

SOPHISMS OF THE PROTECTIVE POLICY

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Sophisms of the Protective Policy by Fr. Bastiat

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FR. BASTIAT

**SOPHISMS OF THE
PROTECTIVE
POLICY**

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TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

THIS little volume is presented to your serious consideration. There is not one of you whom it does not materially concern.

The importance of the subjects discussed, the mischievous effects of the Sophisms exposed, and the terse brevity and ability with which the whole is written, inspire the subscriber with the hope that in a country where every man may be called upon to deliberate and decide upon public affairs, it may convince every unprejudiced citizen, that it is *not nature*, but *ignorance* and *bad government* which limit the productive powers of industry, and that in fulfilling the duty of a legislator, *public* and not *private* interests should form the exclusive object of his legislation; that "he is not to frame systems and devise schemes for increasing the wealth and enjoyments of *particular classes*, but to apply himself to discover

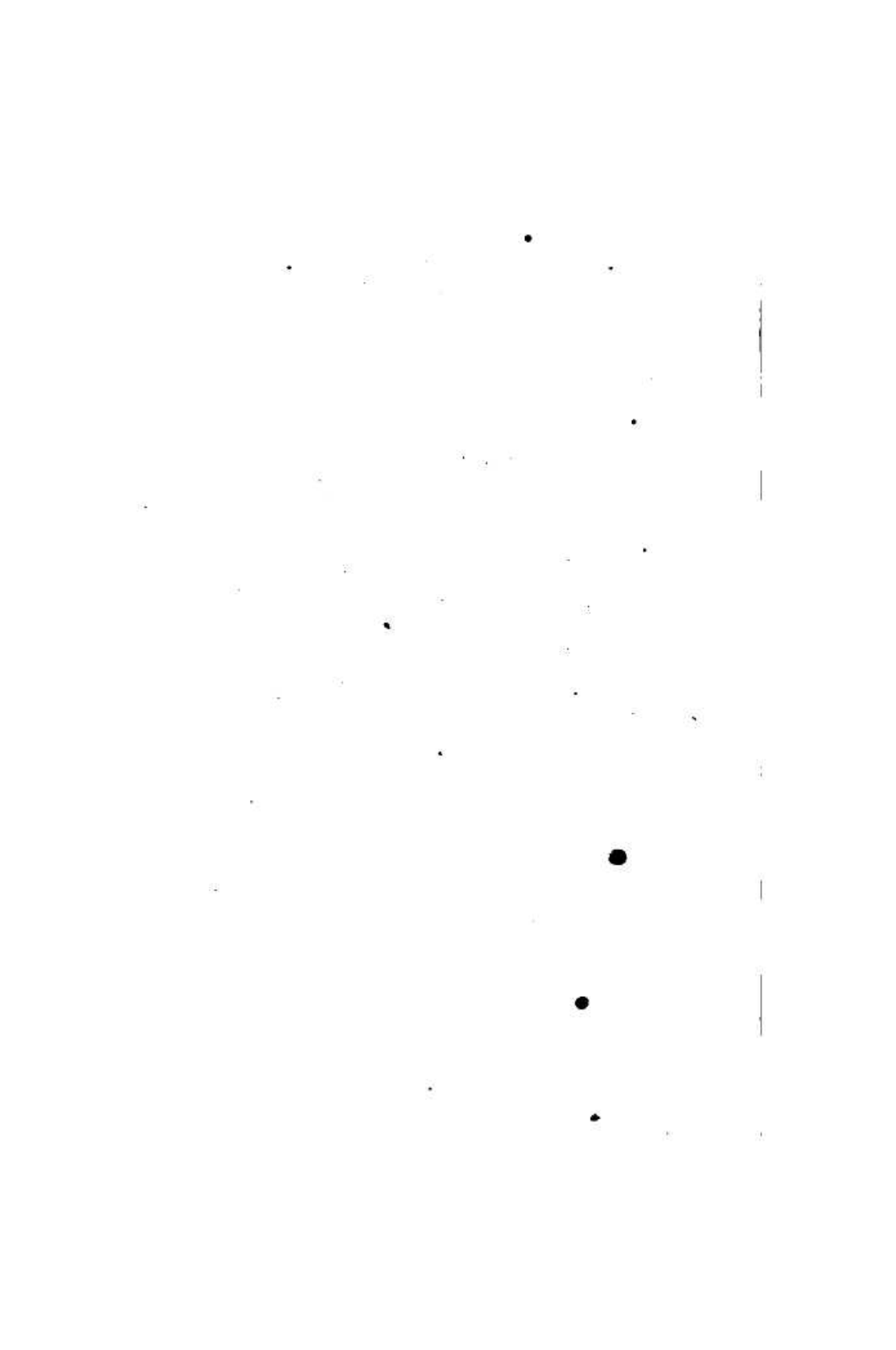
the sources of *national wealth* and *universal prosperity*, and the means by which they may be rendered most productive."

The subscriber vouches for the accuracy of this translation, which he offers to the American public, with the hope that it may be found useful in the correction of some popular errors which have too much influenced the legislation not only of our own country but of the whole world.

D. J. McCORD.

LANG STRE, S. C., Jan. 18, 1848.

Sophisms of the Protective Policy.



SOPHISMS
OF THE
PROTECTIVE POLICY.

My object in this little volume has been to refute some of the arguments usually advanced against Free Trade.

I am not seeking a combat with the protectionists. I merely advance a principle which I am anxious to present clearly to the minds of sincere men, who hesitate because they doubt.

I am not of the number of those who maintain that protection is supported by interests. I believe that it is founded upon errors, or if you will, upon *incomplete truths*. Too many fear free trade, for this apprehension to be other than sincere.

My aspirations are perhaps high; but I confess that it would give me pleasure to hope that this little work might become, as it were, a *manual* for such men as may be called upon to decide between the two princi-

ples. When one has not made oneself perfectly familiar with the doctrines of free trade, the sophisms of protection perpetually return to the mind under one form or another; and, on each occasion, in order to counteract their effect, it is necessary to enter into a long and laborious analysis. Few, and least of all legislators, have leisure for this labor, which I would, on this account, wish to present clearly drawn up to their hand.

But it may be said, are then the benefits of free trade so hidden, as to be perceptible only to economists by profession?

Yes; we confess it; our adversaries in the discussion have a signal advantage over us. They can, in a few words, present an incomplete truth; which, for us to show that it is incomplete, renders necessary long and uninteresting dissertations.

This results from the fact that protection accumulates upon a single point the good which it effects, while the evil inflicted is infused throughout the mass. The one strikes the eye at a first glance, while the other becomes perceptible only to close investigation. With regard to free trade, precisely the reverse is the case.

It is thus with almost all questions of political economy.

If you say, for instance: There is a machine which has turned out of employment thirty workmen;