

The Two Economies (1856)*

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§I. *General View*

SUMMARY (OF THE ARGUMENT)

1. Apology for the piecemeal division of the articles.
 2. Proposition.
 3. Scientific judgments are altered by passion,
 4. much more by error in principles.
 5. Easy errors in the moral sciences.
 6. From two principles two economies.
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1. I told you, sixteen pages and no more.
 - But dear mister Director, how can you want me to constrain my brain to explicate every theory and stay under sixteen pages? What if the task takes eighteen?
 - Oh, great! In that case we need to divide it into two articles.
 - Sometimes that sort of thing is possible: but how often is the unity of thought like that of a perfectly fine animal, that if you divide it in two, it perishes!

* *La Civiltà Cattolica* 2, 3rd ser. (1856): 609–20; *La Civiltà Cattolica* 3: 257–72 (from section IV), 465–85 (from section V), 611–24 (from section VI). Note: footnotes from the original by Taparelli will be indicated in continuous numbering and have been lightly edited, while added notes will have special characters per page.

- OK, so leave me to handle it, I will cut it off at sixteen pages, and with a “*to be continued*” everything is nicely settled.
- Sure! Everything, except the effect of the reasoning. What a strange thing! To give a major premise of an argument, and oblige one to wait 15 or 20 days for the minor one. How can you expect, my goodness, that the readers (readers of magazines!) manage to preserve the memory for 15 or 20 days, not to mention the effect that we are seeking, the vivacity of evidence and the conviction, that can only be obtained by erecting an effective embankment against the endemic sickness of doctrines?
- Precisely for the efficacy of this embankment it is necessary that the article gets read. Now how can these never-ending, swollen articles get read? To have them read, do you not see the necessity of preserving poor souls from exhaustion?

Such is, my dear reader, the dialogue that more than once we are constrained to hold with the Director of our compilation: and at the end of accounts, as is well known, the poor pay the price; and we poor writers, in order to not see our children torn into two pieces at the insistence of that geometric stepmother who measures ratiocinations in palms and steps, we end up having to jam thought into iron slippers, like the Chinese shoe the feet of their daughters to civilize them.

2. For the sake of saying four words in a past issue about the Piedmontese law on usury, we were constrained to briefly mention various propositions, the brevity of which apparently left some lacunae in more than one head.

The first of these [lacunae] that today we undertake to fill and which we had supposed without having demonstrated, is that there is a great difference between Catholic economics and heterodox [economics]; and born therefrom is that total diversity of judgments, by which the Church anathematizes as an error the proposition that “a loan is per se fruitful,” while the same proposition comes from Deforesta venerated like an oracle *of Science and Experience*.^{*} How is it that a same doctrine can seem unjust and disastrous to Catholic knowledge, [and] reasonable and advantageous to governmental science and experience? Do we have then two contradictory sciences of the same object? It is as if we were to say, take two geometries or two arithmetics: according to one *two and two make four*, and according to the other *two and two make five*.

^{*} Giovanni Deforesta had proposed in 1855 legislation allowing usury in Piedmont (*Essais sur les principes*, op. cit., n. 33), and the expression of proof “*della Scienza e della Sperienza*”—that Taparelli mockingly capitalizes—was a cliché in liberal argumentation.

3. And yet such is the strength of the passions in moral matters, that mathematics itself would be capable of erroneous reasoning (maybe even false geometrical arguments of Spinoza in his pantheism, or Laplace in his *Probability?*). How much easier could the eccentric confusion be in economic matters, where the sacred hunger for gold and thirst for pleasure have such influence?

Passion though for gold and pleasure would not suffice to explain the many misdirections of economic science, especially if one considers the rectitude of many who present themselves either as teachers of theory, or as followers in application. Even without speaking of those who treat economics with a catholic inspiration (among whom stands out Villeneuve-Bargemont** who aimed at straightening it up on Christian spirit), among heterodox also and among doctrinaires are found men of natural probity, who abhor certain enormities of utilitarianism and attempt to reject its barbaric consequences. Now at least these persons should have been able to straighten out the truth if the error had no other origin than passion, especially that so brutal passion for gold and pleasure.

The problem is revived therefore and we have to ask: How can there be two economic sciences? How can two sensible men exchange these two propositions, one saying seriously: two and two make four, and the other responding with equal seriousness: two and two make five; and that not in some isolated and accidental proposition, but in a long chain of scientific reasonings?

[4.]*** Now the explanation of such an enigma will turn out not so difficult if you reflect that every science necessarily retains in all of its fabric the character of the principle from which one starts reasoning. If the principle was false, the whole series of consequences from it will turn out false.

5. To this first consideration, add this other, that in moral matters error of principle is all too easy: In fact, nearly all of errors strictly and properly moral are derived from errors of principle; since these errors derive from aiming at a disordered and depraved *end*, instead of aiming ordinately at an honest *end*, and the *end*, as you know, is the foundation, the principle of all order and of all moral reasoning.

Given these two observations as premises, you see the not-so-difficult explanation of the proposed question. If it is easy that even honest souls have made mistakes in the *principle*; if from the error in the beginning naturally flows

** Georges Goyau, "Jean-Paul-Alban Villeneuve-Barcement," Wildfire Fellowship, Inc., <https://www.ecatholic2000.com/cathopedia/vol15/volfifteen390.shtml>.

*** Ed. note: "The original Italian does not indicate where section 4 begins."

erroneous the whole series of consequences; what difficulty could one have to admit that there are held among experts two contrary economics that, contemplating the same object, give nonetheless the most diverse, and not rarely contradictory, teachings, under the influence of the contrary principles from which they take their start?

6. To propose therefore to our readers *the two economies*, is the same as discussing the two principles from which this science can at its initiation be derived. The principles, which if by us are placed in some light, will be helpful in giving an explanation of many diversities of opinion that are found at times even among the followers of the same doctrine. Since when in a doctrine there is some element of falsity, it is most natural that either this or that of its theorems are repugnant to moral rectitude, contradicting even the logic upon which it is based; and that an upright soul manages oftentimes to deceive itself in the logic in order to avoid being constrained in offending the internal sense of honesty. The admission then of two economies, far from rejecting the philosophy of economic science, is perfectly in conformity with its nature as a *moral science*, where error of principle is easy; and in fact in its elaboration historically, in which such contradictions and hesitations are found at every step, its wisest enthusiasts admit the greatest imperfections in economic science,¹ and the most ardent critics arrive at the outright denial of its very existence.

¹ See, Pellegrino Rossi, *Cours d'économie politique* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1884), 1st lesson, towards the end, and even more explicitly in the 3rd lesson: "[economic] science, even in its fundamental principles, is not yet definitively settled; because the first sign of all science, that has obtained this degree of perfection, is a nomenclature accepted, recognized and from such a point beyond all contestation." (tcb)

§II. *Economics is a science.*

SUMMARY (OF THE ARGUMENT)

1. The mistake of honest men.
2. Economic science is not impossible.
3. It is not nothing.

1. On this subject, permit us prior to examining the *two economies* that we first remove an objection asking whether there be even one: and that in order to avoid a mistake into which certain sincere Catholics fall; who seeing the nearly total abuse made of [economic science] from the principle of this era, from an atheistic and utilitarian science, believed to remedy things with denying absolutely the very existence of economic science, even its very possibility. Certainly this error is excusable, not only for the Catholic zeal from which in large part it is motivated; but even because in truth it hardly seems possible to call itself *Science* a series of theorems vacillating from their first foundation; which truly has been in large part, as we will see shortly, the economic science of the last century.

2. Notwithstanding that, every sane man will see, at any rate, the fact of the principle having been wrongly established would show at most the vanity of the economic science of today, but not the absolute impossibility of founding a true and real one. If an object upon which the human intellect can exercise itself exists for this economic science, says Rossi, if it is possible to ascertain its nature with evidence, and from this cognition infer speculative consequences, then it is clear that a theoretical economic science can exist. And if you administer this theory by the laws according to which man ought appropriately to act, here you have also the possibility of a practical economic science. Let us posit even that such a science is still unknown, given the *object* and the *possibility of rationalizing it*, economic science *is possible*. Now who could possibly deny that there is an object of economic science? Who could deny that there is a certain distribution of social wealth by which one succeeds more easily than in other combinations in the honest living together of citizens? And that this right proportion has certain causes by which it becomes either stable or unbalanced? And that these causes can either hinder or encourage human will according to how one clings to this or that mode of governing the economic actions of citizens? You will encounter examples at every step in the public economy. Let us mention for example the great question of taxes. Who does not see at first look that there is a proportion of taxes by which they are made to weigh according to the order of distributive justice, which with another proportion of taxes it would

result violated? Who does not see that the enormity of certain unfair taxes ends up encouraging contraband, which would not find it economical where the danger were much greater than the profit? Who does not see that the life of the contrabander, assuming even that it were not guilty in itself, would certainly always be an occasion for culpability, for the corruption of public morality? The authority, therefore, destined precisely by nature to maintain justice and to facilitate honesty, will be obligated to study the causes of this proportion [that violates the order of distributive justice and encourages black market economic activity] in order to reduce its effect with law. Now what else is this research if not the study of social economy?

The zeal therefore of good Catholics, in this as in any other scientific study, must not be excessive, putting in discredit the science itself; but rather sharpen our wits to clearly understand true principles, accurately discerning the chaff from the wheat.

3. But not only is it erroneous to claim that economic science is impossible, it would be exaggerated to accuse this of being invalid, defective, badly managed, and say of it that it is even malign, if you will, from which such damages rain down on the citizens, and so many vices germinate among administrators. Do not the damages that economic science causes, themselves, on the principle of *nihil ex nihilo*, prove that it really is something? And then again, having collected and organized by the thousands the facts, the partial observations, the proposals, the hypotheses, etc., is always a great good, even though unintended by them, providing the necessary elements to true scholars. Moreover, if the economists in large part had misunderstood the true proportions of means and ends in the matter of social wealth, nonetheless by a certain sentiment of natural honesty they followed many times in the practical application better doctrines than those that would have emerged logically from their theory, and thus they emended in inferences many errors to which their premises would have led. Thus we see how Sismondi* and Rossi** corrected many inhumanities from Malthus and from other of their predecessors.

Instead then of excessively aggravating the already gravest guilt of the economists, instead of accusing them of impotence or invalidity, let there be found

* The Editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, “J.-C.-L. Simonde de Sismondi,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, June 22, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/money/J-C-L-Simonde-de-Sismondi>.

** U. Benigni, “Pellegrino Rossi,” Wildfire Fellowship, Inc., <https://www.ecatholic2000.com/cathopedia/vol13/volthirteen183.shtml>.

Catholic scholars to follow in the footsteps of those few who, like Villeneuve-Bargemont, Rubichon, De Coux, Droz, in his later days, and others such attempting to Christianize this still youthful science, in the way that a century ago other sane and valorous minds already made towards adult sciences.

And such is in fact the intent with which we undertake the study of the two economies and the two fundamental principles from which they move. We understand perfectly that expounding the principles will lead us to some universal and abstract considerations, that we would have gladly avoided. But how so, as Bastiat^{***} asked, excusing himself for rising to metaphysical regions, how so can we make sense of a science without raising oneself to the principles?² Or how to talk of principles without some universality and abstraction? Those who do not like metaphysics should not read on: but you resign yourself then to never seeing that full evidence that comes from the sweetest pasture of human intellect.

§ III. *Two fundamental principles.*

SUMMARY (OF THE ARGUMENT)

1. The supreme principle of heterodox economics.
2. Observations on Bastiat's principle of classification.
3. Contrasted with the Catholic principle,
4. produces a chain of reasonings and facts.

1. Two economies, we have said, run through modern society and their diversity must be born from two diverse principles upon which they are built. Now what are these two principles? What are the supreme and immediate inferences that will necessarily infuse the spirit of these two economies?

The response to this question is only a special application of that most universal doctrine that shows up on the field every once in a while when we undertake reasoning on social matters. Already since the 1st Series in the beginning of *Critical Examination of the Representative Orders*,³ we placed beneath the eyes of our readers that great fact that no one any more controverts: that there is

^{***} David R. Henderson, "Frédéric Bastiat," The Library of Economics and Liberty, <https://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/bios/Bastiat.html>.

² "We cannot do without rising to the primordial phenomena of human sensitivity and action. Let the reader be reassured nonetheless: our visit to the hazy regions of metaphysics will not be long." Bastiat, *Harmonies économiques*, 46. (tcb)

³ Luigi Taparelli, *Esame critico degli ordini rappresentativi nella società moderna* (Rome: Tipografia della Civiltà Cattolica, 1854).

visibly in the world after the Lutheran Reform nearly two different societies, each one of which has its own supreme moral principle deriving from its supreme metaphysical principle and propagating itself in all its social doctrine: and this moral principle is for the one the dependence of all created order on the Creator, and for the other the absolute *independence of the individual*, or as they say today, *liberty*. Wretched offspring of the Lutheran [principle] transforming itself in succession as *private spirit*, *free inquiry*, *rationalism*, etc. The *I* of Kant and of Fichte, the *absolute* of Schelling and of Hegel, the *pantheism*, the *worship-of-self*, the *god-state* of the rationalist doctrinaires, the *god-people* of Mazzini and of the republicans, all nothing more than imagined metaphysical concepts to serve as ground to the moral principle of *independence*: which then, following the various nature of those principles had to produce the *absolutism of the State*, the *right of insurrection*, the *social republic*, etc. And all these theories, by interest opposed to one another, in decisive moments take each other along when one party hopes to achieve dominance over [the whole of] society; yet all of them are tied together by a certain bond of fraternal logic, and all take on the title of *modern society*, *informed by the spirit of the century*, *progressive*, etc., etc. And all recognize as their [targeted] opposition that [ordered] society that denies [their conception of] mankind the right to *absolute independence*, or as they say, *liberty*.

2. To tell the truth, Frédéric Bastiat, well-known economist, classifies [things] under another aspect and reduces the leading opinions in economic matters to three: that of the economists, of the socialists, and of the Catholics.

“The Catholics say (according to him): society is pulled towards evil if it abandons itself to the universal laws of nature. Therefore renounce human interests with asceticism.”

“The socialists say: society is pulled towards evil if it abandons itself to the universal laws of nature, therefore let us give society new artificial laws.” These two classes according to Bastiat agree in this, that they reject the free operation of nature.

“On the other side the economists say: society is led to good by human nature, therefore give total liberty to mankind.”⁴

Thus Bastiat reduces the three opinions to two, regarding these opinions solely from the point of view of practical [implication], in which the ones want liberty of commerce, and the others want it regulated by laws. And under such aspect, far from negating the particular analogy between Catholics and socialists in the

⁴ Bastiat, *Harmonies*, introduction, 10–20.

recognition of the necessity of practical provisions, we ourselves have recalled another time some sentences from Proudhon* condemning usury in agreement with the canonists.

But neither is it less true, despite that, that in supreme principle the economists and the socialists are agreed, in so far as the subjective [human] tendency towards pleasure: the one and the other posit the tendency towards pleasure as the supreme law of nature guiding mankind to happiness. If only that the socialists aiming likewise at the goal and seeing that the passions of the rich violate in many cases the right of the poor, call for laws that give superiority to the poor; in the same way the economists, and especially Bastiat, equally seeing the injustice of the oppression of the poor, call for liberty for all so that a poor person can defend himself against the rich, as we will soon see. They are, therefore, the ones in accord in so far as they equate happiness with pleasure and attribute to every person the right to pursue pleasure either with liberty, or with law.

The Catholics, on the other side, denying the supreme principle of the one and the other, say: “human nature is not blessed in the experience of pleasure, but in the following of order; pleasure must therefore be sacrificed to order. Now order is nothing less than acting according to the intent of the artificer: therefore the happiness of man on earth consists in the use of things according to the intentions of the Creator. Therefore the increase of wealth is important to the extent, for both society and for individuals, that it can be an opportune means for pursuing the order of justice and of charity in full.”

If this is called asceticism it is certainly a very philosophical asceticism, and it is quite different from what Bastiat seems to imagine (in renouncing human interests and taking refuge in abnegation, sacrifice, asceticism, and resignation.⁵ Certainly sacrifice, disinterest, resignation are consequences of the recognition that there is a fatherly Providence that dispenses the bad no less than the good in the world, and until the economists succeed in eliminating all the evils of the world, the patience from resignation will be much wiser than impotent fits of desperation and of rage. If the Catholic resigns himself to an evil, this does not remove the need that pushes him to work for temporal goods: actually, he sees in this a duty, but a duty that *passion* tends to exaggerate, and that *reason* must regulate against excess. And since excess can occur in society as in the individual, it is the *reason* of society and of the *law* that thus we believe when the passions of individuals become excessive (an all too often fact in society),

* George Woodcock, “Pierre-Joseph Proudhon,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, January 15, 2025, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pierre-Joseph-Proudhon>.

⁵ Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, introduction, 10.

it is the duty of government to moderate this with law, like any other passion. It is not therefore according to the Catholics that the *nature* of human reason leads to evil, but rather indeed the disorder of the *passions*, and against this the law sets itself. According to the economists on the other hand [material self-] interest** leads to social good if only society be given liberty; [while] according to the socialists liberty conceded to the powerful leads to the harm of the less fortunate; therefore it is necessary to unleash the wretched to revindicate their rights against the powerful. Both socialists and economists recognize therefore the absolute right in man to enjoyment of pleasure: the Catholics recognize the duty in man to conform himself to the intents of the Creator in using goods and resigning himself to evils. The first take the *passions* as *nature*, and the nature of man as *innocent*, and they want to advance the gratification of those passions; the Catholics posit the specific *nature* of man in *reason*, and they want to advance the prevalence of reason subjugating all rebelliousness of interests to it. SUPREMACY OF [MATERIAL SELF-]INTEREST, versus, SUPREMACY OF ORDER: here therefore is the distinctive note, the true war cry of the two belligerent camps.

3. This distinction of the whole civilized world into two societies animated by these two contrary principles, is a fact recognized universally by those who study, well or badly, in the area of the social sciences: a fact already contemplated or presented by the acute observation of the Doctor of Hippo in those two societies that he describes in *De civitate Dei* constituted by two contrary loves: *Love of God up to contempt of oneself* (here is the society of order established in full reverence of the Creator); *love of oneself up to the contempt of God* (here is the society based on the full independence of the “I”).⁶ These days to express this fact, just now observed, new names have been fashioned, as these things go: the illuminated and the obscurantists, progressives and retrogrades, lay and clerical, liberal and Jesuitical, libertines and slaves, rationalists and anti-rationalists, etc., are names that add up to a single word and attest with universal feeling this great fact of the two societies: society of the *independent* “I” and society of *created man* and because of that *dependent*. Now in both these societies so absolutely distinct, actually separated by their principles, average people under the influence of the respective principle act contrarily to their own calculations and in-

** “Interest” in these contexts, whether used by the economists or by Taparelli, means self-interest as typically understood, particularly as material self-interest.

⁶ *Fecerunt civitates duas amores duo: amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui, amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei.* [sic]

terests. It is natural that philosophical heads wishing to justify themselves speculatively on why man should act this way or that in economic affairs, according to the two contrary principles, end up with contrary consequences. Since the principle is practical, practical is the economic behavior. The universality of the first, influences necessarily the second. What are these economic consequences of the two principles? Do we truly see them deduced in theory and applied in practice? Here are the two researches that will resolve our problem.

4. If with reasoning we truly find two series of economic theorems deduced from the two contrary principles; if these two series of economic doctrines we see embraced in practice by the two societies according to the opposed principles that they respectively profess, then the existence of the two economies and the rational explanation that we put forth concerning such double behavior will acquire all the weight of which a practical science is capable, which would reach its apex when it will have combined the test of the facts with the clear connection to reasoning.

§IV. *Heterodox Economy.*

SUMMARY (OF THE ARGUMENT)

1. First consequence love, right, and duty of egoism.
2. Confirmed by the facts.
3. Egoism desires pleasure.
4. Pleasure either moral or material.
5. Wealth is needed for pleasure.
6. Unlimited wealth for unlimited pleasure.
7. Society dominated by pleasure.
8. Principle of slavery.
9. Moderated with prudence,
10. but egoism reigns.
11. Social necessity of such moderation
12. produces authority.
13. Idea of heterodox society.
14. Antagonism that predominates there.
15. Function of authority: administration of enjoyment of pleasure.
16. Unlimited taxes.
17. Promotion of *State* enrichment.
18. Depredation of the treasury.
19. *Useful man*
20. logic descended from *independent man*.
21. Epilogue of the capital dogmas of heterodox economics.
22. Conclusion.

1. We promised to examine in the first place what reason deduces from the principle of natural independence of man. If man is independent, he needs to organize all of his action towards satisfying himself: here is the first consequence that a logical and perspicacious reason deduces necessarily from this false principle. And precisely because of this, Catholic doctrine which in God alone admits independence, teaches us that God in all of his acts has only himself as end, *omnia propter semetipsum operatus est Deus*.^{*} And God himself, while with his decalogue imposes sacrifices on mankind at times painful, begins with representing to him the reasonable motive for obeying the essential dependence of man on God: *I am the Lord your God*. Remove this dependence, the reason for obeying ceases. Given therefore that the heterodox person, judging himself

^{*} “God worked all things for his own sake” (tcb).

as independent, it is most reasonable for him, too, to orient all his actions towards himself: *omnia propter semetipsum operates est*.** Thus we have the crude formula, and nauseating to an honest heart, but sincerely and logically deduced from the philosophy of “I” by Fichte*** as the universal moral principle: *Love yourself above everything and your neighbor for love of you*.

2. This horrible formula nurtured in the depths of Utilitarianism would suffice for proving the same shameless audacity of the impious person pronouncing it, and the admission of the corrupt society that arises from such blasphemy in crowning him as some supreme philosopher. But even if he had not pronounced it, his contemporaries would have accepted it. Who today does not admit seeing how it dominates in the world, with lamenting how society is invaded by this filthy egoism, how minds are absorbed with their own interest, so that the noble sentiment of sacrifice that formed in other times the character of Christian society, seems forever canceled from the thoughts and even from the [laws] of philanthropic society? “At one time in the past,” this is how Brofferio, not a suspect witness, deplored the painful perversion as he threw the increase of crimes into the face of the Piedmont government, in the session of March 26, 1856, “one time people spoke of modesty, of the love of country, etc. But these words are no longer on the lips of anyone. Now the whole politics of our country is directed towards [self-]interest. You all have kindled the thirst for gold; the people look to satisfy that thirst where the gold is. But this passion brings prison and gallows behind it” (*Armonia*, March 27, 1856). That such an assertion expressed, unfortunately, a universal sentiment, the amazing “*bravo’s*” from the viewing galleries attest, so much so that the President had to threaten *to clear out the galleries*. Here we see the fact of that egoism that naturally followed from the reasoning which we demonstrated to be the child of independence, and what flows from it. He is wrong, and very wrong, anyone who laments the consequence after having embraced the principle. Nobody acts for others for nothing.

3. Given, then, that man once regulating himself according to absolute independence, acts only for himself alone, what can be expected in his behavior? He will not work if not for obtaining a good, and independent man can find nothing good if not in his own satisfaction, or rather in that pleasurable feeling that has its seat properly and uniquely in the “I.” A man who *depends* will be able in

** “[Man] works all things for his own sake” (tcb).

*** Dan Breazeale, “Johann Gottlieb Fichte,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, Fall 2024 edition.

thinking to see a good of justice, of order, even in that which in itself yields no gratification: and the reason for seeing a good there will be precisely in this dependence, following which he will say: It is reasonable that one who depends should act for whom, upon whom he depends. But if you take away this dependence, to care about the satisfaction of another to the detriment of one's own, will be behavior contrary both to reason and to feeling. Now if the feeling of one's own pleasure is so robust that even a person who believes himself obliged to depend, often runs after some pleasure against reason, imagine then if one can hold himself back from following pleasure who has been trumpeted by reason itself as independent. You should be quiet therefore, libertine philanthropists whatever sort you are, with your indignation against triumphal egoism. If man is independent, he must act for himself alone; if acting for himself, what else can he desire if not satisfying that innate tendency that he feels toward enjoying pleasure.

4. All of that is not to say that every utilitarian must descend into vile ugliness, that he has to inebriate himself from the cup of Circe and be transformed into a brute. He has also there his pleasures of the spirit and the heart: It is a pleasure to be esteemed, revered, loved in society. And because the dispositions of people are various, the spirits, the temperaments, if the happiness of the ones are found in the bottle and the plate, in the bouquets of the bedroom, or in the dagger of vendetta; there are more benign and naturally honest dispositions, for whom the most beautiful pleasure will be consoling a sigh or drying a tear, accomplishing great things with genius, or making friends from generous spending. But all that matters little, since the principle will be always that: man acts in order to *feel pleasantly*.

5. [Independent man] does not participate in that independent nature of God, [an independent existence] which he foolishly attributes to himself, [and] which in itself alone would render him perfectly happy. Therefore despite all the theories of independence, man feels that each of his tendencies, each of his faculties, seeks an object, upon which he depends for finding satisfaction, and this repose is precisely what we call enjoyment and pleasure. Do you want to multiply pleasures? You must therefore multiply objects towards which these or this or that of your faculties might lead you; and with such indefinite alternations, that with the satisfaction of the first, follows ennui, and then soon the itch of the next one, once satisfied awakens the third and seeks its satisfaction, and thus from one to another without end. This is, as you know, the idea of happiness according to the utilitarians, those who define [happiness] as the sum of happy moments

experienced by you in pleasure.⁷ And this definition of happiness, as crude and as brutal as it may be, oh how many, philosophers and non-philosophers, settle for it today!

6. Now remember reader, that a quantity of pleasurable objects is precisely that which the economists call *wealth*:⁸ and as a consequence, an indefinite quantity of pleasurable objects is the same as indefinite wealth. You will see right away that [once] the origin of the individual in independence is conceded, reason will concede to him as a consequence not only the right, but even the duty to tend towards indefinite wealth, with which to procure indefinite pleasures.⁹ These [pleasures] might be more or less honest, or as it would be said in [*down-to-earth*] language, *noble* or *plebian* (words that in *utilitarian* language are irrational since pursuing happiness wherever it might be found cannot be ignoble or dishonest): one person will take pleasure in feeding a family of sweet little creatures, another in paying a hitman to even up a vendetta. But in any case for enjoyment wealth is needed and wealth is the instrument of happiness. That is the absolutely universal basis of economics with respect to the individual, [independent man].

7. We on the other hand have to treat economics not just with respect to the individual, but with respect to society: and therefore it is our task to briefly recall how society itself develops under the principle of independence, of which we have spoken elsewhere at length.

If independent man will not act for other than enjoyment, for enjoyment as well will he act in [participating in society]. *To extract* from society—which is

⁷This coarse idea of happiness is not quite that of only the most filthy among the animals of Epicurus, of a Gioia, of a Bentham, of a Proudhon. Open even the works of those most wise, and naturally honest persons who apply their ingenuity to make sense of economics, a Sismondi, a Rossi, a Bastiat; and you will always see a return to the same idea, with only this one difference, that where the most egotistical look towards their own enjoyment, the more honest want this happiness universalized to all, “that which we desire,” says Bastiat (*Gratuité du crédit*, letter 14, 460), “is the constant approximation of all men towards a level that itself is always rising” (tcb). And this happiness for all is that which they call the *public good*, the *social good*: and [since] this happiness is unable to ever be common to all, they hope at least to render it to the plurality [of persons] conceding to them rights of election, of suffrage, etc. in law.

⁸We do not offer a scientific definition here, but only the fundamental concept to which such definitions are usually reducible.

⁹“When gold had become ... the instrument of all happiness, everyone wanted to have gold.” (Proudhon cited by Bastiat, letter 7, 339) (tcb).

to say *from all of the persons with whom he lives*—all of *the utility*, or [in other words] the pleasure, that they are capable of producing [for him], [as well as that pleasure that results from] liberating you yourself from the necessity of effort: that is the first impulse according to how that doctrine leads us into society. An impulse that as you see establishes in the world, under a legitimate aspect, two castes, of the leisurely [first class], benefitting from the [second class] of working oppressed of whom the socialists speak. *In virtue of the principle of interest*, writes Proudhon to Bastiat, *an individual can really and legitimately live without working; that is the condition to which the whole world aspires*.¹⁰

8. Transform this same aspiration to laziness into a moral principle, into a natural right, and you will have established slavery in the world, to which in fact the ancient world led and the nations that govern economically according to the Epicurean principle lead again today. And what difference is there between a slave in antiquity and one of these modern workers that turn themselves into brutes and succumb in English factories under the weight of work, from hunger and from every sort of moral disorder? No other difference if not that the first one belonged to a family, and received from a human master even some comfort in their infirmity and in old age; while the miserable slaves of industry destined to enrich the impersonal master that calls itself *Society*, the *Nation*, the *State*, arrived at the point that illness or old age besieges the hands at work, are abandoned in the middle of the street *because they are free*. Meanwhile aristocratic families flaunt their bursting wealth, object of envy for continental Egoism, which according to the same principle it is supremely reasonable to praise them as blessed, and blessed the country in which such fortunes tower. Yes, of course this is true: Given that independent man acts only for himself, everyone who enters into society must say with the citizen of Hobbes: “I want to unleash all my talent and have all of my fellow citizens serve me and minister to my pleasures.” Which with everyone saying so, from the first moment, the first stage of society will be exactly as was said and as we hear testimony confirming it from Bastiat, *the war of all against all*.

9. But in such an unequal war, every person would be touched resoundingly by [its chaos]. So prudence attempts to call a fictional peace, but in negotiating this peace each person would do everything in their power to sacrifice the *minimum* and to gain the *maximum*. Such a peace constitutes, according to Hobbes, the second stage natural to human association: in which, as you see, no one will do

¹⁰ Proudhon to Bastiat, *Gratuité*, letter 7, 314. (tcb) [cf. <http://bastiat.org/fr/lettre7.html>].

anything for others if not that littlest bit that will be absolutely necessary to obtain a peaceful life and social advantages.

10. Unwind in practical terms, oh reader, this doctrine resulting from the principle of independence, and you will see that it expresses that daily fact, which we see testimony from everybody deploring; we mean to say the universal egoism by which everyone draws water to their own mill. In other times we saw (and many monuments still attest to it) many rich persons employ their wealth, for instance to build a hostel for the poor, or a hospital for the infirm, or a bridge for easing communication, or an aqueduct for irrigating the countryside; and many also freely employing their work in public service. We will not say that such practices in Catholic countries have been entirely dismissed; such that the names of a Barolo, of a Mellerio, of a Canossa, of a Borghese, of a Torlonia, of a Taverna, of a Fagnani, and thousands of similar others show what force the principle of disinterest still holds among Catholics. But how much it is losing strength and universality little by little as Protestant utilitarianism spreads among us! Nowadays, apart from noted honorable exceptions, there are [fewer and fewer of] those who might find a surplus for sharing with the poor; or more so, even for one who earns a wage from industry, there does not remain savings to secure the future of his own family, which falls into misery as soon as he himself falls into the tomb. So much then can the Epicurean principle of *personal enjoyment* do to souls, even despite paternal affections.

11. But while everyone wants to enjoy much while sacrificing little, the [fact is] that the nature of society is such that it cannot subsist without individual sacrifice for the common good. Take away this concept and society perishes. Thus the independence of the individual and the mania for enjoyment [multiplies intellectual and moral confusion]. On the one side they need society for the protection from the egoism of others; on the other side they combat society as restrictive of their own egoism. Here [we see] therefore man in society condemned to a perpetual contradiction, preaching to others the duty to sacrifice oneself for the common good while practicing for himself the right to sacrifice nothing except as constrained by force.

12. But when every citizen conducts themselves according to such a principle, how will society be able to survive? Here is how the necessity appears for establishing a Power that gives itself the responsibility of publicly establishing in law how much each one must sacrifice of one's own such that society can be possible: and since everyone would always find the sacrifice excessive that is respectively

imposed on him, a prevailing force will become attributed to this authority to which each one must yield, arming it with the strength of everyone.

13. Bastiat quite reasonably tells us about this recently, saying that *the social sciences would be pointless* if citizens did not tend to plunder each other. Under the influence of the Catholic principle, the use of force is secondary, since citizens are primarily moved in the right ordering of wealth from authority [of reason and of faith], to which force is added only exceptionally, against the riotous. Wherefore St. Thomas maintains that authority would have had a place in the terrestrial Paradise even if Adam had not sinned. But under the influence of the principle of independence, the Idea of society, as you can see, can be summarized in these few words: *universal antagonism, services performed for others from pure necessity of force or of [self-]interest, continuous effort to subjugate others to one's own interest, not yielding [any more than the minimum] than the law prescribes, and only as much as force constrains*, and still, *warring against authority and fellow citizens, with fraud or violence up to wherever success one's own strength extends*. Oh! truly, in such a society Authority without force would be *pointless*, without effect. Examine, in your own mind, the ideas that experience has taught you about the spirit that reigns universally in modern societies, especially in that part [of society] where utilitarianism and rationalism predominate, and you will yourself understand perhaps more even than what we have been able to explain. But if you are less expert in such matters and too under the influence, fortunately for you, of the Catholic principle, and you do not manage to understand that egoism might arrive at such excesses as wishing the slavery of others, wishing the misery of others for one's own advantage; hear it yourself explained by Bastiat with a marvelous clarity. "Here you have," he says, "an any whatsoever producer: What is his own immediate interest? ... Is he a wine-maker? He will wish that all the vines other than his own freeze. Is he a farmer or property owner? He will hope for the scarcity of bread. Is he a doctor? Public health will be disastrous for his profession. Is he cotton manufacturer? He will want banned all the factories of others. Every producer has antisocial intentions: or if that is not the case, [you will have to] attribute it to the humane [feelings], [or] to the Christianity that inspires abnegation."¹¹ As you see, universal egoism could not more obviously reveal itself.

¹¹ See, Bastiat, *Sophismes économiques*, 1st Series, *Abondance, disette*, 7–9. [cf. http://bastiat.org/fr/abondance_disette.html].

14. To such a society let us apply now the economic principle of *happiness and wealth of the ego*. If *wealth is my happiness*, giving the *minimum* of my own and squeezing the *maximum* from the purses of others will be the fundamental law produced from the three first aphorisms of the description given above, and these economic aphorisms can be reduced to this law: *Value is determined by supply and demand, loans will be scarce if interest is prohibited, no service will be rendered if not for an equal service*, and similar others, with which the relations of exchange among those with equal resources are usually determined. All of these aphorisms are based on the principle: man does nothing if not for his own interest.

15. But in order that these [people] live in peace, or rather so that they do not come to open warfare, there must exist, we have said, a society governed by social force. This society would need to correspond as much as it can to the aims of the citizens, who associated themselves for enjoying all the exquisite conveniences that are not available to the solitary person, to the nomad. Now in order to provide all of these facilitations, the society must be rich: and the richer it is, the more comforts it can provide of all sorts. Thus, here is a universal principle of public economy: Limitlessly promoting the increase of public wealth: or to say it according to the words of Helvétius, finding the means to transfer money as much as one can from private funds into the public treasury. As a result, the limit of taxes will not be any longer that which is necessary for society to spend, but that which is possible for private persons to shell out.

16. In fact, what amount would be too much in the treasury when every image of ease and comfort that enters into people's heads must be satisfied from the national wealth? The refinement of sublime studies, of experimental sciences, of enchanting works of art, of high-speed communications, of magical spectacles, of industrial machines, of distant trade routes; everything has to be made available by society to citizens; but above all that satisfaction of national pride, that not only seeks its own autonomy, but primacy over the others. [Government] ministers, you who are charged with the destinies and wallets of a people drunk on the principle of independence; ministers and government authorities, whoever you might be, remind yourselves of it: This is nothing less than what the sovereign people ask for and deserve from you.

- Am I expected to handle this little thing! But where will I get funds to cover such enormous sums?

- You are drowning yourselves in a spoonful of water; who said there was a limit to taxability? Take a census of taxable income and go ahead with confidence, make the people pay even the air that they breathe....

17. Here we see, reader, the economic system of limitless growing taxation: this is nothing but the principle of *happiness in enjoyment*, and thus *happiness in wealth* applied to the social body. This social body is here, as you see, a logical being, a rational being that makes itself great and rich at the cost of impoverishing and squeezing dry all private persons. This is that which is technically called the STATE that wants to be great and rich and powerful at all costs, in order to then distribute throughout the social body the great meal that it just swallowed. This is essentially a socialistic concept, crouched in the bottom of this social and economic theory derived from the *independent ego*: a concept that explains why all the forces of the doctrinarian economists are impotent against socialistic communism. And how could you expect them to destroy the consequence while sustaining, with scattered infantry, the principle! We have in the works of Bastiat his letters with Proudhon, in which whoever would undertake to carefully examine the reasons pro and contra (and who knows if we might not do it one day?) would make the impotence tangible of the otherwise energetic genius of the former to unravel *fully* the arguments of the second. But for now, that which we need to do is to put to the test the fact that a government soaked in heterodox principles must squeeze the nation to make the State greater: and concerning this, the words of Bastiat are solemn. "It invented itself, he says, representative government, hoping, *a priori*, to end the squeezing of the people, leaving to it the taxation of wages of the public. But the remedy, if you wish to admit it, up to now is failed. And why? Because the Governors are too smart, the people too dumb. They first study men and their passions, and if they see for example the people inclined towards war, they sniff around for soldiers, sailors, arsenals, fortresses. All they have to do is to spread around gifts of officers and ranks, and pensions, offices and awards. But for this money is needed. And if the nation will be generous, oh they have no doubt, not only will [the nation] have powerful armies, [but also] commerce will resurge, agriculture will bloom, factories will grow enormous, arts and letters will flourish, every evil, every misery will be eliminated, all we need is to grow the employees [of government] and get the money for paying them. Thus the Ministers, and [eventually] the thunderstruck people, are surprised to find themselves become such a civilized people, so great,

and yet still ‘*Gros-Jean comme devant.*’”¹² In such a manner Bastiat explains the limitless growth of taxes. True it is that in this sketch he attributes the cause to the cunning of the governments; but slightly below he recognizes the proper injustice: the ministers, he says, would not speak of the glory of France, if France were not drunk on this glory; they would not spend on corrupting the voters if the voters were not corruptible.¹³

The fact therefore, as you see, is recognized by Bastiat: Taxes grow because ministers ask; ministers ask because the people want glory and pleasure. But let us go further: The STATE exists; the State has the duty and therefore the right to accumulate limitless wealth for distributing limitless gratifications.

18. But how will this distribution be accomplished? While under the influence of the principle of independence and of the principle of enjoyment (*every person is free, every person acts only to enjoy*), let us remember, reader, that these principles are spurred in the heart of every individual, and that society is ignored by every person except with the intention of drawing water to his mill. Assuming these individual principles, it is clear that the distribution will be made proportionally according to strength. If the might of all the citizens were equal, equal also would be the quantity [of comforts] that each person would draw to himself from the public contest. But unfortunately advantages of intelligence, of strength, of purse, of reputation, of supporters, of audacity in crime, etc., are unequal. Therefore you see the consequence: to each according to strength. And since the greatest power is in the hands of the head of state, he who will say, “*I am the State*” and will play the part of the lion, leaving enough of such booty as is necessary to have hired thugs among officials, armies of slaves among the people. To the people will be given only as much as necessary to save them from succumbing under [the weight] of work; otherwise where [would] one find more arms for amassing wealth? But in giving the minimum, watch out for goodness sake that nothing of that [pay] be left for convenience or worse, for some surplus, otherwise the people will not want to work. The people thus eat, yes, but only what is necessary to keep from dying. To the gangs of thugs [in the administration], whose talent and support the head of state will have [ever] greater need of as much will be given as is needed to satisfy the swollen dogs in proportion

¹² Bastiat, *Physiologie de la spoliation*, 122ff. [note: the French expression means “no better off than before” and cf. http://bastiat.org/fr/physiologie_de_la_spoliation.html]

¹³ M. Guizot would not have had the occasion to say: “France is rich enough to pay for its glory, if France had never been taken by false glory, etc.” (tcb), quoted in Bastiat, *Deux morales*, 130. [see http://bastiat.org/fr/deux_morales.html]

as their work will be necessary in sustaining the burden or rather the milking and sheering of the sheep, by the State.

19. And here is the idea of the *useful man* logically emerging from the *independent man*. Perhaps to a reader accustomed to arguing well, this inference would seem strange; taken as given that the [human] person is regarded as independent, everything, we have said, he acts for the advantage of himself. How ever then from this independence does the idea of the *man useful* to society emerge?

20. Please do not be stunned, reader: If from false principles contradictory ideas are born, nothing there should be surprising. In our case, moreover, more apparent than real is the repugnance. These two ideas seem contradictory because the habit of universalizing scientifically easily carries us to forget the factual implications of the theory: which although these words *independent man* seem to speak of universal *human nature*, in reality applying independence to each individual establishes a singular principle, which would be better called the *independent I*. So what contradiction remains between these two terms? In fact, none. Rather the consequence can be reduced to this general formula: “Given that every person believes himself *independent*, he will consider all other persons as *useful things*”—a strictly logical and obvious inference. Since, the independent person, as said previously, acts only for himself, and all persons desire co-operators to their *own* good, in all men only utility will be considered and a person who is not *useful* to him will, in his eyes, cease to have a reason for existing.¹⁴ Extend this exclusive urge for private good to all citizens, and this will form in the whole of society essentially a moral principle of the dictate “*man must be useful to me*,” and unfortunately such a dictate already tyrannizes [people’s] minds in society, even of many Catholics, from whom we hear with totally pious inspiration asking to what purpose is this [religious] order or that religious institute? And if it is not found *useful to society*, it is already proscribed by the spirit of the century, almost as if man exists for [society] and not rather for himself and for his Creator. And similarly with others unless there is respect due from the [material value of their] work. [It is] almost as if [persons in religious orders] had lost their independence by some crime, and became a malefactor condemned to perpetual labor.

¹⁴“The caste of capitalists has the right ... to say to a mass of citizens: you are too many on the earth; at the banquet of life, there is no place for you.” (Proudhon in Bastiat, *Gratuité*, letter 7, op. cit.) [translated from French].

Divine authority and goodness wished to form a society among mankind, counselled them and commanded them to do good to one's neighbor when needed, accepting this [duty] out of respect to the Divinity. In this way we understand that every person should think about making themselves useful to their neighbor. But, that other men equal to him demand from him this or that service, and if he might not want to give it then they reject him as useless and strip him and torture him: This is a true renewal of the slavery by which man becomes a thing and not a person. This is a slavery worse than the pagan [version], not only for the impiety that prohibits respect towards God, but even for the universality with which it is extended to every fellow citizen, which pleased you to call *useless*. This tyrannical dogma [is] implicit, in so many heterodox declamations and even sometimes from Catholics against the idleness and uselessness of contemplatives.

21. [Let us sum up] here in a brief epilogue the first principles of a society under the idea of absolute independence.

1st Independent man not being bound by any law loves himself above every thing, and others for love of himself. For love of self he lives in society with these [others] to the extent that he hopes that they make themselves useful to him. This disposition, according to this principle, is in the heart of all men, as confirmed by reason and by impression.

2nd With such an attitude towards all people and all things, each person schemes, and with good right, to draw the greatest quantity possible of utility or of satisfaction from things, applying them to the satisfaction of his own needs or desires; and from persons, subrogating them to work in the place of one's self. Wherever *enrich [yourself] the most while exerting [yourself] the least* is the formula for happiness, each person will do their best to reach that standard, exploiting persons and things throughout the universe.

3rd Society is thus in a perpetual *antagonism* where each person offers the *minimum* in order to obtain the *maximum*. From this battle between *supply* and *demand* arises a first determinant of value. The reciprocal struggle, among those bidding, or the *competition*, gives birth to a temperament of unjust pretensions, and from that [arises] a second determinant of value. Economically speaking, society is therefore a war of all against all: mutual war among the sellers, war of the sellers against the buyers, war of one society against the next society to suck out its wealth with a customs system for that purpose.

4th In this war, the right and the egoism of each independent person, not having any limit, would unleash an exterminationist collision in society. But each person

is [also] interested in not letting [society] perish, to not lose all the utility that he hoped from it; thus everybody resigns themselves to establish a Power with enough might to which all private egoisms must yield. From this power each one expects essentially two things, namely, repression of abuses from others, and an abundance of pleasures.

5th The abundance of pleasures can only be obtained in proportion to wealth. Therefore each person desires that society should be rich so that it might distribute delights in abundance.

But since social wealth is by each person desired only in terms of its utility to himself, and this greed of private persons cannot be satisfied by the government, government leaders must aim directly at rendering *the State* rich with little attention to particular individuals, who care each one [only] for themselves. Indefinitely augmenting the wealth of the State is therefore the first duty of a government.

6th [State] wealth is ordinarily not obtained without taxes. Therefore under the principle of independence the indefinite augmentation of taxes will be a constant tendency in society.

7th In order to raise taxes it is necessary to find taxable funds in the purses of the citizens. Therefore good government leaders must act so that subjects *want* to enrich themselves and *can* enrich themselves.

8th To make them *want*, they will awaken the hunger for pleasure in the poor, and advance luxury and voluptuousness among the rich. To make them *able* they must indefinitely advance opportunities and means of enrichment with indefinite movement of capital.

9th Nature would produce this movement *slowly* and *temperately*. While the egoism of each person (feeling the world passing like an arrow) wants to enjoy *right away* and *a lot*. The government must therefore insert itself in private businesses, pressuring all of them to work as might benefit public wealth: *right of succession, mortmain, public debt, monopolies*, etc., all will come to be coordinated for accelerating the enrichment of the State (*despotisme réglementaire*, the French would say).

10th Accumulating immense wealth this way, being social wealth, [it] will have to return to be spent on society, which as the mother equally of all citizens, to all equally must share in her riches. *Communism* is therefore logical in the society derived from *independent man*.

11th But [in practical terms], in a society of independents, we just recently saw, each one cares [only] after himself, or better yet, each one would like to

have all the others as slaves to himself. Each person, therefore, will draw public wealth to himself in proportion to his strength.

12th Thus greater wealth goes to the rich, greater power to the powerful, and to the poor and to the weak greater poverty and greater weakness.

13th These poor and weak, though they do not have a right in themselves to life they remain necessary to society for their labor. The people therefore have utility, while the aristocracy enjoy themselves.¹⁵

14th From this summary of commanding economic principles, you can understand what must be roughly the definition of social economy in this system: It will be the *science that explains the causes from which public wealth is born*. And [that definition] is most correct in that economy is none other than the regulation of possessions. In this system, the social regulation of possessions is that they should increase indefinitely, and therefore [heterodox] economic science must show how this limitless increase can be accomplished. But on this definition we will speak more later.

22. Here you have it, reader, the natural consequences of that heterodox principle. You see these [theoretical] consequences are unfortunately a living depiction of the society that we have before our eyes. This society serves, consequently, as a confirmation of [our] reasoning, [just] as the reasoning explains the society that we see. Maybe perhaps some might understand, who with misguided arguments go around lamenting the poisoned sprouts, while fomenting at the same time and spreading the infected root of *liberty* from which the guilty shoots grow. Little accustomed [are such people] to penetrating into the hiding places of the human heart, and into the inner operation of reasoning. [Too many people] satisfy themselves with the sound of a few magic words. They persuade themselves that if everyone had the freedom to enrich themselves, everyone would have the ability—nearly as if the liberty of all did not actually present an immense obstacle to everyone, as if with universal liberty the few but powerful and conspiratorial people would not oppress the many weak and penniless. Let them meditate, please, and understand the fundamental consequences enumerated up to this point from that absolute and absurd independence that they pretend to bequeath, in the name of science, to every human creature.

¹⁵ “Society is necessarily divided in two castes, one cast of capitalist exploiters and one caste of exploited workers.” (Proudhon in Bastiat, *Gratuité*, letter 7, op. cit.) (tcb)

§V. *Christian Economy.*

SUMMARY (OF THE ARGUMENT)

1. Against anarchic economy
2. the economy of order is contrasted.
3. True principle of order, the creative Will.
4. First practical principle: depending on God.
5. Depending on [Him] with regard to mankind
6. respecting the rights of people
7. and the body:
8. regarding things
9. And the property of producers.
10. Duty and right of work
11. stronger among Catholics than [among the] heterodox.
12. For sustenance.
13. For penitence, protection, religion.
14. Antithesis between the two economies.
15. *Antagonism* and *competition* in Catholic economy
16. Mitigated by justice and charity.
17. Equality and hierarchy.
18. Social peace.
19. Catholic government
20. what is the final purpose of riches
21. in the civil order and in the political order.
22. Burdensome social spending;
23. has something else as its end
24. especially under Catholic influences
25. consoled by natural nobility of love of country,
26. by ambition,
27. by prudence.
28. Natural economy of an orderly society.
29. Not near term, but [within range of hope].
30. Predicted by other events.
31. Epilog.
32. Conclusion.

1. It will not have escaped your shrewd attention, reader, that the society whose economy we have delineated is none other than the society of *anarchy*: since only anarchy can describe a society in which everyone claims *independence by right*. It is true that some material order is necessary, so that the pleasure of the enjoyers be not disturbed by the impatience of the starvers: there you must create a Power endowed with [sufficient] force, able to repress the violent impulses of this hunger. But, since might is not right, the [spirit of the] right of independence of each person will continue to persist there: so under the iron yoke of a superficial and material order, people debate, quivering, the beast of anarchy.

2. To the economy of this anarchical society, we must now contrast the *economy of order*, or rather of an *ordered society*.¹⁶ So what is this society that merits the name of ordered? What is the true principle of order in the universe? Some people call *order* that whatsoever kind of lethargy produced by fatigue of revolution, or that impotence of rioting kept in check by the watchful eyes of spies and the force of bayonets. But this, as we have already said, is rather a social *paralysis* than one of *order*, since one cannot call order in society anything that is not based on a moral principle, the only legitimate motor of human acts.

Others call society ordered when it is governed according to justice, and the assertion would be true, but it is too generic: [as it remains] to be defined in what this justice consists, and by which all social relations should be regulated.

3. Wanting to reduce this concept to a more exact and evident formula, we observe that every artifact can be considered as ordered when it corresponds to the intent of its artificer. If this [creator] out of ignorance mis-proportioned his constructions to his intents, or if others by malice messed them up and broke them, order will be missing from that machine, from the work of the artificer.

Here we have therefore a first principle that gives us an absolute idea of order in the universe and by consequence, in society. Society is ordered when it corresponds to the prototype idea that the supreme Artificer conceived in creating it, and by that [correspondence] is enabled to follow the intent for which it was

¹⁶ These articles on the *Two Economies* were written and partly published when the recent *Discourses on Social Economy* of Angelo Marescotti fell into my hands. Now looking through the first pages we believe to see an analogous intention to our own, since he takes up *creative order* and intends to order economy *following unquestioned Christian doctrine* (vol. I, p. 29). We are most happy for such consonance and would have wished to study the book and give an account of it to readers. But prevented for now in reading it we give this simple notice, reserving this important work to a more developed review.

created. Thus you see that the supreme principle of social order is the *dependence of man on the Creator*, [just] as the principle of anarchy is man's *absolute independence*. Thus further you will understand that the first article of the Christian creed (*I believe in God [...] the creator*) is in society the supreme speculative, [abstract, universally true] principle of order; whereas the supreme principle of anarchy is the divinized "I" in the *absolute*, in *God-State*, in *God-people*, in *God-humanity*.

And here we see why we have called Catholic economy that which results from this same principle of creation, [of dependence]; and how heterodox economy is that which results from the principle of independence. There are certainly among the heterodox and infidels some privileged minds who admit the principle of social dependence; and [some who] base this perhaps even on the [idea of] dependence of the created on the Creator. But because this Creator either they do not recognize because they are infidels, or they do not recognize because they are rebellious; these cannot have that correct and full idea of order that would be necessary for justly solving all social problems. The Catholic, on the other hand, if in the solution of these problems he be fully directed by God creator and revealer, he is certain to reflect *true order* with his theories, which can be none other than full conformity with the intentions of that God who has revealed and who assures the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

4. From which you see emerge as the first operative principle of this society the *total dependence on God in [our] actions*: which is precisely that *love of God to the contempt of oneself* assigned by the Doctor of Hippo as the supreme norm for *society* (or *city*) of God, as opposed to the contrary principle of anarchic Babylon, love of oneself to the contempt of God.¹⁷

¹⁷ Whomever well understands this first principle, will quickly see how absurd [compared] to the Catholic idea is that doctrine that wishes for society, as its *regular* and *ordinary* condition of its existence, the liberty of every cult. That such a liberty be admitted as a transitory or irregular state, no one among Catholic scholars would want ever to deny, if only he read attentively that which the Sainted Doctor d'Aquino wrote of such liberty in the middle ages, in that fully and vigorously Catholic age (II-II, q. 10, art. 12). But to want to sustain the liberty of cults as an ordinary and regular condition, one would have to presuppose it being regular and ordinary to have a party of unbelievers so numerous that constitutes an organic part of that society, or perhaps regular and ordinary that a Catholic society be indifferent in hearing blaspheming the name of its God and seeing the faith of citizens and closest relatives imperiled. The first supposition is absurd for Catholics, knowing how evident be the credibility of their doctrine and how diligent the care in educating, how tightly the obligation to profess the faith, how solemn the word with which every baptized person is sent forth with such a duty. Neither less absurd is

5. Under such a principle of full dependence of man and of society on God, the first question of public economy asks what is the intention with which the Creator formed mankind and everything in the world.

We hear in that regard some serious words from a scholarly dissertation on political economy by Giovanni Intriglia,¹⁸ in which with great pleasure we have observed some beautiful considerations upon Catholic public economy. After having brought in many opinions of economists concerning the definition of political economy, and its limits, wanting to confront the difficulty that arises from the consideration of this with the other, related, sciences, he explains clearly:

Political economy is related to moral [science] on the side of regulating desires appropriately without violating the prescriptions of God.... In this regard I say with Vidal, "why did God create us and put us in the world?" This is the first question of the catechism, as well as the first questions of philosophy, the question which par excellence dominates all the others. Religion or philosophy, morality, social economy, political [science], everything depends on the response that you give to such a problem. If man, if humanity has a destiny whatsoever to accomplish, the good will not be anything other than that which is in conformity with that destiny, that which favors its accomplishment; and evil will be the opposite or the negation of good, which is to say that which serves as an obstacle to such destiny, to the extent that it is contrary to its accomplishment. Therefore if human destiny is not known, neither can one know that which is good, that which is bad, that which is a means, that which is an obstacle, one will not be able to distinguish the true from the false, the just from the unjust, the useful from the noxious; or in other terms there could be no morality, nor religion, nor philosophy, nor rational economics, nor political [science]. And truly when the idea of God and of an otherworldly future is ignored that *conservation* and *improvement*, posited as principles of departure in scholarly research, become two vague and equivocal terms or culminating only in a refinement of earthly pleasures. *Improvement* restricted to the mortal passage, in rigorous logic, cannot conceive of itself as anything other than a means to finite delights and goods, where the mission of the arts and sciences debases itself

the second presupposition, which opposes itself diametrically to the Catholic principle which we have explained here. If the sole function of man on earth is to accomplish the intentions of the Creator, if the Creator does not want a cult other than the one prescribed by Him in the Church, how is it possible that a Catholic government would wish to concede to a few unbelievers their profane ceremonies that [would bring] publicity such that others would be attracted to profess the same errors, to practice the same superstitions?

¹⁸ Giovanni Intriglia, *Essays on Political Economy and Moral Education* (PhD diss., 1855).

to a frivolous pastime, to a calculated profit. The sanction against vice is withdrawn, and the concepts of sacrifice and of virtue are rendered vain and absurd. And *conservation* takes on a more crude aspect, as people will be circumspect only as long as it amuses, and in pursuit of amusement, every way, even the most detestable, will be held licit, or as others have energetically expressed it, with the maxim, “sovereignty of the end, indifference for the means,” will reign.¹⁹

Thus does the valiant Sicilian economist, of whom we present these words to communicate the rare merit of the author in introducing the Catholic idea as the first foundation of his science; and thus because we would not know how to better express the economic significance of this first concept. Given then that all theories must develop from the end with which men and things were created. Immediately we see in Catholic economy the idea of the first things separated from that of the secondary things, by a great intervening abyss, since mankind is created for God, and things for mankind. Here too [true] liberty is immediately returned in the world, into that world where egoism of independent man reduces all the others into instruments of utility for the *I*, loving them only for himself, which is to say to the extent that he can have them as slaves tied to his every caprice. Among Catholics, men are all of God, from God, and for God: and this perfect uniformity of origin, of subjecthood and of destiny obliges each person, in proportion to the understanding that he has, to want effectively for others the fulfillment of this same divine intent, just as he wishes it for himself.

6. They should remember also that this *true liberty*, this actual independence of man from man, leaves in place the full dependence on God, and by consequence, on all the rights established by the will and by *divine Wisdom* in the natural relations between man and man, and manifested to us by means of *human Wisdom* or, rather, of our reason. Thus Catholic liberty produces the dependence of man upon right, as heterodox independence produces the necessity of enchaining others with force: every person finds himself obligated by the Catholic principle to contribute from their abundance to the good of others, whereas from heterodox independence one is authorized, and one could almost say obliged, to draw all the goods of others to his own advantage.

¹⁹ Intriglia, *Essays on Political Economy and Moral Education*, 131–32.

7. Such is the idea of persons and of their interrelationships that Catholicism gives us. Which, kindly note, though [the Catholic idea] distinguishes the body and soul in man, though it subjugates the body to the soul, as servant to master, yet [it establishes] the body's nobility at the same time, lifting it up to its highest dignity, in that it is the instrument, or rather, the companion of the soul in those operations with which man cooperates in the sublime designs of Providence. From this [the body] obtains inestimable dignity for its strict conjunction with the soul from where it is informed, and the indispensable necessity that [the soul] has to freely make use of the body. The whole person, soul and body, in Catholic doctrine, is a sacred and venerable object—especially as [the human person] aims at that state of supernatural beatitude to which the soul and also the body are called. That is why the brutality with which Revere [mocks how the destiny of his bones] will be for making *boot polish*,²⁰ [may well be humorous] to some unbelieving economists, but horrifies Catholic sensibility.

8. Given, therefore, the whole person being secure under the care of divine Providence and of human charity, with the certainty that he will never become a *thing*, let us ask now what might be the destiny of [the rest of] Creation. This corporeal and material world at first glance presents itself as useful only to the corporeal part of man, which is the only [part of man] that seems to be in contact with the material universe. But since man takes from the maternal womb his legacy of material possessions, as the snail or the oyster draw their shell behind themselves, with what law does the Creator determine the quantity of possessions that belong to each person? [Considering] the general necessity that all [people] have and the force with which we can improve [material possessions] in appropriating them to our use, we are told it is enough using them in proportion to need, and possessing them in proportion to the exertion expended. [In such circumstances then] it is a right conceded to each person from the will of creative Wisdom. And since the perdurance of life requires enduring support, and human industry succeeds in producing such [enduring support] of utility for material creatures, the [right of] property in the products that each person has formed is a fundamental doctrine of Catholic economy.

9. And since a fundamental dogma of Catholicism is the mutual liberty among men, nor would a man be free that would be obliged by nature to work for others, to no one then will it be licit to enchain the productive faculty of others, to no one would it be licit to invade the products of others.

²⁰Cf. *Rivista Contemporanea* 8 (January 1856).

10. We will not extend ourselves [further] in declaring these fundamental ideas on Property, since that belongs rather to the philosophy of law than of economy, and they are raised here by us only in that they serve to connect up [those ideas of economy] to the supreme moral principle. We deduce now from these theoretical ideas a first practical consequence, and the true meaning of the *right of work* that among the wild followers of socialism beats out so much noise. To this quivering screaming of socialism there may be someone who responds: “let us say rather *duty of work* and not *right to work*” and then the idea would be most highly reasonable. We believe moreover that the Catholic ideas indicated by us show how under certain aspects, one and the other go together: work is a duty, but the ability to work to obtain subsistence, is a true *right* of each person in Catholic economy.*

11. There is there a great difference between work of which the heterodox economist speaks and that which is recommended by Catholic reason and revelation. With that being the case, the worker on whom [heterodox economy] is imposed cannot consider his work as anything but a weight under which man is burdened *by necessity* of subsistence or for satisfaction of some urge; unless it be of those kinds of jobs to which a person is inclined by talent. The Catholic principle on the other hand, having assigned to man the duty of accomplishing the mission to which he is directed by Providence, [sees that there are] a thousand diverse reasons that induce him to work and that specify the matter and quality of [the work], according to the various historical contexts in which the person is situated by Providence itself.

12. [Among these reasons] the duty of subsistence certainly occupies the greatest place and has strongest force; man being obligated by conservation of life and of all the moral goods that accompany it. But someone who has perhaps satisfied this primary duty, would he have the right to sit there in indolence? He would certainly enjoy [such a right] in heterodox economy; and this is a big charge in the mouth of socialists against modern society—[this is] an accusation to which Bastiat responds to Proudhon [by] bringing in moral [principles] for help. God

* Cf. Taparelli's treatment of subjective rights as a product from consciousness of duties, to God and to ourselves as creatures, extended to our other selves, mankind, in conscience, a natural law justification for the Golden Rule. Thomas C. Behr, *Social Justice and Subsidiarity: Luigi Taparelli and the Origins of Modern Catholic Social Thought* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), appendix.

knows how much effect [such appeals] have over the souls of unbelievers. But among Catholics, who would boast of such a right to sloth? Even if the need for sustenance be satisfied, there are so many other motives and opportunities in the world, seemingly summoned by Providence, that incite man to work! These [incitements], for example, as head of household he is incited by conjugal and paternal love, or [perhaps this other one] is a bachelor but finds himself in a needy family; another has a debt of gratitude to repay, another stands out among his fellow citizens and must guide them in doubtful [times], or save them in danger out of love of country. You have sometimes people who are taken by great compassion for a class of unfortunates and want to bring them relief; someone who learns of the damage caused by a malicious doctrine and wants to renew the misguided; someone who foresees dangers of hostile invasion and wants to prepare weapons and armies; someone who foresees seditions and tumults, plunder or disease, and wants to prepare for the future. There are thousands of combinations with which Wisdom, governor of the world, directs reasoning mankind in selecting the matter of work, and more or less strictly imposes the duty [of work] on him with the laws of justice, love, gratitude, and prudence, which would otherwise be violated by indolence.

13. But to these particular combinations, all included in that duty to fulfill divine intentions on earth, Catholic doctrine adds other universal motives, deduced from the original fall of man that changed work for him into punishment, and from the hereditary corruption of human nature, for which labor serves as a remedy and protection against moral evil; and from the example of the Redeemer who ennoble the most humble profession and accompanying estate. These and other similar reasons that every Catholic knows well, had in every age such efficacy as to lead hermits and cenobites by the thousands to work, either with the arms or with minds: and they were often men of means and rich, even sometimes ministers of state and monarchs who step down from the palace to the farm field exchanging the scepter for the hoe; there were and there are young men and women in the flower of youth who abandon ease and luxuries, close themselves in a hospital, in a prison caring for souls and serving the bodies of the most unhappy among mortals. And how many there are who retaining ownership of abundant patrimonies make themselves more the manager of such property in favor of the poor, than masters for their own advantage? Is not this exactly the true idea of the rich Catholic taken from the Gospel and promulgated at the court of the *Great King* by Bossuet, by Bourdaloue, by Massillon?

14. UNIVERSAL DUTY therefore OF WORK imposed on the highest and the lowest of men, and reverence for the right to take sustenance from that and to use [work] for others, according to one's talent, without others able to violate the property from that [work]; here are the first principles of economy originated by Catholic dogma of God [our] creator; [and these] principles [are] diametrically opposed to the filthy heterodox aphorism and formula for happiness [according to Epicurus], *exert oneself the least possible*, and enrich [oneself] where possible from the exertions of others.

15. To the *antagonism* and to the *competition* therefore, by which heterodox independence determines values, Catholic order adds the higher principles of mutual love and just retribution, destined to reign in society and to guide the lower instincts of man. From which we pray [that you] pay great attention in order not to make the mistake [of] imagining that Catholic doctrine looks to negate and entirely annul all of those economic laws which from antagonism and competition are usually deduced. No, Catholicism does not suppress the passions in man, but guides them and often times masters them. [Catholicism] guides [the passions] with those moral doctrines that every Catholic embraces and believes at least speculatively, [while] the dictates and sense of guilt insert themselves in the conscience of even those who have not the strength to practice them. [Catholic doctrine] masters them in those so many who experience the merit of Christian probity, and in fully practicing them feel the serenity of conscience and rewarded with the sentiment of honor.

16. Under the influence of these vital sentiments, with the passion of interest more or less significant, and consequently the *asking more* and *offering little*, and *competing* honestly with associates in the profession, is not, within the bounds of justice, renounced, even for Catholic workers and shopkeepers. But since this motor of [self-]interest is not operative in civil relations, for Catholics, except in a minor and subordinate way, [self-interest] always looks for the ultimate ratification of its impulses from the higher principles of justice and benevolence. The economic aspect, therefore, of a Catholic society, far from presenting itself as a battlefield where two parties fight over grabbing the booty; presents itself as an immense workshop where thousands of artisans agreeably labor to bring to fruition the same and the sole activity: each person handling the instruments that the universal director of the enterprise has put in his hands; but all together ready to extend a helpful hand to colleagues in the work, where someone might fall short in the light of understanding or rectitude of will or vigor of arm.

17. This harmonious collaboration in a same enterprise joins, in Catholic society, the sentiment of civil equality with the respect for hierarchy of subordination, which is so naturally accepted among the servants of a same master: who, even though they understand on one side that there is a big difference between the broom handled by the lowest and the pen handled by the highest officials, they feel at the same time that the lowest like the highest has access to justice to appeal any bully who might misuse and so much abuse his power. Thus the Catholic sentiment naturally produces a philosophical judgment around what the passions call *greatness* or *lowliness*, and renders much less acute the drive of ambition that everyone gallops to today in search of higher status. What after all, says the Catholic to himself, is all the splendor of a palace, of a throne, if not gold that weighs as much as it shines; what is power if not cash to be leveraged, of which the greater the fruit, so much more must one keep an eye on the balance?

18. Such are the Catholic principles in the question of wealth and of government. Presenting these points to intellects as undoubted truths, slowing if not braking entirely the impetus of ambition, [Catholic principles] produce in society a peace of soul, satisfaction in one's own estate, that in other times would have been thrown in the face of Catholicism, and that today people lament its replacement by the menacing face of the socialist specter: plotting from their caves, brandishing ferociously torchlights and stilettos in hand, screaming: "Jobs for everyone, riches for everyone, equality for everyone."

19. Society and authority under the direction of [Catholic] doctrine has no need of some special contract among independent men to come to life. Providence that guides the pathways of all persons leads men into society and leads princes to government, and each one knows that in whatever part he has in the social organism, he fulfills a duty more than exercises a right: rather he hardly recognizes this right except to the extent that it is the means of accomplishing a duty. Such is principally the sentiment that should be the starting point in the soul of a Catholic government leader. Even if he does not always take advantage of those practical principles, rare is it that it does not inform at least the ordinary basis of his conduct. Now what will become of the administration of public wealth under the influence of such sentiments?

20. To respond to such a question we are obligated to investigate what public wealth might be in the intent of the creator of society: or rather, in what way and up to what point does wealth contribute to the living honestly together in society?

If we were obliged to respond as the Epicurean economists, we would have to here weave a panegyric on money, calling it the blood of the social body that brings life with it wherever it spreads, and where it is absent it leaves death. Or, better, we can raise our sights even loftier with the *bank-ocrat* Baron Siciliano announcing to us that expanding new bank credits will lead to restoration of religion and morality, and little less than the opening [wide the Pearly Gates].

21. For those of us less susceptible to the poetry of the stock market, we can find two aspects principally under which [capital] is an efficacious means for [administering] social order:

First to the extent that [having money] ensures that the mass of people do not lack what is necessary, and second to the extent that [money] makes available to the government the means necessary, both real and personal, for conducting those social works properly assigned to it.

Between these two points, the reader will note right away that there is a great difference with respect to the way in which they could be procured by government. That being the case, with respect to the sustenance of subjects, the function of the government is properly from its first cause responsible in broad and universal terms, but, ordered only to make sure that material [goods] do not lack, assuring that, with opportune education, every subject has the faculty of acquiring for himself the necessary portion; similarly to how Providence keeps thousands of different species of food in the world, leaving to each person the task and adding the means for providing for himself in proportion to his need.

Secondarily, where acting immediately and directly for the maintenance of the social body as a whole, considered in its unity and in its organicity, government has the responsibility to facilitate [in society] the means, real and personal, and protecting [these means] in particular, of social life. [This] is the most apt function of those persons who govern, [and one] which no other [private] entity could easily accomplish. Note that this secondary consideration on wealth, i.e., government's role in its production and protection is such that [when] well managed it conduces automatically to the accomplishment of the first [consideration]. Since [after all] who cannot see that making sure that nothing is missing from that which might be helpful for [citizens in their pursuit of necessities] depends on a good system of administration?

22. Here you have in substance that to which the true need for public wealth can be reduced: that government would be optimum for which [the amount of its] material wealth will suffice for maintaining through the organism of official personnel and material instruments the orderly movement of the whole of the

great social body. When the finances of the State are such that they suffice for obtaining an appropriate number of counselors (call them deputies, consultants, senators, etc., that little matters) for making good laws, and of executive agents for applying them, and of judicial officials for authoritatively resolving disputes, and of soldiers for constraining with force internal and external [persons] to respect right; that State may call itself well furnished with wealth; and if for accomplishing these functions the State will have taken from subjects the *minimum* of possessions and of liberty, reducing taxes and [regulatory] burdens to the *minimum*. With this minimum of exactions if the State will [also] have furnished to the treasury a portion that suffices for extraordinary cases, then one could say that the administration of this State will have reached the ideal of its perfection. That [perfection] consists in the accomplishment of its necessary functions, with the smallest expenditure possible, for the honest life together of citizens, secure and comfortable in society. Now who does not see how absurd [it is] to begin with the idea of rendering citizens comfortable by milking the maximum taxable, spending on [vainglorious] undertakings and aggrandizing the luster of a State, of a Capital; and other things that [purportedly] bring honor to the administrator, which would be one thing if they were paid for by the superabundance of the wealthy, but not from the fasting of the poor and sweat of the laborer.

It is not necessary to bring to your attention that to these *personnel* provisions, with which the State brings in officials, are necessarily connected *real* provisions. [Legislators] cannot make good laws without an exact knowledge of the people over whom they give it; nor can such knowledge be gathered without means of frequent and sure communication. Agents for executing the laws need contact with those who must apply them in public meetings and transmitting orders with messengers and dispatches. Judges cannot make proper decision without the large expense for witnesses, for documents, for jailings, for deputies. Neither above all can the military acquire the prevalence of insuperable material power without the immense apparatus of all the war trains and territorial fortifications.

Very heavy, therefore, and no less is the expense required for maintaining that honest order of which we have been speaking; neither do we have the slightest intention to pretend or minimize at all the importance of such requirement of material means. Every government that operates over [human persons] has to remember that in the human composite the material has no small part: and from precisely this principle we infer, once again, how stupid they are who would subtract the property and the use of material wealth from the Church, [simply] because it is directed to a spiritual end—almost as if the men who consecrate themselves to spiritual functions and places and such things that are used for those functions are not themselves composed of matter. So if this is appropriate

to even spiritual society, how much more will it be for [that society] which has its functions directed to maintaining and [improving] the visible and external order!

23. The reproduction of material wealth is, therefore, a great and necessary means. But claiming that there is no limit to need [in the question] of material wealth, [supposing that] every means must be exploited without limit, every purse must be squeezed until impossible to collect another drop, [the issue] is exactly how much importance as *end* is given to the *means*. [The problem is of] violating proportions in the moral world that should order the insatiable tendency [of persons] towards the end, using limited means in proportion to the end. Far from it being the duty of government leaders [to work towards] the unlimited enrichment of the abstract entity that calls itself STATE; one must carefully reflect upon that which we have said so far, and it will be discovered that the true need of the government is to have at its disposition [sufficient] *administrators*, while *things* are only required to the extent that they are necessary to the functions of those persons.

Thus you see that an able government leader, not counting his own expenditure, finds the way to have at his disposition the persons necessary to him, well furnished with all the instruments of their function: this could be a pattern of good government, even with only the slightest amount of money in the treasury. Those barbarians who developed the embryo of feudal government, perhaps believed they were building this [model] inspired by natural sentiment, in leaving the things for the most part under the power of the vassals, who were only asked in return to be well equipped, accompanied and supplied for delivering their part in war, which in those days was considered nearly the sole function of the government. Experience then taught that leaving such [fundamental] provision-making to the discretion of the not always docile and faithful vassals, detracts from the necessary unity and energy of the government: [Thus] it is necessary for public order that the supreme [head of government] not depend in its operations on securing them from the passions and caprices of a hundred different [tempers] more accustomed to command than to obey. But if, in assuring to the government the necessary prevalence, one could find the way of avoiding piling the immense expenditure needed these days for an army of officials, on the back of the treasury, [and] if the love of country could induce the wealthy to gratuitously serve in public office that time not required for their own sustenance, what doubt is there that the plan would find itself largely accomplished—and accomplished with it the fact of a [more] equitable division of wealth that socialism sighs for, and the abolition of that right to sloth that the economists critique?

24. Now if you reflect on the natural disinterest inspired from Catholicism, [you will surely] understand how efficacious stimulating the wealthy to gratuitous service would be, for diminishing the necessity for immense salaries. *Gratuitous service!* Oh, what heresy to the ears of those economists that we hear scream with Boccardo. But so it is: that sublime doctrine that by the thousands and thousands draws out young men and women, rich and comfortable, from the bondage of self-interest to the voluntary and total despoiling of evangelical poverty, not only can inspire but will [continue] to inspire in every age those who might not have the courage to abandon everything, but the nobility at least to not make themselves slaves to the stock market: and diffusing such a concept in the public mindset, can make it thus that, by pride at least, if not by more religious or noble motives, the patrician class would be ashamed of itself not just to haggle [over costs] but even up to the point not accepting [any kind of] salary. There is no one who does not know that it would take two or three centuries to *re-habilitate*, as they say, the professions, either commercial or mechanical, where one aims directly at profit. And not withstanding all the *re-habilitation* [needed] there is no lack of living persons who have heard the fading echo of these ideas, generous or proud, of patrician disinterest, and who have seen them at work in the magistracies. While [insane] and slanderous blasphemies are those [words] *gratuitous service* to the economist, that does not prove, were the peddler spirit abolished, which nowadays has produced the aristocracy of money, that more vigorous Catholic sentiments could not be reborn in society, and make a revival of that ancient disinterest and gratuitous service to the country.

25. If someone, less confident in the power of the religious sentiment, were tempted to conclude that this restoration was impossible, please notice, gratuitous service is hardly without its compensations, and human frailty might find in it a great satisfaction even in the renunciation of a salary. With that being the case, would not the merit that one acquires with his fellow citizens be already a gentle, yes, but efficacious incitement, an incitement which still today, especially in secondary kinds of cities, supports not rarely a noble disinterest in assuming municipal duties that they gratuitously take on, and administering them with integrity? Rarely is this seen in the big capitals, where souls are already detached from the love of city, [as that love] evaporated in the limitless multitude of population, of business, of foreigners, drawn there by the predominate centralism: nor is that efficacious love of one's own country much extended, [it being] impossible to conceive [of such an idea] unless the frequent communications and weaving of interests do not [somehow] form all the provinces into one, big, family. If the material prodigies from steam or electric communications lead, as

is natural, to a total *fusion* of the entire nation, rendering it united and binding the most capable and most disinterested administrators and magistrates to it with confidence; the noble sentiment of giving gratuitous service to the country could acquire a greater reach, and with that the ancient force, making it possible that every person of means might aim rather to merit the love of fellow citizens over and above the stock market, where already so much super-abounds, not just in what is necessary [but also] the convenient.

26. To the noble sentiment of love of country not little stimulus is added to gratuitous service, from power, from honor, from authority that can in many hearts mean much more than the hunger for gold. Even the economists, reluctantly [with their abacus mentality], begin to discover, speaking about literary and scientific property, that there is for scholars a moral reward in the merit and influence that they acquire, which compensates a part at least for the efforts expended in their product; and by this argument they suggest [actually] a lesser hold over these products, [advancing their argument against monopoly]. Now if those moral rewards should suffice for authors, not rarely in rough financial conditions or even supporting a family; how much more they should suffice for wealthy officials with families swimming in comfort, and for whom power so satisfies vanity, ambition, honor, and passion.

27. Even patricians begin to understand how much influence they could re-acquire over social trends if they would invest the wealth that they waste luxuriating and frolicking in the hangouts of the capital, instead, in the good of their fellow citizens, and especially in the properties of small land holders. They have been exhorted to it in those beautiful *letters on the aristocracy and property*, cited by us elsewhere, of Rupert, and most recently we find them exhorted again to [such shift of lifestyle] by the letter of the Count of Chambord in France who incites [the aristocracy] to live on their lands and occupy themselves with beneficence towards the persons there: so true it is that gratuitous service is not always and totally *gratuitous*!

Combine this therefore with those feelings of love of country, of honor, of ambition, the influence, that is no less rational, of religious or Catholic disinterest, and tell me what difficulty will arise in admitting that Catholic economics would lead to a most remarkable savings on the salaries of government office-holders?

28. Add to this that the spirit of dependence, or of *voluntary* order, will render [citizens] governable by fewer persons (as in recent memory we saw in certain States, where three or four officials fully managed that which nowadays requires 40 or 50). [It] would render, as we say, the multitude governable by few, while

the instinct of independence makes necessary an army of officials, of judges, of spies, of police. Thus you will understand that the Catholic economist in putting a limit on enriching the State, does not take away any of those means that would be able to help in the right ordering of society and the smooth operation of affairs. [The Catholic economist] substitutes the immense force of moral sentiments in the place of the shamefully exclusive [material] self-interest of the heterodox economist. On the other hand, heterodox economics [culminates] in that type of communism that requires squeezing what it can from subjects in order to enrich the treasury, multiplying government officials which will themselves become regulators rather than producers of wealth. Multiplying the offices and salaries to slake the thirst of the greedy and ambitious, especially the young, they end up discouraging the more useful and less ostentatious arts, which is to say they diminish wealth and multiply greed. Anyone can see what a disaster this is for public finance.

29. We are well aware that such a total mutation in social passions and opinion concerning wealth and [self-]interest is not the work of a day nor of a year; just as neither of a day nor of a year will be the work turning perfectly to Catholicism that sentiment of heterodoxy that unknowingly guides so many who believe themselves true and perfect Catholics. But must we for this lose heart? Must we abandon laying foundations in minds because the building itself will only be inhabited by distant grandchildren? With this kind of reasoning the apostles should have hidden themselves away and been quiet in the cenacle, since it was going to take three centuries of blood before the splendor of that light that shines so brightly today on all the paths of Christian civilization was going to flash forth from the catacombs.

30. On the other hand, we are well heartened by the rapidity with which thoughts today fly, powerful like steam, penetrating like an electric light; we are heartened by the immense increase of the Catholic sentiment everywhere taking hold, attested by those wonders of the Propagation of the Faith, of Catholic committees, of the hierarchy, of the ecclesiastical Synods renewed in many places, of the admirable Austrian Concordat, of the emancipation of the Raiyah* in Turkey, the renewed pilgrimages to the Holy Places, and a thousand other similar, unexpected, phenomena that seem to say to the Bride of Christ: *iam hyems transit*.** We are heartened even (since we are speaking about Catholic economy)

* Second-class Jewish and Christian subjects in the Ottoman Empire.

** "Winter is already passing."

how that same ferocious and terrifying specter of socialism, given birth from heterodox economics, threatens from its caves every property owner with plunder, every society with deadly extermination.

31. Speak therefore of a religious economics and demonstrate how with a return to the piety of our ancestors the great panacea of the economic question is finally proposed, as well as for every other social wound. Demonstrate how the Catholic sentiment, opposing the principle of independence [with] religious humbling of human will in front of its Creator, mankind will come to love order more than pleasure, and [will come] to arrange [according to that preference] the place of honor to honest dealings, the one true happiness of pilgrim man, not taking pleasure in wealth, which might well serve as a means, but not as an end [in itself] equated with happiness. Demonstrate how the august voice of the Creator reigning [with] justice and love among Catholics [compares with] that antagonism, that [unlimited] competition that dictates the law of value in heterodox society with supply and demand, [while] in Catholic society people receive value from those supreme virtues in Catholic society, [justice and charity]—[that difference] transforms the universal war of Hobbes into the universal cooperation of equals, hierarchically coordinated in their work under the supreme Master. Show how in this hierarchy of equals the great aim of everyone is not enriching themselves in the present, but in the enjoyment [together] of future delights, and in the expectation of such a future [they understand] wealth is a means of sustenance, work is acquired by merit, that even a modest amount of income suffices for sustenance, and that the surplus is easily used on social goods. When wealth tends to distribute itself, on its own, common people are less driven to theft, and [governments] are less reluctant to provide [for the future] when Treasuries are not held down with the immense weight of satisfying the cupidity for luxury. [Governments] can leave to citizens their just liberty in work and pocket book, and end that fiscal pressure to enrich the State leaving the people penniless. The result for those that are poor, is that they find themselves in such a state free to progress from poverty to wealth, while the wealthy on the other hand are incited to deepen their relief of the poor. And finally, [note] that all of this transformation has been realized with an unimaginable gentleness not from some inexorable right armed with the rigor of justice for stripping from others what is due, but from the internal impulse of conscience that encourages accomplishing duties towards others even superabundantly. The supreme ruler, thus unburdened of the necessity of squeezing people's purses under a press, turns naturally to his social function, not as a shopkeeper looking to enrich the State, but as a wise person who coordinates citizens, who, lovers [now] of order, as comes naturally

to a reasonable person, naturally give support back to this [government] as coordinator. The ferment from perpetual [economic] crises ends, as economy becomes a science of moral order, from the system of Catholic truths, and not merely of simple material growth.

32. All this complex of truth, if it were to be well meditated and explained, could perhaps open many eyes. [We need] to highlight the tight links that unite economy with religion, and the impossibility, by consequence of healing economic wounds without restoring the religious principle.

We, on our side, will organize ourselves to continue applying these fundamental truths to the philosophy of economic science, stressing the contradictory effects of the two contrary principles, as we have done before in our treatment on usury. It is enough for us today to have put clearly the total diversity of the two economies and of the unequivocal reasoning from the opposed solutions that these present to every social problem. This [confusion] is the result of the fundamental opposition of the two [founding, axiomatic] principles, CREATION and INDEPENDENCE, and in their contrary tendencies towards *order* and towards *pleasure*.

§VI. *Bastiat Confirms Our Doctrine.*

SUMMARY (OF THE ARGUMENT)

1. Opportune [analysis] of such apologist.
2. He too critiques the first principles of heterodox [economy].
3. Economy is strictly utilitarian.
4. [Self-]interest is founded on Epicureanism
5. and on man the animal.
6. Vain excuse based on a false concept.
7. Gives birth to an historic lie
8. and an incomplete answer to the first objection
9. where the historic error is defended with a false idea of human nature.
10. Second response, two moralities.
11. False that these are morally reconcilable.
12. [Self-]interest prevails over morality.
13. Gives rise to insurrections.
14. and it is not progressive.
15. Epilog of the first critical review.
16. Another example of an insufficient theory.
17. [Heterodox economy] founds free markets on a false conception of nature.
18. Incomplete response to the dilemma.
19. Providence does not fail to meet needs.
20. Conclusion.

1. Even though the description of heterodox economics presented by us appears confirmed and sustained not only by logic of reason but also by the authority of many economists, and that which counts even more, from the experience of the facts, yet certain good souls who hesitate to judge such grotesque errors, maybe too blindly taken in by protests of honesty and rectitude, and of good intentions of honest but deluded souls will be tempted to suspect equivocations or mistakes in the idea we have described of heterodox economics. Neither should we be much surprised by their hesitation since it is all too common for debaters to attribute hyperbolic consequences [from the ideas of] authors they want to refute. Adversaries may make [claims] that have [even] been proven absolutely false. We do not believe that such a modesty is always justifiable. It is not a good excuse for leading readers into the dilemma of either negating logic or of denying horrible consequences [in front of their eyes].

In our case, that hardly matters since all that we have said concerning the principles of heterodox economy is in substance recognized by the economists

themselves, as grist for their mill. For removing any doubt among our readers we will advance and examine the testimony of one of the most celebrated of current economists, having chosen from among those who have the reputation of [being] the most honest. The valiant and honest writer undertakes to weave together an apologia of his science against those who accuse it of little morality. If in such a moment, such a man confirms our accusation, who could possibly suspect him of being an exaggerator? Since clearing up the errors of [this] apologist may well be of great utility in [understanding] true doctrines, little by little we will cite the authority with which he professes error, and we will indicate the critique by which every mask will be removed.

The Author that we present to you is the celebrated Frédéric Bastiat, who principally in two works presents himself as the defender of political economy. Namely in the *Economic Sophisms*,* second series, second chapter, entitled “Two Systems of Ethics,” and in the *Economic Harmonies*** dedicated to the French youth to strengthen them against communism, [attempting] to demonstrate [how] economics [is] the friend of liberty.

2. We shall begin with this second [work] since the author professes in [this work] to trace back *human sensibility and activity to primordial phenomena in the nebulous regions of metaphysics*, in order to consider *the questions* not frivolously but on solid [ground].²¹ Here in the second chapter, entitled *Needs, Efforts, Satisfactions*, after having deplored the anarchy in ideas and facts (note that he had published this chapter the first time in September 1848), promises to investigate the natural harmonies of political economics with the other moral sciences. And to that end: “economy,” he says, “has man as its subject, but not the whole man, since the most sympathetic part of him, piety, love, friendship, patriotism, etc., all that has been invaded by Morality, leaving to its sister, economics, no other realm but the cold region of interest.” As you see, not only does the author concede that which we have said, that heterodox economics bases itself only on interest, but he undertakes defending the exclusivity of this tendency for a deliberate purpose. And here are the proofs to which he has recourse.

*Frédéric Bastiat, *Economic Sophisms*, trans. Arthur Goddard (Irvington-on-Hudson, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc. [1845] 1996), <https://www.econlib.org/library/Bastiat/basSoph.html>.

**Frédéric Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, trans. George B. de Huszar and ed. W. Hayden Boyers (Irvington-on-Hudson, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, Inc. [1850] 1996), <https://www.econlib.org/library/Bastiat/basHar.html>.

²¹ Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, 45, 46.

3. “What does political economy treat? Of contracts between persons unknown [to each other] with nothing else owed mutually to each other than simple justice, and who defend [their] interests and seek to make them prevail; while claiming more than that [on any other basis] would be injustice.”²²

The science of economy therefore has no other region than that of [self-] interest, since it concerns man in the act of contracting an exchange, and the two contracting parties have no other mutual duty than rigorous justice. So he confirms that which we have said: every idea of benevolence, of equity, of Christian charity is excluded by heterodox economics.

4. Let us explain now a bit better what is this interest according to Bastiat, and you will see that it is none other than a branch of the most unabashed and gross Epicureanism. “Man,” here is his judgment (whether he be material or spiritual we will not enter into this question), “man as a passive being is subject to sensations, either painful or pleasurable. As an active [being] he makes the effort to keep at bay the former and to multiply the latter, and this effort also is a [type of] suffering, but a suffering with which one tries to remove the other suffering of need and to reach an end in satisfaction or in enjoyment. Now considering that suffering and enjoyment are affections of the person, we cannot doubt that personal interest is none other than the master spring of humanity.”²³

In these few words the reader sees that which in the preceding paragraphs we have noted: heterodox economics regards in man only the animalistic part (sensitive man), and from the animal tendencies he claims to infer what will be, regularly speaking, the behavior of men in the use of their possessions. This inference seems to the author an undoubtable axiom: *We cannot doubt that personal interest is none other than the great spring of humanity.** If only he were content to say ONE of the great springs!²⁴ But with saying THE *great spring* he concludes that man operates primarily by [self-]interest; this is the perfectly correct conclusion, or consequence, of having established animalistic man, and *sensitivity*, as the first economic principle.

²² Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, 45, 46.

²³ The author repeats this same sentiment at p. 42, and elsewhere.

* Translated from the French.

²⁴ Translated from French: “Everything is personal in this ensemble of phenomena, as much the Sensation that precedes the effort, as the satisfaction that follows it. We cannot doubt therefore that personal interest is none other than the great spring of humanity.” Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, 47.

5. And what? Is not man also endowed with reason with which he knows both duties and rights, and [differences among them] in rigor and urgency? And from knowing them, does not an impulse arise in him to act this way or that in the dispensation of his own goods? And this impulse extended universally in society would it not produce phenomena totally different from those of [a society based on] sensations and [self-]interest?

If this is so obvious, then that an economy based solely on the principle of [self-interest] will be a disfigured economy will be evident in the same way. Economists will be unable to make sense of economic phenomena in the past, similarly [incompetent] in the prediction of the future. M. Bastiat will come in a bit to confirm in facts this incapacity of his system for explaining history. In the meantime, let us hear again the defense that he offers for having so concentrated economic [science] on [self-]interest alone.

6. “Great injustice,” he says, “to criticize our science for not having the beauty and unction of ethics. Do you not see that this would be to defeat its nature? If human conventions that are aimed at wealth are the subject of economic science, if in these conventions persons [unknown to each other] compete, for whom nothing is mutually owed and who pay attention only to justice and to interest; why suppose from us sentimental enthusiasms and heroic sacrifices?” (*Economic Harmonies*, p. 45).

Excuse us M. Bastiat, no one asks of you either sentimentalism or heroisms: one asks of you the simple truth of economic [life], and an adequate explanation of the phenomena that it presents. If you want to call economics the science of jurists who clarify the rigorous rights of either party, that would be a question of words in which we do not see why you would want to substitute the word *economics* for the word *jurisprudence*. If instead you intend with the science of public economics to explain to us the phenomena that happen in the use of possessions among men, which is to say among persons motivated both by sensation and by reason, and free to have prevail this part or that, then we would ask you if that science takes into account both of these principles. We would ask you a simple truth of fact and the full contribution of reasoning: that is asking you only not to forget that which you yourself had written, [i.e., that the freedom and frailty of] reasoning should never be forgotten.²⁵

²⁵ “We can have a good or bad judgment, make a good or bad choice. It is never useless to remind this to people when one speaks to them of Liberty.” Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, 48. [translated from French]

7. You have certainly lowered [the human condition] to the extent that you are pleased to reduce it to pure sensation; man will not change nature in any case: and history that witnesses with horror the excesses of *auri sacra fames*,* will witness equally, but with veneration, all the good that liberality and charity have produced in the temporal order. And economic science, if it wants to be complete in its explanation of production and distribution of wealth, while it speaks of wealth produced by agriculturalists, middlemen, and salaried administrators, it should not remain silent on that which is produced by colonies of Trappists or by gratuitous service of administrators of pious congregations. If [economic science] wants to show us how wealth, from the power of [self-]interest, gets distributed among property owners, capitalists, agricultural workers, and debt collectors, it must also show us that where Catholic charity reigns a portion from the capitalist and property owner is distributed in great part as balm on the back of the worker, equalizing with generosity that which comes unequal by chance. If [economic science] wants to speak to us of the disproportion that results under purely natural influence between the increases of wealth and increases of population, then it must not remain silent on how the institution of Catholic celibacy and the apotheosis of virginity and evangelical poverty balance out-of-balance scales. If you, M. Frédéric, had introduced this reasonable element in your economic calculations, who knows how much could have changed in your first chapter of the second series of *Economic Sophisms*, where you introduce and abominate [your version of] a theocracy that plunders the people promising to open the gates of Heaven to them, and instead arriving at so crushing people with that [illusion] that they become incapable of production [in the here and now].

Here is, if we are not going astray, the necessary function of economic science, that which the heterodox economists will never be fully up to the task [of explaining] with their narrow-minded way in which they contemplate their half-man, giving material interest as *principal spring* to his behavior: from which, not rarely, must arise incomplete and erroneous solutions, of which Bastiat himself will be able to submit to us not few examples.

8. And the first one we will take from that other apologia of the economists presented by Bastiat in the second series of the *Economic Sophisms*, [the] second chapter “Two Systems of Ethics.” He proposes with that to show the harmony between moralists and economists, and having first shown there in how many ways theft (*plunder*) occurs in society: “How?” he asks of himself, “will theft be inevitable, a necessary circumstance of society, or will we find an alternative

* “the accursed greed for gold”

to always seeing theft, either by violence against the weak, or by fraud against the foolish? Is therefore human nature so wicked that we cannot hope for something better?"

9. "The colors of the picture are murky, you reply, but it is not my fault that such is man, if his heart is insatiable in desires, if to satisfy them it takes work, and if work is displeasing to man, if from this displeasure combined with the desire for enjoyment, arises the perpetual struggle to increase one's own pleasures putting by force or by fraud work on the backs of others. Such is man in History and we cannot cancel out History."

10. The confession is explicit and clear; and our accusation against heterodox economics gets adopted here by Bastiat as a justification for the economists. The economists make a savage of man, because, they say, as such is man by nature (and such is logically Epicurean man, sensitive man). Given that moreover the apologist sensed the weakness of such an answer, he goes right away to the second. "Thanks to heaven," he says, "notwithstanding the mania to enjoy everything, for individuals to gobble everything, a general tendency to share enjoyments and pains equally is noted in the universe. Therefore we must say that there has been set a force in society by Providence, a law that tends to remove the iniquity and to put justice into play. Now what is this force, this law?"

"Since in every maleficent act we can look at two ends, that is the *agent* and the *patient* [the person upon whom the action is performed], it is seen that the act can cease either because the agent abstains or because the patient begins to resist. Thus two cooperators towards good: religious or philosophical morality, and economic morality. Religious morality turns to the agent and says to him: *master your passions, sacrifice your interests*. Economic morality turns to the patient and stimulates him to react against the actions that wound him, *rendering thus oppression difficult and risky*. Religious [morality] condemns the guilty act in itself, economic [morality] condemns it for the damage it produces. The triumph of the moralist is more beautiful when it works, that of the economist is easier to gain and more lasting. These two forces conspire therefore to put an end to the guilty act, the first to control the agent, the second with counterbalancing against it the reaction of the patient. Why then," Bastiat asks, "why refute the second while it cooperates with the first?"

11. The reader has already replied in his heart. We refute the second [force] because if it may well conspire materially in a particular case, but it conflicts morally with the doctrine to which it appeals [in every case]: because exhorting

to the patient, resistance based on attachment to wealth is itself diametrically opposed by those who inculcate the disdain of wealth for obtaining cessation of the maleficent action by the agent against the resistance.

If the economists would admit, as Catholics admit, those two tendencies in man that the Apostle to the gentiles called law of the mind and law of the members; but above all if they would admit that the second [of those tendencies] must be subordinated to the first, then they would comprehend that cooperation asserted by Bastiat. In fact, there is no judicious moralist among Catholics who does not advise the practice in education of uniting the animalistic tendencies with the rational tendencies, and reconciling these with the religious perspective. But if that were admitted by Bastiat, it would make him [admit] more of human nature than that wicked description with which he represented it to us as slave to pleasure and enemy of work (*attracted to enjoyments, repugnance for effort*). It is one thing [to say] that in nature there is also the tendency towards pleasure, another [to say] that man is the slave to [pleasure]. If reason is given to man, for dominating this tendency [towards pleasure], why posit only in this [one tendency] the principal spring of human action?

But [for] Bastiat, who only understands half man, it is natural that he dares to invoke history for confirmation of such a doctrine: that history that from the early days of Christianity to our own days does not cease to represent to us by the thousands the ranks of those who sell their patrimony for distributing the proceeds among the brothers. The incredulous Economist does not see, unfortunately, that which today forms the admiration and enthusiasm of Europe, the heroism of the clergy and of the Sisters in Crimea. But was this a new event created in 1855, or not rather a small episode, a recent scene of the heroic drama that the chosen children of Christianity present for more the eighteen centuries, the history of which should not be unknown to M. Frédéric?

12. Here is how Bastiat, considering in the nature of man solely the grosser part, was constrained to eliminate from history a long series of facts that need to be calculated and explained. Falsified this way, man and history, who does not see that this economy, far from cooperating with morality, impugns it? While morality on one side says to the agent: *Sacrifice your [material] interests*, economics says to the patient: *defend your [material] interests, you have the right*. If the agent and the patient were two, totally separate persons, it would mean that the two precepts could cooperate. When the coachman holds [one] horse back with the bridle on the left, and suddenly applies the lash [to the one] on the right, he will obtain from the contest of both horses a composite effect to which both conspire, and send hitch and coach in circles. But the *agent* and the *patient* of

M. Bastiat are not quite distinct and diverse as the right horse from the one on the left; the one that today is the agent, tomorrow is the patient; the one today sells, and tomorrow buys, the one who today bargains with one more rich and powerful, tomorrow acts the pretentious boss with one poorer and weaker than himself. With this understood, if yesterday you had made the exhortation to the patient to fight back against oppressors for the love of riches or of status how can you hope that today he will be disposed to sacrifice these interests for the good of his neighbor?

You see, reader: the exhortation of the economist is precisely the opposite of that of the Catholic moralist, of which it tends to destroy every influence. And since, according to Bastiat, the triumph of the economist is *easier and more certain*, you can bet one-hundred to one that the mass of people will more easily learn morality that inspires a *justifiable mistrust* against oppressors *making oppression difficult*, than that other system of ethics that suggests sacrifice with *eloquence* and with the prize of *admiration and sympathy* (p. 130).

13. The French economist strengthens his argument with showing that economics not only excites the oppressed to reaction, but shows also to the oppressor that the evil act *produces dangers, provokes reprisals, requires expensive precautions* (p. 130). But if the Author believes [he can] obtain the conversion of the oppressor with this [argument], truly he would reveal a naiveté unworthy of a man of the world. But no, truth be praised, the Author does not hope that: he leaves converting oppressors to religious morality, and for political economy he contents himself if he succeeds in illuminating [the understanding] of the oppressed: *that religious morality touches the heart, if it can, of the Tartuffes [hypocrites], the Caesars, the colonizers, the position seekers, the monopolists, etc. The task of political economy is to enlighten their dupes* (p. 132).^{*} He trusts that the light of political economy alone will produce universal hate for the oppressor and sympathy towards the oppressed. We do not know how much probability this hope has: but consider that for this to take real effect, economic calculations were necessary for making the victim sympathetic and the oppressor odious?

14. The Author concludes [with] asking which of the two moralities more efficaciously works towards social progress: and he responds that it is the *defensive morality of the economists*, since very often the audacity of the oppressors was beaten by the *virile resistance* of the oppressed. He does not find a memory of

^{*} Translated from the French.

any oppressor that desisted spontaneously from evil-doing. It is apparent that historical memory is not always very reliable, or certainly little versed in the history of the Church. Given even that the *virile resistance* were more efficacious at impeding the fact of oppression, it would be opportune to calculate how many times the oppressed who resist [this way] transform themselves into Jacobin oppressors, and to compare how many evils attach to the resistance versus the evils produced under the oppressor, and found, finally, [the figures all collected], it would be useful to remember that [these calculations] represented a purely material result, and not, as the author supposes, *social progress*.

15. Let us conclude therefore summarizing the analysis of the apologia and of the response. According to Bastiat, man by nature [is] slave to pleasure and enemy of effort, [therefore] whomever [would] want to procure the good of society can find no more efficacious means than to stimulate the oppressed to resistance, and this exactly is that which the economists seek to advance.

In this first account, the idea of human nature is false: [human nature] which leans towards pleasure by instinct, inclines towards duty by reason, and much more when it is supported by Faith.

To calculate only the animalistic element as the foundation for economic science is to found it on a falsehood.

History is invoked by Bastiat to testify in favor of his theory: and yet history is precisely that which fights against it. Because on the one side [history] shows in paganism and in certain corrupt parts of Christian society the triumph of animalistic man, [history] shows in other parts marvels of disinterest and sacrifice.

According to Bastiat, the moral [philosophy] of the economist, that suggests resistance to the victim, cooperates (but more usefully) with Catholic moral [philosophy] that aims at converting the oppressor. But the truth is that, even if that resistance does not produce greater evils at times, economic science with its suggested principles tends to abolish Catholic morals. Catholic morality [urges] renunciation of worldly goods as persuasion against evil-doing; [economic science] looks to inebriate the people with the mania of self-enrichment and enjoyment to stir up resistance.

This mania, according to Bastiat, should produce social progress, and it might even seem that he is right, if social progress is what he calls the [mere] increase of material resources. The truth is otherwise: These heterodox principles begin [with making] true social progress impossible, that is of the order of justice and the tranquility of peace, unleashing all the most savage passions [in man] that end up transforming society into a kingdom of cannibals and burying under the ruins of order that same material growth.

16. Our observations on the chapter “Two Systems of Ethics” in *Economic Sophisms* end here. The *Harmonies* returns to present us another example of the gaps and of the errors that enter into [heterodox] economics by the false principle, upon which it wants to build, of man purely sensitive and driven in the matter of wealth by simple [self-]interest. He speaks in the introduction of this book to French youth: concerned to inculcate in them the great economic dogma of *free trade*, he begins with proposing this question: *Are human interests left to themselves in harmony or antagonism?* “There are two solutions,” responds Bastiat, “one is of the socialists who see *radical antagonism of interests* and deduce from that the necessity of reorganizing interests and society artificially. The other is of the economists, who see all interests as bound in general harmony, and these do not need violence, but liberty” (p. 4).

“When one is convinced,” adds Bastiat, “that liquid tends by nature to level itself out, a more sure manner for perfecting that levelling cannot be found than to leave it in complete liberty.”

17. What value does this argument by M. Frédéric have? All the value that a comparison of human society with a liquid that tends to level itself could [possibly] have. So what is the reason why such is the tendency of liquid? It is the homogeneity of its molecules. In fact, pour out liquids of various sorts and as well various specific gravities, into a vase, and you will have those various layers that physicists show in an ampule as the proof of various gravities. A liquid put on the flame, you will see it agitated with sustained boiling because of the unequal heating of the molecules.

Now, is human nature such a homogeneous composite? When one speaks of liberty (and it is Bastiat himself who reminds us) one should never forget the free will and the fallibility of the mind with which judgments and resolutions can be formed.²⁶ Add to this that man is not directed like molecules of liquid solely by the tendency downward: Man finds in the reason and in the heart that light and that heat that can lift him up to the highest regions of heaven. Compound with these elements that ocean that we call society, and then tell us if [just] leaving them freedom is the most secure manner for rendering its level perfect. As far as we believe to know from the evidence, [many of] these human molecules left free to use their physical and moral strengths, will surely use physical forces to oppress honest [people], little concerned about right, and the moral forces will

²⁶ Bastiat, *Harmonies*, 48.

succumb, because for opposing grave difficulties deeds are [often necessary] that honest persons find difficult to accept. Exactly for this reason, M. Bastiat invoked economic morality, the morality of [material self-]interest, in order to stimulate the patient to face [hard realities] of resistance.

18. Thus you see how the dilemma was handicapped from the first questioning: so long as it asked if interests were in harmony or in antagonism, for inferring from that whether they should be left or not left in liberty. Whomever would have wanted fully to respond to that would have had to say that human interests are not fully in harmony, neither fully contrary. It would be harmonious if all men governed themselves with reason, because reason says the same thing to all, and the good of justice can be shared by all, without anyone losing by it. But since common people (and I speak also of fashionable people) leave themselves guided by their senses, the good of which cannot be shared by one without it becoming diminished in another, the interests of men find themselves [routinely] in antagonism; and, abandoned to themselves, leads society to that perpetual boiling that liquid suffers on the burner from unequal saturation of molecules.

19. We are not obliged to conclude, because of this, to say that the work of Providence is imperfect.²⁷ It is not the fault of [Providence] that the economists have wanted to tear man into two parts, and to renounce all at once the influence of reason and that of the faith and of grace, with which [Providence] would correct the disordered impulses of animalistic man.

²⁷ *I have a total faith in the wisdom of the laws of providence, and by this reason I have faith in Liberty.* (11)

20. Here, dear reader, we have some examples with which one of the premier modern economists confirms our criticisms. It is not us anymore but it is Frédéric Bastiat who, while he makes himself an apologist for economic [science], confesses candidly that the economists have founded everything on [an Epicurean concept of self-]interest, abandoning to the moralists all the noble sentiments of the human heart. He confesses that he treats men as if the ones and the others of these noble sentiments] were perfectly unknown, as if men are not obliged by anything other than strict justice (and God knows of what sort of justice he speaks; we do not want to seek it). And with that principle these [economists] undertake to explain all the phenomena of production and distribution of wealth. But the principle being false, false must be the explanation that is born from it.