

by selfish and sinister influences, so that it had parted with all its vitality, and was blended with and hardly distinguishable from error. When it began to be dimly discerned that Government had a legitimate duty to perform towards Industry—that the latter might be cherished, improved, extended by the action of the former—legislators at once jumped to the conclusion that all possible legislation upon and interference with Industry must be beneficial. A Frederick the Great finds by experience that the introduction of new arts and industrial processes into his dominions increases the activity, thrift, and prosperity of his People; forthwith he rushes (as Macaulay and the Free Trade economists represent him) into the prohibition of *everything* but coin from abroad, and the production of everything at home, without considering the diversities of soil and climate, or the practicability of here prosecuting to advantage the business so summarily established. The consequence is, of course, a mischievous diversion of Labor from some useful and productive to profitless and unfruitful avocations. But this is not the worst. Some monarch finds himself unable to minister adequately to the extravagance of some new favorite or mistress; so he creates in her favor a Monopoly of the supply and sale of Salt, Coffee, or whatever else is not already monopolized, and styles it a “regulation of trade,” to prevent ruinous fluctuations, competitions, and excesses! Thus private ends are subserved under the pretence of public good, and the comforts of the people abridged or withheld to pander to the vices and sustain the lavish prodigality of princes and paramours.

From a contemplation of these abuses, pierced and uncovered by the expanding intelligence of the Eighteenth Century, the Political Economy of the Schools was evolved. In its origin a protest against existing abuses, it shared the common lot of all re-actions, in passing impetuously to an extreme the opposite of the error it went forth to combat. From a scrutiny and criticism of the gross abuses of the power of Government over Industry, it was impelled to the conclusion that no such power properly existed or could be beneficially exercised. Thus the Science became, in the hands of the latest professors of the ‘enlightened’ school, a simple and sweeping negation—a demand for incessant and universal abolishing—a suicidal science, demonstrating that to do nothing is the acme of governmental wisdom, and King Log the profoundest and greatest of monarchs.

These conclusions would have staggered the founders of the school; and yet it is difficult to resist the evidence offered to show that they are legitimately deduced by their disciples from the premises those founders themselves have laid down.

10. *Basis of Protection.*

There are reasons for hoping that the reaction against a sinister and false regulation of Industry has spent its force, and that the error which denies that any regulation can be beneficent, equally with the fraud which has cloaked schemes of personal aggrandisement under the pretence of guiding Industry aright, will yet cease to exert a controlling influence over the

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