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Frederic Bastiat

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Frédéric Bastiat was a keen observer and analyst of political and economic problems and a passionate proponent of liberal economic theory. ***"The Law," "The State," and Other Political Writings (1843–1850),*** collects nineteen of Bastiat's "pamphlets," or articles, ranging from the theory of value and rent, public choice and collective action, government intervention and regulation, the balance of trade, education, and trade unions to price controls, capital and growth, and taxation. Many of these are topics still relevant and debated today.

Bastiat's famous essay "*The Law"* showcases his talents as an activist for the free market. He explains that the law, far from being what it ought to be, "namely the instrument that enabled the state to protect individuals' rights and property, had become the means for what he termed 'spoliation,' or plunder." From the article *"The State,"* in which Bastiat argues against socialism, comes perhaps his best-remembered quotation: "The state is the great fiction by which everyone endeavors to live at the expense of everyone else."

Throughout his articles, Bastiat demonstrates how the combination of careful logic, consistency of principle, and clarity of exposition is the instrument for solving most economic and social problems. Readers will find extensive introductory material, including notes on the translation and on the editions of the *OEuvres Complètes*, a chronology of Bastiat's life and works, two maps of France showing the cities associated with Bastiat, annotations to the articles, and a bibliography. A special section provides little-known anecdotes about Bastiat and his contemporaries, including his editor Prosper Paillottet, who became Bastiat's friend and eventually his executor.

In addition, this edition also contains footnotes and glossary entries that help explain the political, economic, and intellectual context in which Bastiat lived and worked. Filling gaps on Bastiat and his philosophy, this volume features articles that have never before been translated in English.

Frédéric Bastiat (1801–1850) was one of the leading advocates of free markets and free trade in the mid-nineteenth century.

Jacques de Guenin is founder of the Cercle Frédéric Bastiat. He is a graduate of the École des Mines in Paris and holds a Master of Sciences from the University of California, Berkeley.

Pascal Salin is Emeritus Professor of Economics, Paris University, and former president of the Mont Pelerin Society. He is the author of *Libéralisme; Français, n'ayez pas peur du libéralism*; and *Revenir au capitalisme, pour éviter les crises.*

Dennis O'Keeffe is Professor of Social Science at the University of Buckingham, Buckingham, England, and is Senior Research Fellow in Education at the Institute of Economic Affairs, London.

David M. Hart has a Ph.D. in history from King's College, Cambridge, and is the Director of Liberty Fund's Online Library of Liberty.

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