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## THE EXPANSION OF THE MODERN STATE.

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“It is not a question of absolute evils ; it is a question of relative evils —whether the evils at present suffered are or are not less than the evils which would be suffered under another system.”—Herbert Spencer, Introduction to Essays entitled “A Plea for Liberty.”

THE rapid expansion of the sphere of the state's activity, in all civilized countries, during the last hundred years, is one of the most remarkable social phenomena of the present time. This extension of governmental functions has been contemporaneous with a great increase in material wealth, which, by affording a large taxable area, has indeed rendered the former possible. It has resulted in the growth of new doctrines with respect to the proper sphere of the state and in much discussion concerning its causes and tendencies.

When Adam Smith published “The Wealth of Nations” in 1776, the Government of Great Britain had in only a few cases extended its control beyond the two essential duties of providing for the national security and administering justice. The most important of these exceptions were the Established Church, poor relief, the regulation of external commerce, and the post office. Capitalistic production and the factory system were both in an incipient stage. The laborer was able in most cases to protect himself from injustice without state interference. State education was as yet unthought of, and state participation in the industrial domain had taken place only to a very limited