

**THE TRIUMPH OF INDUSTRY**  
**Primary Source**

Andrew Carnegie worked his way up from a bobbin boy in a cotton factory to the captain of the steel industry. However, despite his vast wealth, Carnegie often wrote and spoke about social responsibility. He used much of his fortune to build universities and libraries that he hoped would help expand economic opportunities for all Americans. In his article "Wealth," Carnegie discussed both the right to amass wealth and the duty to use it wisely. ♦ *As you read, remember that Carnegie was born into poverty. Think about how this may have affected his views. Then, fill in the boxes below by answer the questions.*

**"Wealth"**

**Summary**

**According to Carnegie, what is the role of the wealthy?**

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**Purpose**

**What do you think Carnegie hoped to accomplish with this article?**

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The price which society pays for the law of competition, like the price it pays for cheap comforts and luxuries, is also great; but the advantages of this law are also greater still, for it is to this [competition] that we owe our wonderful material development, which [has improved our living and working conditions]. But, whether the [competition] be [kind] or not, we must say [that it] is here; we cannot evade it; no substitutes for it have been found; and while the law may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it ensures the survival of the fittest. . . .

Individualism will continue, but the millionaire will be . . . [entrusted] for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, . . . administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done for itself. . . . The man who dies leaving behind him millions of available wealth, which was his to administer during life, will pass away "unwept, unhonored, and unsung," no matter to what uses he leaves the [money] which he cannot take with him.

**Context**

**How does Carnegie view competition?**

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**Impact**

**Has American society embraced the ideas promoted in this article? Explain your answer.**

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From the late 1800s through the early 1900s, politicians and citizens debated the correctness of Social Darwinism. Many who considered business tycoons such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller captains of industry embraced Social Darwinism. Those who saw Carnegie, Rockefeller, and others as robber barons often criticized Social Darwinism. ♦ *Read the following poem, published in Labor Standard magazine in 1878. As you read, contrast the ideas expressed in the poem with those expressed by Andrew Carnegie in "Wealth." Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow.*

**"Wealth" and Social Darwinism****The Political Economist and the Tramp**

By Phillips Thompson

Walking along a country road,  
While yet the morning air was damp,  
As unreflecting, on I strode,  
I marked approach the frequent tramp<sup>1</sup>.  
The haggard, ragged careworn man  
Accosted me with plaintive tone,  
"I must have food—" he straight began;  
"Vile miscreant<sup>2</sup>," I cried, "begone!  
'Tis contrary to every rule  
That I my fellows should assist;  
I'm of the scientific school,  
Political economist.  
Dost thou know, deluded one,  
What Adam Smith<sup>3</sup> has clearly proved,  
That 'tis self-interest alone  
by which the wheels of life are moved?  
This competition is the law  
By which we either live or die;

I've no demand thy labor for,  
Why, then, should I thy wants supply?  
And Herbert Spencer's<sup>4</sup> active brain  
Shows how the social struggle ends;  
The weak die out the strong remain;  
'Tis this that nature's plan intends.  
Now really 'tis absurd of you  
To think I'd interfere at all;  
Just grasp the scientific view,  
The weakest must go to the wall."

<sup>1</sup>tramp: bum, vagrant<sup>2</sup>miscreant: villain, evildoer<sup>3</sup>Adam Smith: Scottish economist who published a treatise suggesting that self-interest directed the market forces of the economy.<sup>4</sup>Herbert Spencer: English philosopher who applied his own theory of evolution to society and morality, asserting that people adapt their ways of life and their moral values in order to survive.**Questions to Think About**

1. To whom is the narrator speaking?
2. **Summarize** Which lines of the poem summarize the main idea of Social Darwinism?
3. **Contrast** How does the poet's point of view differ from Andrew Carnegie's point of view in "Wealth"?