

University; in his work on political economy writes thus concerning the origin of these prejudices. "Hardhearted and selfish, are the stereotyped epithets applied to this science. Ill-defined antipathy is sure not to rest long suspended upon a mere abstract idea; it seeks some concrete object, and therefore the epithets, applied to the science are speedily transferred to those who study it, and a political economist exists vaguely in the haze of popular ignorance, as a hardhearted selfish being, who wishes to see every one rich, but has no sympathy with those higher qualities which ennoble the character of men." The injustice of these ignorant prejudices becomes manifest to every reasonable person, when we conscientiously examine the true object and scope of this science. For we then discover that the political economist may be the most useful of philanthropists, in as much as he seeks, and acquires that information which will enable him to improve the moral and physical conditions of all classes of humanity. Far from being desirous of enriching the few at the expense of the lower classes, which after all constitute the great portion of the human race, the true economist should seek to increase the material advantages of the poor, and by so doing heighten their intellectual status, which has deteriorated through lack of cultivation. Viewing the mission of the political economist in this light, which is the only true one, the economist should be looked upon, not as an egotist, but rather as a zealous benefactor, deserving of our esteem and gratitude.

Liberator, that beacon light in the arena of philosophic learning, defines political economy as "the science of public wealth with regard to its rightful ordering as a means of common well-being." "Let it not be interpreted to mean that a nation has no other mission to fulfil, than to become rich. For no one, other than a sensualist will contend that wealth should be the one absorbing aim of life. Notwithstanding the many assertions to the contrary, the great political economists recognize that in dealing with the phenomena connected with the production and distribution of wealth, the other phenomena of man's social

existence must not be ignored. If therefore, an economist considers that the sole aim of this life is the hoarding up of colossal fortunes, by means of the formation of powerful combines and monopolies, then let the individual be blamed, and not the science of which he professes to be an exponent.

When it is considered that the object of political economy is the acquirement of wealth, an objection is raised by some that the tenets of this science are in direct contradiction to the Christian doctrine "Blessed are the poor." And as many even among the educated classes imagine that this repugnance really exists, it may not be inopportune to show the absurdity of such a contradiction. It is true that the Catholic Church says "Blessed are the poor," but it is not true that she disapproves of acquiring riches. Christianity teaches that the riches of this life are not the sole end to be attained, but that there is another life hereafter, which can be enjoyed by the poor and rich alike. And in the sense alone that the attainment of this end is less difficult for the poor than for the rich does the church rightly exclaim "Blessed are the poor." To accuse Catholicity of fostering poverty among her adherents is a base calumny, that will not bear the light of investigation. History affirms that civilization and Catholicity have always gone hand in hand. Religion has been the plant as it were and civilization its flower.

We recognize two factors in the acquirement of wealth, labor and saving. Who dares to say that Catholicity does not prescribe labor; and what is saving but self-denial, and the restraint upon our sensitive appetites; and are not labor as well as self-denial prescribed by the Church. It is obvious then that the true Christian spirit leads to wealth, and the nation which is faithful to the precepts of Christianity must eventually become prosperous. Idleness, moral corruption or political oppression, not religion, are the causes of poverty.

As an active factor in society, and wielding an influence of its own, political economy has been in evidence only since the time of Adam Smith. And the thoughtful reader is likely to inquire whether this, comparatively new science