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ESSAYS IN POPULAR & PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY.



JUSTICE IN THE
REVOLUTION AND IN
THE CHURCH

BY P.-J. PROUDHON.



FIRST STUDY:
POSITION OF THE PROBLEM
OF JUSTICE.



TRANSLATED BY SHAWN P. WILBUR

FROM THE NEW EDITION,
REVISED, CORRECTED AND EXPANDED, ORIGINALLY
PUBLISHED IN 1860.



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NEW PROUDHON LIBRARY

— WORKING DRAFTS —

The text presented here is a more or less unpolished draft, produced as part of the NEW PROUDHON LIBRARY project, an attempt to establish an English-language edition of the major works of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and a selection of related documents. There is a good deal here that is unfinished and some that will undoubtedly be subject to revision. It has seemed useful, however, to supplement the work of translation and revision with public discussion, so I am making relatively complete drafts available to readers while the project is in progress.

In the interest of minimizing the variants floating around on the internet, please don't archive these drafts in public depositories other than the Libertarian Labyrinth. The texts will eventually be available in archives like the Anarchist Library. In the meantime, I will be setting up a directory of the most recent drafts reachable at

proudhonlibrary.org.

— Shawn P. Wilbur

WORKING NOTES

— MARCH 3, 2023 —

FIRST STUDY.

POSITION OF THE PROBLEM OF JUSTICE.



TO HIS EMINENCE
MONSEIGNEUR LE CARDINAL MATTHIEU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BESANÇON.

MONSEIGNEUR,

Have you heard of a small book, in 32mo format, with a yellow cover, that appeared, some two years ago, under this title: Proudhon, by Eugène de Mirecourt, from Gustave Havard, Publisher, Rue Guénégaud, Paris?

— No, you answer, my memories do not go back so far. I don't know the author or his work.

— Excuse me, Monsignor: this little book is part of a collection called *Les Contemporains*. It is number 32 in the series. It is a so-called biography whose author, M. de Mirecourt, after having recognized, in his own way, that my private life is unassailable, nevertheless concludes and clearly suggests, to anyone with a Christian heart, that I am a scoundrel. The

nature of the information obtained by the author, the spirit in which his notice is written, the interest it claims to serve, everything, in my eyes, reveals an ecclesiastical origin.

— In truth, sir, I don't understand you. What at you getting at?

— There is found there a quotation from a letter addressed to the biographer by a *holy archbishop*, who, however, is not otherwise identified. As this letter contains details about my family, about my life as a young man, spent entirely in the country, I believed that it could only come from you, Monsignor. Do you recognize it?

— Sir, what do you mean by this interrogation? Your questions are becoming more indiscreet. I don't owe you an explanation.

— Well, Monseigneur, I have seen the letter (B); that good M. de Mirecourt was kind enough to show it to me. The holy archbishop who provided the author of *Les Contemporains* with such precious notes is none other than Mgr. CÉSAIRE MATTHIEU, archbishop of Besançon, cardinal, senator, and, as in the past, prince of the Holy Empire...

For God's sake, Monsignor! What did you

think you were doing? You, in collaboration with a libelous enterprise? You, the friend of M. de Mirecourt! — which will not, God forbid, cause me to forget myself so far as to treat you as *Le compère Matthieu!*... Did you even know the man with whom you had this correspondence? Was it in order to encourage his work—a work of scandal, some have said of blackmail—that you blessed this *bohemian* pen, which is not intimidated by the police correctional?

M. de Mirecourt approached me one evening on my doorstep, and declared his intention of publishing my biography. The approach he made to me was all courtesy, he said: *he wanted to save the man*; it was for him only an assessment of my ideas in chronological. It was then that he showed me the letter he had from you, Monsignor, which affected me, I admit it to you, to the highest degree. Pastor of my native town, in the absence of charity for my person, all you needed was that spirit of compatriotism, which animates all Franche-Comtois, to refrain from handing over a member of the Bisontine family to the malice of the pamphleteer.

Well, Monsignor! Do you think I care about my biography and its author? Am I not one of the least abused of *Les Contemporains*? And you

yourself, after all, have you not done me justice? What pained me was to encounter you in such a matter; it was that you represented my country to me, and that when I saw your signature I felt one of those invisible bonds that bind every man to his country break within me.

However, I did not allow my feelings to show, and contented myself with telling M. de Mirecourt that he would oblige me very much not to entertain the public, in any manner, with my person. — It's impossible, he replied, *I am engaged*.

I did not know M. de Mirecourt at all. I had not read any of his publications, as I have only read today the one that concerns me. I assumed that after his *courteous* approach, he himself, an honest critic, would bring me the first copy of his booklet. No doubt he discharged this duty towards you, Monsignor, who cultivates his correspondence. Imagine my surprise on reading this buffoonery steeped in devotion, in which my private life is defiled, and at the end of which the claw of an archbishop is visible!

Here, then, is where French society stands under a religion of charity and a regime of order! These are the morals that the saviors of the family, the protectors of privacy, the masters

of the spiritual life, work to make for us! This is what amuses the public, what Justice suffers, as guardian of persons as well as properties, what the Church approves and encourages! Twenty thousand copies of this alleged biography have been sold. Encouraged by success, M. de Mirecourt continues his martyrology; today it is at number 80.

Of course, I am careful not to give the author of *Les Contemporains* more importance than his readers grant him. I don't even believe that in his heart of hearts he professes any principle, that he belongs to any church. He just doesn't think. Notice, however, that this man, who in the preface placed at the head of number 32, boasts about *the care with which he goes after information*, who, moreover, seems to defy reprisals, who even provokes them, feels supported. He has a bias, a calculated plan for all cases. Since it has pleased him to include me in his gallery of caricatures, he came back to me on his account of things!... Well! Good people who are disconcerted by defamation, please be silent. M. de Mirecourt is not alone here; and when he made up his mind on this trade, he fully counted on your cries. He is above every slight. I don't want to know anything about his

life. Responding to the evil he says of others with the evil he may have committed is a bad way of reasoning, which does not get to the bottom of things. The question is higher: all the barbs you direct against the libelist are wasted. We have to get to the point.

M. de Mirecourt — what do his antecedents and his pseudonym mean to me? — is for me a 32mo of 92 pages, nothing more. What is this 32mo? What does he want from me? What idea does he represent? In the name of what interest did he come to seek me in my retirement, to research my life, my family, my business, and, saddling me with the Catholic *san-benito*, flouting me in the face of the world, in the process of forgetting me?

Now, to these questions, which arise naturally from the fact, I have not gone far to seek the answer. No offense to those who say the opposite, there is nothing more to the author of *Les Contemporains* than a literary adventurer, exploiting public curiosity at the expense of the celebrities of the time. M. de Mirecourt is a sign of the times. He is a champion of divine right, whose work is connected with the system of reaction that prevails at the moment throughout Europe. He

thus apostrophizes his detractors:

“Who are you? where are you from? Advocates of an unworthy cause, plead at your ease, and expect no reply. You can, as much as you please, defend both M. de Lamennais and all those who have deserved our condemnation. The tip of the democratic ear and the rancor of party pierces far too much in your anger...”

And elsewhere :

“In times of revolution, there are two men that a dictator must silence, no matter what the cost: Proudhon and Girardin.”

In his journal, — M. de Mirecourt publishes, with the permission of the government, a journal, — he speaks like a volunteer of the army of faith...

You are a legal scholar, Monsignor; everyone knows it, and you like to parade it. You know the axiom of law: *Is fecit cui prodest*. You will therefore agree: M. de Mirecourt is only a *straw man* here. Soldier, volunteer or mercenary of the counter-revolution — I don't know and I don't care care which — immorality and misery would not explain it entirely. Outside the environment that makes him possible and produces him, he would have no reason to

exist. Without his relations with you, Monseigneur, which means with all the Besançon clergy, my biography would have become impossible for him; without the Christian point of view that you provided him, he would not have been able to give it meaning. Even his bravado, his affectation of effrontery which serve him to confuse the enemy—he would not maintain them, if he did not find support in the conscience of the devout and reactionary public. *It is an old war stratagem*, by means of which he hopes, like the crusaders of Peter the Hermit and Saint Bernard, to obtain, by amassing money, the remission of his sins, and to regain the esteem of *honest* people. And the ground he has chosen for his battlefield, which, at least as far as I'm concerned, you suggested to him, Monsignor; the theme that he develops, renewed by the ecclesiastical pamphleteers of the last century, the Frérons and the Desfontaines, is this: outside Authority and Faith, outside the Church and absolute government, there is neither virtue, nor probity, nor modesty, nor delicacy, nor conscience; there is only corruption, laziness, pride, lust, ferocity, hypocrisy. Witness Lamennais, George Sand, Emile de Girardin, Eugène Sue and, to be clear,

Proudhon.

You see, Monsignor, I'm going straight for the enemy, spear-tip to the body. M. de Mirecourt, a brainless writer, is in my eyes only an insolvent debtor: the real respondent, Prince of the Church, is you. No recriminations: in a few lines I summarize the work of M. de Mirecourt and I set the debate. You can now advise him to leave it at that: the public need hear no more. What I have to say for myself will be useful for everyone.

When the magnin passes, says the peasant from Franche-Comté, *I must geld*. You must have heard this rustic apothegm in your pastoral tours. We call *magnin*, in our country, the industrialist who gelds calves, pigs, lambs, kids and foals. Every year, in the spring, the magnin makes his rounds. When he crosses through a village, or passes a farm, he plays a tune on the flageolet. The peasant comes out immediately and calls the magnin: *Tempus castrandi*, says Ecclesiastes.

I hear the Flageolet of Time. It warns me that the time has come to fight the great fight. It is necessary, while the multitude is on their knees, to snatch virtue from the old mysticism, to extirpate from the hearts of men that

remnant of *latria* that, maintaining superstition, destroys justice in them and prolongs immorality.

The eighteenth century was only a skirmish. Its criticism, libertine and superficial, could not obtain a victory that demanded, with the highest reason, the purest morality. How could Voltaire, with all his wit, have *écrasé l'Infâme*, when he gave it *La Pucelle [d'Orléans]* (C) as a safe conduct?... — How could the Revolution, with all its vigor, have established liberty, when it bowed to theology? A philosopher in Bailly, Condorcet, Cloutz, Marat and Volney, in the person of Robespierre the Revolution gives itself to God and the next day finds itself possessed. As soon as it relies on faith, revolutionary virtue leads to the corruption of Thermidor.

Socialism itself, which initially announced itself as being both the speculative and practical Reason of Humanity, which as such presented itself as Antichrist; socialism, which remained theological in its dogmas, evangelical in its discourse, pontifical in its churches, speaking to a failing society of voluptuousness, of passionate growth, of free love, of the emancipation of women and the rehabilitation

of the flesh—when it was necessary to administer to it the energetic cordial of Justice, socialism failed in its mission and contradicted itself: its work has to be started anew.

No more ambiguity, at this hour; no more of these transactions that dishonor all parties. The Revolution is attacked in its ideas and in its mores; it is blackened in its generations: the question is posed between Justice according to Faith and Justice according to Liberty. It is a question of knowing if man, finally taking possession of himself, can, through the effort of his conscience alone, advance in virtue; or if he is condemned by the infirmity of his nature to remain eternally impure, only capable of Justice when he is visited by the tongue of fire of the Holy Spirit.

For me, always respecting the dignity of others, even when my own is attached to the pillory; respecting in religion the naive conscience of the people, in the priest the minister of this conscience, I do not come, at this solemn hour, to display an unseasonable impiety, to jeer at venerated symbols, to slap the anointed of the Most High. Anyone can close my book, who would look there for a sacrilegious pastime. I seek the laws of the just,

the good and the true: it is only in this capacity that I allow myself to question religion.

Religion! She belongs to humanity; she is the fruit of its loins. To whom would she be despicable? Let us honor in any religious faith, in any Church, recognized or not recognized by the State, let us honor even in the God whom it worships the human conscience; let us keep charity, peace, with the people to whom this faith is dear. It is our duty, and I will not fail in it. But public piety satisfied, the system of theology belongs to my criticism: the law of the State abandons it to me.

Let each read these writings, as they were written, with the calm that truth demands. Our moral life is at stake, our eternal salvation, as the Church says: and never was a higher question raised among men.

CHAPTER ONE.

Definitions, method, axioms.

By engaging in this controversy, where we must find ourselves in perpetual antagonism, will you allow me, Monsignor, at least one thing, which is to lay down principles?

Everything connected with morals, as you know, seems affected by mystery, and this is not the least cause of the discredit into which this study has fallen. Since the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar*, in particular, moralists seem to have passed among themselves the word to spread over the laws of conscience the character of a semi-revelation, which satisfies right reason as little as sincere faith. Let us first try to get some ideas from common sense.

I. — DEFINITIONS. 1. The word MORES [Fr. *mœurs*] comes from the Latin *mos*, genitive *moris*, plural *mores*, which means custom, usage, habit, institution, and in the plural, mores. The root of this word is the same as that of *modus*, mode, manner, fashion; *modius*, measure, muid or bushel; *moderare*, to moderate, to temper, to govern by measure; *modestia*, a quality of the

soul that consists in maintaining moderation and propriety in everything. *Vir modestus* is the man of good manners, measured in his words and feelings.

Related to the same subject are *meta*, limit; *metrum*, meter; *mensura*, measure, etc.

The Greek ἔθος or ἦθος, from which we have made *éthique*, ethics, goes back to the radical ἔω, to go, to come, presents an analogous meaning. It means gait, appearance, march, arrival. Latin, more abstract, reveals the legal genius of the people-king; Greek makes an image, and is better suited to poetry.

The Greeks also used, to say mores, the word τροποι, [Fr.] *tournares*, that is to say modes, forms, manners, usages. According to Dion, the Emperor Augustus, who larded his conversation with Greek phrases, took the title of επιμηλήτης τροπῶν, which Suetonius translates thus: *Recepit morum legumque regimen*; he took the direction of morals and laws.

According to etymology, mores would be the *manners*, *gaits* and *turns* of living beings, as both individuals and species, in their thoughts, their language, their relationships, their loves, in a word in all the acts of their existence.

I therefore understand by *mores*, the formal

conditions of life, in all its states and relations. Just as being cannot be conceived without attributes, the soul without faculties, substance without modes, science without method, so life, manifested in the individual or in the group, cannot be conceived without conditions; and every living being, whether man or beast, by the very fact that it lives, necessarily has mores.

2. The modes of the subject, individual or collective, being dependent both on its intimate constitution and on the environment in which it is called to live, it follows that among subjects of the same species, the mores can be, in some way, different. Thus there are the mores of the peoples of the North and the mores of the peoples of the South, monarchical mores and republican mores, workers' mores and bourgeois mores, the mores of the peasant and those of the soldier, oratorical more and ecclesiastical mores.

But, whatever the variety of mores, there exists in all moral beings a dominant trait, through which is manifested what is called character, and which consists in the fact that the subject, honoring itself and before any other, affirms, with more or less energy, its

inviolability among its peers, its agreement with itself, and its supremacy over all the rest. This is what we will call, if you will, *dignity*. Without dignity, no mores.

3. Dignity has as its maxim or rule of conduct *felicity*. So that these three terms, felicity, mores, dignity, are adequate, united, and cannot logically find themselves in opposition.

Hence the idea of moral *good* and evil, synonymous with that of *happiness* and *sorrow*.

It is, in fact, as a result of the firmness of mores or their subversion, of the consideration for the neighbor or of their underestimation, that the subject experiences either contentment or discomfort, so that, according to the state of their consciousness, according to whether their dignity is satisfied or compromised, they are happy or miserable. These relations are linked to each other, like the effect to the cause, like the mode to the substance. Pleasure or pain, such is the inevitable consequence of moral integrity or depravity.

This amounts to saying that the dignity of the subject constitutes for them a positive law, having happiness as its sanction, if they obey it; suffering, if they violate it.

4. All beings, individuals or societies, tend by the spontaneity of their lives to make their dignity prevail in all the circumstances in which it is involved, and consequently to maintain the integrity of their mores: it would imply a contradiction if a subject fought against its essential modes, and was fundamentally wicked. To be hurtful to oneself! It is absurd. Undoubtedly the accidents and complications of existence can suspend, delay and make more difficult the production of just mores: this is a consequence of the variability of the environment in which we live, as well as of our organization itself. It is even possible that in certain souls, as in certain bodies, the dissolution becomes irreparable. But the subject will always, however depraved we suppose it to be, struggle against its unworthiness, which is its misfortune. Immorality, even irremediable immorality, can no more become a second nature within us than disease.

I call *virtue*, in general, the more or less active energy with which the subject, man or nation, tends to determine its mores, to make its dignity prevail, to restore that dignity if it is harmed.

But this virtue, like everything related to movement and life, is subject to hesitations and relaxations. It has its failures, its intermittences, its illnesses and its eclipses: this is *vice, sin, crime*.

5. Since moral evil can sometimes be the effect of ignorance and excessive compression, sometimes of the cowardice of the subject itself, the pain it entails in the conscience takes on an entirely different character, depending on whether it derives from the first of these causes or from the second. The sin of ignorance does not leave vivid and lasting traces in the soul: it does not infect the will, and the memory quickly rejects it. While the evil committed by cowardice engenders a bitter sorrow, poison of the soul, which withers the subject in its essence, affects life at its source and often leads to suicide: this is *remorse*.

6. Moreover, as every anomaly suggests the idea of adjustment, as every infirmity inspires the desire and the hope of recovery, so it is supposed that moral evil, however serious, is capable of repair. This is called *penance, satisfaction, expiation*. If penance or expiation is voluntary, it is called *repentance*; if it is imposed by a foreign will and by force, it is called

chastisement, revenge, torture. To tell the truth, repentance is the only valid reparation for sin, the only one that rehabilitates the culprit, because it is the only one that cures remorse, and restores esteem. Where remorse does not appear, we may see an enemy, a ferocious beast, a monster, but it would hardly be possible to find a *culprit*.

There are still other notions that come up frequently in books on morals: some of those are religion, justice, liberty, etc. The definition of these notions is itself one of the most difficult problems, which these *Studies* are precisely intended to resolve.

II. — SCIENCE AND METHOD. — Mores being the forms or phenomena by which the invisible, immutable essence of the subject is translated outside itself, it follows first of all that morality constitutes within it, like sensibility, intelligence, love and all the affections, a positive thing, real, not fanciful; that, consequently, it is subject to laws and can become the object of a science.

Now, as has been observed above (Def. 2), the subject being constantly modified by the environment in which it lives, mores depend on

two kinds of causes: a constant, deriving from the nature of the being, and variables, which come from outside.

The procedure of science, or its *method*, will therefore consist, after having classified the facts according to the faculties to which they belong, of comparing acts of the same category with each other and then of extracting from their variations the common character or tendency, which is their law.

We call *ethics* or *morals* the science of mores, that is to say, of the formal conditions of human life and its happiness, both in the solitary state and in the social state.

This is the *science of good and evil*, allegorized in Genesis by the fruit of the forbidden tree.

III. — AXIOMS. — In addition to definitions, the science of mores presupposes *a priori* the certainty of a certain number of indemonstrable principles or first principles, among which I limit myself to citing the following:

1. *Nothing necessary is nothing*: — principle of NECESSITY.

2. *Nothing can be drawn from nothing or be reduced to nothing*: — principle of REALITY.

3. *Nothing happens by virtue of nothing*: —

principle of CAUSALITY.

4. *Nothing is done for the sake of nothing*: principle of FINALITY or FELICITY.

5. *Nothing can be balanced by nothing*: — principle of EQUALITY and STABILITY.

6. *Nothing can be the expression of nothing*: — principle of MEANING or PHENOMENALITY.

7. *Nothing becomes or declines in zero time*: — principle of EVOLUTION or DURATION.

8. *Nothing is composed only of parts*: — principle of SERIES or SYNTHESIS.

All these notions and propositions flow logically from the conception of life and its modes. They apply to all systems and cannot be contradicted: we will see where the difficulties begin.

CHAPTER II.

How the idea of a principle of equilibrium is given to us by the opposition of interests. Miscellaneous assumptions. — First glimpse of a legal state.

IV. — In the subject considered in isolation, the study of mores, whatever variations they undergo under outside influences, does not appear to suffer from any serious difficulty. Man subordinating nature to himself, being servant only to himself, his dignity taking precedence over all existence, his happiness being his only law, the contradiction does not arise anywhere.

It is not the same with the subject considered in its relations with its peers and living in society; and one wonders first of all if a science of mores, in a collectivity formed of intelligent and free beings, is possible. The variety of mores is infinite among nations. But is there, can there be a social constant? Here begins a series of problems which cause the despair of the philosophers and the triumph of the theologians.

We have seen above that in the subject, whatever it is, individual or group, considered

in itself, and apart from all relations with individuals or groups of the same species, the rule of mores is the greatest good, what is called the *maxim of happiness*. Now, it can happen, and experience proves that it happens every day, that interests, both individual and collective, despite the sympathy that brings together beings of the same species, are in diametrical opposition. How can these divergent interests be reconciled if, for everyone, the maxim of morals remains the same, happiness? How are we to simultaneously satisfy antagonistic wills, each of which demands that which is the object of the claims of the others?

V. — To establish the balance, we have recourse to various hypotheses.

Some, considering that man has value only through society, that outside of society he relapses into the state of a brute, tend with all their might, in the name of all interests, individual and social, to absorb the individual into the community. That is to say, they only recognize as legitimate interests those of the social group, consequently recognizing dignity and inviolability only in the group, from which individuals then derive what is called, but very

improperly, their *rights*. In this system, the individual has no legal existence; he is nothing by himself. He cannot invoke rights; he has only duties. Society produces him as its expression, gives him a specialty, assigns him a function and grants him his share of happiness and glory. He owes it everything; it owes him nothing.

Such is, in a few words, the communist system, advocated by Lycurgus, Plato, the founders of religious orders, and most contemporary socialists. This system, which could be defined as the DEGRADATION OF THE PERSONALITY IN THE NAME OF SOCIETY, is found, slightly modified, in oriental despotism, the autocracy of the Caesars and the system of absolutism by divine right. It is the basis of all religions. Its theory is reduced to this contradictory proposition: *To enslave the individual, in order to liberate the mass*. Obviously the difficulty is not resolved: it is cut off. This is tyranny, a mystical and anonymous tyranny; it is not association. And the result has been what we could have foreseen: the human person being stripped of its prerogatives, society found itself devoid of its vital principle; there is no example of a community which, founded in enthusiasm, has not ended in imbecility.

VI. – The mind goes from one extreme to the other. Warned by the failures of communism, we have rejected the hypothesis of unlimited liberty. Proponents of this opinion maintain that there is no fundamental opposition between interests; that men being all of the same nature, all having need of each other, their interests are identical, hence easy to reconcile; that ignorance of economic laws alone has caused this antagonism, which will disappear on the day when, more enlightened about our relations, we return to liberty and to nature. In short, they conclude that if there is disharmony between men, it comes above all from the interference of authority in things that are not within its competence, from the mania for regulating and legislating; that we have only to let liberty act, enlightened by science, and everything will inevitably return to order. Such is the theory of modern economists, supporters of free trade, of *laissez faire, laissez passer*, of “each in their place, everyone for themselves,” etc.

As we see, this is still not solving the difficulty; it is denying that it exists. — “We have nothing to do with your justice,” say the

libertarians, “since we do not admit the reality of the antagonism. Justice and utility are synonyms for us. It is enough that the interests, supposedly opposed, understand each other for them to respect one another: virtue, in the social man, as well as in the solitary one, being nothing but selfishness, of course.”

This theory, which makes social organization consist solely in the development of individual liberty, would perhaps be true, and we could say that the science of rights and the science of interests are one and the same science, if the science of interests, or economic science, being made, its application met with no difficulty. This theory would be true, I say, if the interests could be fixed once and for all and rigorously defined; if, from the beginning, having been equal, and later, in their development, having walked with an equal step, they had obeyed a constant law; if, in their growing inequality, it was not necessary to attribute so large a role to chance and arbitrariness; if, despite so many and such shocking anomalies, the slightest project of regularization did not arouse such lively protests on the part of well-to-do individuals; if we could already foresee the end of inequality,

and consequently of antagonism; if, by their essentially mobile and evolving nature, interests did not continually obstruct one another, creating new inequalities between them; if they did not tend, in spite of everything, to invade each other, to supplant each other; if the mission of the legislator were not precisely, and finally, to consecrate through his laws, as it emerges, this science of interests, of their relations, of their balance, of their solidarity: a science that would be the highest expression of right, if we could ever believe it definitive, but a science that, always coming after the fact, not anticipating difficulties, forced to impose its decisions through public authority, can well serve as instrument or auxiliary to order, but could not be taken for the principle of order itself.

According to these considerations, the theory of liberty—or of selfishness, of course—irreproachable in the hypothesis of a completed economic science and the demonstrated identity of interests, is reduced to a begging of the question. It presupposes things being done that can never be done; things whose incessant, approximate, partial, variable realization constitutes the interminable work of the

human race. Also, while the communist utopia still has its practitioners, the libertarian utopia could not receive the slightest beginning of execution.

VII. — The communist hypothesis and the individualist hypothesis being thus both set aside, the first as destructive of personality, the second as chimerical, one last option remains to be chosen, and option on which, moreover, the multitude of peoples and the majority of legislators are in agreement: It is that of Justice.

Dignity, in man, is a haughty, absolute quality, impatient in the face of all dependence and all law, tending to the domination of others and to the absorption of the world.

It is accepted *a priori* that, before the society of which they are a part, all individuals, considered simply as moral persons, and disregarding capacities, services rendered, disqualifications incurred, are of equal dignity; that consequently they must obtain for their persons the same consideration, participate in the same capacity in the government of society, in the making of laws and in the exercise of offices.

Respect for persons, equal and reciprocal,

whatever the cost in antipathies, jealousies, rivalries, opposition of ideas and interests: this is the first principle.

The second is an application of the first.

Man's tendency to appropriation is, like the dignity from which it emanates, absolute and without limits. It is agreed to do justice to this tendency, in all subjects, but under certain conditions that serve to establish the property of each and to distinguish it from that of others. Thus property is legitimate, as such inviolable and guaranteed by public power, if its object is determined; if the occupation is effective; if it was acquired by usucapion, labor, purchase, inheritance, prescription, etc. These conditions are also subject to revision; they can, in proportion to the multiplicity and complication of interests, be augmented with new articles, but as they exist, they must be observed religiously.

Respect for properties and interests, equal and reciprocal, under the conditions laid down by the law, at whatever cost to envy, avarice, laziness and incapacity: this is the second principle.

In short, mutual recognition of dignity and interests, as they are determined and

conditioned by the social pact: this, at first sight, is what the legal system, Justice, is. Respect for respect, guarantee for guarantee, service for service, under conditions of equality: that is the whole system. Let's highlight the benefits.

VIII. — 1. With regard to man:

We have seen communism start from the idea that man is a fundamentally unsociable and wicked being, *homo homini lupus*; that he has no right to exercise, no duty to fulfill towards his fellow man; that society alone makes everything within him, that society alone gives him dignity and makes him a moral being. It is nothing less than human degradation posed as a principle, which is repugnant to the notion of being and implies a contradiction (Def. 1 and 2).

In the system of pure liberty, the dignity of the subject, which one believed to be safeguarded by an exaggeration in the opposite direction, is no less sacrificed. Here man no longer has either virtue, justice, morality or sociability, interest alone making everything within him, which is repugnant to conscience, which does not consent to being reduced to

pure selfishness.

The juridical idea therefore appears, from this first point of view, to satisfy the noblest aspirations of our nature: it proclaims us worthy, sociable, moral; capable of love, of sacrifice, of virtue; knowing hatred only through love itself, avarice only through devotion, treachery only through heroism; and it expects from our conscience alone what others impose on our submission or solicit from our interest.

2. With regard to society, we will note analogous differences:

In communism, society, the state, external and superior to the individual, alone enjoys the initiative; outside of it, there is no free action; everything is absorbed in an anonymous, autocratic, indisputable authority, whose gracious or vengeful providence distributes from above, upon prostrate heads, chastisements and rewards. It is not a city, a society; it is a flock presided over by a hierarch, to whom alone, by law, belong reason, liberty and the dignity of man.

In the system of pure liberty, if it were possible to admit its realization for a single moment, there would be even less society than

in communism. As, on the one hand, we do not recognize a collective existence, but, on the other hand, it is claimed that there is no need for reciprocal concessions in order to maintain peace, that everything is reduced to a calculation of interest, political or social action becomes superfluous: there is really no society. It is an agglomeration of juxtaposed individualities, marching in parallel, but without any organic character, without any power of collectivity; where the civil society has nothing to do, where association, reduced to a verification of accounts, is, I do not say null, but, so to speak, illicit.

For there to be society between reasonable creatures, there must be a meshing of liberties, voluntary transactions, reciprocal commitments: which can only be done with the help of another principle, the mutualist principle of right. Justice is commutative in its nature and in its form: so, far from society being conceivable as existing above and outside of individuals, as happens in community, it has no existence except through them; it results from their reciprocal action and their common energy; it is their expression and synthesis. Thanks to this organism, individuals, similar in

their original indigence, specialize in their talents, their industries, their functions; they develop and multiply, to an unknown degree, their own actions and their liberty. So that we arrive at this decisive result: By wanting to do everything through liberty alone, we diminish it; by forcing it to compromise, we double it.

3° With regard to progress:

Community once constituted, it is constituted for eternity. There, there are no revolutions, no transformations: the absolute is immutable. Change is repugnant to it. Why would it change! Does it not consist in absorbing more and more into its anonymous authority all life, all thought, all action; to close the exits, to prevent free labor, free commerce, as well as free examination? Progress here is nonsense.

With unlimited liberty, one images at all costs that progress can exist in industry; but it will be nonexistent in public life, nonexistent in institutions, since, according to the hypothesis, the just and the useful being identical, morals and interests merging, there is no social solidarity, there are no common interests, no institutions.

Justice alone can therefore still be said to be

progressive, since it presupposes a continual amendment of the legislation, according to the experience of daily relations, and thus an increasingly fruitful system of guarantees.

Moreover, what establishes the triumph of the juridical idea over the two hypothetical forms of communism and individualism is that, while right is sufficient in itself, communism and individualism, incapable of realizing themselves by virtue of their principle alone, cannot do without the prescriptions of right. Both are forced to call on Justice to help them, and thus condemn themselves by their inconsistency and their contradictions. Communism, forced by the revolt of oppressed individualities to make concessions and to relax from its maxims, perishes sooner or later, first by the ferment of freedom that it introduces into its bosom, then by the institution of a magistrature, arbiter of transactions. Individualism, incapable of solving a priori its famous problem of the harmony of interests, and forced to lay down at least provisional laws, abdicates in its turn before this new power, which the pure practice of liberty excluded.

IX. — Of the three hypotheses that we have seen produced in order to triumph over the opposition of interests, to create an order in humanity and to convert the multitude of individualities into an association, only one really remains, that of Justice. Justice, by its mutualist and commutative principle, ensures liberty and increases its power, establishes society and gives it, along with irresistible force, immortal life. And just as, in the juridical state, liberty, in rising to a higher power, has changed its character; likewise the state, by acquiring an extraordinary force, is no longer the same as it was when first posed in the communist hypothesis: it is the resultant, not the dominant of the interests.

Hence this consequence, which radically distinguishes the Revolution from the old regime: although the state, considered as a higher unity and a collective person, can also have its own dignity, its interests, its action and, finally, its rights, it does not, however, have any greater business than to see to it that everyone respects the person, the property and the interests of everyone, that everyone is faithful to the social pact. In this consists the

essential prerogative of the state. All its attributions flow from it: which means that, far from commanding the interests, it exists only to serve them. As much as the individual is bound to respect the pact, on pain of losing the support of the city and incurring its animadversion, he seems subordinate to the state; but insofar as the same individual has the right to call others to respect the pact and to require the protection of the city, he is superior to the state and himself sovereign. In the juridical or democratic order, authority, which we love to avail ourselves of so much today, has no other meaning.

CHAPTER III.

Difficulties raised by the idea of a legal state. — Inability to change approaches. — On what condition Justice can become a truth.

X. — Considering things only from a purely speculative point of view, and before any attempt at application, it is certain that Justice, in other words the social order established on a system of free transactions and reciprocal guarantees, having for interpreter the arbitration of the city, for sanction its power, it is certain, I say, that this hypothesis is infinitely more rational, more practical, more fruitful than the two others, the only ones that can be opposed to it.

But it is not enough to have demonstrated the superiority of a theory: one must be sure that this theory suffices for its object; that in the face of the difficulties of application, the bad will of men, it will not fail miserably, and change the hopes of the legislator into disappointments.

Here arise the most scabrous questions.

Man is free, selfish by nature, let's even say

legitimately selfish, capable of devoting himself out of love and friendship, but rebellious against all constraint, as befits all reasonable and worthy beings. If he seeks society, he is full of mistrust towards his fellows, whom he judges all the better because he knows himself, and quick to go back on his commitments, to break them, to elude them, as soon as he suspects their imprudence, doubts their sincerity or utility.

It is therefore a question of knowing whether man will give his consent to this system of transactions that are extolled to him under the names of Social Contract and of Rights, for it is evident that, without consent, there is no justice; if, first of all, he is free not to consent, since, faced with the necessity of a social order and the impracticability of two systems, one of which takes away his liberty and the other of which delivers him up to antagonism, it appears impossible that he can refuse, at least in a formal way; if its acceptance will not therefore be accompanied by secret reservations and reluctance, which would virtually destroy the pact; if, indifferently satisfied with the law, he will be more so with its interpreters; if consequently this juridical

state, from which such marvelous effects were expected, will not be resolved into a system of hypocrisy, from which every wise man will take what he thinks fit and leave the rest.

Who will formulate the law? Who will state the right and the duty? In whose name or what name will this Justice, always blind, always belated, never entirely restorative, present itself? Who will guarantee the wisdom of its precepts? Suppose that the law is just: who will guarantee to each the fidelity of the neighbor, the probity of the judge, the disinterestedness of the minister, the prudence and the honor of the functionary? In this specious system, where everything is supposed to come from the initiative of the man and citizen, where the law is reputed to be the expression of his will, what violence and arbitrariness! What evasions!...

What if now, after having seen this sublime idea of law shine for a moment, we were to admit, with theology, that Integral Justice is not of this world, that we can only fully possess the notion of it and only grasp its shadow, how are we to propose to the defiant reason of mortals an approximate legislation? How are we to chain consciences? Who will assume the right to accuse offenders? How are we to punish

people who, in order not to be dupes, have taken it upon themselves to compromise with the law? What then becomes of vice and virtue? What becomes of morality?... Wasn't open, relentless war, without respite or mercy, better for the poor humans than a shameful peace, full of pauperism, perfidy, betrayals, assassinations, under this so-called rule of law? What! We should have escaped tyranny and anarchy through Justice, and now under the pretext of Justice we have the absolutism of the state, the antagonism of interests, and in addition, treason!...

Since man has united with man for the common defense and the search for subsistence, this formidable problem has been posed and the solution does not seem more advanced than on the first day. Revolutions follow one another; religions, governments, laws change, and Justice is still just as equivocal, still just as powerless. What did I say? It is this disappointment of Justice that causes the general misfortune. As at the time of the first initiation, minds dream of right, equality, liberty and peace. But it is still only a dream: faith has died out, and the truth has not shown itself; the maxim of self-interest, barely

softened by the fear of the gods and the terror of torture, alone governs the world; and if the mores of humanity have been distinguished up to now from those of animals, it is by this legal comedy, of which the *stupidity* of the latter renders them at least incapable.

Thus, despite the irreproachable rationality of the system, Justice could not become, in practice, a truth. The disorder is in the social body, right weak, law uncertain; as a result, the state wavers between absolutism and anarchy, the magistrate remains skeptical, the masses dissolute and unhappy.

XI. — Such a situation is as contrary to the reason of things as to that of man, and it is above all because the reason of things is repugnant to it that we cannot resign ourselves to it. It is a law of nature that the intelligent and free being determines its own mores; that it groups itself according to a law of reason and liberty; that finally, in whatever situation it finds itself, alone or in society, it arrives at happiness by its very morality.

This is what reason says and what nature demands; what the example of the animals attests, to a certain extent; what man seeks,

under the double and irresistible impulse of his sensibility and his conscience. It is impossible to remain in this state of semi-justice: we must move forward, especially since we could not change the system; we are committed to Justice by the very efforts we have made to achieve it. A few reflections will convince us of this.

I say first that less than ever can we resume the communist yoke.

The subordination of the individual to the group, which forms the basis of this system, is observed in all the associated animals; it then appears as a consequence of the physiological principle that, in every organism, subordinates each faculty to the general destiny. Thus, among the bees, the community results from the organization of the individuals, or to put it better, it is this organization that is determined by the requirements of the common life. The plurality of females implying the plurality of families, and this leading to the dissolution of the community, there is only one female for the whole community, one queen, representative of the social unit, whose fertility is enough to maintain the population. This queen is served by seven or eight kings, who are killed as soon as spawning has rendered them useless. The

workers have no sex, that is to say, nothing that leads them to schism and division. All their love, all their soul, all their happiness is in the hive, in the well-being of the community, outside of which they perish like creatures without a reason for existence, members whose central life has been withdrawn.

This is community, as logic demands and nature realizes it.

Now, by making men similar and, if not quite equal, at least nearly equivalent; by giving them an exalted sense of their dignity; by creating individuals of both sexes in equal numbers; by positing the distinction of families in the formation of couples, nature does not seem to have wanted such a murderous subordination for man. She leaves him his personality. She desires that, while associating, he remains free. What will be the form of human society if it is not communist? By what virtue, by what law, will man, multiplying his power by association, nevertheless preserve his personal action and his free will? This is what the human race has been ardently seeking for centuries; this is why it overthrew so many different governments, whose absolutist tendency and tyranny led it back to animal

communism; for this reason, today, by affirming its sociability more loudly than ever, it always sets Liberty as its first condition.

XII. — But if community is organically antipathetic to us, liberty is, in its turn, even when excited by the motive of interest, not enough either for the constitution of order. The notion of the useful, which plays such a great role in society, is powerless to produce it; something else is needed, which everyone understands perfectly under the words Right and Duty.

A comparison will clarify my point.

Let the physiologist deduce, from the consideration of life and its laws, rules of conduct for subsistence, clothing, habitation, work, the relations of the sexes, the education of children, etc.: he will have drawn up a code of *hygiene*; no one will say that he has made a treatise on DUTIES and laid the foundations of a social order.

The laws of hygiene can furnish the motive and the occasion for a right to be exercised, for a duty to be fulfilled; by themselves they do not oblige anyone, and it is in vain that one would claim to solve the problem of association in this

way. The unwholesomeness of a profession is one thing; the interest of the entrepreneur is another. If the latter finds advantage in sacrificing hundreds of workers to make his fortune more quickly; if the latter, enticed by the salary, find it useful, in exchange for a present enjoyment, to tamper with their future health, it is not advice on hygiene that will stop them. — But, it is said, the state has an interest in ensuring that the lives of the citizens are spared, and this interest takes precedence over all the others. — To this I reply that if the interest of the state takes precedence over the interest, well or poorly understood, of the contractor and the workers, that does not mean that these interests are the same, which should, however, be the case in a system where the useful is regarded as the expression of the just, liberty is regarded as the same thing as Justice; in the second place, I reply that there can be no question of invoking general utility, when one reasons within the system of absolute liberty. Communism alone, and Justice, can speak of general interests.

Now, what we have just said in particular of hygiene applies, in a general way, to the economy.

Let the utilitarian, following the example of Bentham, seek in the natural relations established between men by work, property, exchange and credit, rules and guarantees for the conduct of operations, the foresight of risks, the safety and well-being of existence; let him go so far as to demonstrate that in many cases the individual who understands his true interest finds it to his advantage to sacrifice something of his own rather than to engage in a struggle with his fellows and with society: this philosopher of a new species will be able to be a great *economist*; he will have nothing in common with one who teaches Justice, Right.

Political and domestic economy, an eminent science, which yields in dignity only to the science of right itself, can furnish, like public and private hygiene, ample material for the prescriptions of the legislator and for the establishment of morals. It is not Justice. It is not only common sense, but it is, as I have said, the very nature of things that declares this.

In all these cases the law, hygienic or economic, is proposed to the subject, but in the form of advice, without injunction from the conscience, with the probability of a benefit, if he takes it upon himself to submit to it, or to a

claim, if he refuses. Justice, on the contrary, by virtue of the reciprocity that founds it and whose oath binds us, imposes itself, imperative, often onerous, without concern for interest, taking into account only right and duty, however unprofitable circumstances have made the first, however disastrous they have rendered the second.

Therefore, no community: we have too many habits of independence, personality, responsibility, familism, critique, revolt;

Nor unlimited liberty: we have too many interdependent interests, too many common things, too much need for recourse to the state against one another:

Justice alone, more and more explicit, more scholarly, severe: this is what the situation calls for, what all the voices of Humanity demand.

XIII. — Could it be now that human society, in its rigorous details, is an impossible creation; that our ambiguous species is neither solitary nor sociable; that it cannot subsist by right any more than by community or by selfishness, and that all of the morals of man consist in safeguarding his private interest against the incursions of his fellows by paying tribute to a

fiction that, if it does not entirely fulfill its expectation, at least diminishes its risks by saying to brigandage: You will go so far, but you will go no further?

The thing is worth examining. Because, if it happened, as some claim, that our Justice with its formulas is only a play-acting of our antagonism, it must be admitted that that would singularly reduce our glory, and all that science would have to say would be that we are peculiar animals. Let us go further: man not daring to confess his law of nature, which is selfishness; unable to follow his social reason, which requires sacrifice; tossed between peace and war, speculating both on the hypothesis of right and the reality of robbery, man would truly have no mores: he would be a creature that is, by essence and destination, immoral.

Isn't that what the ancient meant, who compared the laws to cobwebs? Flies are taken here, he said; bumblebees pass there. While Justice remains obligatory for the multitude, all the more obligatory the more miserable it is, we see the upstart, as he grows in strength and wealth, throw off the mask, free himself from prejudice and pose in his pride, as if, by displaying his selfishness, he returned to his

dignity. Talent, power, fortune, have always been, in the opinion of the people, a reason to dispense with the duties imposed on the masses. The least author, the most obscure *Bohemian*, if he thinks himself a genius, puts himself above the law. What about the princes of literature and the princes of art? Princes of the church and princes of the state?... Like religion, morality is sent back to the plebs: beware lest the plebs, in turn, decide between the great lord and the bourgeois!... And who could still be fooled? Haven't we, in the last seventy years, changed maxims twenty times? Are we not, above all, worshipers of success? And while redoubling our hypocrisy, don't we make a profession of thinking and saying to anyone who will listen that crime and virtue are mere words, remorse a weakness, Justice a scarecrow, morals a bell?

Justice, morals! We can say of them what the English say today of the protective regime, that it is an expired patent for invention, a recipe that has become useless. Alas! Everyone possesses this fatal secret and behaves accordingly. There is no Justice, these poor children tell you. The natural state of man is iniquity, but iniquity limited, restricted, like the

war that is its image, by armistices, truces, exchanges of prisoners, provisional peaces, which cunning and necessity form, and which resentment and revenge break.

A publicist, M. de Girardin, with his usual neatness, has highlighted this situation. "I deny morality," he wrote in a pamphlet published some time after the *coup d'état*; "I deny Justice, right, modesty, good faith, virtue. Everything is crime, naturally crime, necessarily crime; and I propose against crime," — guess what, Monseigneur; a religion? Oh! no, M. de Girardin is of his century, hardly mystical, and not at all a theologian; — "a system of insurance..."

XIV. — Let us summarize these first three chapters, and, from what we are permitted to affirm with certainty, that every being has mores, let us conclude what they must be in human society, on pain of death for the individual and for the species.

According to our definitions, every subject necessarily has mores, just as he has faculties and passions. (Def. 1.)

These mores form the essence of the subject; they constitute his dignity; they are the pledge

and the law of his well-being. (Def. 2, 3 and 4.)

The mores are therefore both *reality* and *idea* in the subject: reality, since they are nothing other than the subject itself considered in the conditions of its existence and in the exercise of its faculties (Ax. 5); idea or relation, since they result from the communion of the subject with nature and other beings. (Def. 1 and 2.)

For the same reasons, the mores explain the subject (Ax. 6): they explain his organism, his faculties, his passions, his virtues and his vices, his joys and his sadness, his corruptions and his amendments; they give the first and the last word of the being. Whoever does not know the mores of the man, even if they had the most perfect knowledge of his organism, would know nothing of man.

That is not all. The subject, as a moral being, knows himself and feels himself; he has instinct, intuition, knowledge of his law; he affirms it, wants it, adheres to it with love; he has the intimate certainty that through it and through it alone he can be happy, and he strives with all the energy of his will to realize it, by subjecting everything around him to it. (Def. 5, Ax. 4).

Applying these principles to the man who lives in society, I conclude:

The social condition cannot be for the individual a diminution of his dignity; it can only be an increase of it. Justice, the name by which we designate that part of morality that, above all, characterizes the subject in society, must therefore be more than an *idea*, it must at the same time be a REALITY. It must, we say, act not only as a notion of the understanding, an economic relation, a formula of order, but also as a power of the soul, a form of the will, inner energy, social instinct, analogous, in man, to this communist instinct that we have noticed in the bee. For there is reason to think that, if Justice has remained powerless to this day, it is because, as a faculty, a driving force, we have completely misunderstood it, that its culture has been neglected, that it has not progressed in its development at the same pace as the intelligence, and finally that we have taken it for a fancy of our imagination or the mysterious impression of an alien will. It is therefore necessary, once again, that we feel this Justice within us, like a love, a voluptuousness, a joy, an anger; that we may be assured of its excellence as much from the point of view of

our personal happiness as from that of social preservation; that, by this sacred zeal for Justice and by its shortcomings, all the facts of our collective life are explained — its establishments, its utopias, its disturbances, its corruptions; that it appears to us, finally, as the principle, the means and the end, the explanation and the sanction of our destiny.

In short, a FORCE of Justice, and not simply a *notion* of Justice; a force that, by increasing the individual's dignity, security and happiness, at the same time insures the social order against the incursions of selfishness: this is what philosophy seeks, and that apart from which there is no society.

Does this force of Justice exist? Does it have its seat somewhere in man or outside of man? Here once again opinions divide.

CHAPTER IV.

Realism of Justice. — Transcendence and immanence.

XV. — From the preceding there already results an essential point, which we can take for granted, namely:

That in order to regulate the relations of individuals among themselves, to make them live together and through each other, and thus to create society, a principle, a power, an entity—something like what we call Justice, having its own reality, its seat somewhere, from which it determines wills and imposes its rules on them—is necessary.

What is this power? Where are we to grasp it? How are we to define it? That is now the question.

It has been claimed that Justice was only a relation of balance, conceived by the understanding, but freely admitted by the will, like every other speculation of the mind, because of the utility it finds in it; that in this way Justice, reduced to its formula, being reduced to a measure of precaution and

insurance, to an act of good pleasure, even of sympathy, but always with a view to self-love, is, beyond that, only an imagination, nothing.

But, without taking into account that this opinion is contradicted by the universal feeling that recognizes and affirms in Justice something other than a calculation of probabilities and a measure of guarantee, we can observe, first of all, that in this system, which is nothing other than that of moral doubt, society is impossible: we experience it today, as the Greeks and Romans experienced it; — secondly, that in the absence of a force of Justice, preponderant in souls, violence and fraud once again becoming the only law, liberty, despite all the policies and combinations of insurance, is destroyed, humanity becomes a fiction, which strikes down the criticism.

So I come back to my subject, and I say:

Whatever Justice may be and by whatever name it is called, the necessity of a principle that acts on the will like a force, and determines it in the direction of right or of the reciprocity of interests, independent of any consideration of selfishness, this necessity is indisputable. Society cannot depend on the calculations and conveniences of selfishness; the acts of all

humanity, in its ascents and in its regressions, bear witness to this.

With regard to this principle, this force, it is a question of noting its existence, of analyzing its nature, of giving its formula. To note the reality of Justice and to define it, to indicate its general applications, is today the whole of ethics: moral philosophy, up to the fullest manifestation of conscience, cannot go beyond.

Now, there are two ways of conceiving the reality of Justice:

Either as a pressure from without exerted on the self;

Or else as a faculty of the self that, without leaving its innermost being, would feel its dignity in the person of its neighbor with the same vivacity as it feels it in its own person, and would thus find itself identical and adequate to the collective being itself, while preserving its individuality.

In the first case, Justice is external and superior to the individual, either because it resides in the social collectivity, considered as being *sui generis*, whose dignity takes precedence over that of all the members who compose it, which is part of the communist theory already ousted; or because we place Justice still higher,

in the transcendent and absolute being that animates and inspires society, which we call God.

In the second case, Justice is intimate to the individual, homogeneous with its dignity, equal to this same dignity multiplied by the sum of the relations that social life supposes.

Let us give an idea of the two systems.

XIV. — *System of Revelation.* The first of these systems and the oldest by date, the one that still rallies the mass of the populations of the globe, although it is losing ground every day among the civilized nations, is the system of TRANSCENDENCE, vulgarly of *Revelation*. All the religions and quasi-religions aim to inculcate it; Christianity has been its principal organ since Constantine. To the theologians or theodiceans must be added the multitude of reformers who, while separating themselves from the Church and from theism itself, remain faithful to the principle of external subordination, putting Society, Humanity or any other Sovereignty, more or less visible and respectable, in the place of God.

According to the doctrine generally followed, of which the dissenting theories are

nothing more than mutilations, the moral principle, which forms the conscience, the plastic power that gives it virtue and dignity, is of an origin superior to man, on whom it acts as an influence from on high, gratuitous and mysterious.

Justice, according to this genesis, is therefore supernatural and superhuman; its true subject is God, who communicates it and breathes it into the soul made in his image, that is to say of the same substance as him, capable consequently of receiving the modes of its divine author.

How, according to the Transcendentalists, this communication takes place is a question on which they are divided, as happens with all things beyond experience. Depending on whether the writer attaches himself more or less closely to the mystical idea taken as his point of departure, or whether he gives way to the suggestions of empiricism, his doctrine can vary from Catholicism to pantheism, from the catechism of the Council of Trent to Spinoza's Ethics.

But since in such a matter a system must be studied in its entire historical development, not in arbitrary fragmentations, and since we will

have occasion to convince ourselves that the restrictions proposed by the moderates of transcendentalism are obvious inconsistencies, the effect of philosophical modesty, I will stick above all to the Catholic system, the most complete of all and the most logical.

So it is enough to know, according to orthodox theology:

That the human soul, empty and dark, without any other morality than that of egoism, is incapable by itself of raising itself to the law that governs society, and of conforming its acts to it; that it only possesses a certain aptitude for receiving the light, the transfusion of which is accomplished in it by the divine Revealer, otherwise known as the Word;

That this state of invincible darkness, which nevertheless, we are assured, could not have not been, is the effect of a diabolical corruption, which arrived in the soul in the first days of creation, a corruption that causes it to fall to the rank of the brutes, and from which it cannot be radically cured on this earth;

That the revelation of the law took place a first time in Adam, then successively in Noah, Abraham, Moses, the prophets and Jesus Christ, who, through his Church, organized its

propagation among men in perpetuity;

That in this way Justice, an essentially divine, hyperphysical, ultra-rational thing, above every observation and conclusion of the mind, that which is expressed by the word *transcendence*, which characterizes the system, cannot, as regards its determination, have anything in common with the other branches of knowledge, all of which depend *ex aequo* on understanding and experience; — as regards practice, that man is entirely incapable by nature of any obedience, virtue or sacrifice; that he essentially rejects it, especially since he cannot find in it, in himself and on this earth, any compensation;

That all that man has to do therefore is to follow the impulse of grace, which moreover never fails him, and to obey the law, as it is proposed to him by God through the Church, in which case he will be saved; otherwise, and in the event that he resists the divine order and proves refractory, he will be punished;

But that there can be no serious question of philosophizing on the decrees of heaven, as it is permitted to do on the phenomena of nature, of penetrating the motives from above, much less of claiming to add to them or to subtract from

them, since that would be to aspire to redo the work of God and to see beyond his providence, which, without impiety, cannot be admitted.

As a result, according to this theology, the principle of Justice is in God, who is both its subject and revealer; the power of realization, still in God; the sanction, always in God.

So that, without the divine manifestation, humanity after its fall would not have emerged from the condition of the beasts, and the first fruit of religion is this philosophical reason itself, which misunderstands it and insults it.

XVII. — In support of this summary, I will confine myself to quoting the following passages from the *Dictionary* of Bergier, edition of 1843, revised, enlarged and annotated by Messieurs Doney, Bishop of Montauban, and Thomas Gousset, Archbishop of Reims:

“According to theologians, the *Law* is the will of God intimated to intelligent creatures, by which he imposes an obligation on them; he imposes on them in the necessity of doing or avoiding certain actions, if they are not to be punished.

“Thus, according to this definition, without the notion of a God and a providence, there is

no law and no moral obligation properly speaking.

“It is by analogy that we call *laws* the wills of men who have the authority to reward and punish us; but if this authority did not come from God, it would be null and illegitimate.”

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Kant, Spinoza himself, Cousin, Jean Reynaud, Jules Simon, Pierre Leroux, all the eclectics, the spiritualists, the socialists, the pantheists, up to Auguste Comte, who while denying God clings to the great Humanitary Being, do not speak differently.

Bergier grants that our reason can go so far as to discover the *utility* of the law, but he denies that it can make it a DUTY for us, in which opinion he is followed by the mass of philosophers:

“Reason or the faculty of reasoning can tell us what it is advantageous for us to do or to avoid, but it imposes no necessity on us to do what it dictates; it can *intimate* the law to us, but it does not by itself have the force of law. If God had not ordered us to follow it, we could resist it without being guilty. The torch that guides us, and the law that obliges us, are not the same thing.”

Monseigneur Gousset, in the notes he appended to the *Dictionary*, develops Bergier’s idea in this way:

“No purely philosophical reason can establish the distinction between good and evil. The philosopher who is fortunate enough to have just and precise ideas on such an important question nevertheless remains powerless to convince, by his own reason, the philosopher who has contrary ideas of his error.”

And below:

“One can ask whether consciousness naturally and of itself has the notion of good and evil. The observations we have made on the articles *Certainty, Evidence, Faith, Language, Reason, Revelation* and *Truth*, demonstrate that this notion is, like all the others, transmitted to man by tradition, and that he can only find it in society. Now, society itself has received from God the notions that it deposits in the conscience of each man: it is God who has taught them to society. So, once again, it is God who is the first author of these notions, and it is on God that their philosophical demonstration rests.

“So moral science must necessarily be

attached to the idea of God, that is to say, to Revelation...”

And as if to justify Bishop Gousset’s observation, we see the philosophers, those at least who admit a morality superior to selfishness — J.-J. Rousseau, Kant, V. Cousin, J. Simon, J. Reynaud, J. Oudot — linking the laws of morals to God and to a revelation, historical or psychic.

As for the philosophers who deny any kind of revelation or take no account of it, such as Saint-Lambert, d’Holbach, Bentham, Hobbes, Hegel and the modern pantheists, they fall back, under the name of *Natural Law*, some into the communism and despotism, some into egoism, utilitarianism, organicism and fatalism, which is to say that they deny, with liberty, Justice.

There, then, is the essence of Religion. It exists, it is given, not, as the ancient infidels said, with the intention and with the premeditated will to enslave the human species, although it has had this result, but in order to provide a reason, an authority and a basis for Justice, without which society cannot exist.

We can see from this how miserable it is to

argue, as the Protestants do, about the legitimacy of the Roman Church, about the certainty of its tradition and the authenticity of its teaching, about the truth of its dogma, the purity of its discipline, the variations of its history, the uncertainties of its exegesis; — or else, following the example of the deists, to argue about the truth of prophecies and miracles, the mission of Moses, the quality of the Messiah, etc. It is like the Pharisees of the Gospel, whom Christ reproached for swallowing a camel and grimacing at a fly.

We also conceive what is irrational, hypocritical, in a society that proclaims itself religious, in claiming to separate the spiritual and the temporal, and to put the Church outside the government. It is as if, after having given crutches to a cripple, one forced him to carry them on his back.

XVIII. — These principles established, theology thus explains the movement of history.

This movement, which some take for progress, while others see in it only an irrational and sterile agitation, is nothing else, assure the inspired, than the effect of the

struggle that is established first of all between the selfish and recalcitrant nature of man and the stimulating and increasingly victorious action of the law, the revealed expression of society. Such is the basis of the philosophy of Bossuet, in his Discourse on Universal History. This is why the Church has taken the name of *militant*: her enemy is the angel of darkness, personification of evil, principal author of our debasement, who, despite all the exorcisms, despite the blood of a God shed for the sins of the world, continues to possess the majority of souls.

But to suppose that, like the progress that manifests itself in science and industry, and which is the effect of our accumulated science, there is a similar progress in Justice, independent of the effective action of Grace, is a proposition against which theology protests with all its might, which it declares destructive of religion, and, consequently, of all morality, of all society.

And it must be said, not only does contemporary immorality seem to prove theology right, but on this point as well the deistic philosophy thinks at base like the Church. It believes and teaches that society is,

like the human body, subject to corruption and decadence; that from time to time it needs to rekindle its morals; that this moral regeneration can be accomplished only on one condition, the renewal of dogma. What is dogma? The inner, divine and providential word, which issues forth in fateful epochs for the regeneration of societies. It is for this reason that today we see high intelligences, generous souls, convinced that corruption is at its height, that Christianity is worn out like paganism in the past, and that the time is near, addressing their request to the Divinity, implore with tears and compunction for a manifestation of dogma. The author of *France mystique* has counted more than thirty of these competitors of the Church, whose motto, in a decidedly reasoning century, but one which faith always agitates, seems to be this: *Revelation is needed, but not too much of it!...*

So much has the system of transcendence — drawn from the fundamental concepts and the first hypotheses of reason, formulated in poetic legends and marvelous stories, maintained by the weakness of soul of philosophers — entered the consciousness of men! We know by what gymnastics the incomparable Kant, having

overturned all the alleged demonstrations of the existence of God with his *Critique of Pure Reason*, found him again in the *Practical Reason*. Descartes, before him, had arrived at the same result; and it is marvelous to see the last disciples of this acrobatic metaphysician reject the authority of the Church, the revelation of Jesus, those of Moses, the patriarchs, Zoroaster, the Brachmanes, the Druids, the whole system of religions, and then assert, as a fact of positive psychology, the immediate revelation of God in souls.

According to these gentlemen, God manifests himself directly to us through the conscience; what is called moral sense is the impression of Divinity itself. Simply because I recognize the obligation to obey Justice, I am, to hear them, a believer despite myself, a worshipper of the Supreme Being, and a partisan of natural religion. *Duty!* It is enough that I pronounce this word to attest, against my desire, that I am double: I, first of all, who am bound by duty; and the Other, that is to say, God, who has formed this bond, who has established himself in my soul, who possesses me completely, who, when I imagine myself following the moral law as an act of autonomy,

leads me, without my realizing it, by his imperious suggestion.

In truth, these doctrinaires of the Faith must take us for big children, believing that we will laugh with them at the miracle of La Salette, and that we will accept that much more enormous miracle of their theodicy. Divine possession, imagined in desperation by a timid school, is the last gasp of transcendent superstition. What did I say? It is already the disguised formula of true philosophy, and pity for those who are mistaken in it!

XIX. — *System of the Revolution*. The other system, radically opposed to the first, and whose triumph the Revolution aimed to ensure, is that of IMMANENCE, or the innateness of Justice in consciousness.

According to this theory, man, although starting from a complete savagery, incessantly produces society through the spontaneous development of his nature. It is only by abstraction that he can be considered in a state of isolation and without any other law than selfishness. His consciousness is not double, as the transcendentalists teach: it does not depend, on the one hand, on animality, and on

the other, on God; it is only polarized. An integral part of a collective existence, man feels his dignity both in himself and in others, and thus carries in his heart the principle of a morality superior to his individuality. And he does not receive this principle from elsewhere; it is intimate, *immanent* to him. It constitutes his essence, the essence of society itself. It is the proper form of the human soul, a form that is only becoming more and more precise and perfected by the relations that social life gives rise to every day.

Justice, in a word, is within us like love, like the notions of the beautiful, the useful and the true, like all of our powers and faculties. This is why I deny that, while no one dreams of ascribing love, ambition, the spirit of speculation or enterprise to God, one should make an exception for Justice.

Justice is human, entirely human, nothing but human: it is to wrong to it to relate it, closely or distantly, directly or indirectly, to a principle superior or prior to humanity. Let philosophy occupy itself as much as it will with the nature of God and his attributes; this may be its right and its duty. I claim that this notion of God has no place in our legal constitutions,

any more than it has a place in our treatises on political economy or algebra. The theory of *Practical Reason* subsists by itself; it neither supposes nor requires the existence of God and the immortality of souls. It would be a lie if it needed such props.

This is the precise sense in which I use the word *immanence*, purged of all theological and supernaturalist reminiscence. Justice has its seat in humanity; it is progressive and indestructible in humanity, because it is of humanity: such is my thought, itself drawn from the depths of consciousness.

And when I add that the Revolution had the object of expressing this thought, I do not mean either that they were born suddenly, the Revolution and its idea, in a certain place, at a certain time: with regard to Justice, nothing is new under the sun. I mean only that it was from the French Revolution onwards that the theory of immanent Justice asserted itself consciously and fully, that it became preponderant, and that it definitively took possession of society. For, just as the notion of right is eternal and innate in humanity, so the Revolution is innate and eternal. It did not begin in the year of grace 1789, in a locality located between the

Pyrenees, the Ocean, the Rhine and the Alps. It is of all times and all countries. It dates from the day when man, distrusting himself, made appeal, to his misfortune, to an invisible Authority, remunerative and vengeful; but it was at the end of the last century, and on the glorious soil of France, that it made its most brilliant explosion.

That explained, the theory of Justice, innate and progressive, deduces itself.

Without doubt, before his immersion in society or, to put it better, before society began to be born from him, through generation, work and ideas, man, circumscribed in his egoism, limited to life animal, knows nothing of the moral law. Just as his intelligence, before the excitation of sensibility, is empty, without any notion of space or time, so his conscience, before the excitation of society, is also empty, without knowledge of good or of evil. The experience of things, necessary for the production of the idea, is no less so for the unfolding of consciousness.

But just as no external communication could by itself create intelligence and cause myriad winged ideas to spring forth without an intellectual preformation that makes the

concept possible, so too the facts of social life will be produced in vain and, the intellect grasping their relation, this relation will never be translated into an obligatory law for the will, without a preformation of the heart that makes the subject perceive, in the social relations that embrace it, not only a natural harmony, but a sort of secret command from himself to himself.

Thus, according to the theory of immanence, even if Revelation were proven, it would still serve, as the instruction of the master serves the disciple, only insofar as the soul possessed in itself the faculty of recognizing the law and of making it its own, which radically and irrevocably excludes the transcendental hypothesis.

It follows from this that consciousness, as it is given by nature, is complete and healthy: everything that happens in it is of it. It is self-sufficient; it needs neither a doctor nor a revelator. Moreover, this celestial helper, on whom we want it to lean, can only present an obstacle to its dignity, can only be a hindrance and a stumbling block for it.

So not only is the science of Justice and mores possible, since it rests, on the one hand,

on a special faculty of the soul, having, like the understanding, its fundamental notions, its innate forms, its anticipations, its prejudices; and, on the other, on daily experience, with its inductions and its analogies, with its joys and its sorrows, it must also be said that this science is only possible on the condition of separating itself entirely from the Faith, which, far from serving it, perverts it.

In the system of Revelation, the science of Justice and mores is necessarily based, *a priori*, on the word of God, explained and expounded on by the priesthood. It expects nothing from the adhesion of conscience, nor from the confirmations of experience. Its formulas, are absolute, freed from any purely human consideration; they are made for man, not after man, decreed in advance and in perpetuity. It would imply that a sacred doctrine should receive the slightest light from the incidents of social life and the variability of its phenomena, since that would be submitting the order of God to the appreciation of man, *de facto* abjuring revelation, and recognizing the autonomy of conscience, something incompatible with Faith.

Such is the DIVINE RIGHT, having *Authority* as its maxim: hence a whole system of administration for the States, of policing for mores, of economy for goods, of education for youth, of restriction for ideas and of discipline for men.

In the theory of Immanence, on the contrary, the knowledge of the just and the unjust results from the exercise of a special faculty and from the judgment that Reason then passes on its acts. So that, in order to determine the rule of mores, it suffices to observe juridical phenomenality as it is produced in the facts of social life.

Hence it follows that, Justice being the product of conscience, each finds himself judge, in the last resort, of good and evil, and constituted as an authority with regard to himself and others. If I do not pronounce myself that such and such a thing is just, it is in vain that the prince and the priest will affirm its justice to me and order me to do it: it remains unjust and immoral, and the power that claims to oblige me is tyrannical. And, reciprocally, if I do not pronounce in my heart of hearts that such and such a thing is unjust, it is in vain that the prince and the priest will claim to defend it

for me: it remains just and moral, and the authority that forbids it to me is illegitimate.

Such is HUMAN RIGHT, having *Liberty* as its maxim: hence also a whole system of coordinations, of reciprocal guarantees, of mutual services, which is the inverse of the system of authority.

XX. – Is it necessary to add that in this theory, man having to arrive by himself and by himself alone at the knowledge of Justice, his science is necessarily progressive, that it is revealed to him progressively by experience, unlike revealed science, given all at once, and to which we cannot add or subtract a letter? — This, moreover, is what the history of legislation demonstrates; and this was not a small cause of embarrassment, when it was necessary to harmonize the conditions of this progress with the idea of a simultaneous and definitive Revelation.

But that is not all. As the apprehension of the law is progressive, the justification is also progressive: something to which history still attests, but which is again irreconcilable with the theory of a thoughtful, concomitant grace, and with every kind of help, providence and

service from heaven.

Now, progress being given, first as a condition of knowledge, then as a synonym of justification, the history of humanity, of its oscillations, its aberrations, its falls, its recoveries, everything is explained, even the negation of human potential that is the basis of the religious idea, even this despair of Justice that is its consequence, which, under the pretext of rallying us to God, completes the ruin of our morality.

Thus, from *practical philosophy*, or the search for the laws of human actions, is deduced the philosophy of history, or the search for the laws of history, which could just as well be called *historiology*, and which is to *historiography*, the description of the facts of history, what anthropology is to ethnography, arithmology to arithmography, etc.

A society where knowledge of right would be complete and respect for justice inviolable would be perfect. Its movement, obeying only a *constant* and no longer depending on *variables*, would be uniform and rectilinear; history in that society would be reduced to a history of labor and studies; to put it better, there would be no more history.

Such is not the condition of life in humanity, and such it cannot be. Progress in Justice, theoretical and practical, is a state from which it is not given to us to emerge and see the end. We know how to discern good from evil; we will never know the end of Right, because we will never stop creating new relationships among ourselves. We are born perfectible; we will never be perfect: perfection, immobility, would be death.

Moreover, the annals of nations are full of monuments to this incessant justification of humanity by itself. There is no precept, not even the most elementary, that has not been the occasion of doubt and the pretext for terrible struggle; but the final triumph of Justice over selfishness is the most certain and admirable phenomenon of psychology, and, as it demonstrates the efficacy of conscience, it proves at the same time its high guarantee.

The first individuals who, under the influence of this radiant illumination of the moral sense, organized themselves into societies, were so delighted that they took the emotion of their hearts for a supernatural inspiration, the testimony of a divine will, before which they knew only how to bow their

heads and strike their breasts. Hence those marvelous legends that Christianity has claimed to raise to the height of scientific theories, which form the basis of its discipline.

The theory of Immanence, while resolving the apparent contradictions of morality, still explains all the fictions of the allegedly revealed system. It gives, so to speak, the natural history of theology and worship, the reason for the mysteries, the biography of the gods. It shows us how religion was born from the preponderance given in society to one of the essential elements of the soul, an element that, sovereign in metaphysics, must remain secondary in practice, the IDEAL. It only emerged yesterday and we already owe to it that spark that makes the lights of the old faith pale; slandered excessively, it will save us from the corruptions *in extremis* of a reaction to despair and a religiosity that is dying out.

XXI. — I have summarized the two hypotheses regarding the science of mores that divide the world. Their verification will be the subject of these studies, of which you can boast, Monsignor, of having been the inspiration. My intention is not to write a moral treatise, any

more than a philosophy of history. My task is more modest: it is a question of orienting ourselves first; the rest will take care of itself.

By virtue of what are we honest people, when we are honest, and do we cease to be so when selfishness gets the upper hand in our hearts? What is Justice? Is there one? Does it have its home in man or in Divinity? Can we recognize it, certify it, follow it? What guarantees to us its reality, its necessity and its supreme beneficence? Can we sacrifice ourselves, even without hope of return, and remain happy and free?

Which amounts to saying, according to the succinct exposition that we have just made of the two theories that occur:

Is Justice with the Church or with the Revolution?

On the one hand, what has been the teaching of the Church up to now? What is its doctrine worth? How does it ensure the virtue and liberty of man? Who agitates it at this hour, and against what does it show itself so full of hatred and menace?

On the other hand, what is the moral and legal significance of the Revolution? What is its perfecting power? Is it not a paradox, after

having accused Christian morals of insufficiency, of nullity, of corruption, to claim to substitute for it another moral system, more rational, more liberal and forever inviolable?

Never, I dare to say, will the religious thought that gave birth to the Church, and which, outside of it, animates all the mystical sects, find itself at such a feast; for never have such strong words been spoken about it. Let man think of God and of the other life what he will: above all, he was born for Justice and his happiness, his reward, is in his fidelity to the law. Within him is the principle of his morals, their reason, their virtue and their sanction. Justice is the efflorescence of our soul; morals is the omnibus of humanity. The intervention of a supernatural authority in the prescriptions of the conscience, far from adding to virtue, only consecrates immorality. O priests, you will not always say that the Revolution is a negative force, that it only produces ruins, that it is powerless to create anything. Man's life is short, and the Revolution is not yet a generation old. Your book of the Gospels was made clear only a century after the death of Jesus Christ; and still, at the beginning of the fourth century, the Christian sect still passed

for the enemy of the human race. We have marched faster, because now, amid the dust of past beliefs, humanity is already swearing by itself; she exclaims, her left hand on her heart, her right extended towards infinity: It is I who am the queen of the universe; everything that is outside of me is inferior to me, and I do not belong to any majesty.

Do not cross yourself, Monsignor; do not cry blasphemy; do not say that the one who argues with you insults you. It is an old tactic of the Church to call free thought sacrilege, and to burn instead of respond. Didn't your M. de Mirecourt make me say already that Christianity was an *old thing*, a *rag*, *falling to pieces*? So he concludes:

“God alone can answer him with his thunderbolt, unless he leaves it up to men to send him to Bicêtre.”

No, Monsignor, and I want you to take note of it, I have never expressed myself on the Christian religion, which was that of my fathers, *Deus patris mei*, nor on any religion, with this indecency, which would have only dishonored my pen. I have always respected humanity, in its institutions, in its prejudices, in its idolatry and even in its gods. How could I

fail to respect her in Christianity, the most grandiose monument of her virtue and her genius, and the most formidable phenomenon in history? To insult, in words or gestures, a religion! Only a man brought up on the principles of Catholic intolerance could come up with this stupid idea.

Religion is the mystical lover of the Mind, the companion of its young and free loves. Similar to Homer's warriors, the Spirit does not dwell alone in his tent: a lover, a Psyche, is needed for this Cupid. Jesus, who forgave the Magdalen, taught us indulgence towards courtesans. But the day comes when the Spirit, tired of its own exuberance, thinks of uniting itself, by an indissoluble marriage, to Science, the severe matron, that which the Gnostics, those socialists of the second century, called *Sophia*, wisdom. Then, for a few moments, the Mind seems to be separated from itself; there are ineffable retreats and tender reproaches. More than once the two lovers believed themselves reconciled: I will be a *Sophia* for you, says Religion; I will also become learned, and I will be even more beautiful. Vain hope! Inexorable fate! The nature of ideas cannot be adulterated in this way, any more than that of

things. Like the abandoned nymph of Narcissus, who by dint of languor ends up vanishing into thin air, Religion changes little by little into an impalpable phantom: it is no more than a sound, a memory, that remains in the most profound depths of the Mind, and never quite perishes in the heart of man.

May those who read these writings forgive me! Sometimes, in these studies, I will have to speak about myself: they will see that I do not give in to a vain self-esteem. I hate autobiographies like death, and have no desire to give mine here. *Know thyself*, said the Oracle of Delphi; and never speak of it, adds the Modesty of Nations. I have observed this maxim as long as I could during my life; and if I happen to depart from it, I hope to bring to that departure such discretion that the reader will not be angry.

Is it my fault if an implacable reaction, which does not seem ready to end, after having slandered our persons by our ideas, begins to slander our ideas through our persons? Having to avenge the mores of the Revolution, I wanted, through examples, to show what the revolutionary race promises to be one day. I am like the physician who, defending a principle, is

obliged to speak of his own experiments.

APPENDIX.

In publishing a new edition of the book of *Justice*, our main aim is to inaugurate, to the extent of our strength and wherever our voice may be heard, the moral and philosophical teaching intended, in our opinion, to replace or at least to supplement religious education.

When we saw the government of the Emperor Napoleon III, for eight years so devout, suddenly undertake, by a seesaw game that deceives no one, to tame both the Revolution and the Church, the old society and the new, giving the signal for the assault on Catholicism after having sacrificed liberty, and neglecting all principles, we thought we could defer no longer, and, while the pope and the bishops protest on their side, that the time has come for us to speak again.

Nobody will accuse us as a result, we hope, of allying ourselves with the Church against the Empire. You need only read us to see, alas, that any pact between the Church and us is impossible. When men who want the maintenance of liberty and right, respect for

principles, fidelity to commitments, whatever their social aspirations, political or religious beliefs, all come together, face to face with a government, not even in an affirmation, but in a common reprobation, can this government be allowed to accuse its adversaries of a coalition?

This encounter exists today; it is forced on us. The imperial government, at the same time that it suppresses liberty, ignores the rights of its nation and deceives the hopes of all parties, is lacking in all principles. Here the questions of dynasty, of republic, of Church, become secondary: the question is purely, exclusively moral.

Just as, then, in 1848 and 1851 we had united against a social peril, real or fanciful, we find ourselves inevitably united, in 1860, against a new social peril, much more serious, much more evident. And this union is as legitimate, legal, as it is spontaneous; there is nothing insurrectionary about it, nothing personal. It tends only, apart from persons and titles, to put an end to the anomaly, in the midst of a democratic revolution, of an absolutist power, and to place society once again under its own law.

Let everyone here take the advice of their

conscience: as for us, whose whole strength is in speaking, and who have contracted the habit of conspiring aloud, here is the course we propose to follow.

Instead of long works, of 500 and sometimes 1,800 printed pages, we will publish separately, at more or less close intervals, a series of *Studies*, each of 4 to 5 sheets, i.e. 150 to 200 pages, in large 18mo format, on all the questions that may interest the citizen and man.

The twelve studies of which the first edition of the book on Justice was composed—revised, corrected and augmented—will form the first twelve numbers of this series.

The augmentations consist of: 1° *Notes and Clarifications*, quotations from authors, replies to objections, etc., serving to mark the movement of minds; 2° *News of the Revolution*, summaries of the political, economic and social facts, being used to note the movement of history.

In this way our publication will be theoretical and practical, always at the level of the circumstances, and yet always freed from the circumstances.

For the rest, we recall what we have already

said in our program: We are not founding a church; we are not, strictly speaking, a party. We do not bring to the world an established doctrine, in the manner of the champions of revelation, the philosophers of the absolute and some contemporary reformers. We are not the representatives of any opinion, of any corporate or class interest. Our principle is as old as the world, as common as the people: it is Justice. We only believe that we are far from having seen all that this inexhaustible notion of Justice contains, and we undertake to give, at new expense, a commentary that others will continue after us and that will never have an end. Justice is for us the axis of society, the first and last reason of the universe. Thereby, dominating everything from the heights of right, our philosophy is purely critical: it only becomes dogmatic with regard to the things that conscience, assisted by the lights of science, declares to be just; it pronounces exclusion only with regard to those demonstrated to be unjust. Such affirmations and exclusions, subject moreover to the incessant control of public opinion, have nothing at all personal about them and cannot give scope to any selfishness. They would even

appear excessive in their disinterestedness, if we had not decided to pursue, at all costs, iniquity, in the facts that realize it as well as in the theories that express it.

NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS.

Note (A)

RELIGIOUS CRITIQUE. — Critique of religious ideas definitely tends to take on a new character. In the past, hardly more than a century ago, religion was attacked with ridicule, impiety and licentiousness. People laughed at its miracles and mysteries; the errors committed by its writers in physics, astronomy, chronology and natural history were noted. It was the time of Rabelais and Voltaire.

Then it was understood that religion was a manifestation of the human mind; we endeavored to decipher its symbolism, to make its legends serve as testimony to reason itself, to right and freedom. This critique begins in France with Dupuis' *Origine de tous les Cultes*; German philosophy then took hold of it: the work is far from over. The result of this critique has been to reconcile, up to a certain point, the human mind with its work. The objections of the old critique have been treated as trifles; religion has been deemed essential to

humanity. Hence a pietistic disposition which, without leading to a complete restoration of the faith, made, for a time, the opinion of the masses and of the governments emerging from the Revolution more favorable to religious beliefs.

Currently, the critique is taking a step further. The question that occupies it is that of the utility and the practical effectiveness of religion, of the legitimacy of its intervention in morality, of the perpetuity of its action in humanity. Strengthened by the conclusions of symbolism, we maintain that Religion has value in the eyes of reason only as a poetic expression of society, an allegory of justice, a mythical conception of the universe and of destiny; and we affirm as a result that, from the day when philosophy is distinguished from theology, science from belief, morality from piety, Religion is without a role; it becomes for man and society a harmful, immoral element.

Among the works belonging to this third critique, which have appeared since the publication of the first edition of *Justice*, we will cite: *La Démocratie*, [by Étienne] Vacherot, a work referred to the correctional police by the imperial government; *La Métaphysique et la*

Science, by the same author; *L'Église et la Morale*, by Dom Jacobus, Brussels, 2 vols. 18mo, a work remarkable for its strong erudition and deep moral feeling. Let us also mention an opuscle by Ferdonand Eenens, *Le Paradis terrestre*, although the author has allowed himself to be drawn into critiques that are more of the eighteenth than of the nineteenth century.

As for the works of [Patrice] Larroque, *Examen critique des doctrines de la religion chrétienne*, and Henri Disdier, *Conciliation rationnelle du Droit et du Devoir*, they belong, by their deism as much as by their criticism, to the first period. One thing to note: the most acrid detractors of Christianity are either libertines, whom morality upsets even more than faith, or religionists who, under various names, aspire to redo the work of the Church, the work of Divinity!

Note (B)

EPISCOPAL POLICE. — We had not only seen and read the letter, we had a copy of it, certified true by M. de Mirecourt himself. Without this precaution we would have seen ourselves transferred to the correctional police for slander, which would not have been the smallest of joys for the Catholic-Imperial party.

When we appeared before the examining magistrate to answer the charges brought against us, the honorable magistrate, after having exhausted all the questions relative to the work, continued, with a perfectly played indifference:

“You sent your book to Bishop Matthieu; you speak of a letter he allegedly addressed to M. de Mirecourt: are you sure of what you are saying there?”

“Would it be by any chance, Mr. Judge,” we replied, “that if we were not sure of the fact, you would sue us for defamation?”

“Oh!” he cried, “it’s not about that. But, as a magistrate, I must question you on everything that may aggravate or excuse the offenses of

which you are accused, and serve to reveal the truth.”

“Well, then! Here’s the certified true copy we got from that featherbrained Mirecourt. Now you have been warned, Your Excellency, that if it pleases you to consider this document false, we on our side have decided to summon the Archbishop and his correspondent, and to submit the oath to them both. We will thus know the background of this intrigue, and who the forger is.”

The examining magistrate seized the paper, descended to the parquet where he examined it with the imperial prosecutor; then, returning to his study after a quarter of an hour, handed it over to us without saying a word. There was no means to bite us with it.

Besides, we would not like our readers to believe that we attach the slightest importance to the fact that the name of Mgr. Matthieu, or that of M. de Mirecourt, continues to appear in a writing whose subject goes beyond any personality. But the truth must be known, in the interest of history and for the just appreciation of this period.

Now, the truth is that the Church, credulous, as always, to the demonstrations of

a power that employed her for its ends, triumphed, two years ago, to the point of insolence; that, by an effect of this same credulity, she placed her secret police at the service of libelists whom she trusted to be defenders of the faith. While de Mirecourt thought only of making money from the scandal, the Archbishop of Besançon, we have no doubt, imagined himself doing a pious work; this is clear from the very terms of his letter. Now the Church is struck on its head by the very one whose piety, for ten years, filled it with joy; what is sadder is that the same mercenary writers, who formerly pushed the zeal of their orthodoxy to ultramontaniam, today, on a new watchword, undermine the See of Saint Peter in the interest, they say, of the Church herself, and claim to be more Catholic, more Orthodox and better Christians than the Pope!

As for the Sieur de Mirecourt, after having long experienced the leniency of the courts of the empire, now demonetized, decreed for seizure, he took refuge in London, where he has just, for his debut, published a pamphlet against the emperor. This is the world that had undertaken to remake society: by one anecdote, we will let you judge the rest.

Note (C)

IMMORALITY AND INSUFFICIENCY OF THE VOLTAIRIAN CRITIQUE. — M. Larroque, in his *Examen critique des doctrines de la religion chrétienne*, develops the thought that we are only indicating here:

“It is doing an incomplete work to be content to take away from the people their false beliefs without putting true ones in their place. Such was the work of the philosophers of the eighteenth century, who moreover made the mistake of attacking fundamental truths at the same time as error... Voltaire rendered immense services to the cause of reason, but one cannot regret too much that the moral sense was so deplorably lacking in him... When it was necessary to institute a serious polemic against the enemy, which appealed to the lofty feelings of the human soul, he more than once took as auxiliaries the corruptions of the heart and the evils of the mind. He addressed himself to a small minority, enlightened, but impious and libertine, etc...”

M. Larroque concludes his critique of

Voltaire and the philosophy of the eighteenth century with a Religious reform, which is nothing other than a paraphrase of the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* and of the *Social Contract*. His three volumes, printed at Brussels, whose introduction into France had at first suffered some difficulty, now enter there without hindrance. M. Larroque is or calls himself a religious man. Two years ago that was not enough for imperial policy: witness the suppression of the *Revue Philosophique et Religieuse*. It is enough today. But journalists are condemned to a fine if they allow themselves to make an apology for M. Proudhon's book *De a Justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Eglise* (See *La Presse* of January 27, 1860.) Later, we will see. And that is what politics is...

NEWS OF THE REVOLUTION

The situation in Europe is definitely compromised. This is the fact expressed by the formula, now become vulgar: *The treaties of 1815 have been torn up*. Yes, the treaties of 1815 are torn, and there is no government in Europe that cannot be accused in this regard of violation, complicity, connivance, or at least indifference. But here is a strange thing, which lays bare the incapacity of the leaders of nations: if the treaties of 1815 are torn up, it is just as certain that the powers that signed them do not know how to get out of them, or what idea to substitute for the idea that inspired the Congress of Vienna, an idea that continues, in spite of everything, to govern the political world, and which is far from being exhausted. The renewal of European law, beyond the thought of 1815: this is the problem currently facing politicians, as much, it must be said, as a result of the ineptitude of governments, as by the progress of the Revolution. How much bloodshed and wasted treasure will it cost before this problem is solved?

ROME. — The capital fact of the moment is the defeat by the first of the Catholic powers of the temporal power of the Pope. What an event it would be, if it had been accomplished under a revolutionary initiative, by a nation armed for ideas and a free government! There would no longer be that vain and deceitful distinction between the spiritual and the temporal, which tore the Middle Ages apart, which a moderately intelligent eclecticism, if it were possible for it to reconsider the established facts, would no longer want today; it would be the spiritual according to the Revolution asserting itself instead of the spiritual according to the Church, and that without any separation from the temporal. The separation of the two powers was a weapon of the state against the priesthood, of philosophy against faith, when minds, no longer wanting ecclesiastical government, nevertheless did not feel strong enough to proclaim human morality by eliminating revealed morality. In itself, the separation of the temporal and the spiritual would be the death of society, as the separation of soul and body is the death of the individual.

But here, as in everything else, there was to be found the intellectual chaos and the anachronistic empiricism that distinguished the Second Empire. When Napoleon I decreed the union of the Papal States with France, he affected, as everyone knows, universal monarchy. The pope, in becoming primate of Gaul, did not at least cease to be the head of the Catholic world; the conquest could help the return of the Protestant populations. The Church was carried back to the times, which we speak of as united, of Constantine and Charlemagne. To judge the new establishment only from the Christian point of view, one could say that there was compensation. Then, Napoleon I, legislator and codifier, continuing the work of the Constituent Assembly, the Legislative Assembly and the Convention, had just laid the foundations of the new moral order. If the Church were humbled, the spiritual revolutionary rose accordingly. There was a sequence, a logic, a plan, in the acts of the first emperor. Is it the same with Napoleon III? Isolated in Europe after his victories, overwhelmed by the Revolution, without an idea as well as without an ideal, he has reconciled, we don't know why, with England,

whom he threatened the day before (again, we don't know why); he captured the favor of bureaucratic liberalism by making a treaty of free trade, not according to French solidarity and from the point of view of French interests, but according to the anarchic theory of Mr. Cobden and in the service of the industrial supremacy of England; finally he sacrifices, purely and simply, without profit and without glory, to the detriment of national influence, and against a tradition of fifteen centuries, the sovereignty of the Holy Father. At this twist, England applauded, the Saint-Simonian newspapers clapped their hands, proclaimed Napoleon III the most liberal sovereign of the century, more advanced than the Revolution, more Catholic than the Pope. For us, if we could rejoice in this appalling mess, it would doubtless be to see our enemies devour each other and cut short our work. But, in the face of the devout circulars of the imperial government and the severities deployed against liberty, in the face of this traffic in national interests that have been declared *contemptible*, sometimes in connection with an unfinished and fruitless expedition, sometimes in connection with an agreement previously disdained, which it is

now a question of restoring, it is impossible for us not to see that he works, to the exclusive profit of despotism, to release the country from any idea and any faith; that the spirit of the Revolution is more odious than ever, and that the only principle that we follow, even if it costs us the nation, with its thought, its labor and its capital, is good pleasure.

Moreover, nothing is done, said Napoleon I, as long as there is something left to do. The pope has only lost half of his States: Napoleon III, by one of those about-faces with which he is familiar, may very well one day reinstate him. It is in the nature and in the situation of this power to begin everything and to abandon everything, to undo and redo, to be unfaithful to every idea, not only to one's own. Disgusted with the Italians, as with the Turks, who knows if Napoleon III will not turn to Austria and to the Pope? Let's wait and see.

ITALY. — We would like nothing better than to credit the Revolution with the conquest of Lombardy from Austria, the expulsion of the archdukes and the annexation of the provinces of central Italy to the constitutional royalty of Victor Immanuel. But one thing keeps us

mistrustful: it is that, with Italy losing its emperor and its pope, we do not know what becomes of it, we do not even foresee what it can be. There, more than anywhere else, the notion of right seems extinct, and ideas are conspicuous by their absence. Also, the emancipated Italy belongs to itself less than ever; its destinies are brewing outside of it, to the great joy of a swarm of intriguers, and to the profound indifference of the peasants. One of our friends, an Italian, writes to us on this subject:

“The future Italian parliament will be, do not doubt it, a thoughtless rendezvous of authentic fools and skilled rogues. All Italian affairs, all the real business, drags on in the dark: they are linked to the mysteries of the Tuileries or to those of secret societies. In Italy, you have before you only silent diplomats or sworn conspirators. Are you asking for discussion? We are silent. You are being answered with false news; you are opposed with theories that are deliberately equivocal, false by calculation, deliberately contradictory. We only like the double and quadruple agreement positions; we run after the pleasure of deceiving, the supreme felicity of surprising.

Do you know where Italy is discussed? In Paris... There, 218 brochures have already been printed since the one on *The Pope and the Congress*; here, nothing. This is the incurable calamity of the country of Machiavelli: add to it the fashion of turning one's back on friends without telling them why; the fashion of establishing personal enmities with lightheartedness, in order to avoid political explanations; the fashion, in a word, to always give physical and moral blows with the stylus...

“The countryside makes fun of everything. The government has only found the remedy for the situation by appointing governors, whom it chooses from among the rich with several millions, and whom it obliges to accept salaries of 50 to 70 thousand francs. But the soldiers, the devoted men, the victims of Austria, are on the pavement. They are refused the most modest places. And do you know what these governors are for? To represent the federation! ... So that we will have unity surrounded by governors, with a federal ministry, having unitary representatives appointed, and organizing the reign of the rich against the peasants, in the name of French democracy and of 1789...”

The kingdom, that is to say monarchical centralization, was anti-national in old Italy. Five times, since the fall of the Western Empire in the fifth century, it has been tried: there has been the kingdom of the Heruli, the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, the kingdom of the Lombards, the kingdom of the Franks; lastly, a kingdom supposedly from Italy, but whose feudal holders came, some from Friuli, some from Germany, some from Provence or Burgundy. All these kingdoms were devoured one after the other by Italian federalism. Things got to such a point that the greediest of princes, to whom this dangerous crown was offered, in the end no longer wanted it. We are now in the Piedmontese kingdom. God preserve the chivalrous Victor-Emmanuel from accidents! But we are firmly convinced that if, instead of the Emperor, the Revolution had presided over the emancipation of Italy, if the Italians had waited for the signal from Paris, the Austrians would not have remained in the Peninsula; Italy, federal by nature and destination, would not seek the guarantee of its independence in the unity of the kingdom; and Victor-Emmanuel, scarcely in possession of Lombardy, would not see himself faced with the

alternative, either of abandoning Savoy, his family patrimony, to the Emperor of the French, or of being accused of ingratitude by his great and very insecure ally. We sincerely wish to be mistaken, but we are afraid that the emancipation of Italy, under the auspices of an emperor, is only an imperial fantasy, a thing to begin again.

Cheers, in the meantime, to the Savoyard patriots who protest against the annexation of their country to France! They are within their rights, within the truth of principles. The imperial government itself recognized this: it declared that the annexation of Savoy would take place only with the consent of the populations. Could it believe itself certain of this consent? Is there anyone in Savoy tempted by the glory and liberties of the Empire? As for republican France, it is no longer by these antiquated means that she intends to exert her influence on the world. Let the Savoyards, the old Allobroges, therefore say to Europe: "We are no more French than our neighbors in Geneva, Vaud, Neuchâtel, Porentruy, Fribourg, Valais; we cannot become it, we do not want it, and it will not be. We appeal to the principle of nationality, for which we fought at Solferino

and Magenta.”

AUSTRIA. — We believe that we are mistaken when we imagine that the Austrian Empire — made up of so many different peoples, and plagued by the general disease, liberty — is on the verge of its ruin. It may be that, as a result of obstinate resolutions and easily foreseeable events, there will be a change of dynasty in Austria. It is a law of history, which admits of few exceptions, that a revolution in a state brings about a change of dynasty, just as a modification in the policy of a government brings about a change of ministry. The dissolution of the Austrian empire would not result from this. In the situation of Europe and in the disposition of people’s minds, a great State, approximately in the place now occupied by the Empire of Austria, seems to us inevitable. Whether the capital is Vienna, Prague, or Pesth, whether this state is called Austrian or Magyar, it matters little. The law of agglomeration would be the strongest here; the Revolution is not sufficiently advanced in ideas for such a large expanse of the country, surrounded by powerful empires, to remain delivered up to fragmentation. What makes

Austria ill is that, heiress of the Holy Roman Empire, formed in its image, and like it constituted, in principle, in a sort of federation, it is torn by two contrary tendencies: one side, the central power, which for two centuries has been trying to transform its federal constitution into a unitary, absolutist and divine-right constitution, analogous to the French constitution after Richelieu and under Louis XIV; on the other hand the peoples, all of whom demand liberties and guarantees. It is, in short, the struggle of Revolution and counter-revolution, a struggle that could well end in the sacrifice of the imperial family of Habsburg, never with certainty in the downfall of the peoples.

ENGLAND. — We recently read M. Ledru-Rollin’s book on *The Decadence of England*. We know that of M. Eliat Regnault on *The Crimes of England*. We also read the brochure by M. de Montalembert on *The Political Future of England*. And we have been sufficiently edified, for eight years, by reading the newspapers, on the policy of the English government. While acknowledging the truth of the facts, and associating ourselves with most of the opinions

of writers whose political faith is basically ours, we are not, however, as convinced as they seem of this approaching damnation of Great Britain. Besides, and whatever our opinion on the future of the English nation, we would like to know, and we ask it earnestly of the former Minister of the Republic, if the ten years that have elapsed since the publication of his book have not in some way modified his judgment; if, for example, he does not think that an electoral reform would bring about in England the resurrection of what we in France call the *people*; if he believes that this people would be strong enough to come face to face with the bourgeoisie and the English gentry, and would know how to use universal suffrage better than the French people did in the famous *comitia* of 1800, 1803, 1804, 1848, 1849, 1851 and 1852?

RUSSIA.—Does the emancipation of the peasants advance? Where now? We do not know. It is said that the Emperor Alexander II dedicated his life to this great work; but he does not seem in a hurry to make himself a martyr for it. What we firmly believe is that this revolution is now inevitable, and that not half a generation will elapse before the serfs of

Muscovy are set free, and the boyars tempered. In the meantime, they make railways in Russia and they teach political economy. A good sign.

PRUSSIA AND GERMANY. — The development and consolidation of the parliamentary system will be the best defense to oppose the Napoleonic conquest, if indeed Napoleon III, curious to visit his uncle's battlefields, takes it into his head to cross the Rhine. In '93, liberty was on this side of the Rhine; now she's on that side. The Revolution has not lost an inch of ground: it is not difficult to foresee what the outcome will be of this march and this counter-march.

FRANCE. — After what we have said in our program about the policy of the Imperial Government, a few words on the mental state of the country will suffice.

"Everything is dead in France," writes one of our correspondents, "in law, philosophy, literature and art. Apart from an elite that has not wavered and preserves, with the sacred fire, the cult of beauty and the good, no one is interested in anything. To satisfy the nutritive instinct and the sexual instinct, such is the

occupation of this great caravanserai that the empire has made of Paris. Do not imagine that the Vacherot trial, the suspension of Olivier, the consultation of the lawyers in connection with the article of Mr. d'Haussonville move the public even slightly. You would be in the deepest error. Do you believe that in the city of the Caesars, there was the slightest concern over the accusations brought, by the unofficial or official sycophants of the prince, against an Epictetus, a Cremutius Cordus or a Thræsea?... Well, France is in that state. We concerned ourselves with the Roman question as and as much as it pleased those in high places. Then, when the master judged that there was enough gossip about the pope and his temporal, he cut the chatter short with his letter to Mr. Fould; and the onlookers then talk about reducing tariffs and free trade. What amuses me is to see people who think they are clever take all this seriously; and, with each word that fell from the mouth of Auguste, to construct political novels. What is serious, dear friend, is that this country has become a real *teetotum*..."

The French people, we say it through the pain in our soul, by letting December 2 happen and by ratifying it with its votes, HAS LACKED

HONOR: as justice must be done, degradation has struck the culprit. What would France not give for the chosen one of her terrors to be what the vulgar and the poets call a great genius, a great man! The glory of the prince would cover the ignominy of the nation. What would he not give himself to transform himself into a constitutional king and leave an irresponsible crown to his innocent son! These hopes were to be pitilessly disappointed. Let others insult Napoleon III: we will simply say that, without principles, there is neither genius nor glory, and that Napoleon III, of all mortals the most greedy for fame, could not, whatever nature made him, with whatever generous intentions he may be animated, express something other than what his six million electors on December 20, 1851 had in their hearts. Ah! Why did his friends not know how to give another meaning to his accession? Why didn't they marry his name to an idea? By making him despot, *per fas et nefas*, condemned to rule without principle, they cursed him, and we are cursed with him.

However, as the saying goes, the excess of the evil produces the remedy. Some symptoms of reversal appear.

The warnings, for a few months, have fallen more thickly than ever on the newspapers: proof that impatience wins over minds and that the power grows irritated.

The chauvinistic spirit is on the decline: witness the article in the *Presse* on the annexation of Savoy, an article described as lying by a minister who claims, apparently, that the power to which he belongs alone has the privilege of lying.

The tendencies towards centralization are beginning to weaken: witness the articles published on this subject by the *Courrier du Dimanche*, and the work, announced by the *Presse* of January 27, by M. Ch. Dollfus. Liberal and republican France has no more solid guarantee of peace to offer Europe than this. Don't Brittany, Provence, Alsace, Languedoc, Burgundy, Franche-Comté, Auvergne also have their own nationality?

Sometimes when the justice of opinion comes to light, it is enough that it meets an interpreter worthy of it. The success of M. Dupanloup, responding to *Le Constitutionnel* and *Le Siècle*, was complete. Do you believe that public opinion is papist in France? It is less so, perhaps, than in England. The imperial

government took the silence of the populations in the midst of clerical agitation as a sign of sympathy for itself. It did not see that this indifference, an effect of the Revolution, accused it itself, and its policy of eight years. Opinion, in France, is like the language: it likes clear positions. It wants the Revolution to be the Revolution, and the Pope to be the Pope. It whistles the Gospel and Gallican homilies of the government, and it stigmatizes one more defection.

There is talk of rapprochement between a fraction of the Republican Party and a fraction of the Orleanist Party. We don't believe in mergers, but we persist nonetheless in regarding this rapprochement as a good omen. There are many nuances in each of the two parties: why shouldn't those that are close together come together? It takes a prodigious consumption of men and things to bring about a revolution: why not employ all the medium terms as their turn comes? The antagonism between the republic and Orleanism made possible the re-establishment of the empire; the end of the empire, we mean the end of personal government and the return to principles, would be the result of the agreement of the

republicans and the liberals. — Rather the continuation of the empire than the return to constitutional monarchy, say some radicals, affecting Puritanism. We suspect these Puritans of being closer friends of the Emperor than they are of the Revolution. Hey, dear friends! Who speaks to you of a return to the monarchy? Don't you see that you speak exactly like the Puritans of Orleanism: Rather the empire than the republic, they say. Let the moderates of both parties act, and act, if need be, yourselves, on your friends of December 2, and be convinced that all will go for the best in this new evolution.

The alliance with the Church broken, Orleanism and the republic gathering in one and the same opposition, what remains to the empire, in terms of ideas and men? Millionaire Saint-Simonianism, the police, perhaps the army: uncertain supports. Unfortunately it is left with that dreadful demoralization that makes the patient say: Rather gangrene than the scalpel! But here again the empire is in its decline.

“...In the midst of all these ruins,” writes another of our friends, “there is a grave, serious, and real consolation: the true, sincere

republican party becomes a philosophical religion; by the very fact that its ranks are thinning out, its remnants assert themselves more and more in the name of human reason, in the name of Justice. It's stoicism minus selfishness. This party will be fruitful: but how long will it take to bear fruit?...”

In short: the republic of 1848 will have served to sow the revolutionary seed; the blood of December 2 made it rise; the experience of a power without principle and without control will give it growth.

End of the First Study.

A

CORVUS
EDITION