

the young individuals of most species of animals and vegetables must have hard work in obtaining the means of subsistence; this necessarily causes a competition among them in order to obtain the indispensable supplies of life.

This great competition for the necessaries of life goes on everywhere and at all times, among human beings and animals as well as among plants; in the case of the latter this circumstance, at first sight, is not so clearly apparent. If we examine a field which is richly sown with wheat, we can see that of the numerous young plants (perhaps some thousands) which shoot up on a limited space, only a very small proportion preserve themselves in life. A competition takes place for the space of ground which each plant requires for fixing its root, a competition for sunlight and moisture. And in the same manner we find that, among all animal species, all the individuals of one and the same species compete with one another to obtain these indispensable conditions of existence in the wide sense of the word. They are equally indispensable to all, but really fall to the lot of only a few—"Many are called, but few are chosen." The fact of the great competition is quite universal. We need only cast a glance at human society, where this competition exists everywhere, and in all the different branches of human activity. Here, too, a struggle is brought about by the free competition of the different labourers of one and the same class. Here too, as everywhere, this competition benefits the thing, or the work, which is the object of competition. The greater and more general the competition, the more quickly improvements and inventions are made in the branch of labour, and