

and capital, the materials and implements of production with its accompaniments of competition, production for profit, and the man-made law of inheritance of property. Socialism, on the other hand, means collective ownership of the materials and implements of production, with co-operation in production and distribution, and provision of employment for all as concomitants. Socialism thus means throwing open to human labour the raw materials of nature, and allowing every man's reward to depend on his exertions. Which of these two conforms most closely to natural conditions? Let us run over the ground hastily. We will take first the struggle for existence. In a state of nature, all animals, at starting, enjoy equality of opportunity. It is obvious that under Socialism all men would be similarly situated. No portion of the earth's surface would be the exclusive possession of any man, just as no jungle or forest is the exclusive possession of any tiger or lion. No man would have power to compel other men to work for him, just as no lion can compel other lions to work for him, just as no lion can compel other lions to hunt for him. No man would be born into the world to find all his work done for him before he arrived, and the results awaiting him in the shape of his father's accumulations, just as no lion ever inherits anything from his parents except a sound constitution. In short, so far as the struggle for existence is concerned, the conditions under Socialism would be exactly similar to those prevailing in a state of nature. Of course co-operation is not to be found among lions or tigers, but, as has been already pointed out, it is in full swing among such animals as ants, beavers, and bees. It follows from all this that under Socialism natural selection would operate as freely among men as among wild animals, resulting in the survival of the fittest, and the improvement of the species. Let us now see how it works under the existing Capitalistic arrangement.

To many who are born into the world nowadays the struggle for existence is unknown. They come to find the table ready spread, and they have nothing to do but sit down and eat, with a silver spoon. Their fathers have earned, or stolen (perhaps we should say "made") more than they will ever require. The struggle for existence does not affect them. They will probably survive, whether they are fit or not. They escape the test of fitness which nature imposes elsewhere, and transmit to posterity imperfections which ought to be eliminated. There is no struggle for existence; no survival of the fittest; and, consequently, no improvement of the species taking place among them.

On the other hand, those among us who are born poor are almost as far removed from natural conditions. The children of the poor die off many times more rapidly than do the children of the rich, owing to poor food and insanitary surroundings. They may be among the fittest, but they die nevertheless before they are old enough to take part in the struggle. Those who reach maturity find land and capital, the sources of their food supply, monopolised by others, and production for profit restricts their industry. They are handicapped at starting in the struggle. There is no equality of opportunity here. The test to which they are subjected is not a fair one; and, under the circumstances, failure does not prove them unfit to survive. Whether as affecting the poor-