure in regard to this; for the essence and principle of the terrible Henry Georgite theory is contained in the amendment as much as it was in the original Bill. The reason for this is that any true theory like that of Henry George is perfectly cohesive; you cannot accept a part without accepting the whole; in regard to an organic structure such as that, a half-way-house policy is doomed to failure. The Opposition in the House of Lords has merely accepted a principle, and rendered its carrying out difficult of accomplishment.

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DARWINISM FALSE AND TRUE.

The great authority of Darwin is popularly invoked nowadays in support of the crudest of theories about the struggle which is said to proceed everywhere, and the necessary success of the man or nation that can hit out hardest in the supposed unavoidable fight everywhere proceeding. We believe that no authority is so often quoted—or is it misquoted?—to justify the cruelties and inequalities of modern society. That some men should roll in wealth, while other useful members of society go penniless is, by many who are blessed with a kind of half-knowledge, claimed to be quite in the natural order, and justified by appeal to a distorted version of Darwin's law of "Survival of the Fittest."

The lesson which Darwin taught has been turned to base uses—sometimes unconsciously, sometimes with intent. It has been used to buttress every special privilege, every anti-social interest. Is one section of the community living on the sweat of others? Then we are told that all is as it should be, for is it not due to some special ability or strength on their part, which has enabled them to come to the top in the fight for the "Survival of the Fittest"?

Has one man the power to command service of others without rendering to them any equivalent service? Then the same complacent formula is advanced in justification of the palpable injustice.

But it needs no profound knowledge of Darwin's works to affirm that no justification is there found for any such conclusions, and nothing is more certain than that Darwin himself would have repudiated them had he known his name was to be used in their support.

The lesson Darwin taught was that there is an unceasing effort on the part of every living thing to maintain life, and that owing to this struggle, the individuals which have the best chance of survival are those which best adapt themselves to their surroundings. Those individuals which take on a variation that is profitable or useful to them in getting food, or avoiding their enemies, are those which have the best chance of living to an old age, and rearing a numerous progeny inheriting like characteristics. On the other hand, any variation or characteristic which is injurious to the individual, renders it less able to get what is necessary for the support of life, and ultimately leads to the disappearance of such types.

By the term Natural Selection, Darwin means simply to imply the preservation of such variations as arise, and are beneficial to the individual or species, under any given environment.

The "struggle" Darwin refers to is the struggle as to which individual shall best adapt itself to the surroundings in which it finds itself, and those most successful in adapting themselves to surroundings are the "fittest" in the Darwinian sense. It is not at all a struggle in which success to some must necessarily mean damage to others. As Dr. Wallace puts it:

"In some cases, undoubtedly, there is actual war between individuals, the stronger killing the weaker, but this is by no means necessary, and there may be cases

in which the weaker species physically may prevail by its power of more rapid multiplication, its better withstanding vicissitudes of climate, or its greater cunning in escaping the attacks of common enemies."

Thus one species succumbs, not because it is starved out by the other species or exterminated, but because it does not so well accommodate itself to surrounding conditions.

The possibility of struggle in the ordinary sense of gain at the expense of other weaker members is, of course, not altogether excluded, but it appears to us that that could only take place in cases of scarcity when the available supplies for the support of life were inadequate for the needs of all. But even such cases lend no support to the crude pseudo-science so often put forward as emanating from Darwin, viz., that existing glaring inequalities in human society are to be accounted for by corresponding inequalities in individual capacities and the "Survival of the Fittest." In the animal world, where subsistence is scarce, all suffer, and where it is abundant all benefit. Unlike human society, whoever knew of a herd of beasts which were not all fat in a bountiful season, and all lean in a bad one?

Darwinian theories lend no support to human institutions which entail poverty amid plenty.

We are not sure that he anywhere specifically states as much, but through all his theory of variation of species and natural selection runs the implication that natural forces are allowed free play—that there be no interference with equality of opportunity for all.

Given equality of opportunity, and that species or individual within the species which is best equipped with features in harmony with its environment will survive those who are not so well equipped. But the *sine qua non* is equality of opportunity.

Every healthy beast of the herd on a rich pasture is sleek, provided they have all access to the pasture, but if we could imagine the gross absurdity of some among them enforcing special, exclusive claim to it, and levying toll or preventing others from using it, clearly that happy condition could no longer hold good, and notwithstanding the ample food-supply, we would see the surfeited and the underfed, just as we do in communities of men to-day.

The following passage is taken from Darwin's "Naturalist's Voyage." He is speaking of the rich mines of Chile, and the disgraceful conditions under which the miners work, and goes on:

"Bad as the above treatment of the miners appears, it is gladly accepted of by them; for the condition of the labouring agriculturists is much worse. Their wages are lower, and they live almost exclusively on beans. This poverty must be chiefly owing to the feudal-like system on which the land is tilled: the landowner gives a small plot of ground to the labourer, for building on and cultivating, and in return has his services (or those of a proxy) for every day of his life, without any wages. Until a father has a grown-up son, who can by his labour pay the rent, there is no one, except on occasional days, to take care of his own patch of ground. Hence extreme poverty is very common among the labouring classes in this country (Chile)."

Here we have Darwin correctly ascribing effect to cause, and proving how in human society degradation of large masses is due, not to any "unfitness" on the part of those who suffer, but simply to the fact that by process of law, backed by all the forces the State commands, they are deprived of their natural rights, and forbidden access to Nature, unless at the pleasure and on the terms of privileged fellow-creatures. He shows that whatever the richness of a country, whatever the ability of a people, the "fittest" cannot possibly survive so long as unjust laws deny the equal right of all to the gifts which Nature freely offers.

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