

words. Cases may arise in which a temporary protection, such as that here indicated, may be imposed, but they are very rare. The danger is when such teaching is made general instead of being limited to the peculiar cases to which it may with safety be applied. That Mr. MILL did not intend to advocate moderate protection as now understood no one can doubt who has ever read his writings on political economy. The paragraph immediately preceding that we have quoted is an argument against even the smallest incidental protection, and a few pages earlier in the same chapter, he says, with much emphasis:—

“The importation of foreign commodities, in the common course of traffic, never takes place, except when it is, economically speaking, a national good, by causing the same amount of commodities to be obtained at a smaller cost of labour and capital to the country. To prohibit, therefore, this importation or impose duties which prevent it, is to render the labour and capital, of the country less efficient in production than they otherwise would be ; and compel a waste, of the difference between the labour and capital necessary for the home production of the commodity, and that which is required for producing the things with which it can be purchased from abroad. * *

“In the case of manufactured goods the whole difference between the two prices is absorbed in indemnifying the producers for waste of labour, or of the capital which supports that labour.”

The welfare of the many and not of the few should be the first object of a Government. It has the right to take by taxation so much as is necessary for its support. It should do this by making the burden of taxes bear equally on all. If it affords special encouragement to one form of labour, the other forms of labour are neglected, and thus positively discouraged. In the discussion of Protectionist doctrines, reference is usually made to the United States. In that country more than three-fourths of the people are engaged in agricultural pursuits ; so that the Government cannot, if it would, by any discriminating tax laws, protect the great majority of those who live by their honest labour. In trying to afford special protection to some of the other forms of labour, it is clear the Government is making laws for the good of a small minority, and imposing positive and unequal burdens upon the great majority. The Free Trade League of New York, states the case in these words:—

“The Southern farmer produces, say, a bale of cotton ; he can exchange this in the markets of the world, if the government will let him, for at least two tons of iron. But the government steps in and imposes a heavy duty on iron, not for the support of the government, because it would get more revenue by means of a lower duty, but for the special benefit of the iron masters of this country. The result is : the Southern farmer gets only one ton of iron for his bale of cotton.