

A NEW PROUDHON LIBRARY



OF JUSTICE IN THE  
REVOLUTION AND IN  
THE CHURCH

BY

PIERRE-JOSEPH PROUDHON.



VOLUME ONE.



A WORKING TRANSLATION BY SHAWN P. WILBUR

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



CORVUS EDITIONS, 2023



## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The WORKING TRANSLATIONS presented here are part of an attempt to establish an edition of the major works of PIERRE-JOSEPH PROUDHON. The goal is not simply to provide individual translations, but to provide a collection of translations that work well together to ease the task of the student of Proudhon's thought. A later stage will involve considerable annotation, including some attempts to connect the various works, but the connections have to be discovered before they can be noted, so it has been necessary simply to prepare as great a volume of relatively clean draft translations as possible as quickly as possible. At present, the raw materials for the NEW PROUDHON LIBRARY project amount to well over a million words of new translation, together with the drafts that I have accumulated since starting to translate Proudhon's works in 2006.

This particular volume — the first of four covering the 1860 revised and expanded edition of JUSTICE IN THE REVOLUTION AND IN THE CHURCH — contains drafts that have been subject to at least two rounds of revision. It is quite possible that some errors have still escaped the process, but it is unlikely that they will pose particular problems for readers. There are some questions of style that are still unsettled. At times, for example, Proudhon goes beyond the normal French gendering of some key terms — among them, significantly, the Revolution and the Church — to real personification, so readers may find, for instances, that the Church is at times referred to as “it” and sometimes as “she.” Final decisions on some of these questions may ultimately depend on larger patterns in Proudhon's work.

In the interest of easing the work of tracing Proudhon's keywords and fundamental concepts across and between works, the tendency has been to translate the relevant terms rather uniformly. Where there are obvious English equivalents for French synonyms — *labor* and *work* for *travail* and *œuvre*, for example — I have generally maintained the existing patterns of usage, except where that practice would obscure familiar English phrases. (*Droit de travail* has generally been translated as *right to work*.) Some key distinctions have been more rigorously maintained — *right* and *law* for *droit* and *loi*, for example — even in some instances where the temptation is strong to have recourse to more familiar constructions.

It is important to note that these choices are not driven by any particular uniformity in Proudhon's own use of terms. On the contrary, because Proudhon understood most concepts as “indefinable notions,” always subject to additional clarification in context and sometimes to startling swings in meaning. (*Anarchy* is the most striking example of this tendency, marking, as it does in Proudhon's works, both the *social problem* and a significant element of its solution.) At times, the goal is simply to reduce the potential of introducing additional uncertainty in the translation process. There are, of course, terms in French that are subject to multiple meanings that are difficult to render in English without simply making

a choice among them: *esprit* for *spirit* and *mind*, *conscience* for *conscience* and *consciousness*, *expérience* for *experience* and *experiment*, etc. In these cases, and some derived from them, the practice has generally been to translate the word in all cases with the phonetically similar English term. In these cases, it is often possible to see the two most logical options as a choice between *the language of the Church* and *the language of the Revolution*. In instances where real confusion would be introduced, more specific choices have been made, but elsewhere readers are encouraged to treat the various senses of the French term as part of a single *series* of meanings and to pay close attention to contexts.

The 1860 edition of JUSTICE was first released as a series of twelve installments, each of which included a revised Study from the 1858 first edition, together with a series of endnotes, marked by letters in the text, and an application of the theory to current events, under the title “News of the Revolution.” In addition, a new “Program on Popular Philosophy” was added at the beginning of the first installment. In the *Œuvres complètes*, these “Notes and Clarifications” were relegated to two separate volumes. At least one modern French edition has excluded the “News of the Revolution” material as inessential. There are perhaps arguments to be made that the 1858 edition is a more cohesive work than this edition, but there are also indications that the period between the two editions marked a kind of watershed in Proudhon’s understanding of his project, in the context of which the relative messiness of the later edition is itself of interest to students of the work. Part of the process moving forward will be establishing a parallel translation of the 1858 edition and documenting the differences between the two published editions and the substantial body of related manuscripts that have survived. For now, however, readers should be aware that the choice of text and the approach to the organization of the translations reflects a specific interest in the reuse of the 1858 work as the main material of Proudhon’s “Essais d’une philosophie populaire” — a title that we have to understand as implying both *short works* and *tests, trials* or *experiments* in popular philosophy.

As the process of translation, revision and annotation continues, the current drafts of all translations will be available online at [proudhonlibrary.org](http://proudhonlibrary.org). The texts by Proudhon will be supplemented by selected works of criticism, relevant correspondence, commentary, etc. Notices of group readings will also be posted on that page.

— Shawn P. Wilbur

September 3, 2023.

OF JUSTICE  
IN THE REVOLUTION AND IN  
THE CHURCH



## POPULAR PHILOSOPHY.

# PROGRAM



### § I. — The Coming of the People to Philosophy.

At the beginning of a new work, we should explain our title and our intentions.

Ever since humanity entered the period of civilization, for as long as anyone can recall, the people, said Paul Louis COURIER, have *prayed* and *paid*.

They pray for their princes, for their magistrates, for their exploiters and their parasites;

They pray, like Jesus Christ, for their executioners;

They pray for the very ones who should, by rights, pray for them.

Then they pay those for whom they pray;

They pay the government, the courts, the police, the church, the nobility, the crown, the tax-collector, the proprietor and the occupier—I should have said the soldier;

They pay for every move they make; pay to come and to go, to buy and to sell, to eat, to drink and to breathe, to warm themselves in the sun, to be born and to die;

They even pay for the permission to work;

And they pray to heaven to bless their labor, that it may provide them enough to pay more and more.

The people have never done anything but pray and pay: we believe that the time has come to make them PHILOSOPHIZE.

The people cannot live in skepticism, following the example of the gentlemen of the Institute and the beautiful souls of the city and the court. Indifference is unhealthy for them. They reject libertinism and they are quick to flee from the corruption that invades from on high. And what they ask for themselves, they want for everyone, making no exceptions for anyone. They have never claimed, for example, that the bourgeoisie must have a religion, that religion is necessary for the regulars at the stock exchange, for the bohemians in the newspapers and in the theaters, or for that innumerable multitude living from prostitution and intrigue. They simply claim that, for their part, their hardy consciences have no need of God. The people want neither to dupe nor to be duped any longer: what they call for today is a positive law, based in reason and justice, which imposes itself on all, and which no one is allowed to mock.

Would a reform of the old religion be enough to respond to this wish of the people? No. The people have realized that religion has not been legal tender for a

long time among the upper classes, while they continued to believe in it; that, even in the temples, it has lost all credit and all prestige; that it counts for absolutely nothing in politics and business; finally, that the separation of faith and law has become an axiom of government everywhere. The tolerance of the State now covers religion, which is precisely the opposite of what had taken place in the past. Thus the people have followed the movement inaugurated by their leaders; they are wary of the spiritual, and they no longer want a religion that has been made an instrument of servitude by clerical and anticlerical Machiavellianism. Whose fault is that?

But are the people capable of philosophy?

Without hesitation we answer: *Yes*—as well as reading, writing and arithmetic; as well as understanding the catechism and practicing a craft. We even go so far as to think philosophy can be found in its entirety in that essential part of public education, the trade: a matter of attention and habit. Primary instruction requires three years, and apprenticeship three more, for a total of six years: if philosophy, the popularization of which has become a necessity of the first order in our times, should require of the plebeian, in addition to the six years of primary and professional instruction to which he is condemned, an hour per week for six more years, would that be a reason to deny the philosophical capacity of the people?

The people are philosophical, because they are as weary of praying as of paying. They have had enough of the pharisee and the publican; and all that they desire, at the point that we have reached, is to know how to direct their ideas, and to free themselves from this world of tolls and paternosters. It is to this end that we have resolved, with some friends, to consecrate our forces, certain as we are that, if sometimes this philosophy of the people spills a bit too freely from our pen, the truth, once known, will not lack abridgers.

## § II. — The Definition of Philosophy.

Philosophy is composed of a certain number of questions that have been regarded at all times as the fundamental problems of the human mind, and that for that reason have been declared inaccessible to the common people. Philosophy, it has been said, is the science of the universal, the science of principles, the science of causes; this is why we can speak of universal science, the science of things visible and invisible, the science of God, of man and of the world, *Philosophia est scientia Dei, hominis et mundi*.

We believe that the questions with which philosophy occupies itself are all questions of common sense; we believe equally that, far from constituting a universal science, these questions only deal with the very conditions of knowledge. Before we think of becoming erudite, it is necessary to begin by being philosophical. Is that so much to boast of?

Thus the first and most important question, for all of philosophy, is to know what philosophy is, what it wants, and above all what it can do. What does all this come down to? The reader will judge.



PHILOSOPHY,—according to the etymological sense of the word, the constant practice of thinkers, the most certain results of their labors, and the best-accredited definitions,—is *the Search for*, and, insofar as it is possible, *the Discovery of the reason of things*.

It has required much time, and much effort by the seekers, to come to that conclusion—a conclusion it seems the first comer would have found, if they had only followed common sense, and one that everyone will certainly understand.

It follows that philosophy is not science, but the preliminary to science. Isn't it rational to conclude, as we just did, that education, instead of ending with philosophy, must begin with it? What we call the *philosophy of history*, or the *philosophy of the sciences*, is only an ambitious way to designate science itself, that is to say, that which is most detailed, most generalized in our knowledge—as it is characteristic of the scientists' trade to stick to the pure and simple description of facts, without seeking their reason. As the reason of things is discovered, it assumes the rank of science, and the scientist follows the philosopher.

Let us examine our definition more closely.

The word *thing*, one of the most general in the language, must be understood here to refer, not only to external objects, as opposed to persons, but to everything in the human being, both physical and moral, that can furnish material for observation: sentiments and ideas, virtue and vice, beauty and ugliness, joy and suffering, speculations, errors, sympathies, antipathies, glory and decadence, misery and felicity. Every manifestation of the human subject, in a word, all that passes in his soul, his understanding and his reason, as well as in his body; everything that affects him, either as an individual or in society, or emanates from him, becoming thus an object of philosophy, is considered, with regard to the philosopher, a thing.

By *reason* we mean the how and why of things, as opposed to their *nature*, which is impenetrable. Thus, in each thing, the philosopher will note the beginning, duration and end; the size, the shape, the weight, the composition, the constitution, the organization, the properties, the power, the faculties; the increase, the diminution, the evolutions, series, proportions, relations and transformations; the habits, variations, *maxima*, *minima* and means; the attractions, appetites, accompaniments, influences, analogies; in short all that can serve to make known the phenomenality of things and their laws. He will abstain from all investigation, and from any conclusion, on the very nature or *en soi* (in-itself) of things, for example on *matter*, *mind*, *life*, *force*, *cause*, *substance*, *space* or *time*, considered in themselves, setting aside their appearances or phenomena.

Thus, by its definition, philosophy declares that there is a side of things that is accessible to it, which is their REASON, and another side about which it can know absolutely nothing, which is their *nature*: can we show at once more sincerity and more prudence? And what could be better for the people than this modesty?... Philosophy, by its own testimony, is the search for and, if possible, the discovery of the reason of things; it is not the search for, and still less the discovery of their nature: we will not complain about this distinction. What

would a nature be without a reason or appearances? And if the latter were known, who would dare to say that the former was to be missed?

*To become aware*, in short, of what occurs inside, what he observes or carries out outside of himself, of which his senses and his consciousness give testimony, and the reason of which his mind can penetrate: that, for man, is what it is to philosophize, and everything that allows itself to be grasped by the eyes and the mind is matter for philosophy. As for the intimate nature of things, that *je ne sais quoi* of which metaphysics cannot stop talking, and which it imagines or conceives after having set aside both the phenomenality of things and their reason, if that residue is not a pure nothing, we don't know what to make of it; it interests neither our sensibility nor our intelligence, and it does not even have anything in it to excite our curiosity.

Well, now. In what sense is all that beyond the reach of the common people? Just as we are, do we not incessantly, and without knowing it, make philosophy, as the good M. Jourdain made prose? Who is the man who, in the affairs of the world, concerns himself with anything but that which interests his mind, his heart or his senses? To make ourselves consummate philosophers, it is only a question of making ourselves more sensitive to what we do, feel and say. Is that so difficult? As for the contemplatives, those who have wanted to see beyond the reason of things and to philosophize on their very nature, they have ended by placing themselves outside nature and reason; they are the lunatics of philosophy.

### § III. — On the Quality of the Philosophical Mind.

But here is a rather different affair! It is a question of knowing if philosophy, of which it was first said that the people were incapable, will not, by its very practice, create inequality among men. What can we conclude from our definition?

Since philosophy is the search for and, so far as it is possible, the discovery of the reason of things, it is clear that, in order to philosophize well, the first and most necessary condition is to observe things carefully; to consider them successively in all their parts and all their aspects, without permitting oneself a notion of the whole before being certain of the details. This is the precept of Bacon and Descartes, the two fathers of modern philosophy. Couldn't we say that in expounding it, they were thinking particularly of the people? Philosophy is all in the observation, internal and external: there is no exception to that rule.

The philosopher—the one who seeks, who still does not know—can be compared to a navigator charged with making a map of an island, who, in order to carry out his mission, being unable to take a photograph of the country from high in the atmosphere, is obliged to follow with attention all the sinuosities and crevices of the coast, recording one after another on paper, exactly. The circumnavigation completed, and the summary of observations finished, the geographer would have obtained as faithful a representation as possible of the island, in its parts and in the whole, which he never could have done if, keeping himself at a distance, he had been limited to drawing perspectives and

landscapes.

The philosopher can also be compared to a traveler who, having traversed a vast plain in all directions, having recognized and visited the woods, the fields, the meadows, the vineyards, the habitations, etc., would then climb a mountain. As he made his ascent, the objects would pass again before his eyes in a general panorama, which would allow him understand fully what he had only grasped incompletely through the inspection of the details.

Thus, he must stick close to the facts and constantly refer to them, divide his material, make complete counts and exact descriptions. He must go from simple notions to the most comprehensive formulas, testing his views of the whole and the glimpsed details against one another. Finally, where immediate observation becomes impossible, he must show himself sober in his conjectures and circumspect with regard to probabilities, challenge analogies, and judge only self-consciously, and always with reserve, distant things by those near, the invisible by the visible. Under these conditions, would it be too much to say that the practical man is closer to the truth, less subject to illusion and to error than the speculative one? Regular contact with things preserves him from fantasy and vain systems: if the *practitioner* shines little from invention, he also courts less risk of making a mistake and rarely loses by waiting. *He who works prays*, says an old proverb. Can we not also say: He who works, in so far as he pays attention to his work, philosophizes?

It is only by following this scrupulous and slowly rising method of observation, that the philosopher could flatter himself to have reached the summit of philosophy, science, the condition of which is double, certainty and synthesis. These words should frighten no one. Here again the most transcendent philosophy contains nothing outside the abilities and reach of the people.

Indeed, a man may have seen more of things than is common among his fellows; he may have viewed them in more detail and more closely; he can thus consider them from a higher level and in a larger ensemble: this question of *quantity*, which has no influence on the *QUALITY* of the knowledge, adds nothing to the certainty, and consequently does not increase the value of the mind. This is of extreme importance for the determination of personal right, and constitutive of society: allow me to clarify my thought with some examples.

2 multiplied by 2 equals 4: this is, for everyone, a perfect certainty. But how much is 27 multiplied by 23? Here, more than one innocent will hesitate, and if he has not learned to calculate by figures, it will take a long time to find the solution, let alone dare to respond. Thus I take up the pen, and making the multiplication, I respond that the product demanded is 621. Now, knowing so easily the product of 27 times 23, and being able with the same promptitude and sureness to make the multiplication of all the possible numbers by all the possible numbers, I am clearly more knowledgeable than the one whose arithmetic capacity stops at the elementary operation  $2 \times 2 = 4$ . Does this make me more certain? Not at all. The quantity of knowledge, I repeat, adds nothing to the philosophical quality of the knowing: it is by virtue of that principle, and another just like it that we will speak of below, that French law, coming out of the Revolution of 89, has declared us all equal before the law. Between two citizens,

between two men, there can be inequality of acquired knowledge, of effective labor, of services rendered; there is no inequality of the quality of reason: such is, in France, the foundation of personal right and such is the basis of our democracy. The old regime did not reason in the same way. Is it clear now that philosophy is the legacy of the people?

It is the same for the mind's power to comprehend.

2 multiplied by 2 produces 4, and 2 added to 2 still gives 4: the *product*, on one side, and the *sum*, on the other, are equal. If the ignorant man to whom one makes this remark reflects on it just a bit, he will realize that addition and multiplication, although they begin from two different points of view and proceed in two different manners, resolve themselves, in this particular case, in an identical operation. By making a new effort, he will comprehend as well that 4 minus 2 or 4 divided by 2 always remains 2, as subtraction and division still resolve, in this particular case, into one single and identical operation. All this will interest and perhaps astonish him. He will have, in the measure from 2 to 4, a synthetic view of things. But the arithmetician knows much more, and his synthesis is incomparably more comprehensive. He knows that whenever one operates on numbers larger than 2, the results can no longer be the same; that multiplication is an abbreviated addition and division an abbreviated subtraction as well; that, in addition, subtraction is the opposite of addition, and division the opposite of multiplication; in summary, that all these operations, and others more difficult which are deduced from them, come down to the art of composing and decomposing the series of numbers. Does this give him the right to believe himself superior to the other, in nature and dignity? Certainly not: the only difference is that one has learned more than the other; but reason is the same for both of them, and this is why the legislator, at once a revolutionary and a philosopher, has decided that he will take no account of persons. It is for this reason, finally, that modern civilization tends invincibly to democracy. Where philosophy reigns—and where, as a consequence, the identity of philosophical reason is recognized—the distinction of classes, like the hierarchy of church and state, is impossible.

We can make analogous arguments about all of the genres of knowledge, and we will always arrive at that decisive conclusion, that, for all those who *know*, the certainty is of the same quality and degree, despite the extent of the knowledge; just as, for all those who grasp the relation of several objects or ideas, the synthesis is of the same quality and form, despite the multitude of relations grasped. In no case will there be room to distinguish between the reason of the people and the reason of the philosopher.

#### § IV.—The Origin of Ideas.

Here is the great temptation, I should say the great conspiracy of the philosophers; here is their chastisement as well.

This principle, so luminous and simple, that in order to know the reason of things, it is necessary to have seen them, has not always been accepted in

philosophy. (Can you believe it?) Without speaking of those who aspired, in such great numbers, to sound the nature of things, we encounter profound geniuses who have asked if the human mind, so subtle and so vast, could not, through a concentrated meditation on itself, come to that intelligence of the reason of things that is only, after all, the intelligence of the laws of the mind; if the man who thinks had such a need, in order to learn, to consult a nature that does not think; if a soul created in the image of God, the sovereign organizer, did not possess, by virtue of its divine origin and prior to its communication with the world, the ideas of things, and if it truly needed the control of phenomena in order to recognize ideas, that is, eternal exemplars. I think, therefore I know, *cogito, ergo cognosco*—such is the principle of these arch-spiritualist philosophers. Never has a brain that came from the ranks of the people conceived of a chimera like that. Some, interpreting in their own way the hyper-physical dogma of creation, go so far as to pretend that external realities are products of pure thought, and the world an expression of mind, so that it would be enough to have the full possession of the Idea, innate in our soul, but more or less obscured, in order, without further information, to possess the reason and grasp the very nature of the universe!

That manner of philosophizing, which would, if it had been justified by the least success, dispense with all observation and experience, would be, we must admit, very attractive and could not be more convenient. The philosopher would no longer be that industrious explorer, winning the bread of his soul by the sweat of his brow, always exposed to error by the omission of the least detail, reaching only a limited comprehension, obtaining often, instead of certainty, only probabilities, and sometimes ending in doubt, after having lived through the afflictions of the mind. He would be a clairvoyant, a thaumaturge, a rival to the Divinity, directing thought, and creative power as well, like a sovereign, and reading fluently the mysteries of Heaven, Earth and Humanity, at home with the divine thought. Ambition, as we see, is never lacking among the philosophers.

Where does this titanic presumption come from?

From the start we have sensed, in a confused manner, what philosophical observation later clarified, that in the formation of ideas the perception of phenomena does not render reason by itself; that the understanding, through the constitution that is proper to it, plays a role; that the soul is not exclusively passive in its conceptions, but that in receiving images or impressions from outside it, it reacts to them and derives ideas from them; so that, as often as not, the passage of ideas, or the discovery of the truth in things, pertains to the mind.

Thus we recognized that there was, in the soul, something like the molds of ideas, archetypal ideas, prior to all observation of phenomena. What were these ideas? Can we recognize them, among the multitude of those, more or less empirical, that the understanding strikes on its press? How to distinguish the patrimony of the mind from its acquisitions? If something in knowledge properly belongs to it, then why not everything? Wouldn't we be in the right to suppose that if the mind, possessing the innate principles of things, advanced in science only with the aid of arduous observation, that this was the effect of the heterogeneous union of the soul and the body, a union in which the ethereal

substance, offended by the matter, had lost the greatest part of its science and of its insight, retaining only a memory of the fundamental principles that formed its framework and property?... Others attributed the darkening of the intelligence to original sin. Man, for having wanted to eat the fruit of science, against the express order of God, would be, according to them, blinded. All the rest convince themselves that with a good mental discipline and the aid of the Spirit of Light, we could restore the human soul to the enjoyment of its high and immortal prerogatives, make it produce science without steeping itself in experience, through the energy of his nature alone, and by virtue of the axiom already cited: I am the child of God; I think, therefore I know...

What was at the bottom of all that? A diabolical thought of domination: for we must not be mistaken, the privilege of knowledge and pride of genius are the most implacable enemies of equality. Now one thing is known: human science is not enriched by the slightest scrap of a fact or idea through this exclusively pneumatic practice. Nothing has served: neither metaphysics nor dialectics, nor the theory of the absolute, nor revelation, nor possession, nor ecstasy, nor magnetism, nor magic, nor theurgy, nor catalepsy, nor ventriloquism, nor the philosopher's stone, nor table-turning. All that we know, we have invariably learned, and the mystics, the illuminati, the somnambulists, even the spirits with which they speak, have learned in their turn by the known means, through observation, experience, reflection, calculation, analysis and synthesis: God, doubtless, jealous of his work, wanting to maintain the decree that he had entered, namely, that we would see nothing with the eyes of the mind except by the intermediary of the eyes of the body, and that all that we claim to perceive by other means would be an error and a mystification of the devil. There is no occult science, no transcendent philosophy, no privileged souls, no divinatory geniuses, no *mediums* between infinite wisdom and the common sense of mortals. Sorcery and magic, once pursued by parliaments, are dispelled by the flame of experimental philosophy; the science of the heavens only began to exist on the day when the Copernicuses, the Galileos and the Newtons bid an eternal adieu to astrology. The metaphysics of the ideal taught nothing to Fichte, Schelling and Hegel: when these men, whose philosophy is rightly honored, imagined they had deduced *a priori*, they had only, without knowing it, synthesized experience. By philosophizing more loftily than their predecessors, they have enlarged the scope of science: the absolute, by itself, has produced nothing; translated into correctional policy, it has been jeered at as a cheat. In moral philosophy, mysticism, quietism and asceticism have led to the most disgusting turpitudes. Christ himself, Word made flesh, had taught nothing new to the conscience; and the entirety of theology, patiently studied, is found, in the last result, convicted by its own testimony as nothing other than a phantasmagoria of the human soul, of its operations and its powers, liberty, justice, love, science and progress.

Like it or not, it is necessary to keep to the common method, to confess in our hearts and with our mouths the democracy of intelligence; and since it is a question in that moment of the origin and the formation of our ideas, to demand the reason of the ideas, like all the rest, by observation and analysis.

§ V. — That Metaphysics is within the Province of Primary Instruction.

The definition of philosophy implies by its terms: 1) someone who seeks, observes, analyzes, synthesizes and discovers, whom we call the *Subject* or *Self*; 2) something that is observed, analyzed, the reason of which we seek, and which we call the *Object* or *Non-self*.

The first—the observer, subject, self, or mind—is active; the second—the thing observed, object, non-self, or phenomenon—is passive. Let us not frighten ourselves with words: this means that one is the artisan of the idea and that the other furnishes their material. There is no statue without the sculptor: this is very simple, is it not? But neither is there a statue without the marble: this is also clear. Now, it is the same for ideas. Eliminate one or the other of these two principles, the subject or the object, and no idea will be formed; thought will no longer be possible. Philosophy vanishes. Eliminate the sculptor or the block of marble, and you will have no statue. Every artistic or industrial production is like this. Remove the worker and you will remain eternally with your raw materials; take the materials from the worker and, if you ask him to produce anything by his thought alone, he will think that you are mocking him.

However, in this competition, or this opposition, of the subject and object, of the mind and things, we want to know in a more precise manner what is the role of each; in what consists the action of the mind, and what are the natures of the materials it puts to work.

The mind or the self is, or at least it acts as if it is, prone to affirm itself as a simple and indivisible nature, consequently as if it is more penetrating and impenetrable, more active and less corruptible, more prompt and less subject to change. Things, on the contrary, appear extended and composite, consequently divisible, successive, variable, penetrable, subject to dissolution, susceptible to a greater or lesser degree in all their qualities and properties.

How the mind, put in relation with external objects by the intermediary of the senses, perceives a nature so different from itself is what seems at the first inexplicable. Can the simple see the composite? That idea repels us. On reflection, however, we recognize this it is precisely that difference of nature that renders objects perceptible to the mind, and subjects them to it. For it sees them, remark it well, not in their substance, which it cannot conceive as other than simple (atomistic), after its own example, and which consequently escapes it; it sees them in their composition and their differences. The intuition of the mind, its action on objects, comes thus from two causes: by its acuity, it divides them and differentiates them infinitely; then, by its simplicity, it restores all these diversities to unity. What the mind sees in things is their differences, species, series and groups, in a word their *reason*, and it is because it is mind, because it is simple in its essence, that it sees all that. What the mind cannot discover is the nature or the *in-itself* of things, because that nature, stripped of its differences, of its unity of composition, etc., becomes then like the mind itself, something simple, amorphous, unapproachable and invisible.

The consequence of all this is easy to grasp. The mind put in the presence of things, the self in communication with the non-self, in receipt of impressions and images, it grasps differences, variations, analogies, groups, genera, species: all that is the fruit of its first perception. But the mind does not stop there; and the representation of things would not be complete in its thought, it would lack basis and perspective, if the mind did not add something more of its own.

Seeing then that infinite diversity of things, such a diversity that each thing seems to denounce itself as having been able to be completely different than it is, the mind, which feels itself single, in opposition to things, conceives the *One*, the *Identical*, the *Immutable*, which is not to be found;

Observing the contingency of phenomena, the mind conceives the *Necessary*, which it does not find either: this would be fortunate, if it did not decide to worship it under the name of *Destiny!*

Taking the comparative dimensions of objects and establishing their limits, it conceives *Infinity*, which is no more real;

Following, in its consciousness, the revolutions of time, and measuring the duration of existences, it conceives the *Eternal*, which cannot be claimed for any person or any thing;

Recognizing the mutual dependence of creatures, it conceives of itself as superior to the creatures, and affirms its *Free Will* and its *Sovereignty*, of which nothing can yet give it the model;

Seeing movement, it conceives of *Inertia*, a hypothesis without reality; calculating speed, it conceives of *Force*, which it never grasps;

Noting the action of beings on one another, it conceives of *Cause*, in the analysis of which it only grasps a contradiction;

Comparing the faculties of some to the faculties of others, it conceives of *Life*, *Intelligence* and *Soul*; and by opposition, *Matter*, *Death* and *Nothingness*. Abstractions or fictions? It does not know;

Classing and grouping creatures according to their genera and species, it conceives the *Universal*, superior to every collectivity;

Calculating the relations of things, it conceives of *Law*, the notion of which immediately gives it that of an *Order of the World*, although there has been struggle everywhere, and consequently as much disorder as order;

Finally, condemning, according to the purity of its essence, all that appears to it out of proportion, small, mean, monstrous, discordant and deformed, it conceives the *Beautiful* and the *Sublime*, in a word the *Ideal*, which it is condemned to follow always, without ever enjoying it.

All these conceptions of the mind, famous in the schools under the name of the *categories*, are indispensable for the understanding of things; reasoning is impossible without them: while they do not result from sensation, since, as we see, they exceed the sensation, the perceived image, by all the distance from the finite to infinity. What they take from sensation are the various points that have served to form them antithetically; the point of view of diversity, of contingency, of the limit, etc. Except, the categories or conceptions of reason all merge with one another; they are adequate to one another and imply each other mutually, since all are invariably related, not to things, but to the essence of mind, which



is single and incorruptible...

The formation of the categories or ideas, conceived by the mind apart from experience but on the occasion of experience, their collection and classification, forms what we call *metaphysics*. It is entirely contained in grammar, and its teaching belongs to the schoolmasters.

From the manner in which the categories form, and from their usage in language and in the sciences, it results that, as analytic or synthetic signs, they are the condition *sine qua non* of speech and of knowledge, that they form the instrumentation of intelligence, but that by themselves they are sterile, and consequently that metaphysics, excluding, by its nature and destination, all positivism, can never become a science.

All science is essentially metaphysical, since every science generalizes and distinguishes. Every man who knows, however little he knows, every man who speaks, provided that he understands, is a metaphysician; just as every man who seeks the reason of things is a philosopher. Metaphysics is the first thing that infants and savages think: we could even say that in the mind of every man, metaphysics is present in inverse proportion to science.

Thus, by what fanaticism of abstraction can a man call himself exclusively a metaphysician, and how, in a knowledgeable and positive century, do professors of pure philosophy still exist, these people who teach the young to philosophize apart from all science, all art, all literature and all industry, people, in a word, making a trade, the most conscientiously in the world, of selling the absolute?

The man who has once understand the theory of the formation of ideas, and who will carefully take into account these three capital points: 1) the intervention of two agents, the subject and the object, in the formation of knowledge; 2) the difference in their roles, resulting from the difference in their natures; 3) the distinction of ideas into two species, sensible ideas given immediately by objects, and extra-sensible or metaphysical ideas, resulting from the action of the mind solicited by the contemplation of the outside; that man, we say, can boast of having taken the most difficult step of philosophy. He is freed from fatalism and from superstition. He knows that all his ideas are necessarily posterior to the experience of things, metaphysical ideas as well as sensible ideas; he will remain unshakably and forever convinced that, just as adoration, prophecy, the gift of tongues and of miracles, somnambulism, idealism, whether subjective, objective or absolute, and all the practices of the great work of alchemy have never produced for indigent humanity an ounce of bread, have created neither shoes, not hats, nor shirts; so they will not have added an *iota* to knowledge. And he will conclude with the great philosopher Martin, in *Candide*: "We must cultivate our garden." The garden of the philosopher is the spectacle of the Universe. Constantly verify your observations; put your ideas in order; take care in your analyses, your recapitulations, your conclusions; be sober in your conjectures and hypotheses; mistrust probabilities and above all authorities; do not believe the word of any soul who lives, and use the ideal as a means of scientific construction and control, but do not worship it. Those who, at all times, have claimed detach science from all empiricism and to raise the edifice of philosophy on metaphysical ideas alone, have only succeeded in making

themselves plagiarists of the ancient theology. Their counterfeits have fallen on their own heads; their transcendentalism has brought to ruin the supernatural in which the people have at all times believed, and they have managed to lose what they wanted to save. Remember, finally, that there is no more innate or revealed science than there are innate privileges or wealth fallen from heaven; and that, as all well-being must be obtained by labor, or be theft, so all knowledge must be the fruit of study, or be false.

#### § VI. — That Philosophy Must Be Essentially Practical.

We would be gravely mistaken if we imagined that philosophy, because it defined itself as the *Search for the reason of things*, has no other end than to allow us to discover that reason and has an exclusively speculative object. Already, by showing that these conditions are those of common sense, its certainty the same for all, its highest conceptions of the same form and quality as its most elementary propositions, we have had occasion to recall its eminently positive character, its egalitarian spirit and its democratic and anti-mystical tendencies. It is philosophy, we have said, that made the French Revolution, by deducing from its own pure essence the principle of civil and political equality. Then, we have confirmed that premise by uprooting all the pretensions of transcendence and proving that, in fact and by right, there is nothing for the mind apart from observation and consequently nothing that ordinary mortals can claim by virtue of simple good sense.

Logic, which is to say philosophy itself, demands more.

In ordinary life—the life of the immense majority, which forms three-quarters of philosophy—the knowledge of things has value only insofar as it is useful; and nature, our great schoolmistress, has been of this opinion, giving intelligence as a light for our actions and the instrument of our happiness.

Philosophy, in a word, is essentially utilitarian, no matter what has been said: to make of it an exercise of pure curiosity is to sacrifice it. In that regard, universal testimony has issued a judgment without appeal. The people, eminently practical, asked what purpose all that philosophy would serve and how to make use of it: and as some responded to them, with Schelling, that philosophy exists by itself and for itself, that it would be an injury to its dignity if one sought a use for it, the people have mocked the philosophers and everyone has followed the example of the people. Philosophy for philosophy's sake is an idea that would never enter into a sane mind. A similar pretension might appear excusable among philosophers who seek the reason of things in the inneity of genius or among the illuminated in communication with the spirits. But since it has been proven that all that transcendence is only a hollow thing, and that the philosopher has been declared subject to common sense, the servant, like everyone, of practical and empirical reason, it is very necessary for philosophy to humanize itself, and that it should be *democratic and social*, or else never be anything. Now, what is more utilitarian than democracy?

Religion, which certainly had a very different birth than democracy, did not

look down its nose so much at our poor humanity. It has made itself all things to all people; it has been given to us, by grace from on high, to raise us from sin and misery, to teach us our duties and our rights, to give us a rule of conduct, to enlighten us on our origin and our destiny, and to prepare for us an eternal happiness. Religion responded, in its way, to all the questions that our consciences and our hearts could address to it. It gave us rules for the conduct of our interests; it did not even disdain to explain to us the beginnings of the world, the principle of things, the era of creation, the age of the human race, etc. All that it left outside its teachings and surrendered to our disputes were the things of which the knowledge was not immediately useful to our moral perfection and our eternal salvation.

Will philosophy do less than religion? It has taken it upon itself to destroy these venerable beliefs: could it have had any other mission than to fill the void in us?

To pose the question in this way is to answer it. No, philosophy cannot be reduced to a kaleidoscope of the mind in its practical application; its purpose is to serve us, and if the critique of religion that it allows is fair, the service that falls to it with respect to us, in the place of religion, is determined in advance by that very critique. To the old dogma philosophy must substitute a new doctrine, with the only difference that the first was a matter of faith and was imposed by authority, while the second must be a matter of science, and impose itself by demonstration.

Under the empire of religion, man found everything simple by relating it to the word of God; on the strength of that guarantee, he rested in full security. Now that, thanks to philosophical reason, the supposedly divine word has become doubtful and the celestial guarantee itself subject to caution, what remains, except that man finds in himself the rule of his actions and the guarantee of his judgments? This is what the ancient philosophers understood very well and what they sought for so long under the name of *criterion* of certainty.

Thus, the aim of philosophy is to teach man to think for himself, to reason methodically, to make exact ideas of things, to formulate truth in regular judgments, all in order to direct his life, to earn through his conduct the esteem of his fellows and himself, and to insure, with peace of heart, bodily well-being and security of mind.

The criterion of philosophy, deduced from its practical utility, is thus in some sense double: relative to the reason of things, which it is important for us to understand such as it is in itself, and relative to our own reason, which is the law of our perfection and our happiness.

A principle of guarantee for our ideas;

A rule for our actions;

As a consequence of this double criterion and of the agreement of our practical and speculative reason, a synthesis of all our knowledge and a sufficient idea of the economy of the world and of our destiny: this is what philosophy must accomplish.

But where do we find the criterion? As much as philosophy has shown itself powerless to discover the smallest truth with the aid of metaphysical notions

alone, to the same extent it has up to the present been unlucky in its attempts to establish a principle that, serving at once as a critical instrument and rule of action, would give in addition the plan of the scientific and social edifice, and later would enlighten us regarding the system of the universe.

In that which concerns the rule of judgment, we have been served, lacking an authentic instrument, and we continue to be served by different principles, chosen arbitrarily from among the axioms that we suppose most capable of responding to the wants of philosophy. Such is, for example, the principle of *contradiction*, by virtue of which “yes” and “no” cannot be affirmed simultaneously, and from the same point of view, for a single thing. It is the principle that rules mathematics. But that principle, which at first appears so sure when we work with definite quantities, has been judged insufficient in regard to the sophists who are themselves prevailed upon to maintain that all is true and all is false, as much in the ontological as in the moral order, since, in the fundamental questions, on which the certainty of all the others depend, one can affirm simultaneously, with an equal probability, the “yes” and the “no”... The absence of a higher principle, embracing all the content of the mind, appears to make itself felt up to the highest mathematics, the style, the definitions and the theories of which have been justly criticized, though one cannot, in fact, contest the results. Wearied of struggle, we have thought to say, after Descartes, that the guarantee of our judgments is *self-evidence!* And what is it that makes a thing appear self-evident?...

In that which concerns the rule of actions, the philosophers have not even taken the trouble to test anything. All have returned, by some detour, to the religious idea, as if philosophy and theology had exactly this in common, that *The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom*. It has even been said, and it is repeated every day, that a little philosophy leads away from religion, but that a lot of philosophy leads back to it, from which it is necessary to conclude that it is not truly the philosopher’s problem. If some adventurers in free thought have abandoned the beaten path, they have lost themselves in the mires of egoism.

Finally, as to the unity of the sciences, the distress is still more noticeable. Each philosopher has built his system, leaving it to critique to show that the system was a work of marquetry. It is thus that, according to Thales, water is the principle of all things; according to others, it is fire or air; according to Democritus, it is the atoms. Philosophy, like language, is materialist in its beginnings: but that is not where the danger lies; it will go only too far into the ideal. Later, indeed, we have invoked in turn, as the principle of things, love, numbers and the idea; and philosophy, from abstraction to abstraction, has ended by burning what it first worshiped, adoring the spirit that it had only glimpsed, and falling into a hopeless superstition. It is thus that *eclecticism* was born, the meaning of which is that there is not a unitary constitution, either for the world or for thought, and that consequently there are only specific, relative certainties, between which the wise must know how to choose, giving, according to the circumstances, satisfaction to all the principles, but not allowing themselves to be mastered by any of them, and reserving always the liberty of judgment. Eclecticism, which has been so criticized in our days, has not yet received its true

definition: it is polytheism.

At this moment, it is with philosophy as with the public conscience: both are demoralized. Eclecticism in philosophy, just like the doctrinaire position in politics, *laissez faire, laissez passer* in economics, and free love in the family, is the negation of unity, death.

However, an unresolved problem must not be considered an insoluble problem: it is even permitted to believe that we have come closer to the solution the longer we have searched for it. Also, the lack of success of philosophy on this capital questions of the certainty of ideas, of the rule of mores, and of the architectonic of science, has not prevented it from arriving at theories of which the growing generality and the rigorous logic seem a sure pledge of triumph. Why, indeed, if man has certainty of his existence, would he not have at the same time certainty of his observations? The proposition of Descartes—*I think, therefore I am*—implies that consequence. Why, if the intelligence of man is capable of connecting two ideas, of forming a dyad, a triad, a tetrad, a series, finally, and if each series leads to his self, why, we ask, will he not aspire to construct the system of the world? It is necessary to advance: everything invites us. If philosophy is abandoned, it is the end of the human race.

**§ VII. The Character that Must Be Presented by the Guarantee of our Judgments and the Rule of our Actions.—Conversion from Speculative to Practical Reason: Determination of the Criterion.**

Before passing on, will you allow me to make the observation that there is not an artisan who is not in a perfect position to understand what philosophy is, since there is not one who, in the exercise of their profession, does not make use of several means of justification, measure, evaluation and control? To direct them in their labors, the worker has the yardstick, the scale, the square, the rule, the plumb, the level, the compass, standards, specimens, guides, a touchstone, etc. It would seem that there is not a worker who cannot name the purpose of their work, the ensemble of needs or ideas to which it is attached, what its application must be, what its conditions and qualities are, and consequently its importance in the general economy.

Now, what the artisan does in their specialty, the philosopher seeks for the universality of things: their criterion, consequently, must be much more elementary, since it must be applied to everything; their synthesis much broader, since it must embrace everything.

What then is the yardstick to which we must relate all our observations, according to which we will judge, *a priori*, the harmony or discord of things, not only of the rational and the irrational, the beautiful and the ugly, but, what is more serious and which concerns us directly, the good and the evil, the true and the false? Secondly, on what basis, according to what plan, in view of what end, will we raise the edifice of our knowledge, so that we can say what Leibniz said of the world of which it must be the expression, that it is the best, the most faithful, the most perfect possible?

The day when philosophy has responded to these two questions, we do not say that it will be done, since, either as observation or investigation, or as acquired science, it has no limits, but it will be completely organized. It will know what it wants, where it tends, what its guarantees are, what its mission is in humanity and in the presence of the universe.

Let us backtrack a little.

From the definition of philosophy that we have given and the analysis that we have made from observation, it results for us, 1) that the idea comes to us originally, concurrently and *ex æquo*, from two sources, one subjective, which is the self, subject or mind, and the other objective, which designates objects, the non-self or things;—2) that as a consequence of that double origin philosophy bears on *relations*, already by the definition, and on nothing else;—3) finally, that every relation, analyzed into its elements, is, like the observation that furnishes it, essentially dualistic, which is also indicated by the etymology of the word *rapport* or *relation*, returns from one point to another, from one fact, one idea, one group, etc., to another.

It results from this that the instrument of critique that we seek is necessarily dualistic or binary: it would not know how to be triadic, since there would be below it elements simpler than itself, ideas that it could not explain, and that moreover it is easy to convince oneself that every triad, trinity or ternary is only the abridgment of two dyads, obtained by the identification or confusion of two of their terms.<sup>1</sup>

The principle of certainty cannot be simplistic any longer, as if it emanates exclusively from the self or the non-self; since, as we have seen, the subject,

---

<sup>1</sup>The trinity of the Alexandrians was only a superstitious idea; that of the Christians is a mystery. The ternary facts, borrowed from nature, are from pure empiricism, to which are opposed, in much greater numbers, binary facts, quaternary, etc. The famous division of nature into three kingdoms is incomplete: above the *animal* kingdom, in which are manifested sensibility, life, the affections, instinct, and to a certain degree intelligence, we must add the *spiritual* kingdom, of which humanity alone is the subject, and which is distinguished by manifestations unknown in the preceding kingdom, speech, religion, justice, logic, metaphysics, poetry and art, industry, science, exchange, war, politics and progress. The Hegelian formula is only a triad by the good pleasure or the error of the master, who counts three terms where there truly exists only two, and who has not seen that the antinomy does not resolve itself, but that it indicates an oscillation or antagonism susceptible only to equilibrium. By this point of view alone, the system of Hegel would be entirely remade. It is the same for the syllogism, in which there are also two propositions, which are equated by the relation of like terms, much as in arithmetic proportions.

Every MAN is mortal, and *Pierre* is a MAN; thus, etc.

It is useless to express the conclusion here; it is enough to correctly write the premises. To take the triad for a formula of logic, a law of nature and reason, especially for the archetype of judgment and the organic principle of society, is to deny analysis, to deliver philosophy up to mysticism, and democracy to imbecility. We see it there, besides, by the fruits. The only thing that one can attribute to trinitarian influence is the ancient division of society by castes,—*clergy, nobility, roture*,—an antihuman division, against which the Revolution was made.

without an object that stimulates it, does not even think; and the object, without the faculty of the mind to divide, to differentiate and return diversity to unity, would only send itself unintelligible images. Metaphysical ideas themselves cannot serve as the principles for philosophy, although they presuppose realistic perceptions. The reason is that such ideas, obtained by the opposition of the self to the non-self, reflecting its simplistic nature, are extra-phenomenal, and by themselves contain no positive truth, although they are indispensable to the formation of every idea and the construction of every science.

Let us hold then as certain, and let us attach ourselves strongly to that idea, that what the philosophers sought under the name of the criterion of certainty and which must serve in the construction of science cannot be a simplistic or metaphysical notion; that neither is it a sensible image, representative of a pure reality, since that would be to exclude the mind from its own domain, and to make it accomplish its work without putting itself into it; that it cannot be, finally, a ternary or quaternary formula, or one of a higher number, since that would be to set the series in the place of its element.

This principle must be at once subjective and objective, formal and real, intelligible and sensible, to indicate a relation of the self to the non-self, and consequently to be dualistic, like philosophical observation itself.

But, from the self to the non-self, and *vice versa*, there is an infinity of possible relations. Among so many relations furnished to us by philosophical observation, which will we choose to serve as standard and yardstick to the others? Which will form the first basis of our knowledge, the point of departure for our civilization, the pivot of our social constitution? For it is a question of nothing more or less than that.

Up to this point we have considered the self and what we call the *non-self* as two antithetical natures, the one spiritual, simple, active and thinking; the other material, composite and consequently divisible, inert or passive, and non-thinking, serving simply as a target, occasion and matter for the meditations of the self. In order to not juggle too many ideas at once, we are carried to the observation of that elementary fact, intelligible even to the children to whom one teaches the grammar of Lhomond, namely, that philosophical observation implies two terms or actors, the one that observes, the other that is observed. It is the relation of active to passive, as is shown by the conjugation of the verb in every language.

But the passive does not exclude the reciprocal. What we have said of the role of the self and of the non-self in the formation of the idea does not at all prove that the one that observes cannot be observed itself, and precisely by the object that it observed. Locke said, and no one has known how to respond to him: How do we know if the non-self is necessarily non-thinking?... In every case, we know, and cannot doubt, that our observations bear very often upon selves like our own, but which—in this case and in so many that furnish us facts, observations, impressions on which our mind then acts—are considered by us as non-selves. In love, for example, there are also two actors, one who loves, the other who is loved, which does not prevent us from reversing the proposition and saying that the person who loves is loved by the one that they love, and that the

one who is loved loves the one by which it is loved. It is even only under these conditions that love exists in its plenitude. Who then one more time would guarantee that we alone have thought, and, when we describe that plant, when we analyze that rock, that there is not in them something that looks at us?

Someone says to me that that is repugnant. Why?... As thought can only result in an organic centralization; as, thus, while I look at my hand, I am quite sure that my hand does not look at me, because my hand is only a part of the organism that produces the thought in me, which serves for all the members; so it is the same in plants and rocks, which are, like the hairs and the bones of my body, parts of the great organism (which perhaps thinks, if it does not sleep, though we know nothing of it), but which by themselves do not think.

There we are. The analogies of existence induce us to suppose that, as there is in the organized being a common *sensorium*, an interdependent life, an intelligence in the service of all the members of which it is the result and which all express it; just as there is in nature a universal life, a soul of the world, which, if it is not acted on from outside, in the manner of our own, because there is no outside for it and because everything is in it, acts within, on itself, contrary to ours, and which is manifested by creating, as a mollusk creates its shell, that great organism of which we ourselves make part, poor individual *selves* that we are!

This is only an induction, doubtless, a hypothesis, a utopia, that I do not intend to offer for more than it is worth. If I cannot swear that the world, that alleged non-self, does not think, then I can no more swear that it thinks: that would surpass my means of observation. All that I can say is that mind is prodigiously dispensed in this non-self, and that I am not the only self that admires it.

Here, then, is what will be my conclusion.

Instead of seeking the law of my philosophy in a relation between myself, which I consider as the summit of being, and that which is the most inferior in creation and that I repute to be non-thinking, I will seek that law in a relation between myself and another self that will not be me, between man and man. For I know that every man, my fellow, is the organic manifestation of a mind, is a self; I judge equally that animals, endowed with sensibility, instinct, even intelligence, although to a lesser degree, are also selves, of a lesser dignity, it is true, and placed at a lower degree on the scale, but created according to the same plan; and as I no more know of a demarcation marked between the animals and the plants, or between those and the minerals, I ask myself if the unorganized beings are not still minds that sleep, selves in the embryonic state, or at least the members of a self of which I do not know the life and operations?

If every being is thus supposed self and non-self, what can I do better, in this ontological ambiguity, than to take for the point of departure of my philosophy the relation, not of me to myself, in the manner of Fichte, as if I wanted to make the equation of my mind, simple, indivisible, incomprehensible being; but of myself to another that is my equal and is not me, which constitutes a dualism no longer metaphysical or antinomic, but a real duality, living and sovereign?

By acting thus I do not court the risk of doing injury or grief to anyone; I



have also the advantage, in descending from Humanity towards things, of never losing sight of the legitimate ensemble; finally, whatever the difference of that which makes the object of my exploration, I am so much less exposed to being mistaken, that in the last analysis every being that is not equal to me, is dominated by me, makes a part of me, or else belongs to other selves like me, so that the law that governs the *subjects* among themselves is rationally presumed to govern the *objects* as well, since apart from that the subordination of the latter to the former would be impossible, and there would be contradiction between Nature and Humanity.

Let us further observe that through that unassailable transaction, philosophy becomes entirely practical instead of speculative, or to put it better, the two points of view merge: the rule of my actions and the guarantee of my judgments is identical.

What now is that ruling Idea, at once objective and subjective, real and formal, of nature and humanity, of speculation and sentiment, of logic and art, of politics and economics, of practical reason and pure reason, that governs at once the world of creation and the world of philosophy, and on which both are constructed; an idea finally that, dualistic in its formula, excludes nonetheless all anteriority and all superiority, and embraces in its synthesis the real and the ideal?

It is the idea of *Right*, JUSTICE.

#### VIII. — Justice, the universal reason of things. — Science and conscience.

The people, in their life of labor, even more than the philosophers in their speculations, have need of guidance: they need, we have said, a guide for their reason, a rule for their conscience, a superior point of view from which they may embrace their knowledge and their destiny. All this they found in religion.

God, the eternal Word, had created man from clay and had animated him with his breath; God had taught how to him to speak; God had imprinted on his heart the ideas of the infinite, the eternal, the just and the ideal; God had taught him religion, worship, and the mysteries; God had delivered to him the elements of all the sciences by revealing to him the history of creation, making the animals appear before him and inviting him to name them, showing him the common origin of all peoples and the cause of their dispersion. It was God who had imposed on man the law of labor, created and sanctified the family, founded society, and separated the states, which he governed by his providence. God, finally, living and seeing, principle and goal, all-powerful, just and truthful, guaranteed man's faith and promised, after a time of trials on this earth, to reward him for his piety with a limitless happiness.

Philosophy, which is the search for the reason of things, lost God in the process of seeking God's reason; at the same time, a dispersion took hold of knowledge, doubt gripped men's souls, and they became unable to think of anything but the origin of man and his final end. But this state of anguish could only be momentary: under better conditions, reason will render to us what

revelation had given us; and although this legitimate hope has not yet been fulfilled, we can judge, by a simple outline of the state of human knowledge, its conditions and its totality, and how close we may be to that fulfillment. Is it so bad, after all, that something has always been lacking in our knowledge? Isn't it enough for our security, for our dignity, that we see our intellectual wealth increase endlessly?

It thus is a question of assuring ourselves that Justice, the principle and the source of which we will from now on locate within ourselves, fulfills, as a critical and organic principle, the object of philosophy, and that consequently it can replace religion for us, to our advantage. Deprived of the support of heaven, man remains himself. Like Medea, he will say: "Myself, myself alone, and is that not enough?" Philosophy answers in the affirmative: it awaits the certainty of its principles, the justification of its hopes. Now let us see.

Since philosophy is the search for the reason of things, by including under the word *things* all the manifestations of the human being, and since, according to this definition, any search for the nature or the *in-itself* of things, for their substance and materiality, as well as for any kind of absolute, is excluded from philosophy, it readily follows that the principle of certainty, the archetypal idea to which all our knowledge must be referred, must be, above all, a rational principle, that which is most frankly rational, that which is most eminently intelligible, that which is least a *thing*, if I can put it in this way.

The idea of Justice satisfies this first condition. Its most apparent character is to express a relationship that is all the more rational, one might say, to the extent that it is formed voluntarily, in full knowledge of the cause, by two reasonable beings, two persons. Justice is synallagmatic: it produces not merely the impression of the non-self upon the self and the action of the one upon the other, but an exchange between two selves who know one another as they each know themselves, and who swear, on their mutually guaranteed honor, an alliance in perpetuity. One will not find, in all the encyclopedia of knowledge, an idea equal to this in stature.

But it is not enough for Justice to be the relation between two wills: it would not fulfill its office if it were that alone. It is equally necessary that it be reality and ideality; moreover, that it should preserve, with the power of synthesis that we have just recognized in it, a character of sufficient primordiality to serve simultaneously as the summit of the philosophical pyramid and as the principle of all knowledge. Again, Justice combines these advantages: it is the point of transition between the sensible and the intelligible, the real and the ideal, the concepts of metaphysics and the perceptions of experience.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Kant endeavored to show that there were *a priori* synthetic judgements, although that implied a contradiction to some extent, and he was right to think so, since without an *a priori* synthetic judgement, the unity of philosophical construction is impossible. Hegel, on the contrary, argued that such judgements do not exist, and all his philosophy, understood in good faith, is nothing but the analysis and then the reconstruction of a synthesis that is necessarily conceived *a priori*. What, then, is this synthesis that Kant affirms and does not find, that Hegel denies and demonstrates? It is nothing other than Justice, at once the most complete concept and the most primordial, which Hegel calls

It would be, indeed, a narrow understanding of Justice to imagine that it intervenes only in the fabrication of laws, that it has a place only in national assemblies and courts. Undoubtedly it is under this aspect of political sovereignty that it enters our thought and dominates mankind. But this Justice, with respect to which, in our relationship with our neighbors, we are especially preoccupied with the enforcement, imposes itself with no less authority on the understanding and the imagination than it does on the conscience; its formula governs the whole world, and everywhere, if we are allowed to express ourself in this way, it preaches to us by precept and example.

Justice thus takes various names, according to the faculties to which it is addressed. Within the order of the conscience, the highest of all, it is JUSTICE properly speaking, rule of our *rights* and our *duties*; in the order of intelligence, logic, mathematics, etc, it is *equality* or *equation*; in the sphere of imagination, it is called *ideal*; in nature, it is *equilibrium*. Justice is essential to each one of these categories of ideas or facts under a particular name and as an indispensable condition; to man alone, a complex being, whose spirit embraces in its unity the acts of freedom and the operations of the intelligence, the things of nature and creations of the ideal, impose themselves synthetically with an authority that is always the same; and therefore the individual who, in their relationships with their fellows, neglects the laws of nature or mind, lacks Justice.

Someone asks: Why? Because human society, unlike the animal communities, is established on a constantly changing totality of synallagmatic relationships, and because, without speech, the determination of these relationships, and consequently of legislation and Justice, would be impossible. Therefore, the solemn formula of speech is the promise, the imprecation and the anathema; the liar is everywhere considered infamous, and among civilized people, the man who respects himself, according to the precept of the Gospel, eschews swearing: he gives his word. How many centuries will pass before we abolish that feudal shame, the legal oath?... It is through the influence of the same juridical sentiment and its dualistic formula that language tends to become more and more adequate to the idea, and that one notices there these innumerable dual forms (rhymes, parallelisms, agreements in kind, number and case, distiches, oppositions, antinomies, etc), which make grammar a system of couples, I would almost say of transactions.

Man reasons, and his logic is only a development of his grammar, of which it retains the copulative paces: however, as it occupies itself less with form than content, it more closely approaches Justice, of which it is, if you will allow me this expression, the *secretary*. Tell, me, is it by chance that what is in grammar only a phrase, becomes in logic a *judgment*? And if grammar is the preparation for logic, is it less true to say that logic, having for its goal to teach us how to write the judgments of Justice correctly, is the preparation for jurisprudence?

At the same time as he receives impressions and images of external objects, man, we have said, ascends, by virtue of the identity of his thought, to those higher concepts that are called transcendental, because they exceed the range of the senses, or metaphysical, as if they were a revelation of supernatural things. sometimes the Idea, sometimes Spirit or the Absolute.

Here, once again, the dualism of Justice appears. When Kant, after having made the enumeration of his categories, distributed them into four groups, each one formed of a *thesis* and of an *antithesis*, balanced by a *synthesis*; when Hegel, following this example, built his entire philosophy on a system of *antinomies*, what have they both done, while being mistaken as to the role and value of the synthesis, but reveal to us the great law that dominated their entire critique, namely that Justice, a pure concept as much as it is a fact of experience, is the muse of metaphysics?

It was Plato, if I am not mistaken, who said that the beautiful is the splendor of the truth. This definition may please the artist, who asks only to be impressed; it is not enough for the philosopher, who wants to feel and to understand at the same time. It is certain that the ideal is a transcendent conception of reason, which elevates art, like religion and Justice, above real things and simple utility. But how is this idea of beauty formed in us? By what transition does our spirit rise from the imperfect and miserable aspects of reality to this divine contemplation of the ideal? It is an artist who teaches it to us: through Justice. The goal of art, said Raphael, is to render things, not absolutely as nature presents them to us, but as it should have made them, and as we discover, by studying nature, that nature tends to make them without ever fully succeeding. Being, reduced to its pure and just form, without excess or defect, without violence or softness: that is art. Any time that being, in its reality, approximates its idea in some thing, it becomes beautiful, it sparkles, and, without exceeding its limitations, it takes on the character of the infinite. Justness in form and expression, Justice in social life: the law is always the same. It is in this way that the man of genius and the man of good glorify themselves; this is the secret of the mysterious bond that links art with morality.

Shall we speak of politics and its balances? Of political economy, of the endless division of functions, the balance of values, the relation of supply to demand, trade and its balance? Just as the concept of accuracy, i.e. of Justice applied to the shape of things, is the transition between the real and the ideal, so the notion of value is at once subjective and objective, and all of Justice is the transition between the world of nature and the world of society. Shall we say, finally, that war, antagonism at its most excessive, is only one investigation, through the struggle of the forces, of Justice?... But what good is it to insist on things, when it is enough to name them in order to see at once the principle that governs them and constitutes them, the principle of right? It is through his conscience, much more than his understanding and his imagination, that man embraces God, the Universe and Humanity; it is that conscience, to be honest, that creates within him *reason*, of which even the name, according to the etymology, means nothing but the justification of the fact by its causes, its circumstances, its medium, its elements, its time, its end, in word its idea, always Justice.

Each of us knows what satisfaction seizes the soul upon the clear perception of a truth, upon the regular conclusion of a argument, the demonstrated certainty of a hypothesis. There is something emotional in this pleasure caused by the possession of truth, which is not pure intelligence, which is not impassioned, and

which one can compare only with the joy of the triumph gained by virtue over vice. We also know what heated controversy can exist between men of the most peaceful character with regard to questions in which their interests are by no means engaged. In all of this, I repeat, we can sense an element of will intricately mixed with the operations of the understanding, which, in my opinion, is nothing other than Justice intervening in the philosopher's investigation and rejoicing in his success. Just like the pure form or beauty, exact knowledge or truth is still Justice.

Conscience and science would thus be, at base, identical. What gives the sanction to the one is the other. What makes us exclaim, in a tone of satisfied pride or rather of satisfied conscience, "It is obvious," is that the obviousness is not only in us an act of judgement, but an act of the conscience, a kind of final judgment that defies the lie: *It is obvious!*

The separation of science and conscience, like that of logic and right, is only a scholastic abstraction. In our soul, things do not happen in this way: the certainty of knowledge is something more intimate to us, more emotional, more vital, than the logicians and the psychologists say. Also, as one said of the good man, that he could be eloquent, *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, because he had a conscience, *pectus est quod disertos facit*, one could also say that the wise man is incompatible with the dishonest man, and that what science builds in us is the conscience.

Assured, by justice, as to his science and his conscience, finding in his own heart the reason of the Universe and his own reason, what more does man require? And what could the heavens and the heavenly powers offer to him?...

Need I add that, as the quality of the philosophical spirit is the same one in all men, and as they do not differ among them from this point of view, except in the sum of their knowledge, so the conscience is in all also of equal quality? They differ, in this regard, only in the development of their moral sense and the sum of their virtues.

It is by virtue of this second principle that the Revolution, which declared all the citizens, because of the equivalence of their judgment, to be equal before the law, wanted further to make them all legislators and dispensers of justice: voters, jurors, judges, referees, experts, members of the communal assembly and the provincial council, representatives of the people, guardians of the nation; it wanted to given them all the right to publish their opinions, to discuss the acts and to control the accounts of the government, to criticize the laws and to pursue their reform.

Democracy of the intelligence and democracy of the conscience: these are the two great principles of philosophy, the two articles of faith of the Revolution.

Let us summarize this section.

Since philosophy is essentially dualistic, since in its language and its reasoning the ideas of sensible things incessantly call upon metaphysical ideas and *vice versa*; and since, in addition, among the objects of its study are included, often mixed and confused, things of nature and humanity, of speculation, of morals and art, it follows that the critical principle of philosophy, dualist and synthetic in its form, empirical and idealist by virtue of its double origin, must

be capable of being applied, with equal suitability, to all the categories of knowledge.

Now, the idea of Justice is the only one that meets these conditions: it is thus Justice that we will take for the universal and absolute criterion of certainty. The proposal of Descartes, *I think, therefore I am*, is not certain because it is obvious, which does not mean anything; it is obvious because its two terms are *adequate*, equal before the justice of the understanding, confirmed by the judgment of the conscience; and every obvious proposition is found in the same circumstances.

That is not all. Along with the criterion of certainty, we need a principle for philosophy by virtue of which it coordinates its materials, one which, in the endless construction of knowledge, no longer allows itself to be mislaid.

Once again, the idea of Justice answers this wish. Indeed, Justice, or rather reason, right reason, as it was formerly said, being at once primordial and comprehensive to the highest degree, is by itself its principle, its measurement and its end, so that for the philosopher, the critical principle and the organic or teleological principle are the same one. So that it results that the last word of philosophy, its constant goal, is to realize, through the synthesis of knowledge, the agreement between man and nature, which is to say, as Fourier called it, universal Harmony. There is nothing beyond that.

#### IX. — Supremacy of Justice.

Philosophy defined;

Its dualism established;

Its leveling spirit and its democratic tendency demonstrated;

The formation of ideas, perceptions and concepts explained;

The criterion having been found, the goal indicated, the synthetic formula given, man's purpose determined;

We can say, in a sense, that philosophy is finished.

It is finished, since it can present itself before the multitude and say to it: I am JUSTICE, *Ego sum qui sum*; it is I who shall draw you forth from misery and servitude. All that is left is to fill in the blanks, which is the business of the professors and scholars.

Indeed, what is this Justice, if not the sovereign essence that Humanity, from time immemorial, has worshipped under the name of *God*; that philosophy has not ceased to seek in its turn under various names: the *Idea* of Plato and Hegel, the *Absolute* of Fichte, the *Pure* and *Practical Reason* of Kant, the *Rights of Man and of the Citizen* of the Revolution? Since the beginning of the world, hasn't human religious and philosophical thought constantly revolved on this pivot?

It would not be difficult to reduce to this program all the theories—religious, philosophical, aesthetic, and moral—that have occupied the human mind since the beginning of the world. We will excuse ourselves from this work. The people do not have time to give to such vast, wild imaginings. All that they ask is that we summarize for them this new faith in a way that grasps it, that enables them to take it seriously and to make of it, at this moment, a force and a weapon.

We have known well how to make astronomy accessible to children, without making them pass through the deserts of the higher mathematics; we, formerly, had found good means to make all the substance of religion—history, dogmas, liturgy, scriptures—penetrate into the mind of the people, without obliging them to become theologians in the process. Why, today, should we not teach them philosophy and Justice in the same way, without imposing any other condition on them than to make use of their good sense?

So we say to the People:

Justice is simultaneously, for any reasonable being, the principle and form of thought, the guarantee of judgment, the code of conduct, the goal of knowledge and the end of existence. It is feeling and concept, manifestation and law, idea and action; it is universal life, spirit, and reason. Just as, in nature, *all converges, all conspires, all consents*, according to the old expression, in the same way, in a word, all the world tends to harmony and balance; in society, likewise, everything is subordinated to Justice, everything serves it, and everything is done by its command, according to its measure and for its sake; it is upon its foundation that the edifice of interests is constructed, and, to this end, that of knowledge: while at the same time, it is in itself subordinate to nothing, recognizing no authority beyond itself, serving as an instrument to no power, not even to liberty. It is, of all our ideas, the most understandable, the most present, and the most fertile; of our feelings, the only one that men honor without reserve, and the most indestructible. The ignoramus perceives it as fully as does the wise man, and, to defend it, becomes instantly as subtle as the doctors, as courageous as the heroes. Before the glare of right, mathematical certainty fades. So it is that the construction of Justice is the great enterprise of mankind, the most masterly of sciences, the work of collective spontaneity much more than of the genius of legislators, and an unending task.

This, O People, is why Justice is severe, and does not suffer mocking remarks. All knees bend before it, and all heads are bowed. It alone allows, tolerates, forbids or permits: it would cease to exist if it required any permission, authorization, or tolerance from anyone. Any obstacle is an insult to it, and every man is called to arms to overcome it. Quite different is religion, which could only prolong its life by making itself tolerant, which could not continue to exist without tolerance. It is enough to say that its role is finished. Justice, on the contrary, is fundamental and without conditions; it suffers no opposition, it allows no competition, neither in the conscience, nor in the mind; and whoever sacrifices it, even to the Idea, or even to Love, is excluded from the communion of mankind. No peace with iniquity, O democrats: may that be the motto of your peace and your cry of war.

— But, the last of the Christians will say to us, your Justice is the reign of God, which the Gospel advises us to seek in everything, *Quærite primum regnum Dei et justitiam ejus*; it is the sacrifice that God prefers, *Sacrificate sacrificium justitiæ*. How, then, can you not welcome our God, and how can you reject his religion?

It is because you yourselves, oh inconsistent worshippers, believe in Justice even more than you do in your God. You affirm his word, not because it is divine,

but because your spirit finds it true; you follow its precepts, not because God is the author, but because they seem correct to you. Theology wishes in vain to reverse this order, to give sovereignty to God and to subordinate Justice to him: the intimate sense protests, and, in popular teaching, in prayer, it is Justice that serves as witness to the Divinity and the pledge of the religion. Justice is the supreme God; it is the living God, God the Almighty, the only God who dares be intolerant with respect to those who blaspheme against him, beneath which are nothing but pure idealities and assumptions. Pray to your God, Christians, as the law permits; but be sure that you do not prefer him to Justice, if you would not be treated as conspirators and corrupters.

What man, now, in the presence of this great principle of Justice, would not have the right to call himself a philosopher? It would be a return immediately to the antique spirit of caste, to disavow the progress of twenty-five centuries, to hold, like the senate of old Rome, that the patrician alone has the privilege of legal formulas and the sacred things, and that in the presence of fulgurating Jupiter the slave does not have the right to call himself religious. All the relations of men with one another are governed by Justice; all natural laws derive from that by which the beings, and the elements that compose them, are or tend to be brought into equilibrium, all the formulas of reason are reduced to an equation or a series of equations. Logic, the art of right reasoning, can be defined, like chemistry since Lavoisier, as the art of maintaining balance. Whoever commits an error or a sin has *faltered*, one says; he has *stumbled*, or he has *lost his balance*. In a thousand different expressions, language unceasingly reproduces the same idea. Do we not recognize, by this sign, the existence of a popular philosophy, which is nothing other than the philosophy of right, a philosophy that comes simultaneously from reason and from nature? And is this not, at bottom, the same philosophy taught, in his barbaric language, by that philosopher who has never been equaled by any other, the immortal Kant, when he demanded from practical reason, from that which he called its *categorical imperative*, the supreme guarantee of speculative reason, and when he acknowledged with frankness that there was nothing certain beyond right and duty?

#### X. — Conditions for a philosophical propaganda.

It is when religions pass away, when monarchies fail, when the politics of exploitation is reduced, in order to preserve itself, to proscribing the worker and the idea, and when the republic, everywhere on the agenda, seeks its formula; it is at the hour when the old convictions are dilapidated, when consciences are routed, when opinion is abandoned, when the multitude of egoisms shouts "*Every man for himself!*" that the moment arrives for an attempt at social restoration by means of a new propaganda.

1. Let us not fear to repeat: Justice, under various names, controls the world, nature and humanity, science and conscience, logic and morals, political economy, history, literature and art. Justice is what is most primitive in the human heart, most fundamental in society, most sacred among the nations, and



what the masses demand today with the greatest ardor. It is the essence of the religions at the same time as it is the form of reason, the secret object of faith, and the beginning, the middle, and the end of knowledge. What could possibly be more universal, stronger, more complete than Justice, Justice with respect to which any superiority would imply contradiction?

Now, the people possess Justice within themselves; they have preserved it better than their masters and their priests; it is stronger among them than among the savants who teach it, the lawyers who discuss it, and the judges who apply it. The people, finally, in their native intuition and their respect for right, are more advanced than their superiors; they are lacking, as they say themselves when speaking of the intelligent animals, only *speech*. It is speech that we want to give to the people.

Thus, we who know how to speak and write, we have but one thing to do, in order to preach to the people and to philosophize in the name of the Justice, which is to inspire ourselves with the feelings of our audience, and to take them for our arbiter. If the philosophy that we attempt to explicate is insufficient, they will tell us so; if we go astray in our controversies, if we are mistaken in our conclusions, they will inform us; if something better offers itself to them, they will take it. The people, in that which concerns Justice, are not, strictly speaking, disciples, much less neophytes. The idea is within them: the only initiation they call for, like the Roman plebs of former times, is that of the formulas. That they have faith in themselves, that is all that we ask of them; then, that they take note of the facts and the laws: our ministry does not go beyond that. We are the counselors of the people, not their initiators.

2. This first advantage entails another, no less precious: while presenting ourselves simply as missionaries of right, we need neither to prevail upon any authority, divine or human, nor to pose as geniuses, martyrs or saints. Modesty, frankness, zeal, above all, good sense—nothing more is required of us. The truths we carry are not ours; they were not revealed to us from on high by grace of the Holy Ghost, and we have no copyright or proprietary patent over them. These truths are shared by everyone; they are inscribed within every soul, and we are not called on, as a proof of our veracity, to apply them to prophecies and miracles. Speak to the slave of liberty, to the proletarian of his rights, to the worker of his salary: all will understand you, and if they see there a chance of success, they will not ask themselves in the name of whoever or whatever you hold up to them such a discourse. In matters of justice, nature has made all competent, because it has given us all the same faculty and the same interest. This is why we can weaken in our teaching without ever compromising our cause, and why no difference of opinion can lead to a schism between us. The same zeal for Justice that has divided us on a point of doctrine will reconcile us sooner or later. No authority, no priesthood, no churches. All of us who affirm right are in our belief necessarily orthodox, consequently eternally united. Heresy in Justice is a nonsense. Oh! If the apostles of Christ had been able to hold to this teaching! If the Gnostics had dared return to it! If Arius, Pelagius, Manès, Wyclef, Jan Huss and Luther had been strong enough to understand it!... But it was written that the popular Word had for its precursor the Word of God: how blessed are both!

3. But, someone will say, the people are incapable of a course of study; the abstraction of ideas, the monotony of science repels them. With them, one must always concretize, personalize and dramatize, employ *ethos* and *pathos*, constantly change object and tone. Constrained by imagination and passion, realist by temperament, they voluntarily follow the empirics, tribunes and charlatans. The fervor is not sustained; at every instant, it falls back into the materialism of interests. This proves one thing: the philosopher who devotes himself to teaching the masses, himself fully educated on theories, must be above all, in his lectures to the people, a practical demonstrator. In this, at any rate, he will not be an innovator. Isn't the identity of the fact and the law, of the content and the form, the constant object of the tribunes? Does jurisprudence, in its schools and its books, proceed other than by formulas and examples?

Why, moreover, in teaching Justice, should we deprive ourselves of these two powerful levers, passion and interest? Has Justice any other end than to ensure the public happiness against the incursions of selfishness? Does it not have poverty for its sanction? Yes, we know that the people feel themselves to be highly interested in Justice, and no one takes their material interests more seriously than we do. If there is a point to which we propose to return constantly, it is that all crimes and misdemeanors, all corporate privilege, all that is arbitrary in government, is for the people an immediate cause of pauperism and sorrow.

This is why, as missionaries for democracy, having to combat the most detestable passions, and the cowardly and obstinate egoism, we never intend to make the mistake of arousing popular indignation through the vehemence of our discourse. Justice is demonstrated by sentiment as well as by logic. The penal code of despotism calls this *inciting the citizens to hate one another, to mistrust and hate the government*. Shall we be the dupes of a hypocritical legislation, the sole aim of which is to paralyze consciences in order to ensure, under a false appearance of moderation, the impunity of the most guilty parties?

Man's life is brief: the people can receive but rare and rapid lessons. What purpose do they serve if we do not render those lessons as positive as existence; if we do not put men and things in play; if, in order to seize minds, we do not give impetus to imaginations and hearts? Shall we scruple, in speaking of Justice, to be of our time, and will we not merit what is said of us by the false apostles, if, as our adversaries wish, we reduce it to a pure abstraction?

It is in the contemporaneity of facts that we must show the people, as in a mirror, the permanence of ideas. The history of religion, the Church tells us, is an uninterrupted stream of miracles. But the faithful has no need, in order to be convinced of the truth of his belief, of having seen them all; it is enough that he contemplates this Church, the establishment of which, according to the doctors, is itself the greatest of miracles. Thus it is with Justice. The history of its manifestations, of its developments, of its constitutions, of its theories, encompasses the lives of many hundreds of men. Happily, the people have nothing to do with this burden. In order to sustain their faith in Justice, it suffices for us to show, through striking examples, Justice oppressed and then revenged, crime triumphant and then punished; it is enough that they hear the protestations of generous souls in eras of unhappiness, and that they feel that this

Revolution, so slandered, which for three millennia has pushed the working masses toward liberty, is Justice.

4. But what order to follow in this teaching? What is especially painful in the study of sciences is the yoke of the methods, the length of the preliminaries, the sequence of the propositions, the accuracy of the transitions, the rigor of the analyses; it is this obligation never to pass on to a new subject, before the one that precedes it on the staircase of method is exhausted. Thus, before approaching the study of philosophy, the student requires six or seven years of grammar, languages, humanities, and history; logic, metaphysics, psychology, then come morals, not to mention mathematics, physics, natural history, etc. These studies having been completed, if the poor student has obtained his diplomas, he may begin studying law, which takes at least three years. It is in these conditions that the young man, rich enough pass his time thus, becomes legist, lawyer, Justice of the Peace, or substitute for the imperial prosecutor.

The people, undoubtedly, cannot traverse this entire succession; if philosophy can be acquired only under such conditions, it is condemned without reprieve. Either democracy is only a word, and there is not, outside of the language of the Church, apart from feudality and divine right, communion between men; or it is necessary here to change approaches. I want to say that, in agreement with popular reason, it is necessary to abandon the analytical and deductive method, glory of the School, and to replace it with a universalist and synthetic method, more in touch with the reason of the masses, which sees everything concretely and synthetically. I will explain.

Since everything, in nature and in society, pivots on Justice, since it is the center, base, and summit, the substance and form of every fact as well as every idea, it is obvious, *a priori*, that everything can be reduced directly to Justice, consequently that the true philosophical method consists in breaking all these patterns. In that sphere of the universal where we are going to move, the center of which is called Justice, harmony, equilibrium, balance, equality, all the graduations and specifications of school vanish. Little matter that we take our point of departure at this meridian or that parallel, at the equator or at the pole; that we begin with political economy rather than logic, with aesthetic or moral philosophy rather than counting and grammar. For the same reason, it matters little to us to change the subject as many times as we please, and as it pleases us; for us, there can result from it neither confusion nor mix-ups. It is always the higher reason of things that we seek, that is to say the direct relation of each thing with Justice, which does not undermine in any way the classifications of school, and does not compromise any of its faculties.

To philosophize about this and that, in the manner of Socrates, will thus be, except for the adjustments demanded by the circumstances, the approach to follow in a philosophico-juridical education destined for the people.—A method of this sort, some will say, is no method at all.—Perhaps: with regard to science, rigor of method is a sign of the mistrust of mind, arising from its weakness. If we should address ourselves to superior intelligences, it is the method of Socrates that they prefer, and universal reason itself, if it could speak, would not proceed otherwise. Now nothing resembles universal reason more, as to form, than the

reason of the people; in treating it thus, we do not flatter it, but serve it.

#### XI. — Law of progress: Social destination.

An objection is posed.—If the center or pivot of philosophy, namely Justice, is, like that of being, invariable and fixed, the system of things that, in fact and in right, rests on that center, must also be defined in itself, and consequently fixed in its ensemble and tending to immutability. Leibnitz regarded this world as the best possible; he should have said, in virtue of the law of equilibrium that presides over it, that it is the only possible one. One can thus conceive of creation, at least in its thought, as being completed, the universal order being realized in a final manner: then, as the world would no longer have a reason to exist, since it would have reached its perfection, all would return to the universal repose. This is the secret thought of the religions: The end of things, they say, is for the Creator, just as for the creature, the consummation of glory. But strip away the mythology: underneath this unutterable glory one finds immobility, death, nothingness. The world, drawn from nothing, i.e. inorganic immobility, amorphous, dark, returns, under the terms of its law of balance, to immobility; and our justification is nothing other than the work of our annihilation. Justice, balance, order, perfection, is petrification. Movement, life, thought, are bad things; the ideal, the absolute, the Just, which we must continually work to realize, is plenitude, immobility, non-being. It follows that, for the intelligent, moral and free being, happiness is to be found in death, in the quiet of the tomb. Such is the Buddhist dogma, expressed by this apothegm: It is better to sit than stand, to sleep than to sit, and to be dead than to sleep. Such is also the conclusion to which one of the late philosophers of Germany arrived; and it is difficult to deny that any philosophy of the absolute, just like every religion, leads to the same result. But common sense is repelled by this theory: it judges that life, action, thought are good; morality itself is repelled by it, since it gives us constantly to work, to learn, and to undertake, in a word, to do the very things that, according to our final destiny, we should regard as bad. How are we to escape from this contradiction?

We believe that, as the space in which the worlds whirl about is infinite; time infinite; matter, hurled into infinite space, also infinite; consequently, the power of nature and the capacity for movement are infinite: in the same way, without the principle and the law of the universe changing, creation is virtually infinite, in its extent, its duration and its forms. Under this inevitable condition of infinity, which falls on creation, the assumption of a completion, of a final consummation, is contradictory. The universe does not tend to immobilism; its movement is perpetual, because the universe itself is infinite. The law of equilibrium that presides over it does not lead it to uniformity, to immobilism; it ensures, on the contrary, eternal renewal by the economy of forces, which are infinite.

But if such is the true constitution of the universe, it must be admitted that it is also that of Humanity. We are not heading for any ideal perfection, for a final

state that we might reach in a moment by crossing, through death, the gap that separates us from it. We are carried, along with the rest of the universe, in a ceaseless metamorphosis, which is all the more surely and gloriously achieved as we develop more in intelligence and morality. PROGRESS thus remains the law of our heart, not only in the sense that, through the perfection of ourselves, we must approach unceasingly absolute Justice and the ideal; but in the sense that Humanity renewing itself and developing without end, like creation itself, the ideal of Justice and beauty that we have to realize always changes and always enlarges.

Thus, the contemplation of the infinite, which led us to quietism, is precisely what cures us of it: we are participants in universal, eternal life; and the more we can reflect the image of it in our own life, through action and Justice, the happier we are. The small number of days that is allotted to us has nothing to do with this: our perpetuity is in the perpetuity of our race, which in turn is linked to the perpetuity of the Universe. Even if the very globe upon which we live, which we presently know with some scientific certainty to have had a beginning, should crumble beneath our feet and disperse in space, we should see in this dissolution merely a local metamorphosis, which, changing nothing with respect to the universal organism, could not cause us despair and consequently would not affect our happiness in any way. If the joy of the father of a family on his deathbed is in the survival of his children, why shouldn't it be the same for our terrestrial humanity, on the day when it will feel life become exhausted in its soil and consequently in its veins? After us, other worlds!... Would this idea be beyond the reach of the simple, or too lowly for the philosophers?

Thus determined in its nature, its conditions, its principle and its object, philosophy gives us, in its own manner, the name of our destiny.

*What is philosophy?*

Philosophy is the search, and, as far as the strength of the human mind permits, the discovery of the reason of things. Philosophy is thus defined as opposed to theology, which would be defined, we dare say, as the knowledge of the first cause, the inmost nature, and the final end of things.

*Who created the universe?*

Theology answers boldly, without understanding the meaning of its proposition: It is God. Philosophy, on the contrary, says: The universe, such as it appears to the eyes and the reason, being infinite, exists for all eternity. In it, life and spirit are permanent and indefectible; justice is the law that governs all its metamorphoses. Why should the world have a beginning? Why an end? Reason sees no need of it, and repudiates it.

*What is God?*

God, says theology, is the author, the creator, the preserver, the destroyer, and the sovereign lord of all things.

God, says metaphysics, auxiliary and interpreter of theology, is the infinite, absolute, necessary and universal being, which serves the universe as its *substratum* and hides behind its phenomena. This being is essentially one, consequently possibly personal, intelligent and free; moreover, because of its infinity, it is perfect and holy.

God, philosophy says finally, is, from the ontological point of view, a conception of the human mind, the reality of which it is impossible to deny or affirm authentically;—from the point of view of humanity, a fantastic representation of the human soul raised to the infinite.

*Why was man created and put on the earth?*

To know God, says theology, to love him, serve him, and by this means, to acquire eternal life.

Philosophy, pruning the mystical data from theology, answers simply: To carry out Justice, to exterminate evil, to contribute by the good administration of his sphere to the harmonious evolution of the worlds, and by this means, to obtain the greatest sum of glory and happiness, in his body and his soul. . . . .

.....  
We will continue this questionnaire. The catechism, with its mythology and its mysteries, served, for eighteen centuries, as a basis for the instruction of the people. Today, children no longer want it. Would philosophy, concrete and positive, arriving at its moment, prove less popular than the catechism has ever been?

## XII. — A word about the situation.

It is by their principles, religious or philosophical, that societies live.

Before 89, France was Christian: its monarchy ruled by divine right, its economic constitution established on feudality. Christian, monarchical and feudal, the French nation could be said to be as well disciplined in its thought as it was in its government. It had principles, doctrines, a tradition, a system of morals; it had rights. Under Louis XIV it arrived, using its principles, at the highest degree of power and glory. No nation disputed its precedence: elder child of the Church, it walked at the head of one hundred million catholics.

The Revolution of 89 changed this position, but did not reduce it. From the Christian, monarchical, and feudal nation that had been, there emerged one that was philosophical, republican, and egalitarian. Then too, and more than before, it could be praised for having principles, rights, and morals. Its tradition, which up to that point had been confounded with its religion, was displaced: it was the tradition of free reason, older than catholic feudality, more imprescriptible than divine right. For a moment, through this abrupt conversion, France could believe itself isolated in the midst of the peoples. But it had become initiator, instructor; soon it could judge that its word was welcomed everywhere. An incalculable future opened before it; it had only to wait until philosophy had brought minds to a state of maturity.

The revolutionary whirlwind lasted ten years.

In 1799, a thought of conciliation emerged and seized the government. Minds were divided; the country aspired to rest. It was believed that it was possible, through mutual concessions, to forge an agreement between the conquests of 89 and the old religious and monarchical tradition: this was the whole intent behind the consular restoration. All in good faith, and because it was in any case

impossible for it to do better, France was at the same time Christian and philosophical, monarchical and democratic, propertarian and egalitarian. Was this eclecticism founded in reason as it had appeared to be founded, for more than half a century, in fact? We cannot believe so. The reception given in 1814 to the Bourbons, the bearers of the Charter, the revolution of 1830, that of 1848, proved that this system of conciliation was only a work of circumstance, and that as the nation was permeated by the new system of right, the Revolution took on an increasingly decisive preponderance. In any case, it is at least certain that eclectic and liberal France, just like that of 89 and 93, just like feudal France, had principles, ideas, and that its internal and external policy was the expression of these. Principles! It seemed, in its moderation, to confound the antagonistic thoughts of two modes: many intelligent people, it must be said, were seduced by it. Also, after 99, French power experienced an extraordinary development: Europe followed, dragged along rather than overcome, and we shall never know what would have happened if the genius of the emperor, and of the governments that succeeded him, had been equal to their aspirations.

Was this system, which, following the revolutionary period as it did, had certainly had its *raison d'être*, exhausted when, at the end of 1851, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, president of the Republic, seized power?

We are strongly inclined to believe so: this is even, we maintain, what explains the success of the *coup d'état*. December 2, and the regime that has been in place since then, is not the work of one man, nor an incident of history: it is a situation. An impure generation, partly born since the restoration, which of liberalism understood only libertinage, of the philosophy of the eighteenth century understood only impiety, of the Revolution only dissolution, of eclecticism only skepticism, of the parliamentary system only intrigue, and of eloquence only verbosity; a greedy generation, as coarse as its own native soil, without dignity, started to dominate the country: it still dominates it. It is this generation that inaugurated, under cover of an imperial restoration, the reign of impudent mediocrity, official advertisements, open swindle. It is this generation that dishonors France and poisons it...

Whatever the causes that so abruptly brought about the end of the *juste-milieu*, republican and monarchical, there is one unquestionable fact: it is, on one side, that the fear of falling into an extreme of revolution or counter-revolution drove the masses to accept the coup d'état, and that however, since this fatal date of December 2, France, which was once catholic, monarchical and feudal, then philosophical and democratic, finally eclectic, conciliatory and moderate—I will not use the ill-sounding epithet *doctrinaire*—France no longer has principles, public spirit, tradition, nor ideas, not even mores.

The France of December 2 follows neither the Gospel, nor the Declaration of the Rights of Man; it is neither a divine-right monarchy, nor a democracy according to the Revolution, nor a government of the middle classes, with balanced powers, as the Charters of 1814 and 1830 wished to establish. A purely arbitrary despotism, a thing from a fantasy,—without precedent in the national tradition nor in the first empire, which, in spite of its military exigencies, still followed principles, nor in the dictatorship of 93, which certainly also had its

principles, nor in the monarchy of Louis XIV, who cannot be reproached for having lacked any,—more arbitrary, finally, than Machiavelli had dreamed of, for if Machiavelli did not recoil before despotism, at least he placed it in the service of an idea: that is the France of December 2.

Some will, I expect, cry slander: they will quote the constitution of 1852, renewed from that of 1804; the *Napoleonic Idea*, which served Prince Louis as a program, and this multitude of declarations, messages, decrees, circulars, professions of faith, brochures, etc, that the imperial government never stops producing. Why doesn't one add to it the reports of the limited-liability societies and their advertisements?... Oh! if words were a guarantee of principles, there would be few governments so well-founded in theory as the empire of the past eight years. But it is by facts, by acts, that a government reveals its essence and proclaims its thought: in this respect, and without at all wishing to reduce my criticisms to a critique of persons, I dare to state that the government of Napoleon III, to his misfortune and ours, has no principles, or, if it has principles, that it has not yet revealed them. Testimonies abound close at hand: since December 2, I have recorded them each day. Let us cite the latest, which is at the same time the most serious.

The middle course charted by the first Consul, which had its apogee under Louis-Philippe, recognized that the existence of Catholicism is indissolubly related to that of the papacy, and that the papacy itself, after the abrogation of the pact of Charlemagne, has only the prestige that it draws from its temporal sovereignty. Under the Caesars, and later under the Ostrogoths, the Lombards, the Franks and the Germans, the Pope could do without the title and power of prince: religion made him the vicar of God on earth. Charlemagne consecrated this vicariate, not by separating the two powers in the way that this is understood today, but by opposing them and binding them to one another in a system that embraced the world. As for the gifts of land that accompanied this imperial and papal constitution, it was initially, like the three crowns that ornament the tiara, only a jewel, a badge, a kind of glorification of the pontificate. It is not what made the power of Gregory VII, of Urban II, of Innocent III, of Boniface VIII.—After the papacy, rebuffed by Philip the Fair, had been transported to Avignon, the State having broken with the church on all points and dissolved the old pact, the papacy was still supported, and Catholicism remained standing, thanks to the temporal sovereignty that the popes had gained, in part through the lands donated, and in part by force of arms. But one soon saw how powerless this sovereignty was to preserve Catholic unity. First, there was the great schism caused by the removal of the papal seat; then the Reformation, which removed half of Christendom from the Holy See. Consequently, the authority of the sovereign pontiff, of the Catholics themselves, has been steadily decreasing: the severities of Louis XIV, the legal concordat of 1802, and the capture of Savone, are the signs of this decline. Destroy the temporal holdings of the popes, and Catholicism degenerates into Protestantism, the religion of Christ crumbles into dust. Those who say that the pope will never be better understood than when he deals exclusively with the affairs of heaven are either speaking in political bad faith, endeavoring to disguise atrocious deeds behind devout words, or are foolish



Catholics, incapable of understanding that in the affairs of life, the temporal and the spiritual, just like the soul and the body, are interdependent.

However, in the presence of this tottering papacy, what was the line of conduct taken by the French moderates?

The moderates had as their principle the reconciliation of religion and philosophy, monarchy and democracy, Church and Revolution. They were therefore very careful not to touch the papacy; they would not have dared to assume the responsibility for this great ruin, first of all, because they did not feel able to substitute their own teaching for the religious ideas, and secondly, because the hour of Protestantism seemed to them, with good reason, to have passed, there was, according to them, no longer enough faith in France to be worth the costs of a Reformation, and they would have been ashamed to indenture the conscience of the country to Anglican hypocrisy any more than to German theology; because, finally, in this serious state of uncertainty, they could neither renounce the legitimate influence exerted by France over 130 million Catholics spread across the surface of the globe nor support the formation of an Italian State whose area would have proportionally reduced the French prepotency. It is, indeed, not a matter of burning the old papacy on the altar of philosophy; it is necessary that the temporal not have to suffer from this decapitation of the spiritual.

The government of Napoléon III has had none of these scruples. Would this be an indication of a change of policy on its part, the sign of a return to principles?... After having showered the clergy with his favors, restored the religious communities, recalled the Jesuits, returned control over its teachings to the Church, and given, on all occasions, evidence of its piety; after having disputed the protectorate of the Holy See in Austria for ten years, as had Louis-Philippe, how is it that suddenly, under pretext that the events that it had itself caused are beyond its control, that *their logic is inexorable*, it tells the Sovereign pontiff that his royalty is no longer for this century, that consequently he has to resign himself to leaving the government of his States in lay hands and condescend to accept from Catholic nations, in compensation for their temporal treasure, a revenue!...

For my part, I applaud the crucifixion of the Church, but on one condition, that the new head of France should tell us what spirit he intends to substitute for the Catholic spirit: does he propose, after the example of the kings of England and the tsars of Russia, to seize the principedom and the pontificate, or to return purely and simply to the Revolution?

Alas! I am quite afraid that Napoleon III does not even suspect that one can address such questions to him. As the expression of his time, carried to the crest of power by an imbroglio, he constantly testifies, like all of his supporters, to his horror of ideas; he believes only in matter and force. He does not want a Revolution: he proved that by his public safety laws in 1851 and 1852; since then, he has never stopped proclaiming this in all of his acts, both official and unofficial or pseudonymous; he has just repeated this in his letter to the pope of December 31, 1859. He no longer wants the bourgeois moderates: he broke with them irreconcilably with his *coup d'état*, and he will take care not to be exposed to their

criticism. Through the fault of his situation much more than of his will, Napoleon III does not and cannot desire any principle, any guarantee, any liberty. If he sacrifices the pope, it is, as he himself says, because events have forced him to this pass; because he does not have in him what he would require in order to control events, i.e., principles, ideas, a faith, a law. But at the same time that he pronounces the forfeiture of the Holy Father, that he intercepts the bishops' mandates, that he threatens the Jesuits and bombards the catholic newspapers with warnings, he takes speech from the democracy, and condemns in his courts the philosophers, accused of *insult to public and religious morals*.

Therefore, neither Christian nor revolutionist, nor anything in between, in a word, nothing: this is the France, not made, but revealed at this point in time by the government of December 2.

The common people had not at first perceived this characteristic of imperial policy, of having no principles and of going blindly. Following the custom of the French spirit of relating everything to the master, they said of Napoleon III: See how fortunate he is! Everything works for him. Some praised his spirit of conciliation: he said of himself that he was the end of the old parties. The Church hailed in him a new Constantine, while the plebs saw in him, as they had in his uncle, the herald of the Revolution. Now everything is revealed: the imperial government is a government without principles and the emperor cannot help it; as for his pretended successes, a little while longer and, things remaining as they are, we will see nothing but calamities.

No, I tell you, no principles, no true successes: to maintain the opposite would be to grant to a man a power that the philosophers refuse even to God, that of making something of nothing.

Of what use was the expedition to the Crimea? We prided ourselves on relieving the Ottoman Empire: the peace having been made, we abandoned it like a corpse.—We wanted to halt Russian encroachment: Russia has just conquered the Caucasus, no less important, as the future will show, than Constantinople. Russia has Armenia; its colonists extend over the southernmost coast from the Black Sea to the front door of the sultans' palace. And France does not have even a foothold in Asia Minor.—Is it the English alliance or European equilibrium that profited from the capture of Sebastopol? The dead of Malakoff were not buried before Napoleon III, disgusted with the English, signed a peace treaty with the tsar, and contemplated an alliance posing a different threat to the freedoms of the world than the protectorate of Russia over the Orient. At this moment, admittedly, there is a cooling of the Russian alliance, and a reheating of the English alliance. Protestant England applauds the failure of Catholicism; it reasons, from its point of view, exactly as did the French *juste-milieu*. To strike the papacy, the Revolution not being there, is to break the catholic *faisceau*; it is to lessen France. It proclaims the author of the booklet *La Pape et le Congrès* as great a theologian and statesman as Jacques I and Henri VIII, and perhaps it will condescend to sign a commercial treaty with him. How long that will it last? How long can alliances formed without principles last? Also, England does not trust it.

The empire, organ of a society abandoned by the idea, the empire is in

turmoil, burns powder, makes a racket; its glory does not kindle. It could not, or did not know how to preserve the Ottoman Empire from its dissolution; it has raised no barrier to the invasions of Russia; it did not dare to advance as far as the Adriatic and left the Austrians in the Peninsula; it does not even have the courage to keep the promises of Villafranca; now it lets down the Pope, whom it wanted to make the Federal President of Italy and whom it had supported for ten years. Let us suppose that after the annexation of the duchies and the Romagnas to Piedmont comes, with the aid of British diplomacy and the party of unity, that of Venetia and Naples; Would Napoleon III prevent it? He could not, committed as he is by his own words, committed by his craving for an alliance with the English. He would not dare to claim that the people's wishes are sacred, as long as the sovereignty of the Holy Father is at stake, but that the annexation of the insurgent regions to the Sardinian states is something else. The only fruit of the Italian campaign would thus be to have served as an instrument for the policy of de Cavour, Garibaldi, Mazzini and Orsini; of having created a powerful neighbor for us, who cannot love us, who has never loved us, and of having consumed France's investment.—Can we, say the politicians of December 2, prevent Italy from realizing her unity? Do we have the right? Isn't the Revolution itself based on the principle of respecting nationalities? Then make it, I will answer them, make the Revolution; cling to it, to its law, to its maxims; and, superior to the world through the power of your principle, you will have nothing to fear from the aggrandizement of your neighbors. *I do not want a Prussia in the south*, said General Cavaignac. He was a thousand times right, since he was eclectic. The government of December 2 renounced this policy: if the Italians wanted to lend themselves to it, we would have at our gates an empire of twenty-six million men. Would the territory of Nice or Savoie compensate us?

A government without principles is a science without method, a philosophy without a criterion, a religion without a God. We have just seen what sad fruits the policy of December 2 produced outside France; it was no more fortunate inside. Its balance sheet can be summarized in eight articles:

- The tax has risen from 1,500 to 1,800 million;
- The national debt increased by three billion;
- Conscription raised from 80 to 100, 120 and 140 thousand men;
- Failure of the middle class and proportional increase for the proletariat;
- Reduction in the population;
- Depravity of national mores;
- Decline of literature and the arts;
- Failure of all the enterprises of the government.

To speak only about this last article, the stream of miscalculations by the imperial government would be long.

In 1852, the government reduces the interest rate from 5% to 4½%. And everyone applauds. We know what increase, purely artificial, reigned during this year of beginning over all the values. But what followed by no means responded to these hopes; the Bank did not decrease its discount; more than once it even raised it up to 6 and 7%; in last analysis the 4½ remained fixed at 90, which means that, in spite of the reduction, 5.0% is still the normal rate of interest. Any

tax, any reduction of assessed income on the property, to be right, must be general. The conversion of the rate having remained an isolated measure, it is as if the government had made bankruptcy with the *rentiers* of ½%. Is this a success?

The imperial government aimed to establish the *Crédit Foncier*: it did not succeed;—to establish a *Crédit Mobilier*: its *Crédit Mobilier* is an enterprise of speculation;—to establish docks: the society of the docks ended up in court;— to establish the rents at a cheap rate, and half of the Parisian population is driven out of the capital.<sup>1</sup> It flattered itself that it would revive the merchant marine, but, in spite of the granted or promised subsidies, nothing is done. It accepted the protectorate of the opening of the isthmus of Suez; it gives it up today; is this because the business appears bad to it, or as a consequence of its change of policy?. What are we to say of the Palace of Industry, the hackney carriages, and so many other things that the imperial government took up? Through its commercial treaty with England, it comes to take the first step in a career of the free exchange, to ensure, in the opinion of all foreign people of businesses, disinterested in the question, the preponderance of England in the French market, over the French navy. *Free exchange*, thanks to the label, is one of imaginations of the contemporary democracy, which has never shone, as we know, through economic science. You do not need, however, to be a great economist to see that free exchange, which is nothing other than the *chacun chez soi, chacun pour soi*, so scorned by this same democracy, is not a principle, that which without principles, without Justice, without guarantees, without reciprocity, political economy, like politics, is fertile only in disasters. I would only want the little lesson in political economy that it pleased His Majesty to give to France via its minister of State, in order to predict that it will be with the customs reform issued by Napoleon III as it was with that of Robert Peel: perhaps the price of imported food products will drop, but the people will be more drained than before. It is thus so difficult to understand, for example, that if French wines obtain a considerable outlet in England, the price will rise, and that the French people will drink somewhat less than before; that it will be the same for meat, butter, vegetables, fruits; that if, in addition, the irons and woven cottons of England arrive to us at cheaper prices, the wages of the French workers will drop by as much; as a result, that the allowances of price, on the two sides of the strait, will benefit the shareholders and the owners, along with some intermediaries, brokers, merchants; that there will be displacement of businesses and fortunes, but that all in all, industrial competition and capitalist absorption being exerted on a greater scale, the fate of the masses will worsen?... Free exchange has as a condition the exemption from payment of the discount: can we accomplish, on these terms, the balance of trade?—The imperial government will have had the glory of completing the railways, and even of making far too many of them: but it will also be able to boast of having delivered the country up to the financial aristocracy; of having re-established in favor of its creatures the hated system of *pot-de-vin*, and of having allowed the nation to

<sup>1</sup> Means have been found to make them return, by transferring the allocation to the fortifications. What a favor!

contract the previously unknown habit of gambling. The completion of the railroads by the imperial government and its intervention in all manner of business, will date for France the ruin of the middle class, which is to say the disorganization of French society.

The government of the emperor had the thought, worthy of praise, of being the restorer of mores, as it had had the ambition to be the founder of credit. There is for this purpose an office of propaganda in the ministry of the interior. Now see how this moralist government is plagued by misfortune! A M. Giblain, stockbroker, is accused of misappropriation in the exercise of his office and of embezzlement. The facts are stated by experts; the offense is flagrant: 1,800 embezzlements and as many forgeries. A conviction seems inevitable. But no, the jury returns a verdict of acquittal. Do you know why? It is because it resulted from the debates, for the jury as for the Court, that the acts of which M. Giblain was accused were common to him and the whole association of stockbrokers, which was declared honorable by the magistrates. It was at the time when the Court of Cassation, by its confirmatory judgment against the outside brokers, granted stockbrokers the privilege of futures markets, that the prosecution prosecuted a stockbroker charged 1) with having made futures exchanges, like all his colleagues; 2) of having done so for on own account, like all his colleagues; 3) of having kept, for this purpose, an account of adjustment on those exchanges, like all his colleagues; 4) finally, of having sometimes profited, and sometimes lost—not everything is profit in this trade—on the exchanges that he carried out on his own account, like all his colleagues!... Obviously, the Court of Cassation and the prosecution didn't see eye to eye. A conviction was impossible. Do we believe that if the imperial prosecutor had announced his resolution to push the investigation to the end, and to place, if necessary, the whole association of stockbrokers on the criminals' bench; if, at the same time, the Court of Cassation had stigmatized the aforesaid association, by declaring its request against the outside brokers inadmissible, do we believe, I say, that the jury would have dared to answer: Not guilty? But the corporation is one of the pillars of the State, as such reputed to be holy and inviolable. Under Louis-Philippe, the Testes and the Cubières were the exception, and the jury condemned them. Today, they are the generality, and the jury acquits. Against a power without principles, even virtue does not succeed. In the absence of the jury, the stones would cry out: Hypocrisy!

Let us be fair, however. Undoubtedly, since December 2, a debasement of public morality has taken place in France; the nation lost its self-esteem; it feels its own unworthiness, and, as is habitual, it blames the government for it. This is the principle that will bring down the empire, if its unworthiness can likewise be translated into indignation. But the government is in this, as in everything, merely the expression of the conscience of the country; and if one can only say of it that, for the fidelity with which it expresses the perdition of their hearts, it deserves the recognition of its citizens, then one cannot say that it has deserved their hatred. The humiliation of France begins to reach farther than the *coup d'état*; Napoleon III, if it were possible to summon him before a jury, would have only a rather small share in that. Does one think by chance that, if the dynasty of Bonaparte had suddenly disappeared, the situation of the country would have

changed? That would be a serious error. France can remake itself only through the Revolution; it is not there. After rejoicings such as those that followed the death of Commodius, there would be the biddings of Didius Julianus. This is why we declare, hand on our heart, that between us and Napoleon III there is neither envy nor hatred; he has neither misled us nor supplanted us; we have upheld him in nothing and we do not aspire to become his successors. He is the official representative, not the personification, of an era of misfortune: that is all. His complicity does not extend beyond the acts of Strasbourg, Boulogne and December 2. We will allow ourselves however to recall to him, without any threat, the word of the Gospel: *Voe autem homini illi per quem scandalum venit*. Which means, in military language: Sentinel, guard yourself!

### XIII. — Conclusion.

The papacy having been broken, Catholicism is brought low: there is no more religion in the civilized world.

The Protestant churches—a sort of middle term between religious thought and philosophical thought, which remained in opposition to the Roman Church—perish in their turn, obliged as they will be either to decisively adopt philosophy, and consequently to consummate their renunciation, or to undergo a restoration of unity, and consequently to contradict themselves.

Eclecticism itself no longer has any *raison d'être*; of what could it remain composed? Willy-nilly, it must join the revolutionary antithesis, unless it is to dissolve into pure skepticism. Isn't it already towards the latter sad alternative that minds are inclining in France and in all of Europe? Before December 2, the governments, by a kind of tacit pact, pursued a moderate course in politics; they tended to balance one another, and followed one another in the application of the constitutional system. Now, all political and social development is suspended; the reason of state, which had been in the process of reconciling itself with the reason of right, floats randomly, free from any suggestion of fear, mistrust, and ancient antagonism. International relations are disturbed; there are no more principles; the despair of minds pushes them toward war.

Has England, which first, out of hatred of democracy, applauded December 2, any principles? The question has become almost laughable. For some years, England has astonished the world with its contempt for divine and human law... I am mistaken: yes, England has one principle, to destroy, one by the others, the powers of the continent.

Does Russia have principles? — If Russia had principles, if for example it believed in the inviolability of nations, then either it would restore Poland, or else it would not permit this so-called emancipation of the Italians. If Russia had principles, it would understand that there is no transition between the immorality of servitude and the recognition of the rights of man and citizen; it would be its night of August 4; instead of haggling over the liberty of its peasants, it would free them straightaway, in a revolutionary manner.

Does Austria have principles? How then is it perpetually at odds with its

peoples, suspect to its neighbors, unfaithful to its allies, ungrateful to its benefactors, odious to all?

Does Germany have principles? Let us hope so. Germany is the land of philosophy, as France is the land of the Revolution. Now, a German has said that Revolution and philosophy are one and the same thing. But, since December 2, that connection has been broken: Germany, which perhaps fears a new *Tugendbund* more than a new Napoleon, dreams of centralization, which could well mean, one day, denationalization. With Germany centralized, there would be five empires in Europe: four military empires, the French, Austrian, German and Russian; and one mercantile, the British. These five empires, when they did not battle one another, would form a holy alliance by which they would reciprocally guarantee the obedience of their subjects and the exploitation of their plebs. But then there would be no more nations in Europe, nothing being more destructive of nationalities than military and malthusian mores.

Does Italy have principles? Is Italy imperial, pontifical, royal or federal? It does not know itself. Poor Italy! In place of the Revolution, we have brought it revolt; it has hurled back at us the tempest.

There are no more principles: Europe has descended into the chaos of December 2, and we advance through the void, *per inania régna*. What is sad is that we know it, we speak of it everywhere, and we accept it. We take our part in it as a natural thing, as an inevitable phase. "France has fallen; the times of the Late Empire have come for it:" this is the talk in the cafes of Paris. As one said in 93, France is revolutionary; in 1814, France is liberal; in 1830, France is conservative; in 1848, France is republican. A little while longer, and we will say with the same carelessness, "France is rotten," and we will record its moral death.

Let Napoleon III now do as he wishes: the papacy struck down, nothing can call it back to life. The faith of the peoples no longer sustains it. The judgment is without appeal: neither restrictions, nor amendments will do a thing. The pope can absolve the emperor, the emperor, confessed, reconciled, will not save the pope. And as there is not a nation in Europe of which one could not note, proofs in hand, the intellectual and moral decadence, the fall of the papacy becomes the signal of the debacle.

Now, the time of the initiating races is past. The movement will not be reborn in Europe, neither in the east, nor the west, nor the center; today, regeneration can be neither Greek, nor Latin, nor Germanic. It can only come, as eighteen centuries ago, from a cosmopolitan propaganda, sustained by all people who, after having renounced the ancient gods, protest, without distinction of race nor of language, against corruption.

What will be their flag? They can have only one: the Revolution, Philosophy, Justice.

The Revolution is the French name for the new idea; Philosophy is its German name;

Let Justice become its cosmopolitan name.







OF JUSTICE IN THE REVOLUTION  
AND IN THE CHURCH.

STUDIES IN PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

ADDRESSED TO HIS EMINENCE M. LE CARDINAL MATTHIEU,  
ARCHBISHOP OF BESANÇON.



PRELIMINARY ADDRESS.

Under the name of an archbishop, I address these *Studies* to all the members of the French clergy.

As in the time of the Caesars, society is threatened with dissolution; and, as in the time of the Caesars, the Church believes that it alone has the power to regenerate it.

The work you are about to read having as its aim to recognize the reality and intensity of the evil, to assign its cause, to discover its remedy and, above all, to demonstrate, from the point of view of justification, that is to say, of human perfectibility, the non-value of the ecclesiastical ministry, and to establish moral philosophy, apart from this influence, on its legitimate basis, the dedication belonged by right to the clergy.

In short, what should henceforth be, for the people, the organ of virtue, the Revolution or Religion? This is the object of my research. There is none greater or more commendable.

§ 1. — State of mores in the nineteenth century. Invasion of moral skepticism:  
society in peril. Where is the remedy?

And first of all, what is there of truth in the current crisis?

If we cast our eyes on the progress of the century, it seems that, in fact, as the Church denounces it, the situation is very compromised.

France has lost its mores.

Not that the men of our generation are in fact worse than their fathers: the

history, better known today, of prior eras would strongly contradict that claim. The generations follow each other and improve: that is, on the whole, notwithstanding the incessant oscillations and deplorable gaps, what an attentive observation of life of peoples reveals to be the most plausible account thus far.

When I say that France has lost her mores, I mean something very different, that it has ceased to believe in its principles. It no longer has either intelligence or moral conscience; it has even forgotten the very notion of *mores*.

We have arrived, moving from criticism to criticism, at this sad conclusion: that the just and the unjust, which we once thought we could discern, are terms of convention, vague and indeterminable; that all these words like *Law*, *Duty*, *Morality*, *Virtue*, etc., about which the pulpit and the school make so much noise, only serve to cover up pure hypotheses, vain utopias, indemonstrable prejudices; that thus the practice of life, directed by who-knows-what form of *human respect*, by *conventions*, is fundamentally arbitrary; that those who speak most of Justice prove, moreover, by the supernatural origin that they assign to it, by the extra-worldly sanction that they give to it, by the sacrifice that they never hesitate to make of it to established interests, and by their own conduct, how much their faith lacks in seriousness, that thus the true rule of relations among humans is egoism, so that the most honest man is still the one who confesses his egoism most frankly, because at least such a man does not take you for a traitor, etc., etc.

To sum things up in one word, it is *skepticism* that, having devastated religion and politics, has descended on morals: it is in this that the modern dissolution consists. The case is not new in the history of civilization: it already presented itself in the times of Greek and Roman decadence; I dare say it won't present itself a third time. Let us therefore study it with all the attention of which we are capable; and since we could not escape this last invasion of the scourge, let us at least know what we should expect from it.

Under the desiccating action of doubt, and without crime having perhaps become more frequent and virtue more rare, French morality, in its heart of hearts, is destroyed. There is nothing more that stands: the rout is complete. There is no thought of justice, no esteem for liberty, no solidarity between citizens. There is not an institution that we respect, not a principle that is not denied, flouted. There is no more authority, either in the spiritual or the temporal realms: everywhere souls are driven back into themselves, without a point of reference, without light. We no longer have anything to swear to or anything by which to swear. Our oaths are senseless. The suspicion that strikes principles attaching itself to men, we no longer believe in the integrity of justice, in the honesty of power. With the moral sense, the instinct of self-preservation itself seems extinguished. General management given over to empiricism, a stock-market aristocracy hurling itself, in hatred of the *partageux*, on the public wealth; a middle class dying of cowardice and stupidity; a plebeian class sinking into poverty and bad advice; women feverish with luxury and lust, youth immodest, childhood outdated, the priesthood, finally, dishonored by scandal and vengeance, no longer having faith in itself and barely troubling the silence of public opinion with its stillborn dogmas: such is the profile of our century.

The less timorous sense it and worry about it:

“There is no respect any more,” said a businessman to me. “Like that emperor who felt he was becoming a god, I feel that I am becoming a rascal and I wonder what I believed in when I believed in honor?”

“I am overcome with *spleen*,” confessed a young priest. He who, by his functions, by his faith and by his age, should have been sheltered from this English evil, felt the moral life in his heart collapsing. Is that a life? Wouldn't it rather be called an expiation? The bourgeois atones, the proletarian atones, the Power itself, reduced to governing only by force, atones.

“The mind of man,” says M. Saint-Marc de Girardin, “has lost its clarity; the heart feels no more joy. We feel that we are in a fog, we stumble trying to find our way, and that makes us sad. Cheerfulness is rare these days, even among youth.”

“That nation has no principles,” Lord Wellington said of us, in 1815. — We notice it at this hour. With what an increase of horror Royer-Collard, witness to our failure, would repeat his words of the same period:

“*Society is dust*. All that remains are memories, regrets, utopias, madness, despair.”

However, as the doubt about Justice, and the demoralization that it brings with it, has not added appreciably to the sum of misdemeanors and crimes, the statesman, for whom external respect for the law suffices, would not need to worry about it until then. Statistics in hand, he would show that crime is proportional to pauperism, and he would demand this precious morality, which conscience no longer supports, from the combinations for financing and insurance. The religion of right and duty would thus be succeeded by the religion of interests, and all would be said and done. Order maintained in the street, force remaining in the law, the statesman could rest on his laurels and we would only have to repeat the proverb: The world moves by itself.

Sadly, history shows that if the safety of persons and property cannot be seriously affected by moral doubt, it is not the same for the family and society.

To form a family, so that the man and the woman find in it the joy and calm to which they aspire — qualities without which, brought together by desire, they will never be more than incompletely united — a *conjugal faith* is necessary. I mean thereby an idea of their mutual dignity that, raising them above the senses, makes them still more sacred than dear to each other, and makes their fruitful community a religion sweeter than love itself. Without this, marriage is no more than a costly society, full of disgust and troubles, soon and necessarily replaced by free love.

Likewise, to form a society, to give the interests of individuals and families the security that is their first need — without which work is refused, the exchange of products and values becomes a fraud and wealth a trap for he who possesses it — requires what I shall call a *juridical faith*, which, raising souls above selfish appetites, renders them happier in the respect of the rights of others than in the respect of their own fortunes. Without this, society becomes a free-for-all where the law of the strongest is replaced by the law of the most deceitful, where exploitation succeeds primitive theft, where the last word of war is

servitude and the guarantee of servitude is tyranny.

Once again, to form a state, to confer support and stability to power, a *political faith* is needed, without which the citizens, given over to the pure attractions of individualism, cannot, whatever they do, be anything other than an aggregate of incoherent and repulsive existences, which the first breath will disperse like dust. Haven't we seen, since the Revolution, enough defections and recantations? How could a power subsist when contempt has invaded souls, when ministers, senators, magistrates, generals, prelates and functionaries, the army, the bourgeoisie and the common people are as indifferent to the changing of their princes as to the furnishings of the crown?

Through skepticism, the purely moral appeal of marriage, of generation and the family, and the attractions of work and society being lost, the social being dissolves and the population itself tends to die out. This is the serious side of the present immorality.

As long as we are stung by moral doubt, all of us who have acquired the consciousness of our loneliness feel, through this weakness of Justice in us, diminished in the best part of ourselves and stripped of our dignity, which means our social potential.

Is it not in fact decay, this ferocious sensualism, which makes us loathe marriage and generation, but drives us through love to the annihilation of the species? The number of abortions and infanticides doubled in 1856, according to the latest report on criminal justice. The height of pleasure is in sterility. We will have no children, these young spouses tell you, coldly!... In Paris, in 1858, the number of births, according to the statistics published by the newspapers, was 35,000: of this number, 11,000 were illegitimate. We will have children, if we can't prevent it, but not marriage. This is our century. Is it the wish of nature and of society? Is it even the wish of love?

Is it not also decay, this lack of faith in the virtue of our neighbor and in our own virtue, which, keeping us in a state of latent war, makes us, whether we like it or not, indifferent to society and to the homeland, and careless regarding general interests and posterity?

The certainty of right, and, with it, the religion of duty, abolished in the hearts of men, society therefore expires. As no one can be honest when internally convinced of their villainy, just so no society can persist with the now general opinion that it is composed from top to bottom of rabble.

*Science and consciousness of Justice*, as one learned professor said, that is what we lack, and the deprivation makes us die slowly, ignominiously. And that is what the Revolution had promised us, what it would have given us long ago, if the misfortune of the times and the weakness of souls had not delayed its glorious and definitive manifestation.

Yes, this juridical, sacramental faith, this science of right and duty, which we seek everywhere in vain, which the Church never possessed and without which it is impossible for us to live, I say that the Revolution has produced all of its principles; that these principles, without our knowledge, govern and sustain us, but that, while affirming them from the bottom of our hearts, we reject them through prejudice, and that it is this infidelity to ourselves that creates our moral

misery and our servitude.

For sixty-three years the Revolution has been repressed by us, disguised, slandered and handed over to the enemy, whose banner we have taken up. And our immorality grew as we approached the principle against which our fathers had risen, but which our fathers could not deny.

## § II. — The Counter-Revolution everywhere: Its Powerlessness.

France, and Europe in its wake, is in full counter-revolution; both are, at the same time, in full decadence. This fact is worth dwelling on, as those who complain the most about it are far from suspecting its agents and causes.

Everything that emerged from the Revolution, from its beginnings, successively turned against it and, by fighting the Revolution, served the dissolution: Democracy, Empire, Restoration, July Monarchy, Republic of 1848, Representative System, Centralization, Philosophy, Political Economy, Industrial Progress, Credit institutions, Socialism, Literature.

Let us note, in a few short pages, this astonishing phenomenon.

*Democracy.* — No one would dare to deny that the object of the Revolution was to emancipate the masses and ensure the preponderance of labor over property. The Revolution is essentially democratic, to such an extent that the monarchy itself, transformed by the Revolution, had to call itself — and calls itself every day — democratic.

And I too, despite my disdain for popular ballot boxes, I belong to the democracy; I do not separate myself from it, and no one has the right to exclude me from it. Am I therefore a traitor or a splitter, because I say that democracy is poisoned, and that more than anything it has served the counter-revolution?

By taking the utopia of Jean-Jacques as its ideal, by substituting the politics of instincts for that of principles, by modeling its government on that of absolutism, democracy ended in the suicide of 93, the mystical atrocities of 94, the defections of Thermidor and Brumaire, the too-forgotten elections of 1800 and 1804, and those of 1848, 1851 and 1852, which, I hope, will not be forgotten. Where is the democrat of good faith who dares at this hour to affirm the steadfastness, the high wisdom, the infallible reason of the multitude? And if you forsake the multitude; if, after having made it vote, come what may, guiding its eyes and hands, you return it to tutelage, what is your democracy?

The democracy, since it became a power, a fashion, has successively espoused all of the ideas most contrary to its nature. Faithful, above all, to the religious principle, but feeling, there as elsewhere, the need to innovate, it has made itself by turns paleo-Christian and neo-Christian, Protestant, deist, pantheist, metempsychosist, druidic, magical, mystical, fanatical, incorporating every available material. In economics, it is whatever you like, communist and feudalist, anarchic, monopolist, philanthropist, free trader, anti-egalitarian; — in politics, governmental, dictatorial, imperial, centralizing, absolutist, chauvinistic, Machiavellian, doctrinaire, disdainful of law, sworn enemy of all local and individual liberty; — in philosophy and literature, after denying

Voltaire and the classics, Condillac, Diderot, Volney, all the Fathers and Doctors of the revolution, it has made itself transcendentalist, eclectic, *apriorist*, fatalist, sentimentalist, idealist, romantic, gothic, whimsical, gossipy and bohemian. It has taken on all the systems, all the utopias, all the charlatanries, having been unable to discover anything in the thought that had produced it. February 1848 arrives. The democracy finds itself without genius, without virtue, without breath. Tell me why?

*Empire.* — We have said it until we can say it no more; we have said it only too often among a combative people: the empire was the sword of the Revolution, outstripping the work of the pen throughout Europe. That was its legitimacy and that will be its significance in the face of history. As a power, the empire remained without originality, because it was, like the democracy from which it had emerged, without an understanding of the Revolution. Was that the Emperor's fault? He had all the genius that the nation's thought contained, as much wit as everyone else and perhaps more virtue. What a fervor for royalty among the heroes emerging from Jacobinism! After the four Bonaparte brothers, who became kings, here is Bernadotte king, Murat king, Eugène Beauharnais viceroy, and Soult, and Masséna, and the insane Junot, who also wanted to be kings! Duke or prince was not enough for these sons of artisans, who had become haughtier than the Rohans. According to them, one *earns* a royal position just as one earns a pension. Speak then, after that, of universal suffrage! Say that the people have been deceived, that they have been frightened!... They had profited. *Vox populi.*

*Restoration.* — It rises at first, through the Charter, above even imperial glory. The Charter was the return to revolutionary life. But soon the Crown believes it sees, it notices that the Revolution is leading it where it does not want to go; it conspires with the Church, the soul of the counter-revolution, and falls, after everything that the Revolution most abhors and detests, after the sword, had multiplied under its wing: Jesuitism, romanticism, Saint-Simonism, Malthusianism, etc.

*July Monarchy.* — It was the crowning glory of the bourgeoisie; it could be, precisely because of this, the most legitimate of powers. A mass of common people to be emancipated presupposes a class of instructors and innovators: this is the fundamental fact of the Revolution. Louis-Philippe rejected this program. As Napoleon had tried to remake the old regime with his soldiers, he conceived the idea of remaking it with his bourgeois. He governed neither by religion, nor by force, nor by instincts; he governed by interests. Under Louis-Philippe the industrial feudalism, which currently reigns, was formed. We can say of this prince what has been said of Voltaire: *He has not seen everything he made, but he made everything we see.* He himself boasted of it in his letters to the leaders of the Holy Alliance; and Napoleon III, who stripped the Orleans family of its privileges, would not dare to revoke, without indemnity, the great concessions, the kind of fiefs with which his royal predecessor had flanked the System.

*Parliamentary system.* — From 1789 to 1799, from 1814 to 1851, the tribune was the glory of French genius; its silence is our shame: I agree. But, by betraying all parties, by pleading all causes, by giving the spectacle of the most

shameful palinodes, by serving truth less than intrigue, by sending, in turn, to the scaffold and to exile the monarchy, the Girondes, the Cordeliers, the Jacobins, the Thermidorians, the Clichyans and the Socialists, has it not refuted itself? Did it not make the people say that the voice of the Revolution was a voice of lies and iniquity: *Mentit est iniquitas sibi?*

*Centralization.* — “The sense of men nowadays has been so perverted,” said Michelet; “our friends have so lightly swallowed the gross blunders thrown at them by our enemies, that they believe and repeat that the Protestants prepared to dismember France, that all Protestants were gentlemen, etc. From that point on, see the beauty of the system: Paris and Saint-Barthélemy saved unity; Charles IX and the Guises represented the Convention.” (*Guerres de religion*, p. 305.)

In a meeting of Republicans that took place after December 2, where they lamented the inertia of the departments, awaiting the signal from the capital, someone having asked the question if it would have been better to save the Republic, at the price of decentralization, than to preserve *unity* by undergoing the *coup d'état*, the majority decided for the second opinion, *federalism* appearing incompatible with the Republic. So do not be surprised that on this strain of Jacobinism the monarchical bud is still flourishing. Our republicanism is above all a matter of words. We abhor monarchy; unity is something else!

Do we at least possess this centralizing unit, the installation of which cost France fourteen months of terror and the Girondins their heads? Alas! No. Centralization presupposes parties grouping together under a law of series, but always for the benefit of their liberty and their initiative. Paris and its government, its administrations, its companies, its monopolies, its pleasures, its parasitism, Paris, which has become the inn of Europe, absorbs and devours France: that is centralization!

*Philosophy.* — A social revolution supposes, with a new government, a new philosophy. To establish Justice, to develop the humanitarian thought of Cloutz, symbolized by the Cult of Reason, a critique of that same reason was essential. For that to continue, by elevating and clarifying it, the movement of the eighteenth century was enough: there was no need to appeal to the Germans, the Scots, the Platonists, and, under the pretext of materialism, to give the signal for a reaction, as Royer-Collard did. Did the worshipers of matter, since matter there is, ever cause a philosopher to be outlawed or a pyre to be lit, or set up as a principle the ignorance of the people and the stupefaction of humanity? Quite different, certainly, is the religion of the spirit. For forty years, university spiritualism, rival or ally of the Church, gave it intelligence. It was spiritualism that, in 93 and 94, sent the Revolution to the guillotine: it would do it again. The festival of 20 Prairial [Feast of the Supreme Being, Year II], of which the Law of the 22<sup>nd</sup> made a veritable *auto-da-fé*, was a call to the priestly party, and a sort of evocation of neo-Christianity and all the sects that were to infect the Republic in 1848.

*Socialism.* — Its root is in 89: its object, to be considered only from the point of view of material interests, is the inversion of the relations between labor and

capital. It is Justice, in its application to matters of the economy. Falling into the hands of dreamers, haranguers, gastrosophers and androgynes, socialism, the *justicier* that the Revolution wanted it to be, has become sentimental, evangelical, theocratic, communist, erotic-bacchanalian, omnigamous; it was all that the reaction could wish it to be for its own profit and our shame: it was socialism that, after December 2, undertook to initiate Europe into the mysteries of *Bankocracy*.

*Political Economy.* — The creation of an economic science, based at once on the analysis of industrial phenomena and on justice, is the last word of revolutionary thought. Terrible to feudalism, hostile to the Emperor, surly with the Bourbons, haughty with the Orleans, enemies of all all governmental initiative and concentration, swearing only by liberty, the economists, much more than the Jacobins, could pass for the true representatives of the Social Republic. They were only asked one thing: to finally construct this science, the shapeless and contradictory materials of which they had been collecting for a century. Instead of answering, they went on to boast about *free trade, moral restraint, laissez-faire laissez-passer* and all the juggling and turpitude to be found on both sides of the Channel. They preached the reason of chance, the sovereignty of antagonism, respect for parasitism, the necessity of poverty; they supported, with all their strength, against the democracy and against the political powers, the prepotence of the big companies, and by their desperate defense of monopoly, served as godfathers to the new feudalism. Then, when they saw themselves denounced as schemers, hypocrites, enemies of the people and foreign agents, they cried “*Wolf!*” against the Revolution.

*Literature.* — As it had its metaphysics, its ethics, its economy, its jurisprudence, the Revolution should also have its literature. The movement begins with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, continues with Beaumarchais and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. The harangues of the Constituent Assembly, the Legislative Assembly, and the Convention raise it to the sublime. Its enemies themselves take up the same tune: the antithesis of the Revolution comprised all the genius of De Maistre. Suddenly, by one of those reversals so frequent in the march of the human mind, the new muse abandoned her flag. To the harsh but misunderstood realities of a nascent world, she prefers, as the subject of her songs, the vanquished ideal, and we have *Romanticism*. Has it done us enough harm? It was romanticism that, in 1848, on the eve of the December elections, lamented that if the socialists became the masters they would demolish Notre-Dame and that pieces of the Column would bring big money... Now, romanticism, like economism, like philosophy, and everything that served the reaction is worn out, but the corruption they sowed, the servitude they prepared, the ruins they piled up, all this remains, and we have no more literature.

Isn't it a surprising thing: a Revolution opposed, abrogated by all those it carried in its bosom, all those who received its baptism? For ten years, I have followed the current of history with all the attention of which I am capable. As far as I could, I took cognizance of ideas and acts. Apart from a few strong characters who are known, I found everyone hostile to the Revolution: people of letters, people of law, business people people of the schools and people of the



political parties; poets, historians, novelists, magistrates, speculators, shopkeepers, industrialists; academics, economists, eclectics, pantheists, constitutionalists, imperialists, democrats; Gallicans, Protestants, Jews, Neo-Christians; youth, women, the bourgeoisie, the multitude, the clerk, the soldier, the academician, the scholar, the peasant, the worker, like the priest.

And as if the Revolution, growing distant, carried Justice with it, the more this world showed itself hostile, the more I found it corrupt.

Democracy, through the mouth of Robespierre, asks the Supreme Being again for the sanction of human rights. Immediately the notion of right is obscured, and corruption, suspended for a moment, resumes its course. The Empire, the Restoration, the bourgeois monarchy show themselves more and more unfaithful to their origin; and the corruption advances. Philosophy and literature deny the tradition of the eighteenth century; and Platonism, Romanticism serve as an illumination for corruption. Political economy becomes Malthusian, and now women have a horror of housework and motherhood. The Church erects into an article of faith the pious legend of an immaculate conception, and never have such suspicions hovered over the morals of the Priesthood.

If any life remains to us, if all honor is not lost, we owe it to that sacred flame of the Revolution, which no deluge can extinguish. Her conquests, her establishments, her organs, her liberties, her rights, her guarantees, all have perished: there remains to her only the collective soul, more and more made in her image; and from this inaccessible temple, she imposes her terror on the world, which waits for her to impose her law on it again. The Counter-Revolution knows it: If, she says, I can be mistress for two generations, my reign is forever assured! Two generations would be enough for her to remake the conscience and the understanding to the people. But the generations flee her: never was the Revolution more alive than since the last triumph of the Counter-Revolution. All bruised and dislocated, the Revolution possesses us; it rallies us, governs us, assures us; through it we hope and act, and all that remains to us of spontaneity and virtue belongs to it. So the conscience of the people, long abused, turns with love towards this Grand Orient, and the day when a hundred men knowingly renew the oath of 93, LIBERTY — EQUALITY — FRATERNITY, the Revolution will be established: it will reign.

From what precedes we draw a double consequence.

There is something strong in the Revolution that dominates opinions and masters interests, by which it imposes itself on its adversaries and triumphs over all resistance; — as also there is something that arouses against it the prejudices of caste, of party, of school, of profession, of education, of communion, from which the reason of the masses has not yet been able to rid itself.

What gives life to the Revolution is a positive element, an expression of the universal conscience, which the Revolution aims to determine and build, for the salvation and glory of humanity: it is JUSTICE.

What makes the Revolution suspect can only be a negative element: it is the negation of the principle on which Justice, which must exist by itself, has relied until this day, a principle incompatible with the revolutionary element, but still

living in souls, of which the Church is the organ.

Thus, two powers fight for the world: one born yesterday, with all the harshness of green fruit, and only asks to grow; the other, having reached maturity, which only stirs to die. What checks life in the first is the same as what suspends death in the other: what is this thing? To understand this, let us first know by what incident the Church, mother and rival of the Revolution, arrived there.

### § III — The Church: why, despite its perpetual defeats, does it still exist?

The existence of the Church is no less marvelous in its long duration than that of the Revolution in its beginnings. Always beaten, it has survived all the defeats; it grew through humiliation, and it fed, so to speak, on its very adversity.

It is a surprising thing, which no one seems to have noted, that the Church, which loves to talk so much about its triumphs, has in reality never triumphed over anyone. It is a storm-tossed ship, which from time to time picks up a soul fallen overboard, but which has never sunk nor forced to surrender, by the power of its doctrine, another church. Between religious societies, such a victory is impossible.

So what gives the Church life? How can we explain the problem of this strange existence?

The problem of the Church is the same as that of the Revolution, but in an opposite sense: the persistence of one and the embarrassments of the other stem from the same cause.

Formed by a combination of circumstances that will be explained in these *Studies*, the Church of Christ is nourished, fortified and fattened by the detritus of other churches, the dissolution of which is incessantly brought about by other causes. But the Catholic Church does not triumph over these churches, any more than the tree triumphs over the corpse buried under its roots. It cannot, I repeat, boast of having conquered a single one. A church, whatever it may be, never allows itself to be removed by another church. That is against its nature. It dissolves by itself, or sometimes it merges, or else it is exterminated.

Thus the Church, formed from the dismemberment of Judaism, could not manage to incorporate it: the book of *Acts* contains the formal admission.

“Since you reject the word,” said Paul and Barnabas to the heads of the Synagogue, “we turn to the Gentiles, *convertur ad gentes*.”

A church that crucifies, as false christ and false prophet, the founder of the rival church; that hunts, stones, casts down the apostles of that rival; that, rather than accepting the messianic interpretation of the Nazarenes, chooses to be exterminated en masse and dies heroically for its faith, has this church been defeated? Titus, and after him Adrian, destroyed Judaic nationality. Many defectors, despairing of Jehovah and Moses, went to swell the Christian ranks; others rallied, some to the Egyptians, some to the Magi: the Synagogue always protested, and still protests.

What I have just said about Judaism applies to all the powers that the Church

has had to fight: paganism, Magism, Egyptianism, Druidism, Pythagoreanism, Platonism, Gnosticism, Arianism, Pelagianism, Manichaeism, Mohammedanism, Greek schism, Reformation, Renaissance, ancient and modern philosophy, third estate, empire, royalty, parliament, science, art, freedom, and finally the Revolution.

The Church has not conquered paganism any more than it had conquered Judaism. According to a statistical calculation quoted by Matter, the Christians, at the accession of Constantine, formed about one-twentieth of the population of the empire. At all points, their brotherhoods were made up of what the general dissolution caused the local religions to lose every day, struck in principle by the progress of ideas, and especially by imperial domination. Those who converted to Christianity were already lost to paganism. Far from the Church having conquered paganism, it gradually took from it, as it did from Judaism, all that it could; it has adopted pagan codes, hierarchy, institutions, rites. It was in order to appeal to paganism and to lead the masses dispossessed of their gods, as much as to obey the logic of its own movement, that the Church posited, in the fourth century, the divinity of its Christ, and that later it consecrated the worship of images.

With the Gnostics, heirs to the ancient doctrines of Egypt, Syria, Persia, India and Greece, the Church only ends up giving a itself a gnosis, much less scholarly than that of Valentin, much less severe than that of Marcion, Cerdon, or Tertullian, and much less poetic than that of the two Bardesanes, but such as was necessary for a coarse multitude, which also wanted to have its *perfect ones*, to pass for *spiritual* or *pneumatic*, and could not tolerate the reproach of psychism addressed to it by the Gnostics.

Now, as the vitality of a Church is directly proportional to the intensity and homogeneity of its faith, which in its turn is inversely proportional to the intellectual activity that it arouses; the Gnostic sects, too given up to dialectics, too metaphysical, too idealistic, too liberal in their government, some too suspect in their morality, died out little by little for lack of recruits, and their remnants, keeping their speculations *in petto*, came together in the Orthodox group. Strength helped: were they defeated? Certainly not. They presented, from the beginning, the spectacle of what awaited the great Church herself, once she found herself coming to grips with reason, taste, liberty, nationality and Justice.

What are, in fact, Arianism, Manichaeism, Mohammedanism, the Greek schism and the Reformation, apart from questions of doctrine always foreign to the masses, if not declarations of incompatibility between Catholic unity and the autonomy of nations and intelligences?

Arianism flourished especially in the East, homeland of Semitic monotheism. With the Greeks, the Romans, the Gauls and the Barbarians, it did not last; but it was reborn in Muhammad and settled under the Arab tent, in the patriarchal life, where Christian dogma would not penetrate.

In Persia, the orthodoxy retreated before the Zoroastrian dualism, awakened by Manes. And what demonstrates the truth of this physiology is that the same thing will happen in Persia to Islamism, when it has replaced the religion of Christ. In politics, a government recognizes another government; a state

triumphs over another state and incorporates it; a race interbreeds and merges into another race. In religion, it is not the same: cult refuses to recognize cult; the church does not incorporate the church, and fails to overcome it. Reason can agree with reason, force can conquer force; whereas faith can do nothing about faith: the Absolute and the Absolute do not make a dent in one another.

In the ninth century, the Greeks, already separated for four centuries by the fact of the imperial partition, consummated their split with the Latins. After the capture of Constantinople in 1453, the patriarchate passed to Saint Petersburg. It would go to Peking rather than reconcile with Rome.

In the sixteenth century, Germany, England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, and Switzerland separated in their turn. What do the theses of the doctors and their variations matter? The confessions of faith of the Reformation were thrown away, while Rome continued to chant its *Credo*: does it count that as a victory?

What is the empire of Charlemagne, setting itself up in the Middle Ages opposite the papacy, too fortunate to be its client? — It is the political church, which constitutes, together with the spiritual church, the feudal synthesis. The papacy and the empire have not ceased to battle: which of these two churches has vanquished the other? They have both just sunk, at the peace of Villafranca.

What is this organization of laicism, formed under the name of the *third estate*, separate from the nobility and the clergy, by the establishment of the *communes*? — The industrial church, which is established in its turn in relation to monasticism, as the emperor and the king of France, the heads of the political church, had established themselves in relation to the Holy See. With regard to the divine absolute, any establishment of the human order is in turn posed as an absolute. The clergy opposed the establishment of the communes as much as they could: did they defeat the third estate?

What is the institution of parliaments? — The church of right formed for the administration of Justice, having its jurisdiction outside the episcopal jurisdiction, its schools outside the seminaries, its law distinct from canon law. The Revolution transformed the parliaments: would the Church claim that this transformation was its own work?

What is this great movement of the Renaissance? — Another formation of churches, for the worship of philosophy, letters, arts, sciences, whose first word is to disregard Christ and his religion. To disregard Christianity! It is the whole thought of Bacon's *Organon*; it is the quintessence of Descartes. Raphael, with his virgins beautiful as Venus, protests against Christianity no less than Luther, with his free examination. Under Louis XIV, men of letters, Christians by their baptism and in their prayers, communed with pagan antiquity. Through the resurrection of the ancients and the transfusion of the Greek and Latin muses into our idiom, they founded literary catholicity, a marvelous catholicity, which admits all languages, all styles, all ideas, all geniuses, all races, all epochs, and from so many diverse productions, makes one and the same universal literature! Did the Church triumph over the Renaissance?

According to the laws that govern organized beings, the Church should have perished a thousand times. What remains to her of all that the spontaneity of

conscience, the independence of the mind, the sovereignty of nations, the power of emperors and kings could achieve? She has lost everything, and this miserable domain that she once held through the devotion of a princess, this poor heritage of Saint Peter, is still taken from her.

And yet the Church resists all attacks; she survives all schisms, all heresies, all dismemberments, the institutions of Saint Louis as well as the Gallican liberties, Pothier as well as Descartes, Luther as well as Voltaire. She survived her own immoralities; she had her reforming pontiffs long before the Reformation; and now that the Reformation is but a word, the Council of Trent unquestionably governs the Orthodox universe. What did I say? As the churches more advanced than her in philosophy and liberty fall into dissolution, she picks up their shreds and is constantly reformed by her very immobility. It is in this way that, before losing her temporal sovereignty, she enriched herself from the debris of the Gallican church, which will not now come back to life at the voice of the emperor, which will not rise again even at the voice of the king of France. This is how she will succeed all the so-called reformed Churches, unless the reason of humanity does not conclude definitively against the reason of these Churches, against theology. The Church has nothing but the breath, and this breath is more vivacious than all the energies that she has seen born, stronger than all the institutions that have been formed outside of her by imitating her.

Here, then, as in the Revolution, we must admit the presence of a principle that remained beyond all attack: a principle whose gradual weakening is unquestionable, since wherever the Church presents itself with a certain movement of thought and a superior degree of instruction, as among the Gnostics and the Reformed, it advances towards a rapid dissolution; but a principle that, having preserved its roots in the depths of consciences, suffices to maintain the Church, to constantly bring back to it the debris of dissidence, which would cause it to be reborn from its own ashes, like the phoenix, if it was possible that, this principle always persisting in hearts, the Church that represents its faith should cease to exist.

This principle, creator and preserver of the Church, is *Religion*.

The Revolution affirms Justice, as I was saying a moment ago; it believes in Humanity: that is why it is invincible, and why it is always advancing.

The Church believes in God: she believes in Him more than any sect; she is the purest, the most complete, the most dazzling manifestation of the divine essence, and she alone knows how to worship Him. Now, as neither the reason nor the heart of man has been able to free itself from the thought of God, which is proper to the Church, the Church, despite its agitations, has remained indestructible.

*Navis Petri non quassatur,  
Contra fluctus obfirmatur,  
Frustra ventis agitatur,  
Non timet naufragium.*

says the *reading* for the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. And the reading is correct: as long as a glimmer of religious faith remains in society, the ship of

Peter can consider itself guaranteed against shipwreck.

In all eras of history, prior to the promulgation of Christianity and since its propagation, mankind has believed, with unanimous consent, that religion was a necessary basis for society; that theological faith was the *sine qua non* of virtue, and that all justice had its source and its sanction in divinity.

The rare examples of atheistic protest that the history of philosophy has collected have only confirmed the common belief, by showing that atheists either denied Justice and morality, or gave only a false theory of them, or replaced the religious guarantee by that of an arbitrary subordination.

Now, the analysis of religious ideas and the logic of their development demonstrate that, notwithstanding the diversity of myths and rites, all cults are basically identical, that consequently there is and can only be one religion, one theology, one Church; finally, that the Catholic Church is the one whose dogmatism, discipline, hierarchy and progress best realize the principle and the theoretical type of religious society, that consequently which has the most right to the government of souls, to speak first only of that right.

To any objection of free examination, to any outright dismissal of secular authority, the Church can eternally answer, without the believing soul being able to say anything in reply:

“Do you believe in God?”

“Do you believe in the necessity of religion?”

“Do you believe, consequently, in the existence of a Church, that is to say of a society established on the very thought of God, inspired by Him, and installing itself above all as an expression of religious duty?”

“If so, you are Christian, Catholic, Apostolic, Roman; you confess Christ and all His doctrine; you receive the priesthood He established; you recognize the infallibility of the councils and of the sovereign pontiff; you place the pulpit of Saint Peter above all the tribunes and all the thrones: you are, in a word, orthodox. — If not, dare to say so: for then it is not only against the Church that you are declaring war, it is against the faith of the human race.”

Between these two alternatives, there is room only for ignorance or bad faith.

It must be confessed that, to this day, no nation has been encountered that says: I possess justice within me; I will make my own mores; I do not need the intervention of a Supreme Being for that, and I can do without religion.

The argument therefore remains; and as, from the religious point of view, the principle of all the churches, Latin Catholicism has remained the one that is most rational and complete, the Church of Rome, despite so many and such formidable defections, is the only legitimate one.

How does it happen, then, that it suffers objections from all sides?

How does it happen that, summarizing in her history and in her dogma all tradition and all religious speculation; as such, being able to claim the initiative and ownership of all that constitutes the social state, as founded on religion, she sees herself slapped by her sons, treated as a prostitute by her daughters, ridiculed by the smallest of her grandchildren, contesting even the bread she eats, even the grave she has chosen for herself?

Ah! It is because the human soul, although it calls itself religious, in reality believes only in its own will; it is because at base it considers its own Justice more exact and surer than the justice of God; it is because it aspires to govern itself, by its own virtue; it is because it is disgusted by the constitution of any Church, and because its devouring ambition is to walk in its own strength and autonomy.

Faith in Justice itself, setting aside all piety, and even contrary to all piety: this is what, since the beginning of the world, has raised up war against the Church, and animates the Revolution.

But this also explains the resistance encountered by the latter. Insofar as it represents Justice, the essence of our nature, the Revolution is everything that man in his pride values; it is what makes the life and movement of societies, and sometimes rekindles the spark at the heart of Church itself. But as it is freed from the divine idea, the Revolution is suspect; until it has somehow justified itself, its crimes weigh on it, and the world, still religious, still priestly, still hierarchical despite everything, remains hostile to it.

On the part of the peoples, divided in their thought, sympathy and distrust are therefore equally inspired by the Church, equally inspired by the Revolution. To one, religious consideration; to the other, legal consideration. But to the latter, the horror that the indictment of atheism has always inspired; to the former, the rage for liberty.

#### § IV. — The issue is between the Revolution and the Church.

A question therefore inevitably arises, which allows for no dismissal:

Are the Revolution and the Church, each representing an element of consciousness, called to a reconciliation?

Or must one be subordinated to the other?

Or will there finally be a point at which one or the other must be eclipsed?

This amounts to asking whether Religion and Justice, from the point of view of society, are not incompatible by nature, the former having to be confined within the limits of conscience, at most within the circle of the family, while the second embraces everything?

Fusion, subordination, or elimination: there is no room for a fourth hypothesis.

Now, if we found that the last of these hypotheses was the true one, it would become useless to dwell any longer on the other two. So there is every advantage in asking ourselves at first glance if theological reason is not the very negation of juridical reason, and *vice versa*; and if, consequently, while the Church accuses the Revolution of modern skepticism and immorality, it is not she who, through her theology, having confounded intelligences for a long time, has altered the sense of right in them and produced the dissolution that kills us.

What is Religion, and what is Justice? What are they to one another, and what are their respective functions in the life of peoples? This is the problem. It is important to grasp it in its universality, lest we fall into new and more

deplorable illusions.

Generally, in the enlightened world, we separate ourselves conspicuously from pure orthodoxy. We smile at revelation, as the Scriptures propose it; prophecies, miracles and all the naiveties of legend are rejected. But we like to call ourselves spiritualists, theists; we readily admit an inspiration, a permanent action of Heaven in Humanity; we bow before Providence; the propagation of the Gospel is regarded as a monument of this influence from on high; we are not far from saying with Napoleon that Christ was more than a man...

Isn't this all common sense? Is revelation and all that follows not implied in the spiritualist hypothesis, the theology determined *a priori* by the notion of God and his relations with man; and can this theology or theodicy be anything other than Catholicism?

I am simply posing here the question, of which we will find, in the course of these *Studies*, the irrefutable and completely new solution.

Now, if Christianity is nothing other than the necessary development, theoretical and practical, of the religious concept, in whatever way and to as a low degree as it may arise, is it not supremely unreasonable, not to say in flagrant bad faith, to bring back, under the pretext of religious purification or rational theology, the spirits of fifteen, twenty or thirty centuries ago and present this retrogression to them as progress?

A number of these mystics, apparently incapable of analyzing the principle of their faith and following its consequences, declared themselves against divine right, affirmed the Revolution, calling themselves at the same time followers of a *Natural Religion*, which, according to them, would be known only through the light of the reason, and would not require external worship or priesthood.

But do not all these ideas of God, of Heaven or of the future life, of revelation, of sacraments, of Church, of worship, of priesthood, form, in human understanding as in the practice of nations, an unbreakable chain? And if so, is it not clear that the first link in this chain is as repugnant to the Revolution and to Justice as the last? The proof is that there are, in an embryonic state, who knows how many churches ready to seize the succession from Catholicism, who knows how many popes awaiting the death of Pius IX to take his tiara!

It is especially fashionable to protest against the fundamental dogma of the fall, against hell and the devil, and to do so by virtue of a so-called philosophical theism, of a devotion made up entirely of inner feeling. Our poets sing of the end of Satan while blessing God!

Do not all these oppositions give rise to one another from the same Absolute? Is not the dogma of original sin the corollary of the ideas of Religion and Providence, identical and adequate to the psychological principle that makes Justice in us an impression of Divinity, from which it follows that, for revolutionary reason, God and Devil are the same thing?

We grant that Justice is obligatory, even without hope of remuneration here below. But we do not give up the hope of an indemnity in a *better world*; so that this so-called *Duty* is basically only a credit that we give to the Sovereign Distributor: what hypocrisy!

We advocate reason, but maintain an even higher esteem for faith, provided,



of course, that this faith has nothing in common with that of the priests. We praise Justice, but we put love above it. Our people of letters, women and men, summarize the social philosophy in three words: *Believe, Love, Labor*. As for me, I affirm labor. But I have all sorts of reservations about love and I reject faith. Love, when it is not a slave to right, is the poison of souls and the devastator of society. As for faith, I repeat, there is none other than that which engendered the Church.

Weary of these disputes, some take a heroic stand: that is to say that there is no other religion than morality; that spiritualism, theism, etc., all of that is useless, and that what matters is to be an honest man.

Good for them! I like this talk, and I draw an excellent omen from it. But then tell us what is morality, what is right, and how it applies to the various relationships of life; show where its corruption comes from; prove above all, to these people infatuated with their immortality, that Justice is sufficient unto itself and that if Justice is sufficient, the present life is also sufficient and does not need an extension into eternity.

It is thus that by a higher criticism we are led to recognize, on the one hand, that outside the Church, Christian and Catholic, there is neither God, nor theology, nor religion, nor faith: there, as in logic, morality and languages, the unity of the human spirit bursts forth; — on the other hand, we are led to recognize that society must be founded on pure Justice, the Practical Reason of the human race, the analysis and experience of which agree in demonstrating its incompatibility, in the social order, with the conception of a supernatural world, with Religion.

Hence this decisive conclusion:

That all the previous history of mankind, dominated by the religious principle, forms a clearly characterized period, in which all the political and economic constitutions of the peoples, their legislation and their morals, despite innumerable varieties, are basically similar, amounting to the negation of the rights of man and of the citizen; — and that the French Revolution, making the juridical principle prevail, opens a new period, an entirely contrary order of things, of which it is now a question for us of determining the parts.

Shall I go, then, at this hour, to take up again an exhausted polemic over the choice of a religion; to argue with the sects; to quibble with the Church, the mistress of all of them, over her dogmas and her mysteries; to challenge the authenticity of her Scriptures, remake her history and reveal her origins, her encroachments and her borrowings; to explain these myths, to oppose to her genesis, to her deluge, to her theophanies, astronomy, geology, physics, chronology, philology and political economy, the entire encyclopedia of human knowledge; then to mock her worship, blame her discipline, display her shame, recall her abasement and her revenge?

Shall I ask her to account for her vicariate, as if I cared about this divine ministry; shall I say that she has failed the inspirations of the Most High, as if I were instituting myself as a prophet in her place; shall I pretend, with the author of *Terre et Ciel*, that the time is right for a renewal of theology, that the need is felt everywhere, and on this pious pretext, start theologizing in competition with

the episcopate?

No, no, I'm not one to give in to such whims.

I would never have contested the authority of the Church, if, like so many others who make themselves its competitors, I admitted the necessity of a supernatural guarantee for Justice. I wouldn't have this strange presumption, assuming that the idea of God is indispensable to morality, to believe myself more capable than the Church, more capable than the human race, which has labored there for more than sixty centuries, of deducing in theory and realizing in practice such an idea. I would have bowed before such an ancient faith, the fruit of the most learned and the longest elaboration of which the human mind has given the example; I would not have admitted for a moment that insoluble difficulties in the order of science retained the slightest value when it came to my faith; I would have thought that this was precisely what made up the mystery of my religion, and, for having drawn a few metaphysical threads, I would not have thought myself a revelator. Above all, I would have feared to shake in others, by imprudent attacks, a guarantee that I myself would have declared necessary.

This is what, in the logic of my hypothesis, I would never have done, all the less since, after all, as I said just now, such a controversy, calculated to disrupt consciences, could not lead to a solution.

So let us say it again: the Church, invincible in its Absolute, has succumbed each time the debate has been brought onto the field of reason. But, since the Absolute has never been radically eliminated, the Church persists, even if that means signing pragmatic sanctions and concordats, simulating an agreement between reason and faith, adapting its biblical texts to the data of science, putting a little more reserve in its morals and a semblance of tolerance in its government.

Like the reed in the fable, *it bends and does not break*. The way its inept rivals lead it, it would endure, always bending, another eighteen centuries. In the face of political power, it bends and it endures; in the face of philosophy, it bends and it endures; in the face of science, it bends and it endures; in the face of the Reformation, it bends and it endures. And it will endure as long as it is not attacked in its stronghold, as long as the Revolution, raising the debate higher, does not rid Justice of this divine sanction that hobbles it and of which the Church is the supreme representative.

#### §. V. — Overview of this work.

The reader now knows the plan of this work.

The question for me is quite different from that posed by the mystics. Instead of seeking what is, for the justification and happiness of humanity, the best of religions, I ask myself if Justice is possible with any religion. And as Justice has never been exercised or even conceived in its purity and plenitude, as it has been constantly mixed, penetrated by theological speculation, I ask again, after having noted how right is corrupted and perishes through its union with faith, what would become of it, abandoned to itself, what would society be like if, by an effort of conscience, it decided to set aside the practice of its religious conceptions, and

to follow Justice alone?

So I am not establishing the controversy on the basis of dogma. I set dogma aside and do not quibble over articles of faith. It may be that all that is said about the essence of God and about the supernatural world is true. What can I know with any certainty? Nothing. On what basis can I deny it? Again, there is none. It may be that deep in my heart beats a secret desire for survival, testimony to an ulterior destiny: I will not take the trouble to either verify or contest it. I settle down next to belief and allow it all its fantasies until further notice. My criticism refuses to enter the regions of the absolute.

What I challenge in belief is that it comes, with its hypotheses, to support the commandment of practical, experimental and positive reason, the revelations of which are given to me directly in myself and by the testimony of my fellow men; reason, as such, endowed with a certainty and a reality that no theology can reach; reason finally that is myself, which I cannot invalidate without dishonor or abdicate without suicide.

If then, after examination, it happens that belief, which is presented to me as the indispensable pledge of Justice, instead of assuring it, compromises it; if, by a necessary consequence, the Church, organ of religious thought, was at the same time the agent of our temptation; if such were the principle of all human decadence and retrogradation; if it was through this that Justice, vitiated, has remained doubtful to us until this day: then, without tolerating a perfidious belief any further, I would have the right and the duty to protest against a dishonest guarantee, to take up, against the Church and against God himself, the cause of Justice, and to establish myself as its guarantor and father.

Anyone who has studied these questions will recognize that in this I am only applying the precepts of the *purest orthodoxy*. It is the doctrine of the saints that damnation should be preferred to sin, if, by some chance, God imposed the option on us.<sup>1</sup> Now, what for theology is only a casuistical fiction, has become, through the Revolution, a factual truth. The transcendent Being, conceived and worshiped as the author and support of Justice, is the very negation of Justice; religion and morality, which the consent of the people has made sisters, are heterogeneous and incompatible. It is necessary to choose between the fear of God and the fear of evil, between the risk of damnation and the risk of improbity: that is my thesis.

A veil of mystery is still spread over all the things of moral life. To lift this veil will be to demonstrate the genius of the Revolution and hasten the fulfillment of destinies.

---

<sup>1</sup> The worst part of damnation is the hatred of God. We know the words of Saint Thérèse about Satan: *The wretch, he does not love*. Now, the love of God is the same thing as the love of moral good and beauty, of which God is the living and eternal image. Whence it follows that it would be better to suffer damnation, that is to say the loss of God and the tortures of hell, than to have deserved them by sin. This in no way contradicts the doctrine of the theologians, reported below, *First Study*, Chapter IV, on the exclusively divine origin and nature of Justice. It only follows that of two things that, according to theologians, come to us from God, Justice and beatitude, the first, admitting that they can be separated, is the more excellent.

What is *Justice*, or as others say, *right* and *duty*? Is it a simple abstraction, an idea, a relation, abstractly conceived, like the general laws of nature and of the mind? First of all, what is this idea? How have we conceived it? How does it impose obligations on the conscience?

What is *conscience* itself? A prejudice? But a prejudice supposes a fact that determines it... A faculty? Where does it reside? What is its function? What is its mode of exercise? Where is its organism?

What is *equality*? We revolve around this word, we pronounce it with our lips: in reality we don't want it. The poor don't care, the rich hate it, democracy denies it, no one believes it. — Is equality by nature or against nature? If equality is by nature, it is also by right; how then to explain the inequality? If it is against nature, in other words, if it is inequality that is natural, then what does Justice mean?

What is *government* among men? What is the *state* and the reason of *state*? If the reason of state is in conformity with Justice, of what use is it? If it is an exception to Justice, what is a Justice subject to so many exceptions? Is the political order the same as the economic order? Do they blend into each other? How and when? Formidable questions that academic science would be careful not to raise.

What is *liberty*? Is it also a prejudice, or more simply, as modern philosophy explains it, a way of conceiving the organic life in us, the fatality of nature and of the mind? Would there be liberty, as some maintain, only in communities; and would liberty be reduced, for the man and the citizen, to living under a regular, legal and legitimate state regime?

What is *progress*? An organic or free evolution? If progress is only the evolution of the forces of humanity, it is pure fatalism: there is no progress, and in this case how are we to explain so many and such terrible declines? If, on the contrary, progress is the work of liberty, how does it accord with the nature of our organism, which is fatal? Are we in progress, at this hour, or in decadence?

What is *marriage*? Of what does this union consist, which all peoples distinguish from amorous union? The Church, which claims its consecration, admits that it has not yet understood it. Is it a simple legal *concubinage*? Should it be classified among the civil or commercial societies? What is *paternity*? What is *family*?... Our moralists, who preach the domestic virtues to us, have forgotten to give us the definitions of all these things.

What is *love* in the social life of man? What is it worth? What does it deserve? How does it command us to exercise it with Justice?

What is *woman*, in the family and in society, and why is there this distinction between the sexes among persons? Are women equal to men or not? In the first case, what good is this duplication? In the second, what is it for? Does woman, apart from motherhood, have a meaning, a proper function in the moral world? Does she count there, and for how much?

What is *labor*? What is *property*? What is the *ideal*? What is *tolerance*? What is *punishment*?... What do all these things have in common with Justice?

What is *death*? It causes us enough trouble for us to know something about it. Will we be forever told that it is the cessation of the phenomena that constitute

life, as life is the set of phenomena that prevent death? Or, with the priests, that it is the door of eternity? Does death cut Justice, as it cuts the thread of existence?

What is meant by *moral sanction*? Is it within humanity or outside humanity? What difficulties in the first case! What doubts in the second!

What is *religion*? What is *prayer*? What is *God*? Is religion eternal or transitory like its forms? Are we moving towards a religious transformation or towards a resorption of religion by Justice? Admitting that religion was only a preparatory form of civilization, it still remains to be said what was its role, function and mandate; and as nothing happens in social life that does not have its roots in the entrails of humanity, we must also say what religion must be reduced to, and what will be the mode of exercise of this faculty in subsequent ages.

Is there a *system of society*, as all ancient and modern utopians and legislators have understood it? What is this system? How are we to recognize it, to demonstrate it? Is there no system? What then is social order? And when the social system, in all its manifestations and evolutions, is once explained by the principle that is immanent to it, a sovereign, immediate, synthetic principle, both real and formal, a power and an idea, the negation of which implies the supreme contradiction, what will be the influence of this legal demonstration on the general philosophy? Does it contain moral certainty; does it give speculative certainty; would the science of right become the key to the science of nature, and should JUSTICE, finally, be considered as the sovereign reason and reality, the *archeus*, the God who governs the world of consciousness, the world of the spirit and the world of things?

It is a grand undertaking, to extract from the mass of human facts the principles that govern them, to clarify a dozen notions that the past has bequeathed to us without understanding them, and for which we fight as our fathers fought!

In summary :

What is the fundamental, organic, regulating, sovereign principle of societies; the principle that, subordinating all others, governs, protects, represses and punishes the rebellious elements and, if need be, demands their elimination? Is it religion, the ideal, or interest? Is it love, force, necessity or hygiene? There are systems and schools for all these affirmations.

This principle, in my opinion, is Justice.

What is Justice? — The very essence of humanity.

What has it been since the beginning of the world? — Almost nothing.

What should it be? — Everything.

I will say little about the execution of this book, a simple commentary, as you can see, on the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, a kind of framework for a philosophy of the Revolution.

If it is true that Justice is innate in the heart of man, it does not follow that its laws were determined from the outset in the human mind with clarity, and for all categories of application: it is only little by little that we acquire the knowledge of them, and their formula is the prize of a long labor.

The definition of Justice, obtained by an evolution of six or eight thousand years, opens the second age of civilization: the Revolution is its prologue.

Now, just as the physical sciences cannot be built *a priori* on pure notions, but require the observation of facts, likewise the science of Justice and mores cannot emerge from a dialectical deduction of notions: it must be drawn from the phenomenality that these notions engender, as any physical law emerges from the series of phenomena that express it.

Thus, I am not dogmatizing; I observe, I describe and I compare. I am not going to look for the formulas of right in the fantastic soundings of an illusory psychology; I demand them from the positive manifestations of humanity.

This way of dealing with ethics, when everyone starts it with Jupiter, is the greatest originality of my work. The honor goes to natural philosophy, which is the philosophy of common sense.

By this method, the whole secret of which consists in following history, we can explain the aberrations of the moral sense among the ancients, the growing superiority of the moderns, the nature and role of the religious principle, and the longstanding powerlessness of philosophers, who are fortunate when they do not put their ideology at the service of the reigning interests or of their own secret ambitions, to establish the science of mores on solid bases.

I admit, moreover, that I have not had to incur great scholarly expense. The story has been extensively, deeply researched; the materials are uncovered, and I have made it a rule to give preference to the most authentic. I believed that my work, whatever care I took in it, could only be considered an appeal; that to write the Bible of the Revolution nothing less than a vast concourse of minds was needed, beginning afresh at new expense the examination of antiquity, the Middle Ages and modern times. I concluded that my only care should be to set my milestones well, sure that in the way in which they would be set and their results indicated, history, revealing itself in a new light, would show, as in a panorama, the thought, the power and all the riches of the Revolution.

Perhaps I will be reproached for not having kept to the facts of history, supported by the evidence of philology and literature, and for having given in my dissertations a certain place to anecdote. — I thought that with the science of mores becoming entirely experimental, experimentation should exclude nothing, lest it mutilate itself and fall short of the truth. Every act of public and domestic, collective and individual life is in my eyes the domain of science; and this is seldom the least instructive part.

I have not been as brief as I would have liked: the time has not come for the Revolution to make *Etrennes mignonnes* [almanacs] and catechisms. What is needed by a cause threatened in its very existence are demonstrations, facts, science. All of this takes time and space. Let us first philosophize with the breadth that unrecognized truth requires: afterwards, the abbreviators may have their say.

I have given these *Studies* the form of an epistle or rather of a lecture, which is the Greek homily, because, admitting all tones and all styles, it responds better than any other to the variety of my subject, at the same time as it excludes pedantry, declamation and commonplace.

I address them, these *Studies*, to an archbishop: first, because the part that this archbishop played in a so-called biography of my person was the occasion that made me undertake them; then, because the respect for such a serious character is a guarantee to me that, while making use of the greatest freedom of discussion, nothing offensive to the people or outrageous for institutions will escape my pen.

We are treated willingly, my co-religionists and I, as atheists; thanks to this epithet, we are, so to speak, placed outside justice and morals.

Although I am not terribly frightened by the indictment of atheism, I cannot, however, allow it to degenerate into calumny and proscription. I have been thinking about God for as long as I have been alive, and do not recognize in anyone a greater right than mine to talk about the subject. I have thought about it especially from the point of view that I am dealing with today: the reader will judge in what ways this meditation has gone well for me.

If sometimes I happen to talk about myself, the reason will not escape anyone. The facts of my life are less than nothing, and I can defy the whole industry of biographers to squeeze out of my insignificant existence either praise or blame. But I have had the signal honor of being taken as a type. A whole class of citizens are attacked in my person; a tendency is stigmatized; an order of ideas and a category of interests are proscribed. I have the right to follow my adversaries onto the terrain it has pleased them to choose, even in their licenses.

We don't know what will come of these masses created by the Revolution. We imagine that all their eloquence is exhausted in the vote. It is up to me, more than anyone else, to serve as their interpreter. What the people would think if, by a sudden illumination, they could at a glance embrace the philosophical-politico-theological work of forty centuries, what their conscience would experience, what their reason would conclude: these are things that I can say. I have had the rare advantage, if it is one, of being born of the people, of learning what made the people what they are today, and of remaining one of the people. If my ideas are not new, they at least smell of the soil from which they have sprung.

M. Granier de Cassagnac has written somewhere: *Socialism must be suppressed...* Others flatter themselves that they have crushed it...

As for me, the last to come and the most mistreated of this great movement which, rightly or wrongly, has been called *Socialism*, and which is only the development of the Revolution, I do not ask for the suppression or the crushing of anyone. Let the discussion be free and let my adversaries defend themselves: that's all I want. I make war on old ideas, not on old men.

I thought, in 1848, that after so many catastrophes, all those formulas of the ancient antagonism, by which Aristotle and Machiavelli had not been fooled—monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, bourgeoisie, proletariat, etc.—should no longer have more than a transitional value; that the constitution of power mattered little, provided that it passed quickly, after having created the economic order; that in the spirit of the new France, politics should be eclipsed like worship and make way for justice, and that granting the same importance as before to theological reason and the reason of state was to mislead the Revolution and regress.

In the days of turmoil, I argued this thesis energetically, trading criticism for criticism, sarcasm for sarcasm. I have done no worse than Voltaire, whose battle cry so many people, who were silent then, repeat in a low voice today.

Now the period of demolition is over. The country knows that it no longer believes in anything: 1848 will at least have had the merit of making it see this fact. Are we up to the task, men of the Revolution, of making it believe in something? I dare to hope so. If, after five years of silence, I take up the pen again, it is certainly not to wage war against ghosts toward whom the common sense of the public is enough to do justice. Peace to the dying, respect to the dead!

The Revolution had passed into the status of a myth. I come, the first, to present its exegesis.

I don't know if this Revolution, which began gloriously in France, will continue in France. Sixty years of retrograde madness have aged us so much; we have been so thoroughly purged of all liberal ferment that doubt about our right to the hegemony of nations is permitted.

Whatever may become of our weary race, however, posterity will recognize that the third age of humanity has its point of departure in the French Revolution; that the understanding of the new law has been given to some of us in its fullness; that practice has not completely failed us either; and that to succumb in this sublime childbirth was not, after all, without glory.

At this hour, the Revolution is defined: it therefore lives. The remainder no longer thinks. Will the being who lives and who thinks be suppressed by the corpse?



# FIRST STUDY.

## POSITION OF THE PROBLEM OF JUSTICE.



TO HIS EMINENCE

MONSEIGNEUR LE CARDINAL MATTHIEU,  
ARCHBISHOP OF BESANÇON.

MONSIGNOR,

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, Monsignor, 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 correctional police?

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 order. 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*, to flout me in the face of a 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 in 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 him entirely. Outside of 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 *latría* 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! It belongs to humanity; it is the fruit of its loins. To whom would it 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, and 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: *Recepti 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 mores 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 conscience, 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 is derived 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 juridical 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 that 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 decided. 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 egoism, 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 hierarchy, 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 an *engrenage* 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 imagines 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 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 liberty 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 is 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 juridical 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 rejects 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 own 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, while 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 may become 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 one 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 egoism, 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 his expectation, at least diminishes his 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 egoism; 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 egoism, 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 the 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, because its culture has been neglected, because 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 egoism: 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 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 egoism; 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.

XVI. — *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 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 regarding 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 egoism — 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 that 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 conscience.

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, labor and ideas, man, circumscribed in his egoism, limited to animal life, 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 conscience.

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 conscience, 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 in which the 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 egoism 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 egoism 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? What 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 yet, 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, she whom 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 *bascule* 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, starting afresh, 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 liberty. 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 opuscule 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 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 own 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 ultramontanism, 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.<sup>1</sup>) Later, we will see. And that is what politics is...

---

<sup>1</sup> Probably January 31, 1860. — SW

## 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 its 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 pursue 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 *Le Pape et le Congrès*; 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 is 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.



OF JUSTICE IN THE REVOLUTION  
AND IN THE CHURCH.

SECOND STUDY.

PERSONS.



CHAPTER ONE.

Principle of personal dignity.

MONSIGNOR,

Since it was on the occasion of a personal event that I conceived the idea for my book, allow me first of all to return to this event, to which you are no stranger, and to ask you a question. The particular, says logic, reproduces the general; the fact is necessarily the expression of the idea. Starting from a fact, we will arrive that much more surely at the law, while the opposite would be impossible. Such is not, I agree, the method of the partisans of revelation, but it is that of common sense and I am not exactly writing a theological treatise.

I. — I will therefore ask you, Monsignor, you who know the written and the unwritten law, the sacred and the profane, by what cause, under the impression of what influence, by virtue of what right, a man whom I had never seen meddles in my business, publishing, while I am still living, my biography, without my consent and against my stated will?

When M. de Mirecourt sent his secretary to me to ask me for details of my private life, I referred him to the registers of civil state, to the *Journal de la Librairie* and the periodical sheets. When M. de Mirecourt, provided with your epistle, honored me with his visit, I urged him to leave me alone, and even to quit his profession of biographer. Without any means of action against him, what more could I do?

But morality, which governs the Christian as well as the socialist, morality, as you know, Monsignor, extends further than the guarantees of the Code. So I

ask you once again how, even setting aside questions of defamation, can a biographer meddle with my person with impunity? This makes you smile, *episcopo*, whose job is to monitor, inspect, report and censor your fellows. Listen to for me a moment, and you won't laugh so much.

Property is inviolable. Under no pretext is it permitted to lay your hand on it, to use it for anything, to make any change in it, to diminish it, let alone to seize it, without the permission of the proprietor. Articles 675-680 of the Civil Code do not even allow us to look at it; *viewing* the neighbor's property is subject to strict conditions, which render its use quite innocent. The violation of respect for property gives rise to actions that can range, depending on the seriousness of the case, from simple compensation to the *peines afflictives et infamantes*, and even to death.

This is what the civil legislator has done for property, for the *possessions* of man. And the divine legislator went even further: he forbade the desire for it; he made this covetousness a sin that can become mortal: *Non concupisces*.

But when it is a question of a man's *self*, we do not concern ourselves so closely. It is handed over to the inspection of the first comer, abandoned to the indiscretion of biographers, to the exploitation of libelers, to the insults of zealots, armed with the sword of speech and the stiletto of writing, for the defense of religion and order. All license is granted to them to seize this *self*, to do with it as they see fit, to look deeply into it, to settle there, to torture, deceive, vilify it, excluding certain excesses that the magistrate, upon the complaint of the patient, reserves the right to judge.

Where does this difference come from?

The existence of every man in society is divided into two parts, public life and private life, although it is true that they are closely connected.

The first, I grant you, is in the public domain; this follows from the definition. Attack public life, provided the defense is free. I have no objection. But private life, to whom does it belong? How can my intimate secrets, my habits, which will always be ridiculous or base in some ways, be divulged? How can this disclosure become a speculation? How can my soul serve as salvage for an entrepreneur in libel or be sold at auction, like a slave? Even when these biographies, illustrations or charges, contain nothing slanderous, they are indecent: it is not good for the liberty and the honor of a people if the citizens, staging the intimacy of their life, treat each other like *valets de comédie* and street acrobats. Do you want to prepare a country for bondage? Make people despise each other, and destroy respect... Who can justify such a license? You must know it, Monsignor, you who sometimes lend a hand to such expeditions?

Let a police officer arrest me at any hour of the day or night at my domicile, on the basis of a secret denunciation, on suspicion, without the declaration of an crime; let me then be thrown into Mazas; let me be detained preventively for weeks, months, in a cell which, according to the principles of penal law, should at most only be open to the condemned person; let me then be judged according to the notes of an invisible agent, with whom I will not be confronted; or, in order to go even faster, let them send me without judgment, clandestinely, to Cayenne or Lambessa: it is a violence that falls only on the body, which explains,

without justifying it, the state of social war in which we find ourselves and the dictatorship that is its consequence.

But private life, conscience in its intimate, unfathomable manifestations, what reason of state can authorize its violation? Ah! If you have taken *habeas corpus* from us, at least leave us *habeas animam*. After all, this arbitrariness exercised on our flesh, testimony to the power of a principle, honors us; who authorizes you to add infamy to it?

II. — I therefore begin by laying down this principle, which I call the *principle of personal dignity*, as the foundation of the science of morals: Respect yourself. (A)

This principle established, I say that it has the consequence of making us respect the dignity of others as much as our own. Charity only comes later, very much later: for we are not free to love, whereas we are always free to respect, and dignity, as we will see below, is Justice.

Now, for anyone who considers our habit of license, our taste for calumny, our police regime, our spirit of insolidarity, our disregard for the public good, our inclinations as serfs and lackeys, it is obvious that respect for individual dignity is obliterated in our souls: I would only require this fact alone to conclude that our society has no mores.

I therefore generalize my question, and, without occupying myself further with what concerns me, I ask: How is the respect for individual dignity—which, according to the definition that we have given of mores and the prejudice that we have for Justice, should be the cornerstone of society—so weakened in the consciousness of our nation?

For it is no longer a question here of an exceptional sacrifice, demanded by the public safety: it is a system of general disrepute, which, compromising the dignity of all citizens, compromises that of the entire nation. (A)

Shall I tell you my whole thought, Monsignor? It is difficult for you to see this explanation that I am asking of you: you wear it on your forehead, between your two eyes. So it's up to me to read it to you. Refute me, if you can; it is in your most precious interest: for, if you will allow me this metaphor, which has nothing to do with your person, I shall strike the shepherd, as the Scripture says, and mind the herd!

The fact that I denounce has its principle in the notion of that Invisible, which mysticism shows us positioned behind consciousness, prompting it with its rights and duties, and which the imagination of the first peoples transformed first of all into an external subject, animal, sun or heaven, author and guardian of the law, worshiped under the name of God, which emerged in a time of misfortune, then drew from this transcendental concept all the consequences with which it was pregnant; and it is to its influence that we owe the lack of dignity that has, for ten years, distinguished French society.

*In medias res*, as Horace said. I have posed the question on the basis of a fact: I will demonstrate it through history.

## CHAPTER II.

### Identity of personal dignity and right among the ancients: subordination of the religious idea.

III. — If we carefully study the system of social institutions among the ancients, we soon realize that this system rested entirely on two ideas subordinated to one another: Justice, which concerned the human subject, deriving from it alone, formulated and organized for it alone; and *Religion*, relating to the supernatural being, supposed author of the laws and juridical formulas, according to the mystical suggestion of the conscience.

Among the Greco-Latin races, which always placed religious or sacerdotal power after political or judicial power, without however separating them in a radical manner, Right was the same thing as dignity or personal prerogative; Religion was the guarantee, the surety, so to speak, furnished by the gods, of this same prerogative, of which the law, emanating from themselves, was only the determination. Dignity, like the will and liberty, being indefinite by its nature, Religion intervened with its precepts to impose conditions and limits.

Thus Right, the essential thing for society, took precedence over worship, which served as its prop. The same subordination was observed between the magistrate, organ of justice responsible for stating the law, *juri dicundo*, according to the consecrated formula, and the priest, minister or herald of the divine guarantee, responsible for discovering the sign of it in the flight of birds and the entrails of the victims.

The Latin language provides a vivid testimony to the nature of these ideas, or let us say rather of these powers and their subordination.

Right, in Latin *jus*, is, according to the definition of the authors, that which is proper to or relates to each person, *jus est suum cuique tribuere*. It is, in each individual, taken as the center of action, the independent and sovereign subject of inherence, what constitutes the whole of their dignity, either as a faculty, attribution, prerogative, inclination or as a means of action and enjoyment, appanage or property.

This is made clear by the series of terms formed from the root *ju*, of which *jus*, *juris* is the substantification: *jugis*, *jugum*, *jungere*, *juger*, *juvare*, *jubere*, contracted from *jushabere*, *juxtà*, etc. In all these words, the element *ju* expresses adequacy, connectedness, continuity, inherence, juxtaposition, congruence, respectability, conformity, property, attribution, correctness. It is absurd to derive *jus*, from *Jous*, *Jovis*, the same as *Zeus* or *dies*, *diù*, *djoù*, as if right were the thought of Jupiter (why not of Juno?), and even more absurd to make *Jovis* come from *Jehovah*.

In French, as in Latin, we say that a thing is *juste*, that it suits us, that it joins us, when it adapts precisely to another for which it is made. And this seems to me to be the original meaning of the German *recht*, later translated by *directum*, from which we have made *droit*. *Recht* is what goes straight, *rectà*, as Molière

says in *Pourceaugnac*:

Votre fait  
Est clair et net,  
Et tout le droit  
Conclut tout DROIT.

Hence our word *droiture* (*uprightness*), which squares so well with *allures*, *tournures* and *mesures* (*paces*, *turns* and *measures*), literal translations of the words by which Greek and Latin express mores. It is abusing the metaphor to take the text of similar expressions to define the Law, as Mr. Oudot did, as the DIRECTION of liberty by intelligence.

To finish with the etymology of *jus*, I will observe that this word is the genus of which the pronouns *meum*, *tuum*, *suum*, are the species; that is to say, it indicates what is characteristic of man, without designation of persons; what the definition reported above suggests: *Jus est suum cuique tribuere*.

From the essentially subjective notion of *droit* (*right*), *Jus*, derives that of Justice, *Justitia*, defined by Ulpian: *Justitia est constans et perpetua voluntas jus suum cuique tribuendi*, Justice is a constant and sustained disposition to render to each what belongs to them; and better still by Cicero (*De Inventione*, lib. II, n. 53): *Justitia est animi habitus, communi utilitate comparatâ, suam cuique tribuens dignitatem*, Justice is a disposition of the heart by which, subject to the general interest, we recognize each person's dignity.

This Latin conception of Right, Law and Justice leaves no room for ambiguity: the rather ridiculous question, whether right comes from duty or duty from right, cannot arise there; the language opposes it. The right for each one is what his nature supposes, what his existence and his dignity demand; Justice is the recognition by each of this right, which moreover determines and sanctions religion, the true mother of the Law. Right is inherent in man, like the attribute in the subject, independent of any social constitution. The law only declares it, and, in the name of religion, commands respect for it. Such is the Roman conception; it is basically that of all peoples.

IV. — Thus, by its origin and its basis, Right is individualistic, egoistic. The idea of mutuality is not yet found there: it is replaced by divine command. Respect for the rights of others, according to this naive theory, does not come to me from right itself, that is to say, from the same source as the feeling of my dignity; it comes from another cause. In reality, man knows only one right, which is his own; he only suspects rights in others thanks to religion. Personality is predominant here; who would be surprised? Man had known society and the gods for too little time to have been able to forget himself; he understood only his right, his own dignity, two terms synonymous for him, as Cicero's definition shows, and as we see by the comparison of the radicals, *δίκη*, justice, *decus*, honor, *dignitas*, dignity.

Under these conditions, can we say that Justice exists?

Is it of Justice, this false sentiment, inspired by the fear of the gods and in the common interest, *communi utilitate comparatâ*, of respect for the rights of

others as well as for one's own?

It is certainly not nothing, this sanction from a higher power, taken as witness and as guarantor of the rights of each, protector of the dignity of all, as long as it is kept within the limits set by the law, that is that is to say, by the sacred words or formulas (*lex* from *lego*, I speak.) And we can already suspect that the contemplation of the supernatural betrays something natural that has not yet shown itself, but will doubtless appear gradually with the education of souls and the progress of humanity.

But whatever hope we conceive of it for the future, religion, symbol of Justice, is not Justice. It stands in for it... What am I saying? It supplants it, it implies its negation, since it replaces it; and the day will come when, criticism having blown upon faith, religion will be set aside, Justice will be lost, and morals and society with it.

But let's not anticipate events.

Among all peoples, therefore, Right arises, at the beginning, as personal dignity, placed under the aegis of religion; and Justice is the respect of this Right. It is thus that travelers have found it among the savages of Oceania. The *taboo* is the public consecration of persons and objects that we want to preserve from any attack by freeing them from the risk of war and from common use. In a superstition of cannibals, we discover the origin of Justice and the laws.

What is this religion now? Allow me one more etymology: it is in words that is found the reason for morals, the secret of beliefs and the key to history.

V.—The word *religion*, about which so much nonsense has been spouted and is still spouted, does not signify bond or connection, as the etymologists believed at first sight, who hastened to make religion synonymous with sociability. *Religio*, *religare*, to link, this homonym is all the rage. Since December 2, apparently the date of our religious rebirth, I have encountered it more than thirty times. It has become, for many people without religion, a decisive argument in favor of a new religion or a *religation*. But, I repeat, neither does the word religion mean bond, nor is the thing it expresses the union or the communion of souls, although religion is hardly conceivable without a common faith and a rallying sign. The ancients were hardly *socialist*. Religion, although it recommended justice, sometimes even charity, was in no way an inspiration for philanthropy in them; and it is with little intelligence that the new mystics, in order to get their social theories across, rehash an idea that never existed except in their brains, and which just proves that religion is dead, the lack of understanding of the word indicating the death of the idea.

*Religio*, or *relligio*, whose radical *lig* reappears in *p-lic-are*, *f-lec-tere*, *supp-lic-are*, to bend, to bow, and by derivation, to bind, is an old word that means inclination of the body, bowing, groveling, genuflection. It was used exclusively to designate man's homage to divine authority. Latin authors never take it in any other sense. As the question deserves to be clarified, I will quote a few texts.

*Relligio deorum* is a common expression, which obviously does not signify the association or the republic of the gods, with which men were hardly concerned, but rather the respect of the gods, which, for the reasons I have given, mattered



to them much more.

When the word *religio* is used alone, the genitive *deorum* is always implied, as in this line:

*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum !*  
To so much evil has religion counseled!

As the poet is speaking of a religious war and the massacres that accompanied it, it is clear that religion cannot be understood here as the social bond; it indicates the fanaticism for the divinity.

For the same reason, *religio hominum*, religion of men, is not said, is found nowhere: it is a contradiction.

Caesar, *The Gallic War*, book VI. n. 16, writes: *Natio est omnis Gallorum admodum dedita religionibus*; "The whole nation of the Gauls is excessively devoted to religions." And as an example, he cites human sacrifices, which have nothing to do with the social principle.

Cicero, *Pro Cluentio*, n. 194: *Mentes deorum possunt placari pietate, et religione, et precibus justis*; "The anger of the gods can be appeased by piety, religion and humble prayers." And the Romans were not lacking in those things. In all the events, fortunate or unfortunate, that interested the republic to a high degree, the senate ordered bowing, *supplications*: this is the official word, synonymous with *religiones*. The *Te Deums* were not invented today .

It is according to this meaning of the word *religio* that Cicero, *De Leg.*, n. 26, justifies against the Magi disciples of Zoroaster the custom of erecting temples to the divinity:

"We know very well," he said, "that the spirit of God is everywhere, *ubicumque diffusum*; but we believe, we Greeks and Latins, that this custom adds to our piety and imposes a salutary respect, *religionem utilem*, on the cities. For, as it has been said with such high reason, piety and religion towards the gods have all the more influence on our souls the closer we contemplate their simulacra."

Indeed, we only greet people we can see: the word of Pythagoras is very wise.

Virgile, *Aeneid.*, bk. ii, v. 188:

Neu populum antiquâ sub religione tueri.

The wooden horse, says Sinon, having been built by the order of Calchas to replace the Palladium, the Greeks gave it this gigantic dimension so that it could not be introduced into the city and protect the people, as before, under its ancient religion. The religion of the symbol replaces the religion of the deity.

*Ibid.*, v. 715: Aeneas arranges to meet his companions under an old cypress, respected by the religion of the ancestors:

Antiqua cupressus  
Religione patrum multos servata per annos.

*Ibid.*, lib. viii, v. 349: From the time of Evander, the religion of the Capitol made the peasants fearful:

Jam tum religio pavidos terrebat agrestes.

It is impossible to see in all these passages the slightest idea of a social bond.

*Ibid*, bk. XII, v. 176-193: Oath of Aeneas, before fighting Turnus. He invokes all known and unknown gods, *every religion of the air* and every divinity of the ocean:

Quæque ætheris alti  
Relligio, et quæ cæruleo sunt numina ponto.

The synonymy established in this verse between *numen* and *relligio* proves what I am saying, that this last word only meant the gods, whose respectability it marked especially and par excellence. We said to the gods, when speaking to them: *Vestra Relligio*, as we say to a prince: Your Majesty.

What is Aeneas himself? Above all, a religious hero, the worthy author of the Roman people, the worthy ancestor of the Caesars, *pius Aeneas*. The whole *Aeneid* is the development of this idea, on which the policy of Augustus and the constitution of Rome is the commentary. M. Granier de Cassagnac (*Histoire des classes ouvrières*) is mistaken in the interpretation he gives of the word *pius*, and the passages he cites suffice to convince him. *Pius* is a superlative of *religiosus*; it means respectful even to devotion, to sacrifice. Hence the verb *piare*, for which we have *expier* (to expiate.) May Turnus perish, says Juno in the tenth book of the *Aeneid*, and may his devoted blood satisfy the vengeance of the Trojans:

Teucrisque pio det sanguine pœnas,

It is a question of a devotion like that of Curtius. This is why the word *pius*, *pietas*, is used to express filial affection and paternal tenderness. In paternity, says Tertullian, what is sweetest is not authority, it is piety: *Gratius est nomen pietatis quàm potestatis*. The passages from Papinian and the Pandects express the same idea.

Suetonius remarks of Tiberius, 69, that he was *circa deos negligentior, quippe addictus mathematicæ, persuasionisque plenus cuncta fato agi*, “very negligent of the gods, addicted as he was to magic, and full of the idea that everything is ruled by fate.” Doesn’t it seem that Suetonius continues Virgil’s thought, marking the abyss that separated the religious, the pious Augustus, from his impious successor? Indeed, if everything happens by fate, the gods are useless, and their religion a deception.

One last example. Livy, bk. v, c. 24 and 28, recounts that Camille, besieging a place, had promised the Apollo of Delphi a tenth of the booty. The envoys who carried the offering having been, during the crossing, taken by pirates and led to Lipara, the share of the god was about to pass into the hands of the corsairs, when the chief reminded his people that they had better abstain from a consecrated object, and to set the Roman messengers free. So well, adds the historian, did he know how to imbue the multitude with a just religion, *justa religione implevit*. The law of nations not existing for the pirates, only the consideration of the gods could convince them of such a sacrifice. Where the devil, Molière would have said, is religion going to lodge itself?

I mentioned earlier the synonymy of *pius* and *religiosus*. Here is another that sheds new light on the question: it is that of *relligio* and *timor*, *verecundia*, *reverentia*, fear. Where did this particular respect of man for the Divinity come from? From a sense of fear, as Lucretius said in this verse:

Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor...

“It is fear that has made the gods in the world.” Only Lucretius was mistaken in relating this fear to a physical impression: it was the effect of the feeling of Justice which, in every new soul, is not without a mixture of terror. Virgil is much closer to the truth than Lucretius when he says:

Si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma,  
At sperate deos memores fandi atque nefandi;

“If you despise the human race and mortal weapons, believe that there are gods who remember crime and virtue!” Fear and respect, in Greek and Hebrew, as well as in Latin, are expressed by the same word; related to God, this name is synonymous with religion. Everyone knows this saying of the psalmist: The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom: *Initium sapientiae timor Domini*.

The word *religio* being the only one that could give rise to ambiguity, it is useless to seek evidence in the others. Everywhere the analog of *religio* means mark of respect, adoration, piety, devotion, worship; or else a sacred thing, a sacred ceremony, which amounts to the same thing. The Greek says *proskynésis*, prostration, which corresponds to *religio*; *eusebeia*, piety, the equivalent of *pietas*; *hiera*, *hiereus*, sacrifices, priest, in Latin *sacra*, *sacerdos*. Hebrew speaks absolutely the same: *kischthahhaoth*, or *hischthahhaouiah*, marks religious prostration. “Thou shalt give them no religion,” says the Decalogue, speaking of foreign gods: *lo thischthahhaouch*. The Vulgate translates: *Non adorabis ea*, which, from the point of view of etymological correlation, lacks accuracy. The *adoratio* is the kiss thrown from the tips of the fingers to the idol; it would have been necessary, if the verb had been used in this sense: *Non religabis te coram eis*. As for *pietas*, *eusebeia*, it has for Hebrew correspondent *hhesed*, which the Vulgate translates sometimes by holiness, sometimes by mercy. — Ps. iv, 4: Know that Jehovah protects his devotees; Vulg.: *Scitote quoniam mirificavit Dominus sanctum suum*, Hebrew *hhasid* II. Ps. x1, 2: Save me, O God, for there is no more religion; Vulg.: *Salvum me fac, quoniam defect sanctus*, Hebrew. *hhasid*. II. parallel. vi, 42: Remember the devotions of David, great maker of reverences, as we know, Hebr. *hhasdei*. The Vulgate, which has lost the thread of the idea, reads: *Memento misericordiarum David*

It is from the word *hhasid*, piety, devotion, that the *Hassidians* were named, a kind of Jewish *momiers*, whom religion rendered that much less sociable.

For the rest, and whatever intimacy there may be in Hebrew between religion and law, they are not confused. By virtue of the religion, *hhasid*, that is due to him, Jehovah imposes on Israel the observance of his pact, *pactum*, *foedus*, *testamentum*, in Greek *diatheke*, in Hebrew *berith*, the radical meaning of which indicates the sacrifice that presided, among the elders, over the conclusion of treaties and the promulgation of laws. According to the Bible, the *religion* of Jehovah is one thing, and his covenant is another. It is wrong that Bergier, and Mgr. Gousset after him, confused these two terms, and that they said, according to the false etymology of *religio*, that religion is the covenant of man with the Divinity.

The writers of the century of Louis XIV express themselves like the Latins,

the Greeks, the Hebrews.

“All religion,” says Labruyère, “is a respectful fear of the Divinity.”

Everything that makes up the worship of the gods (*cultus*, from *colere*, cultivate, adorn, honor, religion) takes place in a homogeneous series: offerings, sacrifices, libations, prayers, hymns of praise, invocations, propitiations, purifications, pardons, expiations, vows, processions, sacred fire, lustral water, consecrations, statues, temples, etc. Make religion the bond or the social alliance, and all that becomes unintelligible, absurd.

To complete the demonstration, let us finally say that, parallel to the forms and ceremonies of the cult, the law also had its formulas, which, although less pompous, did not hold a lesser place in the life of the father of the family and the citizen: as if, by regulating what suits the dignity of the gods, the legislator had only precluded the regulation of the dignity of man; as if religion were only the mystical form of Justice, or Justice the reality of religion.

VI. — Respect is therefore the element of religion; it is the whole of religion. Under what conditions can it exist? Is it enough to erect a statue, some sign, and say, like Aaron or Jeroboam: *Israel, these are your gods*, for the people to bow down and worship? You would be mad to believe it. The priests of the different cults are in the habit of accusing each other and reproaching each other for their *idolatry*: this mutual calumny simply proves that they do not know each other.

Man grants no religion to anything that falls under the senses. A visible, tangible, measurable divinity is a contradiction.

The God, protector of law, whom any multitude placed in favorable conditions tends to create for itself, and whose symbol or idol the priest then only has to fabricate, this God is first and foremost nothing other than the Essence, supposedly real although invisible, of what appears to this multitude, at the moment when the cult is founded, as supreme good and all-powerful principle, sovereign being. As a sovereign being, this Essence, which the understanding conceives beyond the phenomenon, and which the imagination soon clothes with a soul, a self, a figure, then becomes the subject or *substratum* of Justice: it is to it, consequently, that the believer addresses his reverences and his vows.

Thus, after the religion of Ormuzd, or of the Intelligible Light, symbolized by fire, there was the religion of Osiris, or of Life, symbolized by the ox and the other animals; then the religion of Beauty, which was, under the name of Aphrodite, that of the Greeks; then the religion of the Family, celebrated in Rome under the name of Vesta; then the religion of Christ, that is to say of Redemption or Liberty. We still know the religion of Force, Thor or Hercules; of Wealth, Mammon, Ops or Jehovah, etc. All these deities are only realizations of concepts, serving to express, according to the feeling of various peoples, either the sovereign good, the sovereign power or the sovereign wisdom, which sovereignties are then taken as protectors of the societies that devote themselves to them. (B)

Let us suppose that today, Christianity having been put aside, there remains in souls enough religious feeling and poetic force to make the people wed

themselves to a new faith, and that the idea of this faith be Progress, for example, or the Free Woman, or any other fantasy produced by the current of opinion: there is no lack of sects, at the time of this writing, that aspire to translate the more or less obscure elements of their illuminism into theological dogma, and as a necessary consequence to appear as an idol.

First of all, religion, thus determined in its *idea*, would be posited as a simple affirmation of this idea. Then, by virtue of the tendency of the mind to seek the *reality* or the *substratum* of what it has the idea of, one would ask what is the cause whose apparent effects give rise to the idea, what is the subject of this cause, what is its essence, what is its body, what are its attributes. Finally, the importance granted to the idea attaching itself to the *subject* who provides it and taking the form of respect, fear or love, we would have, at the same time, the god and the sovereign, all the transcendental conditions of justice.

It is thus that every day we see innovators, yesterday atheists or pantheists, imperceptibly falling back into religion, and affirming: 1) a *God*, that is to say an essence of nature and of humanity, ideal, incomprehensible and indemonstrable, and as such, holy and respectable; 2) a *Faith*, that is to say a set of dogmas metaphysically deduced from the first conception, as such superior to experience and reason; 3) an *Immortality*, for, as we shall have occasion to show, if the subject of Justice is God, the moral sanction is also God, in whom henceforth the destiny of man is accomplished. (C)

We shall return to this interesting subject of the constitution of the gods and of their high jurisdiction: it suffices, for the present, to have marked in an authentic way the relation that unites Religion and Justice.

Already we see that the first has no *raison d'être* without the second: theology itself agrees. It is for our justification that Christ, the Son of God, became man, suffered death and established his Church. One has a presentiment that religion could well be only a mythology of Justice: for, if the first is respect, the second is dignity; it suffices, to identify them, to eliminate the intermediary that one poses as author and guarantor of the other. But this identification requires centuries, and we are only at the beginning of the hypothesis.

In summary, ancient society was composed of two things: first, the right of man, *dignitas, jus*, which expressed itself through the manifestation of his prerogatives, the distinction between thine and mine, and did not imply any reverence. Before man, man remained standing; he saluted aloud, *ave*, and did not bow. Then there was respect for the gods, *religio*, which manifested itself in kneeling, a sign of inferiority, and had as its object to obtain, through fear of these invisible essences, respect for the law, that is to say to inculcate Justice.

The man of ancient Italy, so religious, thus made law the principal thing, religion the accessory. Much better, the religion serving to consecrate the law was itself part of the law, that is to say, of the patrician privilege or dignity; it constituted, so to speak, its first division. Hence the double expression of *divine right* and *human right*, to express the privilege of religious consecration, without which the individual prerogative remained as if void. Hence also Modestine's definition of marriage, *juris humani et divini communicatio*, participation of human and divine right, to say that the wife shared all the prerogatives, civil and

religious, of her husband. This very real subordination of the religious element to the juridical element was perhaps not in the thought of the legislator; it was in the institution. The human, in this system, prevailed over the divine; and religion having its reason for existence only in Justice, the priesthood was also only an attribution of the magistrate.

## CHAPTER III.

### Exaltation and decline of the human person among the ancients.

VII. — For you, Monsignor, theologian and jurist, it is not necessary to demonstrate that such a conception of Justice and its guarantees could not give rise to an exact theory and to a lasting constitution. From whatever point of view we occupy, whether we consider this system from the side of man or from the side of the gods, the law is divided, and Justice, which should express fraternity and union, is established on a double antagonism.

We begin by supposing that man owes nothing to man, that he does not depend on him, that he has nothing in common with him, that the respective rights of men involve no link or solidarity. Right is entirely individual, unilateral, unequivocal. It does not complicate itself with any duty; it has nothing social about it. So much so that, in order to make man respectable to man, we are obliged to establish another respect among them, respect for the Divinity.

Such a combination does not bear examination. I say first of all that the law is split in the sense that man is placed within the scope of two different laws, religion and justice, one of which serves the other, I agree, as attestation and sanction, but which in reality have nothing in common and are not related. The concept of religion can be deduced: this is what theology does. The concept of Justice can also be deduced: this is what legislators, jurists and magistrates do. But neither are Justice and its laws logically deduced from the religious concept, nor are religion and its dogmas linked in a rational way to the legal concept: these are two totally distinct orders of ideas, which have in common only this, namely, that the influence of the one serves to maintain in man respect for the other. What is the rational relationship between redemption and the right to property? Between providence and the code of procedure?... Obviously, there is nothing. These are two edifices leaning against each other, which the curious can roam through in turn, but which have neither communicating doors, nor symmetry, and whose meeting forms the strangest discordance.

I add, and this results from the irreducibility of the two laws, that with this theological-juridical complication, instead of putting an end to the antagonism of man with man, we have only created another, that of man with God. Human dignity is absolute: this is its nature. It can bow before the majesty of a Supreme Being, but on this express condition that this being will deign to enter into a discussion with it, and that religion will cause it to lose none of its prerogatives. But is that the case here? No. Religion, with its dogmas, its mysteries, its sacraments, its discipline, its terrors, its promises, crushes the dignity of man.

God, through the relationship that worship makes us maintain with him, is not only a surety, a guarantor; he is an antagonist. This is what the myth of Israel struggling against God indicates, what Job's complaint expresses with such fervent eloquence, what emerges with such force from the eternal opposition between philosophy and faith, as from that between secular power and ecclesiastical power.

One of two things must result: man must be everything here, or nothing. Now, paganism grants him too much or not enough. If right, under the name of dignity, exists originally in the human person, if it constitutes his prerogative, it is necessary, on pain of illogic, that this right goes so far as to recognize itself in others. Man must be able to do justice to man: otherwise he would not have justice within him, which however is granted to him. What use then is the guarantee of the celestial powers? Sooner or later virile pride will wipe the slate clean. But religion dissipated, personal dignity degenerating into pride and selfishness, right no longer finding in itself its own sanction, what becomes of society?

If, in order to escape this danger, we insist on the necessity of religion, if we maintain that it belongs to God alone to attest to the law, to guarantee it and to obtain its observance; that thus the feeling that each has of his right becomes respect for the right of others only through an effect of religion, and that the whole problem is reduced to giving more responsibility to religion, the principle must be followed until in the end, to say that Justice is in us an unfounded pretension, and that man is the vassal of the Divinity. That's what Christianity did. From then on it is human dignity that is in danger, and once again religion is on its way, farewell to Justice and society.

There is no escaping this dilemma. All this jurisprudence doubled with religion is like a sword that some flatter themselves to make stand upright on the pommel, others on the point, and which, always losing its balance, slashes indiscriminately at morals.

History fully confirms this criticism.

VIII. — Greco-Roman society raised the person high: therein lies its glory. In the theology that it had made for itself a kind of consanguinity united men and gods; they negotiated, so to speak, from family to family, from power to power. In the *Iliad*, all the misfortunes of the Greeks come from the wrath of Achilles, towards whom Agamemnon lost respect, ἤτιμήσεν, in the presence of the army. The gods intervene to reconcile the two chiefs, but Olympus is divided in its turn. One part declares itself for the Greeks, the other for the Trojans. Homer, the bard of these sensitive individualities, becomes the theologian, the legislator of the Greeks. Each city, each tribe chooses an Immortal, to whom it binds itself as if by a contract. Kings descend from Jupiter; Jupiter is the common stock from which gods and heroes arose. What exaltation of self-love must have excited among the Hellenes this marvelous epic of which the pivot, the unique idea is respect, the worthiness of the person!

We find analogous ideas in the Bible. Jehovah does not beget, indeed, but below him is a chain of angels, *elohim*, of saints, *kedoshim*, that connects,

without any solution of continuity, heaven to the human race. — I say to you, cries the Psalmist, you are gods and all sons of the Most High: *Ego dixi: dii estis, et filii Excelsi omnes*. This was taken, in David's time, a bit more positively than in Christian theology. Psalm VII, which is supposed to date from the time of the Judges, is a song of triumph, in which the poet, having saluted the immeasurable greatness of Jehovah, celebrates in magnificent verses the quasi-divinity of man:

“When I contemplate your glory, this sky the work of your fingers, this moon and these stars which you have created, I say to myself: How great is the mortal, that you still remember him, the son of Adam, that you visit him! You placed him a little below the gods, elohim; You crowned him with honor and glory, and set him over the works of your hands.”

Doesn't it seem that man gives himself a God only to increase his own nature by the same amount?

The Latin city is imbued with the same spirit. Romulus is the son of Mars, Julius descends from Venus, and Numa is the husband of Egeria. But, without speaking of this mythology, what a story is that of Coriolanus, insulted by the people, whom Rome, vanquished, could only sway by opposing to him the dignity of Veturia, his mother! Livy, writing under Augustus, and engaging in *patriotic* morality, distorted the tradition. According to the ancient idea, the offended and proscribed patrician owed nothing to anyone. He carried his country within him; the only law on which he depended was his prerogative, his dignity. Coriolanus is inflexible, because he is within his rights. Neither the majesty of the people, represented by the deputies, nor the religion of the gods, present to his eyes in the cortege of priests, shakes his courage. He only gives in when his mother, whom he was looking for in the crowd of matrons, uniting her destiny to that of the city, says to him, pushing him away: “I won't kiss anyone who wants to make me a slave!” But in yielding to his mother Coriolanus only yields to himself: he is not a citizen who bows before the inviolability of his country; he is an outlaw who pardons those who outlawed him in consideration of his family. The pride of the mother got the better of the pride of the son, not by fighting him, but by making him, so to speak, even more ferocious. These two souls understood each other. Who ever understood them in our schools?

We find this profound sentiment of personal dignity, which under the republic had shone with so much brilliance, once again, but with a tinge of resignation hitherto unknown, under the tyranny of the Caesars. Read Tacitus: his dark *Annales* are full of accounts of suicides carried out to escape the insult of despots. What the Roman feared most was not death, it was outrage in torment, *ne illuderet*. With what complacency he recounts the last moments of Otho, and the enthusiasm produced in the soldier by this noble and worthy end!

“Towards the end of the day, dying of thirst, he takes a sip of cold water as his only comfort. Then he has two daggers brought, chooses one, places it under his pillow, and falls into a peaceful sleep. At dawn, he pierces his heart, lets out a cry and expires. They hastened to bury him as he had recommended, lest his head be cut off and delivered up to outrage. The body was carried by the Praetorian guards. Bursting into tears, they celebrated his praises and kissed his hands. Some soldiers killed themselves at the stake,



not because they felt guilty and afraid, but out of emulation of bravery and love for their prince. In the camps, at Bedriacum, at Plaisance, everywhere his death received the same tribute of admiration and praise.”

Tacitus adds: “A simple monument was erected to Otho: he will remain!” One would say that after the cowardly and miserable end of Nero, after the atrocities inflicted on the corpse of Galba, having to recount soon the ignominious torture of Vitellius, cut down on the Gemonian Stairs, the historian of that horrible epoch feels a kind of Roman consolation at the death of Otho, who died with honor and as a free man.

The whole Roman system was based on this principle of patrician dignity.

“Each, in aristocratic Rome, held rank for his talent and his labor (*solertia, industria*): knight, if he had only fortune; patrician, if he only had birth; senator, if he dreamed of filling a curule seat; *ædilitius, prætorius, consularis, censorius, triumphalis*, according to the honors he had obtained. This is what the parliamentary language of the Romans called the dignity of a man.” (FRANZ DE CHAMPAGNY, *les Césars*, Bk. I.)

The privileges of Roman dignity were: exemption from prison, torture, capital punishment, public charges; the right of marriage, will, paternal power, domain of property, etc.

Personal right thus engendered real right: hence it is that the plebeian could not rise to property; he had only possession.

The aim of the vanquished nations, their constant effort, was to obtain the *right to honors*, Justice, but the censorship was there to drive them back and maintain the purity of race and the constitution.

From these energetic mores, of which Christianity has extinguished even the idea, was born stoicism, supreme formula of ancient virtue, which flourished especially among the infants of the Wolf, and which counted in its ranks all the strong souls and inflexible characters that the later centuries saw appear.

But, it must be repeated, however haughty this institution was, it could not give rise to true justice, and ancient society was not long in noticing this. Basically, despite the beautiful sentences and the acts of heroism with which the authors abound, the morality of the ancients, with its four cardinal divisions, *Prudence, Justice, Force and Temperance*, is a morality of individualism, incapable of sustaining a nation. For a few centuries, the societies formed by polytheism had mores: they never had morals. In the absence of a morality solidly established in principles, mores eventually disappeared. It was not enough, really, to inspire an Alcibiades and a Lysander, a Coriolanus and a Caesar, with a high opinion of their dignity; they should have been taught to deduce from the same principle the rules of universal justice: now, polytheistic society had drawn from it only laws of exclusion and privilege.

This is what results, not only from the too well established facts of Greek and Latin history, but also from the reaction aroused among philosophers and statesmen by the odious exaggeration of personality.

IX. The noble Dorians, conquerors of the Peloponnese, had set the example of robbery: it was precisely among them that repression was born. Lycurgus

made Sparta a community.

Pythagoras after him, and Plato afterwards, make the perfection of the Republic consist in the fact that no one has anything of his own, and does not even belong to himself.

Aristotle professes the same maxims: he says that each citizen must persuade himself that no one belongs to himself, but that all belong to the State.

Cicero, witness to the civil struggles that gave rise to the overflowing of the aristocratic personality, regards the love of country as the first of duties, and it gives rise to all the others.

These ideas, which have since become commonplace, were then new: it must therefore be admitted that until then society had rested on a contrary principle.

There then spread among the masses that spirit of centralization of power and crushing of wills that, issuing from the brains of a few thinkers, was to end, in Italy as in Greece, by engendering despotism. The Caesars were only the successors of Alexander and his heirs, who in their turn had only applied, like Epaminondas, Phocion, Philopæmen, with more or less good faith, the lessons of the philosophers.

Then individualist Europe, which had vanquished the absolutist East in the Persian wars—which in heroic Hellas had created philosophy and the arts, and in severe Italy founded law—Europe, in spite of its genius, became a counterfeit of the Orient. This is not quite what the philosophers had asked for, but it was the consequence. Every will must bow before the general will, the theoreticians had said; and it happened that the general will was none other than that of the Emperor, absolute master, like the kings of the East, of the earth and of men.

X. — Some writers of the Catholic school have taken advantage of this reaction to infer that antiquity had no knowledge of natural law; that under the influence of polytheism individual liberty was sacrificed, conscience enslaved, and that only with Christianity had the emancipation of the person begun. And, strange thing, it would be, to hear them tell it, the insufficiency of polytheism that had been the cause of that general servitude.

“Man,” says M. Huet, “is born to live under the superior direction of eternal reason or of God; he does not go all alone and by himself, not being the absolute being. Does he come to reject God, his interior and necessary support? Unable to behave, he seeks, he begs for support from outside; he alienates himself, give himself up to the State, which is charged with thinking and wanting for him. The state serves as God. This is what we saw under paganism: the domination of the ancient States over man was a form of idolatry. (*Règne social du Christianisme*, p. 72.)

Another, Mr. Bordas-Demoulin, quoted by the above:

“Piety, justice, virtue were obedience to the will of the legislator. The Jew did not inquire about what was good or bad in itself, but about what Moses had said. Thus acted the Gentile concerning his own legislation; and Lycurgus, Numa, Solon...” (*Lettre à l'archevêque de Paris sur les droits des laïques et des prêtres dans l'Église.*)

First of all, this is to confuse the eras, and to reason like someone who, taking the fancies of the multitude for the spirit of the Revolution, would maintain that

in 1789 and 1848 the idea of liberty did not exist, and that the empire gave birth to it. And then, who does not see that this theory of the omnipotence of the State, whose source is in a transcendent or communist conception of the social pact, could only have been produced as a reaction to the primitive patriciate?

M. Franz de Champagny, a Catholic like MM. Huet and Bordas-Demoulin, but one who had to cast gloom over paganism from another point of view, refutes them in these terms:

“The philosophical morality of antiquity is almost always selfish; it relates all of our duties back to us; It is for himself, it is for his own DIGNITY, it is for his proud satisfaction that it forms and that it advises the wise man. All duties, or very nearly so, are duties of self-respect. The wise man, no doubt, must be just towards others, because injustice would upset the balance of his soul and make it ugly in his own eyes; the wise man must be just, but he need not go beyond that.”

“The duties are all included by Cicero in Justice and honesty; honesty is precisely this worship of oneself, this maintenance of one’s own dignity, to which antiquity attached such singular importance. (*Les Césars*, Bk. II, p. 431 and 432.)

Where, I will ask M. de Champagny, did the moralists of antiquity get their doctrine, their ideal? From tradition, no doubt. So if this tradition engendered a morality of *egoism*, it was because it had its starting point in institutions favorable to the exaltation of the personality.

The entire history of Rome and Greece, from the times of fable, agrees with M. de Champagny: it is the history of human personality, or, as the ancients called it, of heroism, of its great deeds, of its foundations, then, by the cause that I have related, of its corruption and its fall. The entire period of Dorian rule is nothing but that. *Tyranny* is relatively modern: it was born of the democracy insurgent everywhere, around the sixth century BC, against the noble spirit. It soon weakens, following the great Persian war; after which the excesses of demagoguery again pushed minds towards a system of concentrated authority and brought about Macedonian domination.

The same thing happened for Italy. The ancient patriciate, whose heroic type is Coriolanus, was succeeded by an overwhelming demagoguery, which resolved almost immediately into precariousness. It should even be noted that the name of *imperator*, which served to designate the new authority, is the translation of the Greek *tyrannos* or *kyranos*, tyrant, that is to say commander, patron, master; the first indicating a military leader, the second a civilian leader.

It is this horror of demagoguery, joined to the ancient spirit of the patriciate, that made love of country so precarious among the ancients, and produced those civil wars, those proscriptions, those emigrations, those betrayals, of which later centuries offer fewer examples. We know what trouble the Jewish priesthood had in bringing back the remnants of the nation from Babylon. In the time of Sertorius, part of the Romans had passed into Spain, which made this chief say:

Rome is no longer in Rome, it is all where I am.

From the care that Virgil takes in his palingenesian poem to recommend the love of the fatherland, we see how doubtful this sentiment was:

Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem Imposuit..

Hic manus ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi.

As in the nineteenth century, it was the emperors, destroyers of the republic, tyrants of right, who preached patriotism and made it an instrument of reign. *Chauvinism* dates from Julius Caesar.

No respect for personal prerogative, no homeland. Alcibiades sometimes serves his compatriots, sometimes makes war on them, depending on whether they show him animadversion or benevolence; the people have no resentment against him.

Tacitus, on the occasion of the law *Papia Poppæa*, made by Augustus against celibates, perfectly explains this shift from ancient independence to a regime of unbridled regulation:

“The first men,” he said, “still without evil passion, without villainy, needed no punishments and coercions, any more than encouragements. Doing nothing on their own against good morals, following the law of the good entirely by the inclination of their hearts, the fear of fine or punishment had no hold on them. But when equality began to disappear, when in place of a sense of mores and respect for institutions — *pro modestia ac pudore* — ambition and violence marched openly, then began oppressions of all kinds, and in their wake the tyranny of the laws. When we were tired of princes, we gave ourselves up to law-makers. The laws were at first simple, as befits simple natures: such were those of Minos, Lycurgus, Solon, Numa. With time, the power to legislate became another means of discord and trouble: it was not enough to decide on things of common interest; the inquisition reached even into private life, and the corruption of the republic was marked each year by the multitude of decrees: *In singulos homines latoe questiones, et corruptissima republica plurimoe leges*. As much as we had suffered from the deluge of crimes, so we now suffered from the avalanche of laws: *Utque antehac flagitiis, ita nunc legibus laborabatur.*” ( *Annal.*, Bk. iii , c. 25, 26 and 27.)

It was the same also for the Jews, whose end M. Bordas-Demoulin quite simply takes for the beginning. Everyone knows that the Pentateuch was composed towards the last times of the kingdom of Judah; that the messianic ideas, ideas of absolute royalty, were born following the captivity and limited to the empires of Assyria and Persia; that previously individual liberty, like that of worship, had been excessive; that the kings, chiefs of clans rather than absolute sovereigns, protected it themselves, against the wish of the priesthood, champion of divine right and intolerance. It was quite another thing even in the time of the Judges, *when each did what they wanted*, sadly observes the sacred writer.

Facts so palpable that the writer who contradicted them would not even deserve to be read, should not need to be pointed out, but it is the misfortune of preconceived opinions to invert everything and confuse everything.

Ancient right, personal in principle, failed when the legislator, powerless to determine social law, and finding the religion of the gods insufficient to maintain balance, set about creating the religion of the state, and when the State had begun, according to the expression of M. Huet, to serve as God.

“What is man before the gods?” the priest had asked.

“What is the man before the city?” demanded the statesman in his turn.

And communism, imperialism, utopia invaded the earth; the human person, his freedom, his dignity were made cheap; by dint of denying the individual, we end by denying the law, and instead of CITIZENS there were only *subjects* and the *faithful*.

XI. — Man wants to be respected for himself, and to make himself respected. He alone is his protector, his guarantor, his avenger. As soon as, under the pretext of religion of the gods or reason of State, you create a principle of right superior to humanity and to the person, sooner or later the respect for this principle will cause respect for man to be lost sight of. Then we will no longer have either Justice or morality; we will have an authority and a police force under whose shadow society, like the traveler under the shadow of the upas, will crumble.

A Justice identical with individual dignity being given, Greek and Latin civilization was to perish through the exaggeration of a force without counterweight. The brake of power did no more than the religious crutch: it is not from outside that the balance to liberty must come, but from within. When the personality had lost the battlefield of the *forum* and the *agora*, it gave itself up, under cover of the emperor, to the devastation of the provinces, to the grabbing of lands, to usury, to domestic orgy; something unheard of, corruption seemed to reach even the gods. Man trampling his mores underfoot, the gods became infamous; there was no turpitude which did not find its model and its justification in some divinity. What could the idealism of Plato, the exegesis of Euhemerus, the mysticism of Apollonius of Tyana, the reform of Julian, do against this torrent? Among primitive nations, opinion placing the gods beyond humanity and mortal mores, their histories did not cause scandal: they were respected as august mysteries. At last, the meaning or the religion of the myths being lost, the dishonored gods departed; man was left alone, with baseless institutions and unprincipled mores. Everything was engulfed, republics, cities, parties, characters: there remained only the empire, democratic and social chaos, where the elements of a new world began to ferment again; and the first and most brilliant period of the religious age of mankind was closed.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Religious transition. — Christianity draws the consequences from the premises laid down by Polytheism and Philosophy: condemnation of humanity.**

XII. —In principle, polytheism recognized that the notion of right had its starting point in the dignity of man. In fact, it did not know how to develop this notion; on the contrary, through the external and superior guarantee that it gave to Justice, it lost it (D).

For you, Monsignor, who regard polytheism as the work of the devil, this outcome is nothing but natural; for me, it is most serious, polytheism being a religion, religion itself, in the same way as Christianity.

Everyone agrees that empire, a fatal product of polytheism, accelerated its dissolution, all the more because it sought its support in the restoration of religious ideas. For the first time the impotence of these two great institutions, the State and the Church, was unveiled. The situation demanded a remedy that, going beyond mythology and politics, addressing itself to the conscience of the human race, would seize the evil at its source. Philosophy presented itself first.

Stoics, Pythagoreans, cynics, basically these three sects were in a perfect community of views, and had a full awareness of their work. With different maxims, a more or less pronounced mysticism, each had its category of listeners: the philosophy of the Portico, more scholarly, more severe, more pleasing to the higher classes; that of Diogenes, harsher, more sympathetic to the people; that of Pythagoras, for religious souls. Stoics, Pythagoreans and Cynics were the true precursors of Christ.

To save both civilization and liberty, conscience and reason; to found Justice, which polytheism had only recognized, having failed to find its formula; to abolish servitude and misery; finally to create morality, which everyone sensed, wanted, but which the wisdom of the ancients had left without a principle: What a program! What a role!

The work of reform began with religion. It was the stumbling block on which the conscience of humanity had to be shattered a second time. They understood perfectly, the innovators of the Actiac era, all that was monstrous for the time in the established cults. Full of contempt for a licentious idolatry, without naivety and without good faith, they judged, — and what followed showed if they were right, — that the first thing to do was to strike the ax at the immense tree of polytheism.

But they believed, in rejecting simulacra with all the superstitions and fables that were attached to them, that it was proper to maintain, as the basis of the science of morals, the theological notion, the antinomy of man and God: this is what misled the reform from the outset.

“The Stoics made philosophy simultaneously the science of divine and human things, the contemplation of the infinite Being and the practical study of virtue.

“They conceived of matter as the passive principle of things; while God, who is united to matter as the soul is to the body, is its active principle, cause or reason.

“The world is animated, alive; God is its soul; and as this soul is basically only the same thing as matter, the world is God, or God is the world.”

.....

“The supreme rule of mores is to live in accordance with the universal nature. The good, like duty, consists in the will to remain constantly faithful to the laws of nature”. (TISSOT, *Histoire de la philosophie.*)

The German philosophy of the absolute is does not itself go further. Like the Portico, it leads to the dogma of fatality, and is resolved by quietism.

Moreover, the morality of the Stoics abounds in superb maxims. We know their motto: *Sustine et abstine*, patience and detachment. “There is no other good than virtue,” they said, “no other evil than vice; even pain is nothing.” — An unheard of thing for pagans, Musonius Rufus forbids any love relationship

outside marriage:

“Intemperance, he says, is a great opportunity to sin: be on your guard against it twice a day. – Avoid obscene words, because they lead to actions. — Have only one coat (counsel renewed by the Gospel, Mark, x, 9). — After a good deed, the trouble it may have cost is over, we are left with the pleasure of having done it; after a bad action, the pleasure is gone, and the shame remains.”

What characterizes the Stoics is that they unceasingly preach probity, frugality, self-control, *good works*, *humanity*, *philanthropy*, and, despite their harshness, which is more apparent than real, *mercy*. They are the ones who introduced into the common language these sacramental words, received from antiquity, which Christianity today claims as its own idea. By dint of elevation, Stoic morality is rigid, even proud: the effect of the circumstances in the midst of which it was produced. Christianity is far from this vigor, and whatever its apologists say, it cannot stand the comparison. Neither the *Gospels* nor the *Epistles* are at the level of Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Perse. Also the first impetus of past stoicism, morality, continuing to rest on a principle outside nature, could only descend again.

The error of the Stoics had been, as I have said, to renew the transcendental hypothesis. In this respect they left little to their successors. Know thyself, Nothing too much, Follow God, are three precepts which for the Stoic go hand in hand. “To obey God is freedom,” said Seneca. “No honest man without religion,” he said elsewhere; human virtue cannot sustain itself without the assistance of the Divinity, *Neque enim potest tanta res sine adminiculo numinis stare* (Ep. 41 and 75) (E). Remember that God is watching you, and that the sight most pleasing to him is that of an honest man struggling with adversity.

The gaze of God! Stoic virtue cannot do without it; it needs that conceit. Where are you, chaste Epicurus, who said that, the gods not concerning themselves with men, men should do good without worrying about the gods?....

The Stoic philosophy was not accepted. It was not reproached by compromising, by its theory of the soul of the world, liberty already damaged under despotism; we do not say that it pushed too much towards resignation, when it was necessary above all to preach resistance. On the contrary, its morality seemed too energetic, its faith too rational; the sage it had conceived was still, even within God, too independent, too strong. Depressed souls felt so weak! This infinite, absolute, solitary God frightened them; they wanted him closer, more concerned with them, in more frequent communion.

Perhaps, if Stoicism and Pythagoreanism had been fused into a single doctrine, we would have obtained more.

“More theological than that of Zeno, the school of Pythagoras brought man closer to the Divinity; it maintained more alive the feeling of religious veneration, and in consequence of a less severe logic, it lent itself more gracefully to the exterior practices of worship. It left man less to himself; by fasting, by the frugality of life, by religious observances, it helped him to sustain his virtue and to keep the balance of his soul...” (FRANZ DE CHAMPAGNY, *les Césars*, t. II.)

But it would be easier to couple the serpent with the dove than to bring about

the fusion of two sects. The Stoics would accuse the followers of Pythagoras of bringing back superstition and the lies of the priesthood, while the latter reproached their rivals with inclining to impiety, to atheism. Any compromise was impossible.

Let's move on to the cynics.

Practical reason, then as now, demanded one thing; the religious vein, not yet exhausted, produced another. Christianity presented itself. What was it? Where did it come from? I won't waste time looking for it; I will confine myself to saying what it quickly became, by the very necessity of its position.

XIII. — The history of the establishment of Christianity can be summed up in a few pages.

Obeying the law of oppositions, which wants any exhausted system to be replaced by its opposite, Christianity poses as a contradictor of fallen religion. Don't ask if it understands its time, if it understands itself. It denies paganism, it is paganism that it accuses of social dissolution: this is its fixed idea, this is its plan.

"They (the idolaters) changed, says the Apostle, the glory of the incorruptible God into simulacra of corruptible men, of birds, of quadrupeds, of serpents; they served the creature instead of the Creator, whom all ages must bless, amen. This is why God gave them up to the passions of their hearts, to impurity, to the ardor of their reprobate sense. It is why we see them full of iniquity, malice, wickedness, avarice, perversity, envy, murder, chicanery, and deceit; muddleheaded, slanderers, enemies of God, insolent, arrogant, inventors of crimes, without respect for their parents, without reason, without restraint, without charity, without faith or law." (*Rom.*, 1. 23-31.)

The depiction has nothing philosophical about it; it breathes calumny and hatred. What are we to expect from reformers who proceed with this discernment, with this moderation?

Thus Christianity, in the consciousness it has of itself, is not a reconciliation as the emperors sought it; nor is it a development as Apollonius and Jesus himself had the idea of it, *legem non solvere, sed adimplere*: it is an antithesis.

Now, as any antithesis can, by its nature, only give an incomplete idea; as, on the other hand, all reaction in the moral order as well as in the physical order is equal to action, it was therefore permissible to foresee that the new formula would contain, like all the others, only a part of the truth, if indeed there were any truth in it; then, that it would go in the evolution of its principle as far as polytheism had gone in the evolution of its own, which means that it would end in a similar fall.

Let us follow the history of Christian palingenesis.

Since it did not go beyond the religious idea, and persisted in regarding the transcendental principle as indispensable to the constitution of Justice, the first thing that Christianity had to do was to purify the theological concept, and to sanctify, as it were, the Deity, dishonored by the previous revelation. In this it was following the road opened up by philosophy; there was still nothing original about it.



A single God, freed, as far as possible, from the physical and anthropomorphic attributes of the fallen gods, purged of all the scandals with which the ancient mythologists had most innocently covered their Immortals; a God infinitely holy, but distinct from matter, the cause of all defilement; a God, principle and true subject of Justice, who communicates his grace to man: such must have been, according to the law of historical contradiction, and such was in fact the first article of the Christian faith. (F)

We can already see what will help the Church, barely formed, to disentangle its dogma through the maze of opinions and to constitute its orthodoxy. Its rule of faith, its criterion, will be the contradiction to paganism, or rather the overthrow of the pagan system, and the separation of Christianity from all previous theogonies. Also, when later, and in accordance with this rule, the dogma of the Trinity became clearer in its metaphysical rigor, that of the three persons to whom was devolved the purifying function, the Spirit, received the qualification of saint par excellence: *Credo in Spiritum sanctum et vivificantem*.

XIV. — But here arose a question full of perils.

If the God were declared pure, innocent of the iniquities with which the deluge had flooded the earth, the responsibility for the evil committed not being able to fall on the old gods, who according to the Bible and Saint Paul were pure nothingness, vain images of creatures, who would it fall on?

In the state of ideas and things, Christianity could not escape this question: it was bound to resolve it. Stoicism, Pythagoreanism, which had not solved it, had not been able, because of that, to make themselves accepted. The explanation of the origin of evil, of the production of sin, was the *sine que non* of the new religion.

Now, once the idea of the thrice-holy God was admitted in principle, the explanation would emerge by itself.

The culprit could only be man: a solution that was all the more satisfactory in that it presupposed liberty. How did man, an innocent creature of God, become guilty? How, by a first abuse of his free will, had he become gangrenous to the point of becoming incapable of any justice on his own? It is a mystery that was never explained, but which was sufficiently attested by the growing and, if I dare say so, constitutional, chronic corruption of man. To what period can this decline be traced back? All the myths carried it back to the golden age.

Christianity therefore affirmed the principle of the fall: this was its second article of faith. Then it charged itself with the atonement: that was its third article. All of Christianity is summed up in this trilogy: God creator, God mediator or expiator, God sanctifier. The rest is really just incidental.

Thus, from the spectacle of social dissolution, combined with the idea of God taken as the principle of Justice, was born this terrible dogma, that man is fundamentally depraved, borne to harm; that there are only a few, very few honest people, or, to put it better, that there are none at all, etc.

God, in a word, having been made a priori substance and subject of Justice, man became the subject of sin; or, what amounts to the same thing, man having been declared corrupt and malicious by birth, the seat of Justice had to be

transferred to God: that is geometric.

XV. — Let us take up this thought again, and first translate it into practical terms: we are touching the source of all the servitudes and abominations of the earth.

The problem of Justice results from the opposition of interests: Justice is the principle that is presumed to reconcile them. Its representative is society.

But, by virtue of the principle that the whole is more precious than the part, that the member is made for the animal, not the animal for the member, it implies a contradiction to suppose society in revolt against the individual; the individual alone can be said to be in revolt against society, as experience proves that he indeed is. Society, by itself, is holy, impeccable. All communitarian theories, making individualism the cause of social disorder, presuppose a priori this impeccability. The individual, in fact, notwithstanding his social destiny, being born egoistic, moreover free, all the danger comes from him; from him alone is born evil. With regard to the society that envelops and commands him, the position of man is that of an inferior, dangerous, harmful being; and since he can never strip himself of his individuality, abdicate his egoism, that spirit of revolt that animates him, as he cannot become an adequate expression of society, he is, relative to it, a wrongdoer from the beginning, fallen, degraded.

In theological language, the essential sanctity of God, symbolic expression of society, implies the original degradation of man; and reciprocally the more or less empirical hypothesis of the innate evil of man leads to the conception of God. These two propositions call to one another: that is the only logical link which, in the presence of the unexplained existence of sin, attaches man to the Supreme Being.

Now, whoever says God or degradation implicitly says Church, priesthood, command, obedience; says atonement, redemption, grace; finally says Christianity, since, short of affirming the reign of evil, the Church, the priesthood, and by this means expiation and return to grace, are the only means of making Justice reign.

Consequently, any religion or quasi-religion, whatever its idol or its first hypothesis, whether it begins by positing God theologically or society abstractly; any church that asserts itself, in the name of one or the other of these two terms, as the buttress of Justice and morals, and which as such demands respect and obedience from the follower, this church, I say, this religion, this school, denies individual right; it affirms original sin neither more nor less than Christianity; it is anti-liberal and counter-revolutionary.

I will cite two examples.

XVI. — In his last work, *Terre et Ciel*, M. Jean Reynaud, after having refuted the literal meaning of the myth of Eve and the apple, too coarse, it seems, for his reason, continues in these terms:

“Whatever the species and the circumstances of the first fault committed, I will not admit less that this fault constitutes a capital fact in the annals of the earth. Through it

a revolution takes place: the regime of the planet is transformed; the principle of evil, hitherto absolutely foreign to this residence, is introduced there and lays there the foundations of its terrible reign. The moment is solemn; and for God, who measures events, not in their appearances, but in their consequences, there is a prodigious blow there, and one that does not come from him. God therefore condemns, because he sees in this single term the fall of all men and the whole series of their errors to come. (*Terre et Ciel*, p. 205.)

What difference is there, for a philosophical mind, between the theology of M. Jean Reynaud and that of the priest whom he endeavors to indoctrinate? In good faith, does Christian dogma hold on to the apple or the peach, because we do not agree on the fruit, and not rather on disobedience, whatever the object may have been? And was it worth censuring the biblical account, only to conclude dogmatically like the Church?

The other example is even more instructive.

Among the new sects, none rose with more force against the dogma of decay than that of the Saint-Simonians. In the ardor of its denial, it went so far as to deify the principle that ancient theology made the cause of sin, namely the flesh. Equal sanctity of the flesh and the spirit, of the soul and the body, such is the point of departure of Saint-Simonism.

“God is all that is, intelligence and matter, all that can be seen and all that can be understood. Everything is in him and through him. None of us is beside himself, but none of us are him. Each of us lives his life, and we all have communion in him.”

According to another exegesis:

“The Christian God was incarnate only in Christ; the Saint-Simonian God is incarnated in humanity.”

This is the dogma, renewed by Saint Paul, by Spinoza, etc. Everything in us, therefore, the body as well as the soul, participating in the divine nature, it seems that this time we should be sheltered from all decline. It is not so: the divinity of the flesh will not save us from degradation, any more than that of the spirit.

After the rehabilitation of the flesh, we find, in the doctrine of which M. Enfantin remained the head, two things: the hierarchical principle, adopted as the law of the social organism; and the hierarchical formula, *To each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its works*.

Now, who is the judge of capacity and work? The priest, the priestly couple, representing by his androgyny the substantial duality of God; the priest, initiator and leader of the religion. It is on the priestly magistracy that the Saint-Simonian hierarchy is founded.

JUDGE OF CAPACITY!..... Bow down, Church of Christ. You have humbled only the flesh, the church of Saint-Simon humbles the spirit. It is by the titillation of the flesh that according to you we were fallen; according to Saint-Simon, or rather according to his vicar, M. Enfantin, it is by the false suggestions of our understanding. It was the body and all that relates to it that you therefore wanted to chastise; it is to the conscience that this new discipline is addressed. Social inequality, Christian revelation told us, is the effect of the revolt of the senses. Error, replies M. Enfantin, results from the necessary imperfection of

judgment. Know thyself, the oracle of Delphi had said. It is useless, replies the Enfantinian wisdom: the priest, the man of love and synthesis, is there who knows you and appraises you better than you could possibly do. So drink and eat, fatten up, have children and wealth: the surplus is none of your business.

Thus Saint-Simonism is reduced to a swing of the *bascule*. Before it, the flesh and all the affections it inspires had been sacrificed to the salvation of the soul, particle of the divine breath; now it is the self whose dignity is sacrificed by the decision of the priest to the preservation of the flesh, part of the body of God: which always implies degradation, and the worst of degradations.

Man, said the church of Christ, you are fallen through lust; obey my command, and I will save your soul for eternity.

Man, resumes the Church of Enfantin, you are deposed by the hallucinations of your genius; submit your judgment, and I will save the flesh from misery.

The Saint-Simonians indeed boast of destroying pauperism, which is really not marvelous on the condition that they put in it, the sacrifice of the will. The difficult thing is to preserve both the soul and the body from decay, it is to save the dignity of man in its integrity.

Also there is no worse aristocracy than that imagined by the disciples of Saint-Simon.

In Christianity, after all, fallen man being punished only in this mortal life; the proletariat, slave labor, pauperism, being only accidents of fatality, which the judgment of God turned into the expiation of souls, the best part of ourselves remained intact, and, to a certain extent, inviolable. It never entered Christian thought that souls were unequal in rights; on the contrary, it is the principle that all are equal in Christ and before God. The priest, not judging souls, does not classify the living according to their capacities; he confines himself to accepting, as a providential manifestation, the chance of birth and social position, and he imposes charity on the rich, and resignation on the poor.

In Saint-Simon, it is quite another thing. Man is struck in his heart, his soul, his spirit, his intelligence, his essence; it is the forfeiture of the self in what is most intimate, an arch-forfeiture, a forfeiture that seizes man before his conception in the maternal womb, which begins with the emanation of souls, with the first act of divine thought.

Let me be poor by necessity, by accident, by providential decree, I can resign myself to the thought that this only affects, in the end, the exterior of my being, the surface of my person; and in resigning myself I feel that I am worth, by my resignation and my devotion, the most virtuous of my brothers.

But that a priest, M. Enfantin and his wife, M. Lambert or any other, — men whom I am willing to honor as long as it pleases them to remain men, — allow themselves to rate my capacity, to mark my place in the sun and to settle my pittance while they take millions, I admit that this revolts me, and that if I had the honor of living in the church of Saint-Simon my first impulse would be to slap the pontiff.

We can make analogous observations on the *positive religion* of M. Auguste Comte, who, in the name of the *true great Being humanity* denies justice *a priori*, posits *duty* in principle, and absorbs the individual into the collective organism,

become God and exercising all rights; — on the deism of the eclectics, and in particular on that of M. Jules Simon, who also posits duty in principle, and refers right to God, substance and subject of Justice (H); — finally, on any religious or social conception, whether theistic, pantheistic or atheistic, which, in order to determine the relations of man with his fellows, appeals to a principle prior to, superior to or external to the man.

All these theories imply the decline of humanity, and, what will seem even stranger, in view of their claims to rationalism, they imply the idea of Christ, that is to say of a divine incarnation.

A word on this subject, and I will close this chapter.

XVII. — Modern criticism gladly amuses itself with the somewhat hasty manner in which the promulgation of the great Christian dogma was made at the Council of Nicaea; the dispute over the *homoousios* or *homoiousios*, above all, provided material for jokes. We will see, however, that if ever there was, on the part of a human assembly, an act necessary as well as rational, it was the famous constitution known as the *Symbol of Nicaea*.

At the point where Christianity and the empire had reached in the year 325, thirteen years after the conversion of Constantine, the situation of minds was such:

The old religion was overturned: there were no more gods.

However, humanity strongly believed in God; it could not do without God.

This God, still unknown, was to be the expression of the general thought on the sovereign good, the nature of the soul, the principle of Justice, the origin of evil, redemption, sanctification and the end of man.

It was therefore necessary, as we have said above, that this God should be the subject of Justice or the Word; moreover, that he was a victim redeemer, consequently that he was a man.

It was all the more necessary that this God be man, a living, personal, loving, suffering, visible, palpable being, since in any case religion requires for its own reality that the divine Being escape from abstraction, that it is realized, personified, produced, embodied in a manifestation accessible to all our faculties.

The peoples had believed in Jupiter, Venus, Apollo, Serapis, Mithras: they would have believed themselves to be atheists if they had seen themselves reduced to a metaphysical god, like the *Nous* of Anaxagoras. Deism, says Bossuet very well, supportable as a philosophical hypothesis, in practice is atheism in disguise.

The divinity of Christ, in a word, was the condition *sine qua non* of the existence of Christianity.

With Arius, Christ once again became a man, a prophet, a revealer of the family of Moses, of Zoroaster, of Orpheus. We demanded GOD.

This was the God that the council gave: in this way, it performed an act of high policy, high intelligence, and a true religious sense.

The ignorance reproached in the bishops of the orthodox party was here more learned, more logical, more loyal, it gave proof of more genius than Arius and all his band.

The decision of Nicaea was the legitimate conclusion of the Gnostic elaboration that, long before the appearance of the Messiah, raised the question of his divinity. The further back in tradition one went, observed Arius, the more one saw this opinion weaken; and he drew from this retrospective weakening an argument for its falsity. But it was precisely the proof that the more paganism gave way before the religion of Christ, the more urgent a new realization of the divine essence became; moreover, under this need of spirits, the transcendent quality of Christ, suspected for six or seven centuries, and little by little affirmed, became luminous.

It was therefore necessary, out of all necessity, at pain of a general atheism, that the messiah Jesus, a native of Galilee, crucified under Pontius Pilate, without losing his quality of man, should be recognized as God; that his mother be said to be the *mother of God*; that in him would be found two natures and two wills united, not in the sense that he was half man and half God, but that he emulated in their fullness the two human and divine natures. Paganism had had *demi-gods*, a theological naïveté that Christianity redressed with force and authority, by positing the MAN-GOD.

This seems insane to you, to you druids, partisans of metempsychosis and natural religion, who believe that you are philosophers. But make no mistake about it: what happened to Christianity will happen to any church founded on a metaphysical conception of the great Being, which will be able, with logic and conviction, to deduce its thesis. Sooner or later this so-called *spiritualist* church will be able to *realize* its concept and carve out a God in the flesh, or else vanish itself into nothingness.

It is in this way that polytheism or idolatry was formed; that Jehovism ended in messianism, of which Mahometism is only a degeneration; it is thus that from the establishment of Christianity up to our own day we have seen, at various times, exalted religionists who give themselves, some for Christ, some for the paraclete, some quite simply for God.

The reason for this phenomenon is in our anthropomorphic power, or faculty of realizing divinity, in body and in soul.

Look at the deism of Mr. Cousin, that of the Scots or Mr. Jules Simon: the work of realization is already half done. Is not their God living, personal, voluntary, knowing, providing, governing, judging, vengeful and remunerative? He has a life, a soul, a conscience, a love, a liberty: what is he missing? A body? It's the smallest thing, really. Spinoza, disciple of Descartes, proved by his geometry how spirit and matter are the two modes of divine substance. Now, you have not yet refuted Spinoza. Also he did not hold to the messianist Wronski that the god of Hegel, the same as that of Spinoza, did not become, one day the Christ Napoleon, the next day the Christ Alexander.

To claim that the being of God, or, what amounts to the same thing, his concept, stops at the condition of pure spirit, is to affirm that matter is foreign to the divine nature; that we therefore know what this nature is and what this matter is, what a body is and what a spirit is: all claims of the highest impertinence.

XVIII. — The dogma of the Incarnation, developed and made popular from the first to the fourth century of our era, seemed of a nature to singularly elevate our species and to make it proud. But the Incarnation was the correlative of the fall, the feeling of which, prevailing in souls, produced a mortal sadness. The Apostle bears witness to this: We know, he says, that every creature groans and is in labour: *Scimus enim quod omnis creatura ingemiscit, et parturit usque adhuc* (*Rom.*, vi, 22). And again: The desolation of the century produces death: *Sæculi tristitia mortem operatur* (*II Cor.*, vii, 40).

What could be more horrible indeed than a doctrine whose principle is that there is not, among humans, a fundamentally honest soul; that Justice is foreign to this low world; that virtue does not belong to humanity, and other talk of devout misanthropy? What can we expect, for the reform of mores, from this declaration of universal indignity? Instead of withdrawing us from the abyss, is it not rather made to sink us deeper into it?

We too, the generation of the nineteenth century, have exhausted the fury of revolutions, the stupidity of the masses, the insolence of despots, the rage of parties, the selfishness of exploiters, the governmental and regulatory mania. We are witnessing the decomposition of our mores. And as in the time of the Caesars, there is no lack of preachers, neo-Christians, ex-Christians, materialists, spiritualists, pantheists and atheists, to warn us to remake a religion and an idol for ourselves, since we can expect nothing from good of ourselves, wicked and foolish as we are. With what surprise we have seen men who called themselves revolutionaries offer, by way of consolation, this sad thesis to our dejected friends!

We need a new cult, we need new irons,  
We need a new god for the blind universe.

It is democracy that today maintains this language of Muhammad (C). As if the dogma of the fall, as if the religious idea had not become, throughout Europe, the watchword of the counter-revolution itself! As if those who since 1848 have declaimed the most against the human rabble were not precisely the most depraved of the century!

Rest assured, druid, mage, brahmin, or whoever you are: this Revolution that you have defended, apparently without understanding it, is the salt that, without further ceremony, preserves us from final decay, the immortal leaven that makes our living and victorious virtue. Let the triumphant counter-revolution keep us in this ignominy as long as it can, let nations succumb to it, let old Gaul remain for a time fallen, a third religious phase is impossible. You recognize it yourself: a positive philosophy alone can henceforth speak to the reason of peoples. Now, whoever says philosophy, analysis, demonstration, excludes mystery, consequently respect, *religionem*: for without respect the theological idea becomes foreign to morals, and the dogma of the fall remains nonsense. (H)

Each of our progresses is the fruit of time and comes at its own time. As the Christian institution was given in the polytheistic institution two thousand years before the birth of Christ, so the institution of liberty, which the French Revolution gave rise to in the world, was given in Christianity even before that

faith had named itself, when it still existed only in the contingency of things.

Has the hour of liberty then come, as all the analogies of history lead one to believe? The whole question is there. Naturally, the Church denies it, on the faith of its promises; I affirm it, on considerations of another order, which I am now going to share with you, Monsignor.

## CHAPTER V.

Has Christianity saved human dignity? Growing Peril of Justice.

XIX. — According to the study we have just made of polytheistic evolution, the hour has struck for a religion when the troubled conscience comes to ask itself, not if this religion is true: doubt striking the the dogma is not enough to bring down a religion;—nor if it needs reforms: reforms in matters of faith prove religious vitality; — but if this religion, deemed for so long the guardian and support of mores, is sufficient for its task, which I translate into other terms, if it really has a morality.

It is through this, you know, Monseigneur, that paganism perishes. Neither the Platonists and the Sceptics, nor the school of the Portico or that of Epicurus, nor Christian criticism itself, insofar as it attached itself to fables, was enough to remove it. It collapsed the day when all intelligences were seized with the idea that paganism had no morality, that it was immoral.

So it will be shortly with the messianic kingdom. I am the voice that ask, after so many and such tiring controversies, in the name of the universal conscience, no longer whether faith agrees with reason, whether there are abuses to be corrected in the Church, if the clergy has edifying mores: — it is no longer a question, for our time, of the metaphysics of dogma, any more than of the private life of priests; — but if Christianity possesses a morality, which is quite another thing.

And I answer with sadness, like the President of the Convention pronouncing the guilty verdict against Louis XVI: No, Christianity has no morals; it cannot even have one... Since then, after eighteen centuries of existence, the Christian Church finds itself in the same situation in which, after two thousand years, the polytheistic Church, which perished because it had no morals, found itself: it is lost.

XX. — Let us seek in Christian dogma the metaphysical, theological reason for this non-morality.

Christianity had not forgotten that the most salient feature of heathen dissolution was the loss of personal dignity, that therefore the special character of redemption must be to restore that dignity. Your salvation, says the Apostle, has cost dearly, *pretio redempti cstitis*, wanting to show by that how costly the soul of man was at God's expense. Also, following the example of the Apostle, if the Church speaks a lot of atonement and penance, we can say that it speaks even more of rehabilitation. Christian apologists do not fail to put forward this



excellent idea of the rehabilitation of souls, with which paganism hardly concerned itself. And every day the Church testifies in this regard to its keen interest, by the zeal it displays for the conversion of the infidels, the baptism of infants and the absolution of the dying.

Unfortunately, this rehabilitation takes place in figures, a matter of mysticism and spirituality. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world: this precious dignity, which the degrading empire of Caesar made people lose, Christianity promises give them back in the next life! And it is the same with liberty, equality, wealth, science, love, sanctification. These goods that nothing can compensate, condition of all morality, must be realized only in heaven.

It is quite another thing really with regard to penance and mortification: there, according to the Gospel, is the true earthly reality. As soon as it is a question of punishing, the kingdom of Christ appears, the rich, to strip you; the mighty, to humble you; slaves to maintain you in your misery.

First, man being, by the new revelation, guilty before God, the relationship that had existed in pagan society between Justice and religion was reversed. Justice took second place, religion had the honors. The dignity of man subordinated to the worship of God by this simple change, the individualities, which formerly belonged to their right, *sui juris*, found themselves, it is true, on a level in the presence of the supreme majesty, but lowered from their full height.

In the Christian system, in fact, man, author of evil, cannot by himself have rights; he is outside the law, *ex-lex*, he has only duties. We grant that he experiences needs, aspirations, a certain pride, an esteem for himself; that consequently he solicits for these needs, for these aspirations, for all that composes his dignity, image of the divine dignity, the respect of others; but that he is entitled to this respect on his own account is positively denied. There is nothing in man that justifies this demand; it is not even conceivable. How could the dignity of my neighbor make me respect him, when I know that I am worth nothing, and that he is no better than me? As man to man we owe each other nothing, unless the intervention of a more powerful third party, obliging us both toward them, creates in us a mutual duty through that obligation.

The modern theoreticians of right and duty, who while separating themselves from the Church fatally follow its logic, maintain absolutely the same language. For them also it is the duty that is given first; the law is only an induction, a dependency. (I) Thus speak MM. Jules Simon, Oudot, Auguste Comte, all the communists and religionists. Is it not the greatness of Christianity to have absorbed the substance of religion so much into itself, that those who dream of replacing it can only be its copyists, and that outside the Church there is for the worshiper neither logic nor good faith?

XXI. — We know what the dogma says: let's follow its effects in practice and in history.

The system of polytheistic societies, within which religious thought, intervening only as an auxiliary of Justice, was far from producing all of its consequences, could be defined: *System of personal prerogative, or of RIGHT.*

The Christian system, where religion, having reached its fullness, is made

the principle of Justice, which no one professing Christian faith is allowed to deny, can be defined in turn: *System of personal forfeiture, or of NON-RIGHT.*

This is more than a vain antithesis.

Christianity, imported from the East at a revolutionary time, when Gaul, Spain, Africa, and Asia were rising up against the empire at the same time, when the armed Praetorians would cut their throats for the choice of their Caesars; Christianity, saturated with Jewish, Egyptian, Persian and Hindu ideas, expressions of the misery of the peoples, of the despair of the plebs, of the degradation of the slaves, necessarily had to bring about this inversion of the juridical idea and the religious idea. What in the School could only be a dialectical recrimination, passing into facts under cover of exceptional circumstances, became for eighteen centuries the official formula of morality: it could have no other.

I will even admit that the degradation of the human person, disproportionately exalted under the old cult, was a necessity of the time and a condition of progress.

Justice, as we see by the example of children and savages, is of all the faculties of the soul the last and the slowest to form; it needs the energetic education of struggle and adversity. To arrive at the true notion of the just, for the individual to understand and love the dignity of others as much as their own, it was necessary that the intractable self be tamed by a discipline of terror; and since this discipline could only occur in religious form, it was necessary to create, in place of a religion of pride, a religion of humility.

The Christian era is the true era of the fall of man, I mean of the great trial that was to cause the complete feeling of Justice to arise in his soul. (J)

Above all, the Christian must recognize his unworthiness, humble himself before his GOD, accept mortification and death, admit that he has deserved every kind of affront and chastisement. His first act, the first movement of his heart, is an act of contrition, a request for forgiveness, an appeal for mercy. It is only at this price that he can hope, through the ministry of the priest, — appreciative of his repentance, interpreter to him of heavenly mercy, and endowed by special grace with the power to bind and to unbind, — for the remission of his fault and the granting of his prayer.

The organization of powers in Christian society follows the same course.

Whereas, according to the previous system, the magistrate who pronounced the law had precedence over the pontiff and the soothsayer, in the Christian economy it is the priest who has precedence over the magistrate. The prince is in reality only the sword-bearer of the Church; the emperor, the *bishop from without*, is the valet of the pope, the *bishop from within*; he holds the bridle of his horse and acts as executioner for him. From the earliest days we see in the Christian brotherhoods, first synagogues, then churches, the bishop attracting to himself the decision of affairs, supplanting the civil judge, diverting the faithful from the established tribunals. One can see in Fleury the troubles, the dissensions, the complaints, caused by this usurpation of an abusive and uncontrolled power.

The impulse once given to minds, and the causes that had produced it

continuing to act, nothing could stop this strange revolution.

Christianity, by its principle, by all its theology, is the condemnation of the human self, contempt for the person, the rape of conscience. From there to the profanation of private life, to the system of confessional notes and all that follows, there is only one step. The natural state of man is a state of sin: how could the Christian respect the person of his brother, the priest that of his flock, when every Christian must despise himself, and when the first title of the priest to the function he exercises is his own underestimation, *quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae?* To raise up this fallen being and restore it to honor, nothing less than the immolation of a celestial victim is required, renewed each day in a million places at once. This is the dogma symbolized in the passion of Christ.

Thus Christianity, having to conquer the exaggeration of self, had to exaggerate its humiliation. Its mission is not to establish Justice, but to prepare the ground where it must germinate, *Justumque terra germinet*. Not only does it exclude it from humanity by its theology, it renders it impossible by the annihilation of personal dignity, by all its institutions and symbols. It is a universal instinct among nations to want their leaders to be surrounded by glory and power: the honor given to the prince seems a pledge of the respectability of the citizen. What honor to expect for the man and for the family, consequently what justice, in a Church whose head calls himself the servant of the servants of God, and gives his slipper to the princes of the temporal to kiss?

XXII. — Whatever we do, think, and say, as it comes from human nature, Christianity deems evil, if not culpable; what eludes us of virtue and honesty is the effect of divine influence.

In the data of transcendence, this theory is irrefutably logical; and what proves it is that it had not been absolutely unknown under polytheism. Already the devotees had been able to derive from the worship they rendered to their gods this impious consequence.

“Whatever good deed you do,” says Bias in Diogenes Laertius, “know that it is a gift from the gods.”

Cicero says the same:

“It must be believed that no good man has been such except by the help of God; and never was there a great man without an inspiration from heaven.” (*De Natura deor.*, II, n. 66.)

He says elsewhere:

“If there exists in the human race intelligence, virtue, good faith, harmony, they come to us only from the gods.”

We see by these quotations what the *Relligio* contained in the secret of its principle. Cicero, Bias, Plato, Zeno, as much as Moses and Isaiah, are fathers of the Church. The ancients took the matter much further: they attributed the discovery of the sciences and the arts to the gods.

“Do not say” — it is Seneca speaking — “that the discoveries we make belong to us.

The seeds of all the arts have been deposited in us; and God, the invisible master, sharpens and excites geniuses." (*De Benef.*, 1v, c. 6.)

Pliny, lib. XXVII, c. 4.2:

"The zeal of the ancients for discoveries, their generosity in transmitting them, is a gift from the gods. If anyone imagines by chance that man could have invented all these things, he is an ingrate who ignores the divine munificence."

Until the Christian period these flashes of mysticism do not appear to have had a great effect on mores; even less did philosophy know how to deduce a theodicy from them. It was reserved for Christianity to develop in its fullness the famous doctrine of *grace*, an indispensable corollary of original sin.

Always therefore and in all cases, even when the divine breath inspires him, and above all when it inspires him, man, child of sin, must humble himself. Let him indulge in himself, he becomes an apostate.

This is why Christianity, starting from the principle that all will is perverse, all character vicious, all intelligence depraved, all action polluted, is incessantly concerned with washing us of our defilements, and why it has constituted itself as a dispensary of expiations. Shall I recall the fasts, the vigils, the abstinences, macerations, disciplines, prayers, sequestrations; renunciations, voluntary poverty, perpetual celibacy, and all those inventions of self-hatred that compose the exercise, *askesis*, of the perfect Christian, of the ascetic?

"Everything is hostile to the Catholic religion, naturally speaking," says one of its apologists, "both the mind, and the heart, and the senses, because it itself presents itself as hostile to the mind through its mysteries, to the heart through its precepts, to the senses through its practices." (NICOLAS, *Etudes philosophiques sur la christianisme.*)

And Catholicism acts accordingly: its worship is a series of expiatory rites. Have we not still, outside religious houses where the profane eye does not penetrate, Advents, Lents, retreats, novenas, ember days, rogations, lustrations, indulgences, rosaries, and the insipid breviary, and the appalling office of the dead?

But, Monsignor, you know all this better than I, and your letters prove that it is not you who will allow the old Christian spirit to perish. Let us therefore leave the practice of the devout life, and, now that we have determined the historical and metaphysical reason for Christianity, let us see what effect it has had on morals.

XXIII. — I recognize that the zeal displayed by the Church for the reparation of both actual and original sin was so much in the spirit of the time, it responded so well to the despondency of souls, that the influence of dogma seemed at first to be nothing but salutary, and could not fail to create an illusion. Ideas changed like feelings. We measured the value of man, no longer by his social and positive qualities. but by the rigors of his penance, the intensity of his expiations. This is how the Orientals judge it with their dervishes and their fakirs. The ordeals of persecution succeeded those of hermitism: what prodigies of virtue were the Pachomiuses, the Hilarions, the Sisoes, the Pauls, the Antonys, the Simeon Stylites! And how pale beside them were the ancient heroes, the Miltiades, the

Aristides, the Cimons, the Agesilas, the Socrates, the Camilles, the Cincinnati's, the Fabricius, the Regulus, the Scipios! By common accord Christian morality was considered out of line; its perfection became an article of faith, accepted on word and without examination. From time to time the ambition of the bishops, the scandals of the clergy, aroused popular irritation, more than once the Church was treated as a whore of Babylon; but these reproaches falling only on the personnel, the material, I mean the faith, was not affected. Free criticism rose no higher; it is thus that in recent years we have seen the socialist schools invoke for their justification, following the example of the Albigensians and the Waldensians, the morality of the Gospel, only accusing the Church of having forgotten it and of being unfaithful to it.

And this explains how Christian society could have mores, just as pagan society had; how even in the bosom of the Church characters were produced, some of which, surviving in the memory of men of the faith they served, will remain great before posterity.

But a doctrine that violates humanity could not eternally possess humanity.

The history of the councils is nothing other than that of the corruptions of the Church; the history of heresies, that of the revolts raised by these corruptions. The Church is constantly occupied in defending her dogma and re-establishing her discipline, without ever perceiving that what sustains sin is discipline; what causes heresy, the immorality of dogma.

From the first century, corruption is everywhere: out of seven churches, the Apocalypse counts at most two healthy ones.

From the second to the fourth century, corruption increased further: it gave rise to the rigorous heresies of Marcion, Cerdon and Tertullian.

The persecution of Diocletian gives new strength to corrupted Christendom: after Constantine, dissolution becomes its normal state until Gregory VII.

The period of the crusades, from the year 1077 to the year 1300, is the least impure in ecclesiastical history. But corruption breaks out again under Boniface VIII, and, despite the Reformation, despite the Revolution, it is no longer veiled.

Thanks to the opinion that makes the Gospel the code and the Church the interpreter of morality, Christianity continues to live; but the reason of the people is depraved, and loses even the feeling of human dignity, the principle of all justice and all morality.

One of the most recent apologists of Christianity, M. Auguste Nicolas, makes in these terms the parallel between pagan morality and Christian morality, in what touches the qualities of the man and the citizen. We can judge, from this inventory, the progress that humanity owes to Christianity.

“Among the ancients, pride of soul, boiling courage, implacable resentment, *impiger*, *iracundus*, *inexorabilis*, *acer*, such is the portrait of a hero, of Achilles. — *Ambition*, honored in the person of Alexander; *political assassination*, in Brutus; *suicide*, in Cato; *patriotism*, which sacrificed humanity to the fatherland; the love of glory, which sacrificed the country to the individual; *friendship*, an exclusive feeling, when it was not criminal and monstrous: this is what passed for a virtue among the ancients.”

This portrait is drawn with an obvious intention of denigration, and the

commitment to make the Christian shine at the expense of the polytheist. I am, however, content with it. Let us take the man of antiquity as M. Nicolas presents him to us, with his virtues and his vices, and reduce the whole to its simplest expression: what do we find at the bottom of the crucible? Latin named him: the *Worthy Man*.

“Under Christianity,” continues M. Nicolas, “we see the flowering of sacrifice, humility, mortification, detachment, resignation, repentance, forgiveness of injuries, voluntary poverty, continence, love of enemies, zeal for faith, faith, hope, charity. — There was a time,” says M. Nicolas, “when all these virtues, which bring happiness to humanity, did not even have a name in languages.”

Let us accept this picture, flattering as it is; let us take the Christian such as we have just done, with his cortege of virtues that are not mixed with a vice, and let us sum it all up in a simple formula. What remains? The Middle Ages found the word: the Good Man.

The *Worthy Man*, then the *Good Man*, here is in four words the path that religion has made humanity follow, for four thousand years.

When will we see the JUST MAN?....

XXIV. — But what does the Church do? What thoughts occupy it in the midst of this ever-reviving immorality? With imperturbable gravity, the Church affirms its dogma; it explains it, develops it, accusing the spirit and the flesh, working as best it can to crush them both under its discipline.

Religion teaching on the one hand the infinite and unalterable holiness of the divine Being, on the other the innate, permanent and indelible corruption of the human being, no more admitting a cessation to the perversity of the one than a limit to the perfection of the other, it follows that the *vendetta* exercised in the name of the thrice holy God for an indelible guilt must last as long as the life of the culprit, as long as humanity. The dreadful talion does not stop even with death; it is perpetuated for the reprobate by hell, and does not end for the chosen souls until they leave *Purgatory*, at that moment of ultramundane existence when the inviolable Majesty, satisfied at last, says to the purified soul: Enter into the joy of your sovereign, *Intra in gaudium domini tui*.

The state of morality, in this system, is not of this world: it is the privilege of the saints whom the blood of Christ has redeemed, a privilege that they obtain only with beatitude. Morality, or sanity of the soul, is the thing that has never been revealed, which no eye has seen, no ear heard, no mind understood; the secret that the Christian will enjoy only on the day when, freed from this body of mud, he will contemplate his God, author and subject of all morality, face to face, *siculi est, facie ad faciem*.

The conclusion comes by itself.

Since, ultimately, we are moral only in Paradise, the life of man on earth is devoted to torture, like that of the galley slave. *Shame on humanity!* Such is the motto of Catholicism, the most complete expression of Christian revelation. Catholicism, which more than other sects has preserved itself from liberal temptations, likes to stigmatize, to belittle, to cover with ignominy. It attacks

self-love, which it treats as selfishness; dignity which it calls pride; natural affections, which it regards as infidelity. That respect for others, a consequence of the respect for oneself, so lively among the ancients, and the violation of which made the cynics so contemptible, it has made of it a vice, under the name of *human respect*. It is remarkable, indeed, that no religion has been at war with human respect as much as Catholicism. Conscience vaguely senses that there is something false and insulting in this, and it protests. Catholicism is more irritated by it; it imposes penance on you, afflicts you, crucifies you, confounds you, stigmatizes you, brands you, anathematizes you. The most Christian soul is that which accepts the beating with the most submissive heart; the most heroic, the one that breaks, and debases itself, and annihilates itself even more. To make you perfect from its point of view, it pursues you in your conscience, which it shouts down, pursues you in your will, which it stifles, stops you in your thought which has just been born and which it condemns. It delights in seeking out your miseries, your secret faults, all those peccadilloes that escape the carelessness of fantasy, the indulgence of nature and its promptness, *quas humana parum cavit natura*; it swells them, it enlarges them, illuminates them, envenoms them. Then it demands that you accuse yourselves of them, that you ask for forgiveness, that you be absolved by it: this is what it calls *reconciling* yourselves. If not, it will confess you by force, it will recall the sermon to you, it will post you at the door, it will cover you with your sin as with excrement. This is at least how things happen in these model houses, which we see rising on all sides, where Christianity is practiced in its purity and plenitude. Now, everyone knows that the tendency of the Church has constantly been to submit the nations to the regime of the convents. Is it necessary to recall these known means of the episcopal police, more in favor than ever: excommunications, monitories, revelations of the secrets of the confessional, canonical penances, and all the terrors contained in this inexpiable name, the Holy Inquisition? It is the religion of iniquitous suspicions, atrocious interpretations, anonymous defamations, secret procedures, masked tribunals, underground tortures, perpetual dungeons, *in pace*. Wasn't the *cavaletto* recently reestablished in Rome by Pius IX? The Church needs choice tortures, and torture is too little for her, so she adds derision to it. Nero contented himself with sending Thrasea the order to die; the centurion did not lay his hand on the exile. In 93, the Terror showed itself as reserved as Nero: suicide not being in our morals, we sought a kind of death that left, so to speak, nothing to do with the executioner. Before the stake of the Inquisitors the guillotine is thrice holy; and posterity will not forget that Carrier's greatest crime, in the eyes of the terrorists, was to have *dishonored the torture*. The Church has not recoiled even from extermination by sword and fire: it is to her spirit of penitentiary repression and holy revenge, more than to her policy, that we must attribute her crusades against populations who had done no other wrong than to demand a morality, and to which it answered with the flames of Alby, the massacres of the Alps and the Apennines, the assassinations of Saint-Barthélemy.

XXV. – However, let us agree on one thing.

The Christian work of penitence is today hardly more than a symbolism that in no way hinders well-being and luxury, and humility a fictitious virtue, which we remember in the presence of God, but never, of course, in the presence of the man. For two pennies, once paid, one redeems oneself in Paris for the entire Lenten fast: the fine penance of dining once a year, on Good Friday, with lentils in oil and a fried egg! The beautiful humility of kneeling in a closet, on a velvet *prie-dieu*, the body dressed in silk, the ducal crown on a stool beside it! The Jesuits have long made devotion easy; the joys of life are no longer forbidden; effective penance has been replaced by penance *in spirit*; and it is permissible for the rich to taste the pleasures of this world without prejudice to the happiness of the other, provided they keep faith, detachment, penance and humility in their hearts. In the heart! It is not heavy. So does God need our macerations and disciplines? No, no more than our libations and our sacrifices. *Numquid manducabo carnes taurorum, aut sanguinem hircorum potabo?* The priesthood has known this since the days of the prophets; become as carnal as the disciples of Saint-Simon, it rightly laughs at the raillery of libertines.

But here is what gets serious.

In Christianity, the condition of persons is not the same: inequality, as we will see, is providential. It is necessary that one part, the most numerous, of humanity should *serve* the other. For this service to be obtained, human dignity must be sacrificed: how will the people consent to it if they are not led to it by religion, by faith? Subordination, hierarchy, obedience, service, exploitation of man by man, all of this presupposes degradation, penance, if not apparent, at least in spirit, which is far more serious and which alone is essential; abnegation of the self and its prerogatives.

In this system of refined feudalism, we will be careful not to teach as an article of faith that the privileged have more merit before God than the sacrificed, that the rich men are of holier origin than the *good men*, as the devout plebs were called in the twelfth century. Religion does not commit such imprudences. We will throw back on Providence the decree that privileges these while disinheriting those; the former will be reminded of humility before God, sacrifice in the spirit, charity towards their brothers, redemption of their temporal prerogative by faith and worship; the latter will be taught resignation, by promising them compensation for their misery in eternal life.

Thus, says the Church, the king and the shepherd are equal before the Almighty; but the king was appointed from above to command his brethren. Thus the pope calls himself a servant, though unworthy, of the servants of God. Thus those who are elevated in dignity, power and wealth, must recognize that they have received everything from God by grace, so that the little ones, who might not respect this fortune coming from man, respect it coming from God.

Such is the spirit of Christian society. The inferior respects in the superior, not the man, but a functionary of Heaven. For his part, the superior, considering that he whom he commands is his brother in Jesus Christ, seems to say to him: Excuse me, my brother; it is not in my name that I tyrannize you, that I exploit you, God forbid! I have more horror than you of despotism and privilege. And



who am I to give myself such rights? It is divine wisdom that has settled things thus: *Omnis potestas et omnis obedientia a Deo!*

In Russia, on Easter Day, which is the first of the year, the Czar, on leaving mass, gives the watchword to all his people; he pronounces the profession of faith, *Christ is risen*, and kisses the first ones he meets, who transmit the kiss to the others. It is the counterpart of the Islamic profession of faith: *There is no God but Allah, and Mahomet*, or the sultan his successor, *is his prophet*. Which means in good French: *Vile multitude, obéissez* — VILE MULTITUDE, OBEY.

XXVI. — After all, Christianity deserves the esteem of the philosopher, not for the morality it gives birth to: man is no more indebted to it for his Justice than to polytheism or to any other religion; but because it is logical, and because, like everything that is logical, it has a right to the consideration of science.

When Christianity appeared, the theological idea alone enjoyed the confidence of the masses. Christianity perfected this idea; it purified God, giving him a character of holiness and grandeur that he had never had, placing in him the seat of Justice, exiled from the earth, it was said, since the Golden Age.

Human nature, on the other hand, was, by unanimous consent, judged guilty: Christianity transferred to it the infamy that had before dishonored the gods.

Personality had become exorbitant: Christianity damaged it.

Society, instead of improving itself by the development of its forces, had seemed to retrogress: it denied justification by liberty, following the words of the psalmist: *Non justificabitur in conspectu tuo omnis vivens*.

Crime, like a deluge, inundated the earth: it undertook its expiation.

Humanity, finally, had deified itself, in its gods, its heroes, its emperors: Christianity attached it to the cross in the person of its Christ,

Oh! Christianity is sublime, sublime in the majesty of its dogma and in the chain of its deductions. Never was a higher thought, a more vast system, conceived, organized among men. I, who see in it only a creation of universal remorse, I cannot help saluting in it the genius of humanity, which for the salvation of itself has imposed on itself this long expiation. And I swear here that, if the Church succeeds in overturning the new thesis that I oppose to her, and against which she will find no argument in her tradition, because the enemies she fought in the past, like those who attacking it today, borrowing its principle from it, were to be condemned by the consequences; if, I say, the Church gains this victory against the Revolution, I will abjure my philosophy and die in her arms.

In this frightening dogmatism, irrefutable for whoever admits the hypothesis of transcendence, morality existing only in God, that is to say, being nothing, what remained to be done to govern society, if not to create a ritual, and, as an application of the rite, a discipline?

It is by its discipline, not by its morality, that Christianity has governed the world. We will see in fact in the following study that Christianity, not recognizing personal right, is led to deny at the same time real right: so logic would have it, so the divine commandment, the principle of religion requires it.

XXVII. — Christianity's last word on man and on Justice was pronounced, in witty style, by the author of the *Maxims*, La Rochefoucauld: this word is *egoism*.

Hissing at humanity after having blackened it was still piety, and it was also logic.

La Rochefoucauld, M. Cousin has taught us, having consulted the Christian authorities of his time on his little book, received the greatest praise for it. All of Port-Royal applauded. Nothing could be more exact than this morality of the *Maxims*, it was said, more conformable to the spirit of the Gospel. At the same time, the academician Esprit published a large book entitled *De la poverty des vertus humaines*. This was the thought of La Rochefoucauld, doctrinally justified by the principles of faith. And isn't it always the same spirit of denigration that underlies La Bruyere's *Caractères* and Pascal's *Pensées*; which, in a softened form and with the appearance of tenderness, had inspired the author of the *Imitation* four centuries before?

Wherever the religious idea subsists, the conclusion of La Rochefoucauld against humanity is irrefutable.

Nowadays it is in good taste, in a certain world, to declaim against the *human virtues*, which, it is said, have their origin *in pride*. On the whole line, the order is given to the members of the teaching body to combat *pure morals* as well as *pure reason*, and to strongly inculcate in youth this truth: that man receives from heaven the strength to fulfill his duties, as he borrows from faith the certainty of his knowledge. *God alone*, says M. Saint-Marc Girardin, *can give us the virtue of perseverance*. And in a series of studies he proves that the capital error of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the source of his weaknesses was to have believed that man could find in himself the strength to love virtue enough to practice it. This does not prevent Mr. Saint-Marc Girardin from thinking with M. Cousin that La Rochefoucauld has *forced* the consequences of his principle, and to treat his book as *distressing*.

Let those who can explain this eclectic chatter. But what are we to expect from a society whose wisdom consists in confessing that humanity deserves death and derision, then in covering it with bandages and flowers, according to this principle of quintessential hypocrisy, that if the heart of the man is perverse, if he does good only by the impulse of a divine force, is it neither beautiful, nor charitable, nor useful to tell him so?

## CHAPTER VI.

New age: the Revolution. — Immanence and reality of Justice.

XXVIII. — No religion, no morals, said the reason of peoples in the religious period of history; and we have just seen how religion, making God the subject of morals, results in the negation of humanity.

Now, no humanity, no morality: there remains only the symbolism of worship, the arbitrariness of the Church and the ignominy of its discipline. And

we can now understand how the period of religion must have been the period of immorality.

Under paganism, religion was limited to giving security to a moral system that was nowhere defined; and for want of a science of mores, ancient society succumbed.

Since the establishment of Christianity, religion has endeavored to supply this science, which is always ignored, through the office of penitence; and we are witnessing civilization collapsing again.

In vain, to rebuild it, jurists and philosophers, scholars and scholars, mystics and utilitarians, bring to it the tribute of their sleepless nights; in vain, to seduce consciences through the attraction of rationality, they simplify theodicy or suppress it. As they do not escape from the system, as it is always divine Justice or State Justice that they propose, we do not listen to them: they bore us.

Wouldn't it be time to change the hypothesis, to seek the rule and the guarantee of mores, no longer in a transcendent revelation, but in the consideration of ourselves and, having found it, to resign ourselves to be honest without religious motives, were it only for the pleasure of honesty?

What motivates my faith in the Revolution is that I find it logical, as Christianity was at the time of its institution, as polytheism had been 2,000 years before it. The Revolution is more than logical; it is real. Founded on the experience of history, freed from all illuminism, it possesses all the characteristics of certainty, reality, universality and observability.

Consider its march, and the manner in which it entered the world.

XXIX. — After a treatment of eighteen centuries, Christianity had left society in a state as deplorable as that in which it had taken it; one could even say that the situation was aggravated by all the tenacity that religious impotence lent to the disorder. What Christ could not do, would man would dare to undertake?

Si Pergama dextrâ

Defendi possent, etiam hâc defensa fuissent,

The human consciousness must be robust, you will admit, to withstand such a long disappointment. Eighteen centuries, after the twenty of Greco-Latin polytheism, and the fifty or sixty of the Egyptians and the Magi!

“It is not humanity that has lacked faith,” said the Revolution to itself; “it is faith that has lacked humanity. Let us no longer attribute the immorality that kills us to an internal cause: this cause is other than ourselves; it is accidental and external. Let us similarly stop expecting the light that our government demands from a superhuman wisdom: man and society are no more difficult to penetrate than nature.”

And here is that which from the outset puts vice and crime down to ignorance, superstition, misery, bad economy, bad governments, and which calls to reason for revelation.

“Considering,” says the declaration of September 8, 1791, “that ignorance, forgetfulness or contempt for the RIGHTS of man are the only causes of public misfortunes and the corruption of governments, etc.”

The declarations of June 24, 1793 and of 1848 repeat the same thing. Those of July-August 1789, February 15 and 16, 1795, 5 Fructidor Year 3 (August 25, 1795) implicitly contain the same ideas. As for the constitutions of the consulate and of the empire, of 1814 and 1830, if they have not reproduced them, it is because it did not suit them to criticize the governments.

For me, I admit that this way of proceeding seems to me as decisive as it is rational. *A priori*, as results from the notion of being and its modes, it would imply a contradiction if man and society do not possess within themselves the law of their mores; — *a posteriori*, the hypothesis attributing the corruption of the human subject to himself, which has reigned, according to the calculation of the Egyptians and Orientals, for more than 8,000 years, has engendered only corruption and hypocrisy. Therefore, *conclusum est adversus theologos*, we must change the system.

The source of the evil transferred from inside to outside, it remains to find the remedy. To whom does the Revolution address itself?

The clergy accused the revolutionaries of atheism. It was raising a dangerous, insoluble question that made us lose sight of the real one. How could an assembly of legislators trained in the school of science and experimental philosophy engage in a discussion of theology, say whether or not there was a Supreme Being, what this Being was, and what relations humanity maintained with it? The Revolution therefore set aside the theological idea, without denying it or admitting it, except to reestablish it later, if necessary, and with reservations.

This is what results from all the statements. Those of September 3, 94, June 24, 93 and August 22, 95 are placed under the invocation of the Supreme Being; but those of July-August 89, December 13, 99 say nothing about it. As for the constitutions of 1804, 1814, 1815, and 1830, they are limited, in providing a salary to the cult, to applying the principle of religious liberty, without making the slightest mention of the divinity.

Even that, you will say, is atheism. — Let us not quarrel. The Revolution, by dismissing, along with original sin, the hypothesis of God, does not deny it in itself: interpreter of social law and scientific reason, it does not believe itself to be a sufficient quality to deny or affirm what goes beyond reason and experience. Remaining in the sphere of human manifestations, it limits itself to saying that the idea of God is foreign to human morals, that it is even harmful to morals; not that God is bad in himself—what is bad in itself?—but because his intervention in the affairs of humanity produces only evil there, through the consequences, the abuses, the superstitions and the laxity that it entails.

The Revolution was too wise to touch ideas of this sort. It knew that before it all the founders and reformers of societies had endeavored, in the interest of morality, to purify the divine idea. Such is God, it was said, and such will be society. Is this not what the dissenting religionists still do today, who, judging the God Christ beneath the present era, pursue a theological determination more in keeping with the susceptibility of their reason and the extent of their enlightenment? The Revolution had observed, on the contrary, that the quality or perfection of the divine subject is something almost insignificant; that it can

be indifferently angel, man, star, or phallus, provided that it obtains respect; that it is through respect or religion that it exercises its influence on morals; and it was against religion as an element of morality that the Revolution declared itself.

In summary, the Revolution positively intended to free morality from all mystical mixture; thereby it has radically separated itself, not only from Christianity, but from all religion, past, present, and to come. The rage to theologize must be great for the zealots of this Revolution to have been able to discover that it emanated in a straight line from Christian dogma!

XXX. — Man therefore remains: it is up to him to provide us with the subject of Justice, its principle, its rule and its sanction.

Placed face to face with nature, man, through his moral superiority and the deployment of his faculties, creates by himself his right over things;

Through his activity, he creates his right to the exploitation of the land, which he makes his domain, and through work he creates his right to appropriation;

Through his reason, he creates his right to science and to the manifestation of his thought;

Through the affections of his heart, he creates his right to the family and to the affections that flow from it.

But, face to face with man, what will be the right of man? What can it be? It will not be an action, like that which man exerts on things and on the animals themselves: such an action would immediately produce conflict, would establish the emptiness of right.

The right of man with regard to man can only be the right to respect.

But what will determine, in the heart, this respect?

The fear of God, answers the ancient legislator.

The interest of society, respond the modern innovators, atheists or non-atheists.

It is always placing the cause of respect, hence the principle of law and justice, outside of man, and consequently denying this very principle, destroying its *sine qua non* condition, its innateness, its immanence. A Justice that is reduced for man to obedience or utility departs from the truth: it is a fiction.

What remains then, since we cannot do without Justice, since this Justice must be something immanent and real within us, and since, according to the manifestations of the universal consciousness and the axioms of science (ax. 2, 3, 6), it cannot be that Justice is not something?

It remains that Justice is the first and most essential of our faculties; a sovereign faculty, and for that very reason the slowest to form and the most difficult to know; the faculty of feeling and affirming our dignity, consequently of wanting it and defending it, both in the person of others and in our own person.

It remains, I say, that man is constituted in such a way that, notwithstanding the passions that agitate him and of which his destiny is to make himself master, notwithstanding the motives of sympathy, of common interest, of love, of rivalry, hatred, even revenge, that he may have with regard to some individual, he

experiences in his presence, whether he likes it or not, a certain gratitude for his own humanity, and consequently a certain respect that even his pride could not overcome.

To feel and to affirm human dignity, first in all that is proper to us, then in the person of our neighbor, and this without a return of egoism and without any consideration of divinity or community: that is *right*.

To be ready in all circumstances to take up with energy, and if necessary against oneself, the defense of this dignity: that is JUSTICE.

This amounts to saying that through Justice each of us senses themselves at the same time as person and community, individual and family, citizen and people, man and humanity. A sentiment that is easy to observe, first by the disapproval aroused in us by the sight of any insult done by one man to another man; then by the remorse we feel for the insults of which we ourselves are the authors; finally, by the shame we feel in the presence of a culprit, as if this culprit were ourselves.

XXXI. — To feel one's being in others, to the point of sacrificing every other interest to this feeling, of demanding for others the same respect as for oneself, and of becoming irritated against the unworthy who suffers from being missed, as if the care of his dignity did not concern him alone, such a faculty seems at first sight strange.

Reflecting on it, we will find that things must happen in this way, that if it were otherwise we would no longer be moral natures. I am taking morality here from the very point of view of individualism. We would lie to our dignity, which is contradictory.

It is a law of creation and of reason that beings are characterized by their differences, and reciprocally that identity of attributes supposes identity of essence; so that, essence appearing above all in the generality, preserving itself through generality, defining itself all the better as generality embraces a greater number of particular cases, the individuals separated by their differences wish to consider themselves as copies of each other, relating, by the essence that is common to them, to one unique existence.

Now every man tends to determine and make his essence prevail, which is his dignity itself. (Def. 5)

It follows that the essence being identical and one for all men, each of us feels himself both as a person and as a species; that the injury committed is felt by third parties and by the offender himself as well as by the offended; that consequently protest is common, which is precisely Justice.

To use theological language, which consists in placing supernatural realities where science limits itself to placing abstractions, when Justice makes its imperious voice heard in our soul, it is the WORD, *Logos*, common soul of humanity, embodied in each of us, that calls us and commands us to defend it.

Psychological and metaphysical analysis thus brings us its testimony here. It demonstrates *a priori* that Justice, or the faculty of feeling our dignity in others as well as in ourselves, as a result of the will to defend it, is an essential thing in us; it remains for experience to prove in its turn that it is a real thing.

We will try, in another study, to directly establish the reality of our juridical faculty: let it suffice for the present to recall the principal facts that already make it plausible.

XXXII. — 1. It is a fact that, despite the iniquities that dishonor it, society subsists through justice; that civilization develops with its sole support, and that it is the principle of all the well-being enjoyed by our species.

There is therefore in humanity a principle, a force that sustains it, that communicates life to it. This principle, whatever it is, is not nothing. (ax. 3)

2. This principle does not come, by an additional infusion, from an essence higher than humanity, as the religious myths say; it cannot come that way. On the one hand, religion is the negation of human dignity, which is the basis and object of Justice. It is instituted to make up for the lack of Justice in us; it does not give it to us. On the other hand, the religious movement is the opposite of the juridical movement: while faith gradually weakens and loses its influence, the understanding of right and its practice develops, takes hold of all positions. However we envision them, religion and justice appear to us to be opposed: the relation that unites them, which we shall have to determine, cannot be a relation of causality.

3. Justice does not come to us from society either: how could the genus possess a quality that is not in the individual? — It is neither sympathy, nor sociability, nor kindness, nor the inclination to assistance.

First, it would be with this *socialism* as with religion: for the glory of humanity, it would debase man, kill his moral sense and annihilate justice.

Then, there is a fact no less well attested by history than the one we have just related with regard to religion, which is that the progress of justice is proportional to that of liberty, the inverse of communism as of religion and of any formula tending to absorb personality into the society or state.

Finally, it is obvious that Justice cannot be reduced to sympathy or sociability, a feeling of pure instinct, which it is useful and laudable to cultivate, but which by itself, far from engendering respect for dignity in the enemy, as Justice commands, vigorously excludes it. Among the animal species that inhabit the globe, there are several that are distinguished by their sociability. Is man one of these species? Yes and no. He can be defined as a animal that fights as well as a sociable animal. What is certain, at least, is that he rejects association as the animals feel and practice it, which is pure communism. Man, a free being par excellence, only accepts society on the condition of finding himself free there: a condition that can only be obtained with the help of a particular feeling, different from sociability and superior to to it. This feeling is Justice.

As for assistance, the duty of which, prior to any right, would constitute, according to Mr. Oudot, Justice, it is a virtue of *advice*, not of PRECEPT, as the casuists say; very good in itself, like the charity to which it belongs, but so foreign to Justice that the object of the latter is to annul it by rendering it useless. Justice, we never tire of recalling, is the feeling of human dignity. Now, as it is proper to our dignity to do without the assistance of others, so we want our neighbor to do without ours and, what is more, that he abstains from it.

Christianity, which conceived of love through charity, *debitum conjugale*, could not fail to make Justice also dependent on charity. In this it was faithful to its principle and its role. But who would have expected to see this theory, at which our pride revolts, taken up by the philosophers who came out of the Revolution, and who present themselves as its interpreters? And isn't it a strange thing that the same writers who, in order to make Justice more sacred in our eyes, begin by relating it to Heaven, making it superior to man, then pull it down below man, by deducing it from the obscure and purely carnal affections of animality?

4. Since criticism has led us to speak of the animal, let us compare what happens in the heart of man, when he finds himself in relations to his fellows, with what he experiences in his relations with the animals.

Man hunts animals: it is one of his prerogatives. For these beings of an inferior order, he lays snares; he uses violence and perfidy towards them; he treats them as a despot, according to his good pleasure; he skins them, exploits them, sells them, eats them, and all of this without crime or remorse. His conscience does not murmur about it, neither his heart nor his mind suffer from it; for him, there is no injustice. And the reason, if you please? The reason is that he does not recognize any dignity in animals or, to speak rigorously, that he does not feel his dignity, if I dare say it in this way, in their person.

There is, however, between man and beast a certain sympathy, founded on the confused feeling of universal life, in which all living beings participate. This sympathy has always been the object of theological and philosophical speculation; from time immemorial, some dreamers have sought to deduce from it some kind of relationship between man and the animal kingdom. We know the discipline of Pythagoras and the Brahmins, founded on the dogma of metempsychosis. Now that the notion of right among humans has become obscured, some moralists have seen fit to speak to us of our duties towards animals, and I find in the *Revue de Paris*, June 15, 1856, an article where the return of the *great alliance*, the *ancient alliance*, *universal charity*, is announced as one of the characteristics of the new era.

I ask pardon of the *Grammont Law*, as well as of the oriental hospitality for horses and donkeys, but I can only see in all this pantheistic verbiage one of the most deplorable signs of our modern mental and intellectual decadence. The *ancient alliance*, preserved at Singapore, among the Arabs and the Turks, is nothing other than the primitive and bestial state of humanity. As man rises, he moves away from the beasts; and if he loses his inclinations as a hunter and executioner, on the other hand he takes on the habits of the most hardened exploiter towards them.

What is meant, I ask you, by the *return to the ancient alliance*, to Pythagorean sentiments, with this immense consumption of *wool, leather, horn, Prussian blue, butter, cheese, fresh or salted meat*? Our *philozoa* will always be reduced to English practice: feeding animals well, caring for them well, cross-breeding them well, in order to obtain more milk, fat, hair, meat, and fewer bones, in order to eat them. And whatever kindness we display towards them, it is not, let us be certain, out of consideration for their persons, but out of concern for our own delicacy.



It is quite another thing with regard to man, white, yellow, red or black. As long as I adopt with him the manners that I allow myself with the brutes, I offend him, and, what is more extraordinary, I offend myself by offending him.

If I make a false statement to my neighbor, I am failing his dignity; I am deceiving him. What is more, I fail my own; I lie. It is a double wrongdoing: by the nature of Justice, crime is always double.

If I make him a slave, if I take his wife, his child, his property, if I kill him, I am a tyrant, a thief, an assassin, an adulterer. I feel that I have put myself beneath the humanity that is in him and in me, which means that I recognize myself as worthy of death. If I eat him, I turn into a beast.

What does all this mean, if it is not that between man and man, besides the feeling of benevolence and brotherhood, there is another of consideration and respect, which departs from the ordinary circle of natural sympathy with all living beings, and is no longer found between man and animals; in other words, if between man and beast, if there is sometimes cause for affection, there exists nothing of what we call Justice, and that this is one of the traits that distinctly distinguish our species, like speech, poetry, dialectics and art?

XXXIII. — Justice explained in its principle, separated from religion, distinguished from sympathy, it remains to be seen how it intervenes for the constitution of society.

The Revolution alone has conceived and defined the *Social Contract*.

Association, you say, is spontaneous; there has never been a social contract. — No doubt, no more than there has been a grammatical contract. Does this prevent grammar from being given *a priori* as a map of speech, by the very nature of the mind?

There therefore exists a contract or constitution of society, given *a priori* by the forms of consciousness, which are liberty, dignity, reason and justice, and by the relations of neighborhood and exchange that individuals inevitably maintain among themselves. It is the act by which the men forming a group declare, *ipso facto*, the identity and solidarity of their respective dignities, recognize each other reciprocally and by the same title as sovereigns, and stand for each other as guarantors.

Thus Justice, that lofty prerogative of man, which pagan Rome had placed under the guard of her gods, which Christian Rome made disappear in the sanctity of its triad—Justice has Justice as its guarantee and sanction. So that the members of the new society, guaranteeing each other, reciprocally make use of tutelary gods and of Providence: a conception that effaces all of the most profound productions of the reason of the peoples. Never had such a glorification been made of our nature; never were the doctrines of transcendence nearer their end.

According to the transcendentalists, man being incapable by himself of obeying the law and of sacrificing his own interest to Justice, religion intervenes to constrain him in the name of the divine majesty. Duty in this system therefore pre-exists right; to put it better, duty, being the condition of man, does not leave him right.

The social contract nullifies this theology. According to the revolutionary principle, man constituted in a state of society by the Justice that is immanent in him is no longer the same as in a state of isolation. His consciousness is different, his self is changed. Without abandoning the rule of well-being, he subordinates it to that of the just, all the more because he discovers in respect of the contract a superior felicity, and that over time he has made a habit of it, a need, a second nature. Justice thus becomes another egoism. It is this egoism, the antithesis of the first, that constitutes probity.

A friend gives me a considerable sum in deposit, then happens to die. No one is aware of the deposit, the owner of which did not even demand a receipt. Shall I return the sum?

It would be ignorance of the human heart to deny that the first movement was a secret desire to keep. The deceased only has distant relatives, rich themselves, unworthy, whom he did not love. I have reason to believe that if he had foreseen his end, he would have made me his legatee: his very confidence bears witness to this. Who am I depriving, anyway? Strangers, to whom this chance fortune will come as if it fell from the sky! Why shouldn't it fall on me instead? Who will call me to account? Who will know?

I reflect, it is true, that the established law is by no means in accord with my covetousness; that an unexpected circumstance may reveal the secret; that then I am dishonored; that it would not even be a small difficulty to explain such wealth, etc.

All of this puzzles me greatly. Finally my conscience rises: I tell myself that such meditation is already a disgrace; that if the law is imperfect, if human prudence is faulty, if the chance that enriches some and frustrates others is absurd, if this combination of circumstances is immoral, I have no right as a result and that all the pleasures of ill-gotten wealth are not worth a quarter of an hour of my own esteem.

In short, I return the money.

You see, exclaims La Rochefoucauld, that you have been an honest man out of selfishness!...

Let us be clear: yes, out of the egoism of Justice, which is a contradiction in terms, and completely reverses your indictment.

How can we fail to see that there exists here a being whom the consideration of Justice, the feeling of his dignity in others, has distorted to the point of making him take the side of others against himself; that under the influence of this obsession with right there has formed in him, superior to his first will, a juridical will, which I will even call *supernatural*, not because I relate it to a transcendent or divine cause, but because it expresses a new state, superior to the *state of nature*, which tends more and more to erase it?

Let egoism therefore develop in this sphere as much as it wishes: far from imputing it to myself as a crime, I claim to make it the title of my holiness. Yes, I will shrink from public degradation. I will do a good deed out of human respect. I will push hypocrisy so far as to repeat this role, if I can, every day. I will use my selfishness to constantly create new rights for the consideration of my brothers; by dint of indulging in this selfish habit, I will make of it my second

nature. I will bask in my own worthiness; I will end up showing as much joy at following the suggestions of my self-respect as a member of society, as I used to show ardor in satisfying my private passions. It is precisely in this, and in this alone, that henceforth my VIRTUE consists.

Say now that my motives are not *pure*, since there is an interest in them: it is nothing more than a miserable equivocation, unworthy of a man of sense. The good action which in the system of Transcendental Justice had to relate to God, consequently to egoism, you are forced at this hour to relate to pure Justice, immanent in all men. Certainly, there is for the works of Justice, a delight of conscience, as there is a pleasure for the enjoyment of the senses. I would no longer be moral if I did not feel this delight. Theologians teach that the love of God in heaven is inseparable from bliss, that it is bliss itself. This is precisely what the theory of immanence says. The sacrifice of Justice is inseparable from bliss; it is felicity itself, no longer that selfish felicity whose sacrifice justice demands; but a superior felicity, such as the elevation of the subject to social dignity supposes. What more could La Rochefoucauld, Pascal, La Bruyère, Port-Royal and the whole Church demand?

## CHAPTER VII.

### Definition of Justice.

XXXIV. — We can now give the definition of Justice; later, we will see its reality.

1. Man, by virtue of the reason with which he is endowed, has the faculty of feeling his dignity in the person of his fellow man as in his own person, of affirming himself at once as individual and as species.

2. JUSTICE is the product of this faculty: it is *the respect, spontaneously experienced and reciprocally guaranteed, for human dignity, in some person and in whatever circumstance it finds itself compromised, and at whatever risk its defense exposes us.*

3. This respect is at the lowest level in the barbarian, who makes up for it by religion; it is strengthened and developed in the civilized, who practices justice for its own sake, and incessantly frees himself from all personal interest and all divine consideration.

4. Thus conceived, Justice, rendering all conditions equivalent and interdependent, identifying man and humanity, is virtually adequate to beatitude, the principle and end of man's destiny.

5. From the definition of Justice is deduced that of *right* and *duty*.

Right is for each the ability to demand from others respect for the human dignity in their person; — duty, the obligation for each to respect this dignity in others.

At base, right and duty are identical terms, since they are always the expression of respect, payable or due; payable because it is due, due because it is payable: they differ only in the subject, me or you, in whom the dignity is

compromised.

6. From the identity of reason in all men, and from the feeling of respect that leads them to maintain their mutual dignity at all costs, results *equality* before Justice.

*Modesty* is a form of Justice, a polite way of saying that, while reserving the rights of our dignity, we do not intend to rise above our fellow human beings and cause any harm to their self-respect. The ancients had a keen sense of this virtue; their biographies, as much as their harangues, offer beautiful models. Among Christians it degenerates into an affectation of humility; it is false.

*Pride, ambition* and *glory* (L) openly violate Justice. They call to mistrust, hatred and repression: it is a positive and direct offense against the dignity of others.

Glory is that pompous, swelling instinct that is ridiculed in the fable of the frogs and the ox. Glory, says the Scripture, belongs only to God, who alone cannot be exaggerated because he is infinite: *Dignus est accipere...gloriam*. It is as hateful in the nation as in the individual

7. From the distinction we have made between *Dignity* and JUSTICE — the first individual and unilateral; the second bilateral, indicating a relation of connection and solidarity — is deduced for the legislator the distinction to be established between the acts of the *private life* and the acts of the *public life*, and as a consequence the whole theory of the law on *defamation*.

The acts of private life are those that the man or the family accomplish by virtue of their personal and family individuality, in the secrecy of their dwelling, and which, not being directly connected to any foreign interest, do not come under any law and do not involve the dignity of anyone. Such facts cannot be revealed and made fun of, however ignoble or ridiculous they may be: this would be a lack of charity and justice, and would cause society more harm than profit.

Acts of public life are all those in which the dignity or interest of society are involved: such acts can be legitimately revealed and reproached, unless there has been condemnation and punishment: in the latter case the reproach becomes an insult, and it is no longer permitted.

According to these principles, it can be said that the French law on defamation is itself an outrage to public morals. It covers, without making any distinction between public and private life:

“Any allegation or imputation of a fact that undermines the honor or consideration of the person or body to which the fact is imputed is defamation. (*Law of May 17, 1819, art. 13.*)

“Under no circumstances will evidence by witnesses be admitted to establish the reality of offensive or defamatory facts.” (*Law of February 17, 1852, art. 28.*)

“It is forbidden to report on libel suits. (*Law of August 11, 1848.*)

These laws, all of them reactionary, have been made in the interest of the prominent persons that each new government makes it a duty to protect against the reproach of the citizens. They are of little interest to the masses, and the latitude they allow makes it disgusting for any man who does not feel himself the friend of power to resort to them. Such a manner of covering private life, of

repressing calumny and extinguishing hatred, is nothing but a reserve of impunity, to the profit of the influences of the moment.

XXXIII. — Some observations regarding this definition.

It is necessary, and its negation implies a contradiction: for if Justice is not innate in humanity, if it is superior, external, foreign to it, it follows that human society has no law of its own, that the collective subject has no mores, that the social state is a state against nature, civilization a depravity, speech, the sciences and the arts the effects of unreason and immorality: all propositions that common sense belies.

It states a fact, namely that, if there is not always and necessarily community of interests between men, there is always and essentially solidarity of dignity, something superior to interest.

It is pure of any mystical, physiological element. Instead of the religion of the gods, it is respect for ourselves; instead of an animal affection, a kind of organic magnetism, it is the exalted, impersonal sentiment that we have of the dignity of our species, a dignity that does not separate us from our liberty.

I must respect, and, if I can, cause my neighbor to be respected as myself: such is the law of my conscience. In consideration of what do I owe him this respect? In consideration of his strength, his talent, his wealth? They are external accidents, precisely what is disreputable in the human person. In consideration of the respect he pays me in turn? No, Justice is superior even to this interest. It does not wait for the reciprocal to act; it affirms and desires respect for human dignity, even among the enemy, which is why there is a *right of war*; even in the murderer, whom we kill, stripped of his quality as a man, which is why there is a *penal right*.

What makes me respect my neighbor is not the gifts of nature or the advantages of fortune; it is neither his ox, nor his ass, nor his servant, as the Decalogue says; it is not even my safety that he owes me, as I owe him mine: it is his quality as a man.

Justice is therefore a faculty of the soul, the first of all, that which constitutes the social being; but it is more than a faculty: it is an idea, it indicates a relation, an equation. As a faculty it is capable of development; it is this development that will constitute the education of humanity. As an equation, it presents nothing variable, arbitrary or antinomic; it is absolute and immutable like any law, and, like any other law, highly intelligible. It is through it that the facts of social life, indeterminate in their nature and contradictory, become susceptible to definition and order.

It follows from this that Justice, conceived as an obligatory relation at the same time as a power of the soul, cannot, by the deduction of its notion, lead to the subversion of itself, as has happened to morals every time that we have tried to establish it on religion, and would not fail to happen again if, as the Revolution is accused of, the substitution of the *Rights of Man* for respect from on high were to result in making man an idolater of self, that is to say, a God.

Justice, in fact, implies at least two terms, two persons united by common respect for their nature, diverse and rivalrous for all the rest. Let me take a

notion to worship myself: in the name of Justice I owe the same adoration to all men. Here, then, are as many gods as worshippers, which brings religion to naught, since if the debt is equal to the claim the result is zero. But that is not all: man is a perfectible being, which is equivalent to saying always imperfect. From which it follows that the respect I pay him can never amount to adoration and thus we are necessarily retained in Justice, the exact definition and full observance of which places an abyss between the ancient condition of humanity and the new.

XXXV. — This definition of Justice is confirmed by all previous definitions, incomplete and partial, if we examine them separately, but reproducing as a whole all the characteristics of that which we propose.

MOSES sums up his law: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.* In the book of Tobit we read the famous precept: Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you; from which it may be inferred that this precept formed part of the law and expressed its spirit.

*Me and my neighbor:* these are indeed the two terms of the equation; to *love*, that is the reality of the soul. But it is only love, and love cannot be commanded. What are we to do? As a motive for the love of the neighbor Moses gives us the love of the *Lord*, which destroys the reality of right and establishes Justice on a void.

CHRIST followed Moses: like him, he placed in the forefront the precept of the love of God, from which he deduces the love of the neighbor. But while Moses, legislator and judge, begins with love in order to arrive at Justice, commands what seems to him to be the most in order to secure what he considers the least, Jesus, messenger of love, tending to replace legislation with feeling, clings to love, and leaves justice to the Synagogue and to Caesar. It will be the death of his Church. In the spirit of the Gospel, in fact, charity, fraternity, community is the ideal; Justice, a state of imperfection.

According to the PYTHAGOREANS, Justice is *reciprocity* or the *talion*. Whereupon Aristotle observes that, in practice, reciprocity is not always just; which is true in certain cases, for example, in revenge, where insult is returned for insult, *oculum pro oculo, dentem pro dente*. Another defect of the Pythagorean definition is to stop at the idea, and not to arrive at the power, as Moses did.

ARISTOTLE says in turn: "Justice is that *moral quality* that leads men to do just things... The just is that which is in conformity with the law and with equality."

Aristotle's definition brings back the psychological element, omitted by the school of Pythagoras. But the Peripatetic goes from tautology to tautology when, after having said that Justice is a disposition of the will to do what is just, he defines what is just as what is in conformity with the *law* and with *equality*. To add to the obscurity, he remarks that equality, in practice, is not itself always just, any more than reciprocity; that it would be more exact to speak of *proportion*. By which we see that Aristotle had not arrived at that superior conception of right in which equality, reciprocity and proportionality become identical terms. As for

the efficacy of Justice, it does not matter. He says in proper terms that the multitude abstains from evil only through terror; that science can do nothing about it, and that everything depends, in the last analysis, on a *divine influence*, without which education and reason are powerless. (*Morale à Nicomaque*, translation by BARTHÉLEMY SAINT-HILAIRE.)

We have seen the Roman definition, according to ULPIAN: *Justitia est constans ac perpetua voluntas suum cuique tribuere*.

It generalizes in two words, *suum cuique* [to each his own], what Aristotle's definition left vague with respect to the legal relationship, sometimes egalitarian or reciprocal, and sometimes proportional. By completing Ulpian's definition with that of CICERO, *Justitia est animi habitus, communi utilitate comparatâ, suam cuique tribuens dignitatem*—"Justice is an attitude of mind, comparing the common interest, giving to each his own dignity,"—we see that by the words *suum cuique* we must understand personal dignity, *jus* or *dignitas*.

But where does this will come from? Is it from the essence of the soul, determined *a priori* or by external considerations? Cicero says well that Justice, by granting to each his dignity, reserves the common utility. From which it follows that the duty of the citizen is divided into two, the care of the dignity of others, the care of the public thing. Which comes first? Cicero does not explain himself: but the Roman religion, no less than the spirit of the patriciate, proves that the feeling of dignity in the Roman did not go beyond his own person; that his Justice was, if I dare say so, included in his egoism, and reached his neighbor only by motives of interest or religion, which had basically nothing imperative for the will and made the Justice hobbled and frail.

More naive than the Roman, the BARBARIAN defines right as *the reason of the strongest*. Look at it closely: this brutal definition, which Lafontaine taught us to laugh at from childhood, is basically none other than that of the moneylender: *Suum cuique*. It is the affirmation of personal prerogative, *jus*, manifested by force.

The reason of the strongest is opposed to *the reason of the most skillful*. Odysseus balances Ajax: *Fortisque viri tulit arma disertus*. It is still the affirmation of personal dignity, manifested by another faculty, intelligence. These definitions are true in that they forcefully place the seat of Justice and of right in the human person; they mark the starting point of science: they take the first step, and stop immediately.

SPINOZA: Right is the *power* that we have over nature, which is arbitrarily limited by the State. — It falls far short of the barbaric definition: Right is might.

HOBBS and BENTHAM: Right is the *interest (jus)* that we have to a thing. Very well; but who guarantees us the satisfaction of this interest? We are interested in many things for which the general sentiment nevertheless declares us without right: where does that come from? Doesn't Right imply something else that is not in interest? This definition, which has made a fortune in England, ruins Justice, and leaves in its place only calculation and license.

GROTIUS: Right is the *faculty* of doing everything that is not rendered *impossible* by the social state. — It is indeed a principle of legislation, that all that is not forbidden by law is permitted; it is quite another that Justice, if sometimes

it offends the particular interest, always serves the general interest, *communi utilitate comparata*, says Cicero. But never has a legislator claimed that this was all Justice. Grotius' definition, purely negative, amounts to that of Spinoza: it is not even on the level of that of the barbarians.

BAYLE, following the example of Ulpian, makes Justice a sense proper to the human soul, and consequently maintains that a society of atheists could exist as well or better than a society of fanatics. Bayle thereby separates the moral element from the religious element, but he does not delve into his thought and disregards it.

The philosophy of the EIGHTEENTH century followed Bayle: it sought the principle of morality, the reason of right and duty, in human nature, independent of divine sanction. It is on the path of truth, the complete understanding of which only time could bring.

GASSENDI, like Epicurus, Hobbes, Bentham and others, reduces Justice to egoism; Mandeville, Helvétius, Saint-Lambert, the whole sensualist school propelled themselves down this path. A fatal consequence to which the individualist definition of the moneylender must lead: *Suum cuique*.

WOLF, quoted by M. Renouvier: *Always act in such a way that your action can be regarded as included in the SERIES of natural things ordained by God, and strive to make yourself and others enter into these laws.* — This maxim is valuable in that it indicates on the one hand that Justice must have a character that is not egoist, but social; on the other, in that it lays down the principle of spontaneous justification and progress. It sins in that it causes the notion of God to reappear in Justice, which destroys its reality.

BERGIER. His definition is that of the Church, irreproachable from a religious point of view: "Right is what any man can do or require of others by virtue of a law. If there were no law, there would be no Right. Now, it is the divine law that is the foundation, the rule and the measure of my right."

The definition of Mr. BLOT-LEQUESNE falls within the previous one: Justice is prior and superior to the human race; it is the reason of God.

KANT strives to build morality, like geometry and logic, on an *a priori* conception outside of any empiricism, and does not succeed. His fundamental principle, the absolute command, or *categorical imperative*, of Justice, is a fact of experience, of which his metaphysics is powerless to give an interpretation. Right, he says, is the accord of my freedom with the freedom of all. Hence his maxim, imitated from Wolf: *Act in all things in such a way that your action can be taken as a general rule*. The least defect of these proposals is to pose Justice as a problem, rather than defining it. How are we to obtain this agreement of freedoms? According to what principle? How can I know that my action may or may not serve as a general rule? And what does it matter to me that it serves in this way? What does this abstraction mean to me? Also Kant, taking God for the buttress of Justice, thereby destroys Justice, and delivers up his system.

KRAUSE *et al*: Right is the *faculty of demanding* whatever is necessary for the fulfillment of my destiny. — Marvellous! Here is a definition that clearly poses the individual prerogative, the *jus* of the man and the citizen. There is only one thing missing, and that is to know whether the *faculty of demanding*, which



Krause bestows on me, is matched in my fellows by a disposition to obey. Another defect, no less capital, exists in this definition: it does not take into account the social prerogative, *communi utilitate comparatâ*, which in certain cases requires the sacrifice of the personality. It is pure egoism

HEGEL distinguishes between natural right and social right. The right of nature is the right of force; social right is the sacrifice of what is arbitrary and violent in natural right: it is the realization of liberty, the harmony of private interest with the general interest. We will see elsewhere that liberty, according to Hegel as according to Spinoza, is zero. It therefore remains that, the right of nature being force, and man not being able to live in the state of nature, force must pass to the collectivity, which makes of Justice, as well as liberty, a delegation. An impious conclusion against which liberty and justice protest in all consciences.

LERMINIER: "The first notion of Right occurs in a negative and restrictive form. Man encounters beings who resemble him. Then he conceives that he has the duty to *respect* those whom he calls his fellows, and that he has the right to *be respected* himself; that between him and them there is identity, and hence an equation of rights and duties. It is for man the obligatory, but inactive, recognition of his own liberty and that of others." (*Philosophie du Droit.*)

This definition of Right is certainly one of the best. The principle of identity, the source of respect, is clearly laid out there, and all mysticism eliminated. Unfortunately, this respect, as Lerminier says, is purely *negative* and *inactive*: it is astonishing, it is all that you would want; it is not the effect of a positive, energetic faculty, outside of which there is no justice, no salvation. Leave me alone, and I'll leave you alone: that is what the Right posited by Lerminier is. This is the opposite of what Ajax says to Odysseus in Homer—Lift me up, or let me lift you!—which expresses so well the right of force.

To make up for this *inactivity* of Right, Lerminier brought in a new principle, the principle of sociability, which brought people together and moved them from legal inertia to political and social solidarity. It is to fall back, through animal affections, inferior to Justice, into the inconvenience of transcendentalism. The sociability of man receives its form and its character from Justice; how could it create it? And if it does not create it, how could this inert Justice, even supported by the general interest, be able to stand against the demands of egoism? If Justice does not exist entirely, *a priori*, in the heart of man, it is nothing: neither religion, nor society, nor the State can give it energy, and we fall into failure.

JULES SIMON: Right is the ability to do what Duty prescribes; or more simply, Right is Duty. — And what is Duty? — The will of God in all things," replies Mr. Jules Simon. No one is more orthodox. Besides, it is fair to say that Mr. Simon has perfectly understood that his system destroys Justice. Justice for him does not exist: it is a complex feeling, *love of God, love of neighbor, love of oneself*, which sustains the theological hope of eternal rewards.

OUDOT: After having defined Right as the *Direction of Liberty by intelligence*; then having subordinated it to Duty, which he defines in turn: *the Idea of the direction to be given to Liberty in order to arrive at a goal whose perspective is*

*shown to it as an impulsive or final cause*, Mr. Oudot completes his theory by defining Justice: *the accord of the love of God and neighbor with a certain mistrust of self-love*. It is quite difficult to find oneself in all these directions, these agreements and these mistrusts. But it is clear that for Mr. Oudot, as for Mr. Jules Simon, Right and Duty merge with the ideas of need, instinct, subordination, that is to say, they have no reality of their own and *sui generis*; that Justice is in its turn confused with the ordinary affections of the soul, benevolence, sympathy, love, sociability, which we have in common with the beasts; that it has no more reality of its own than the Right; that finally this Right, this Duty, this Justice being subordinated to a superhuman sanction, which alone makes our needs, instincts and loves, in certain cases, something commanded, and thereby suggests to us the idea of Justice and Right, we can hold this idea, outside of theology, for a prejudice of the understanding, a presumption of pride and an insult to Divinity. Theory of the fall: the clearest product of the Normal School and the School of Law. Let it be said after that that we are making progress!

E. DE GIRARDIN: There is only one Right in the world, the Right of the strongest. Right is therefore force. Now, force is of two kinds: material force and intellectual force. Material force, that is the barbarian right; intellectual force, that is civilized right. Change then, transform material force into intellectual force, and you will arrive at this superior formula: *Reasoning is right*.

Thereupon M. de Girardin breaks lances to prove the excellence of the regime of reasoning over that of force. What emerges most clearly is that M. de Girardin protests against the right of the strongest; that he finds it detestable, iniquitous; that he abhors heroes and brigands, and that instead of fighting he asks to parley. Certainly M. de Girardin is right to trust his mind more than his muscles; but if I am the strongest, why does he want me to listen to him?.... All that he can say on this subject supposes a new principle, other than material force and intellectual force, by virtue of which he calls me back to the struggle to reason. He foresees this principle and names it: *Right*, he says, *is human inviolability*. But at the moment he recants, he denies *obligatory Justice*, which is none other than the feeling of this inviolability; he admits, for himself, only *reciprocal Justice*. Reciprocity, reciprocity, that's what he needs. But reciprocity, theoretical principle of credit and insurance operations, is always only a relation, a formula, an abstraction, which in no way implies in itself that the will must submit to it. Reciprocity, in a word, although it is the form of Justice, is not its energy. It lacks reality.

M. DE LOURDOUEIX, adversary of M. de Girardin, gives in his turn the following definition: *Right is the shortest line that goes from the reason of God to the reason of man*. This is a formula imitated from Cicero: *The first law is the right reason of God*, which amounts to saying, setting aside the image of the straight line and the mention of the Supreme Being, that Right is right reason, or, in other words, that *reasoning is Right*, as M. de Girardin had suggested. But it was written, in divine reason no doubt, that these two gentlemen, battling in front of the public, could not and should not get along. (M)

XXXVI. — Let us summarize this whole study in a few lines.

The point of departure for Justice is the sentiment of personal dignity.

Before our fellows this sentiment is generalized and becomes the sentiment of human dignity, which it is in the nature of reasonable beings to feel in the person of others, friend or enemy, as in their own.

It is for this reason that Justice is distinguished from love and from all the feelings of affection, that it is gratuitous, the antithesis of selfishness, and that it exercises on us a constraint that takes precedence over all other feelings.

It is also for this reason that in primitive man, in whom the dignity is brutal and the personality grasping, Justice takes the form of a supernatural commandment and is based on religion.

But soon, under the influence of this auxiliary, Justice deteriorates; contrary to its formula, it becomes aristocratic, is misunderstood among the common people, and, in Christianity, reaches the degradation of humanity. The supposed respect for God banishes respect for man everywhere; and, respect for man annihilated, Justice succumbs, and society with it.

Then comes the Revolution, which opens a new age for humanity. Through it Justice, vaguely known in the earlier period, and practiced by instinct, appears in the purity and fullness of its idea.

Justice is absolute, immutable, not susceptible to more or less. It is the inviolable meter of all human acts.

Suppose a society where Justice is preceded, however slightly, by another principle, religion for example; or else in which some individuals enjoy a consideration, however slight, superior to that of others: I say that, Justice being virtually annulled, it is inevitable that sooner or later society will perish. However weak the pre-eminence of faith and feudalism may be, the day will come when the superior will demand the sacrifice of the inferior. Then, as a consequence, the inferior will revolt. Such is the history of humanity; such is the Revolution.

This evolution of the juridical idea, in the mind that conceives it and in the history that represents it, is inevitable. If there are rational creatures on Jupiter, Venus or Mars, these creatures, by virtue of the identity of their reason, have the same notion of Right as we do.

And if these same creatures, before arriving at the full and pure notion of Right, had, like us, by the constitution of their intelligence, to pass through a preparatory period, during which Justice would have been observed as a sovereign order, it would still follow that their religion, subordinating Justice, pronouncing consequently the unworthiness of the legal subject, must have undergone the same phases as ours, and its last formula would have been Christianity. Christianity, like Justice, is inherent in all the humanities of the universe. Subject to the law of progress, they must, according to the activity of their nature, be subject for some period of time to the oscillations of faith and reason, of liberty and despotism, and obtain their emancipation by the same Revolution.

The Revolution passed over us like a torrent. Its history is not done, its profession of faith has yet to be written; for fifty years its friends have done it

more harm by their ineptitude than its adversaries. And yet, despite the infidelity of its annalists, despite the poverty of its teaching, the Revolution, by the sole virtue of its name, more powerful than that of Jehovah, carried everything along. Since the storming of the Bastille, there has not been a power in France that has dared to deny it to its face, and pose frankly as a counter-revolution. All have betrayed it however, even the man of the Terror, even Robespierre, and especially Robespierre.... Faced with the Revolution, the Church itself is forced to veil its face and hide its grief. Would you dare, Monsignor, you and all the French episcopate, to issue a decree abrogating of the rights of man and of the citizen? I dare you to do it.

It is written: You will not disrespect your brother; *Turpitudinem fratris tui non revelabis*. There it is, that law of respect, the principle of all justice and all morality: you will find it inculcated in twenty places of the Pentateuch. Moses spoke as did the idolater; the consent of all antiquity is against you. It is to this tribunal of the universal conscience that I refer you and the whole Church; to this incorruptible tribunal, whose jurisdiction you cannot accept or challenge without dooming yourselves.

## APPENDIX.

### NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS.

#### Note (A).

PRINCIPLE OF PERSONAL DIGNITY. — The object of this study has been to demonstrate that Justice is born within us from the feeling of our own dignity; that it is the same thing as this dignity, so that, whether it is a question of our neighbor or of ourselves, Justice and dignity are in us identical, adequate and solidary. So that the following maxim can be taken for an axiom of morality and of law: Any outrage to personal dignity is a violation of Justice, and vice versa.

The principle of personal dignity is the one that Mr. Cousin gives to morality: "TO BE FREE, REMAIN FREE," says the leader of the eclectic school. Now, what is liberty, from the point of view of practical reason, and in the philosophy of M. Cousin? The integrity of the person, of the faculties, and above all of the mores. The possession of oneself, through the integrity of mores and the balance of passions and faculties, what we have called *dignity*, is liberty.

From another point of view, that of sociability, the principle of personal dignity and of its identity with Justice, is again the basis and essential feature of contemporary morals.

"The feeling that dominates me," says a writer of the same shade as M. Cousin, M. Alexis de Tocqueville, "when I find myself in the presence of a human creature, however humble his condition, is that of the original equality of the species; and therefore I concern myself perhaps even less with pleasing or serving them than with not offending their dignity."

Respect for personal dignity is the measure of all public freedoms. M. Guizot says, in *Mémoires de mon temps*: "One does not elevate souls without freeing them." The converse is also true.

How, it will be said, do writers such as Cousin, Alexis de Tocqueville and Guizot deduce from a principle that is dear to them all human morality, all revolutionary law, apart from all religious belief?

We do not undertake to explain the inconsistencies of others: we will answer, only for ourselves, that the absolute incompatibility between the laws of morality and the dogmas of religion had never been proposed until now; that then religion, as an aspiration towards the absolute, which can never be entirely destroyed, was supposed to have, in mores, always the same necessity, the same intensity, the same influence; no one asked whether its action was purely transitory; if, from a certain moment, it should decrease by reason of the progress of Justice. It is, moreover, the character of eclectic philosophy, like that of conservative politics, to maintain all the principles, all the spontaneity, all the forces of humanity, without worrying about their agreement.

Respect for personal dignity is the principle of all the social virtues that the moralists ordinarily distinguish from Justice, but which are only its varied

forms: affability, politeness, tolerance, charity.

“We dishonor Justice,” says Fénelon, “when we do not add gentleness and condescension to it: it is doing evil to the good.”

The principle of personal dignity finally appears as a sanction of Justice, in that it makes us superior to the iniquity of others: “You bear injustices,” says Pythagoras. “Console yourself; the misfortune is to make them.” Stoicism offers nothing finer: it is there in its entirety.

If the offense to the dignity of persons is an attack on Justice, the offense made to the dignity of a people is the subversion of all justice: this is why despotism, tyranny, police or priestly inquisition are agents of corruption and death.

A corollary of this principle is that the tyrant can never be just, and that a despot cannot be said to be a good king. Personal government, whether avowed or surreptitious, despotism and tyranny are an outrage to national dignity.

A second corollary is that, in a society, authority is adequate to Justice, since there cannot be in the state any dignity superior to national dignity, and that national dignity is *Justice* itself.

#### Note (B).

ORIGIN OF RELIGION. — All that we say here about the meaning and origin of religion, and about the conception of divine spirituality, is confirmed by the learned professor of Strasbourg, F.-G. BERGMANN:

“Man is drawn to religion, first by the invincible feeling he has of his *physical* insufficiency to protect himself against the enemy and the inexorable forces of nature, and against the hazards and accidents of life; then, by the feeling of his *intellectual* weakness, to understand reality, life and the world, in their essence and in their causes; finally by the feeling of his *moral* impotence to satisfy the law of Justice which imperiously announces itself in his conscience. He therefore feels the need to lean on some Being who is physically more powerful than himself, who is the keystone of his more or less scientific system, and who is finally the sanction of his moral conscience.” (*Les Gètes, ou La filiation généalogique des Scythes aux Gètes et des Gètes aux Germains et aux Scandinaves*, p. 152.)

This, says Bergmann, is how primitive humanity proceeds, the child-man. The first feeling he experiences, when he wakes up on earth, is that of his physical, intellectual and moral weakness. He will triumph, in time, over the first by his industry; over the second by philosophy, science, indefatigable observation; over the third by discipline, by society, by the maintenance of his dignity, and by the happiness that virtue gives him. Until then he seeks his support in a superior being: of what nature will this being be?

“Originally,” Bergmann continues, “no one conceived of a god, an object of physical nature, other than as a living being (ζῷον *animal*), endowed with *superhuman* power, and having precisely the form that one saw in him in nature. The first object which was thus clothed with divinity by the first peoples was the sky, the brilliance of which ceaselessly struck their gaze, attracted their

attention, night and day, by its marvelous and sublime phenomena, and inspired them through its beneficent influences the idea and religious reverence of a superhuman, powerful, and generally benevolent being. As the sky had no human figure, it could only be conceived at first as a gigantic animal, as a *zoomorphic* god.... From its characteristic attribute, which is light, it was named *Tivus*, the shining one, the same as *Ziu*, *Zeus*, *Dius*, *Djou-piter*, etc.

“The first conception of divinity was therefore purely *zoomorphic*. Then it became, by elimination, *anthropomorphic*, and finally purely *spiritualistic*. (Ibid., p. 154.)

Bergmann then quotes a multitude of etymologies in support of his theory, of which here are a few: *Gott*, name of God in German, the Good; — *Bog*, in Slavic, the venerable; — *Bacchos*, from the Sanskrit *paka*, the respectable, the same meaning as *Bog*; — *Moloch*, the king; — *Baal*, the master; — *Adonai*, the lord; — the *Azes*, in the language of the Scandinavians, supporters, protectors. — The meaning commonly given to the name of *Jehovah*, He who is, is, in our opinion, false: this word signifies the Mighty or the Strong; in some passages he is called the *strength of Israel*. In the Psalms, he is constantly invoked as a support: *Jehovah* is my fortress, *Dominus arx mea*. The most interesting of all these etymologies of the name of God is that of Ormuzd, the god of the Magi, in the Zende language, *Ahuro-maz-daô*, Sun much-shining, or better, much-knowing. God, the Sun, is the source of all light, consequently of all knowledge: he is, as Bergmann says, the keystone of the scientific system of man, precisely what we say today of Justice.

Whatever the conception of the Supreme Being, zoomorphic or anthropomorphic, he is for the worshipper the subject in which force, science and Justice inhere: it is thus that he becomes the guarantor of public faith and contracts, the author and sanction of law.

“The mythological relationship that existed in ancient times between the Sun God and Justice has left traces in the *judiciary* practices of the Scandinavians and the Germans. According to these usages, Justice could only be done while the Sun was racing across the sky. The judge sitting in court had to have his face turned to the Sun, that source of light, purity and justice. The shield, or the *targe*, symbol of the Sun (*Targitavus*) and of royalty, hung above the seat of the head of the jury; so that to go to the *targe* could mean, among the Germans and the Scandinavians, to go to the judicial assembly. Then the court sat at the great times of the year, that is to say at the great *religious* holidays; and one took advantage of the great concurrence of men which took place at the time of these religious and judicial assemblies to also engage in *commerce*, under the protection of justice. The place, all around or very close to the place where the court was held, was therefore transformed each time into a fairground; and just as in the Christian Middle Ages the name of the *mass*, or of the religious act by which the religious festival was opened, became the very name to designate the fair (Ger. *messe*, fair), so, among the peoples of Geto-Gothic origin, the word *targe* also took on the meaning of market (Swed. *torg* n. market; Spanish, *trueco*). From this name the Goths of Spain formed the verb *trocar*, from which is derived the French *troquer*. (Ibid., p. 200.)

Note (C).

REALIZATION OF THE DIVINE CONCEPT. — This question is one of those to which it is important to call the attention of the people with the greatest force. Under the names of deism, pantheism, natural religion, etc., an abominable superstition is hatched, to the shame of the century, and to the loss of reason and liberty. Those who work at it with the most zeal do not yet seem to suspect the result of their efforts; they do not see that after having eliminated the living, real, positive god of Genesis and Sinai, the god of Adam, of Noah, of Abraham, of Moses and of the prophets; the god incarnate in Jesus Christ, always present by his spirit in the Church, who gives himself as nourishment in the Eucharist, they prepare, with their deism, a realization or incarnation of the Supreme Being a hundred times more monstrous. Here, the facts speak louder than all of the denials: we have need, in order to prove our claim, only to show how they come about.

The idea of God as pure spirit, governing the world by the laws of nature alone and without further intervention of his wisdom and power, without special manifestations, without miracles, without internal or external communication with man; this idea, which is that of pure deism, can be maintained as long as the god remains in the state of a philosophical notion, a cosmic hypothesis, an aesthetic or moral given, having life only in books and in school.

But the day when this god enters into the practice of humanity, he tends to realize himself, to manifest himself by sensible signs, to take on a body, soul, face and character; to be communicated to certain chosen ones; finally to establish a cult and a priesthood. This movement of realization is inevitable: the contrary would imply contradiction. One does not *practice* God without *realizing* him, just as in politics one does not affirm the absolutism of the state without creating a despot. This is how all religions, all theologies, all mythologies and all churches have been formed. It is in this way that Christianity, after having first reduced Pharisaic and pontifical mosaicism to its simplest expression, by posing itself as a monotheism without temple, without sacrifice, without priesthood, almost without dogmas, is then developed by the necessity of its practice into a theology, that is, into an endless realization of the Divinity. Civilization lives no more on religious fictions than on legal fictions: it seeks in everything the true, that is to say the real and the positive. Put the idea of God at the head of the constitution; soon the people will want to see this God; they will enter into communication with him, they will give him prophets, apostles, a Christ.

Haven't we had, since 89, the goddess *Reason*, the messiah Robespierre with his prophetess Catherine Théot, the *Mapah*, and so many others? Didn't M. Enfantin make people worship his androgyny? Wasn't Napoleon I in the process of becoming a demi-god when the disasters in Russia put an end to his apotheosis? Aren't the Mormons beginning again, at this moment, in the face of America, the biblical marvels, which the fanatic John of Leyden had already attempted to put into practice in the sixteenth century? Mesmerism, table-



turning, poltergeists, sympathetic snails, aren't they ready to hand over to old Europe a religion and a god? They only await the command. Doesn't Catholicism itself redouble its prestige?

*Well! what time was ever more fertile in miracles?*

Like Mosaicism in its final moments, does it not already have its abbreviators, its simplifiers, its gnostics? Have we not pronounced the name of *neo-Christianity*? Isn't the whole philosophical mob at work collecting its debris? One seizes upon the idea of God, and turns it into pure theism or natural religion. The other takes the Triad for himself; a third collects the dogma of original prevarication; all affirm Providence, human imbecility, the need for reparation. We do not agree on the future life: these make it a circle of existences through the worlds, those a metempsychosis. However, it must be believed that the new religion is not about to be established. Every day brings new data to this great work. Among the strange Masons of this incomprehensible Babel, some, while affirming the distinction of substances and the necessity of a subsequent life to fulfill the *desiderata* of the latter, deny, with all the energy of their faith, the existence of a Supreme Being; others, taking the diametrically opposed point of view, revert to polytheism, which in their eyes is much more reasonable, more lively, more fruitful, more ideal than monotheism, and above all much easier to reconcile with the conditions of science.

What, however, is the common thought of all these secondary creators, who could no longer be called the increment, *jovis incrementum*, but the after-effects of the divinity, if they inspired us with even more pity than disgust?

This thought is that the people need a religion; it is that the people by themselves have neither conscience nor reason, *non est in eo sanitas*, and that they would be ungovernable if they were not dominated by the terror of the gods and the compensatory or penal compensations of the future life.

So watch over yourselves, people of the people! Do not allow yourself to be drawn into these insolent religions, whose first and last word is to dishonor you dogmatically, in order to then piously exploit you. Remember, morning and evening, that the glory of man on earth is to suffice; that you possess within yourselves all the conditions of virtue and happiness; and that your first law is to guard your soul and bow to no deity either of heaven or earth or hell.

Note (D).

SEPARATION OF RELIGION AND MORALITY AMONG THE ANCIENTS. — There are few ideas, in matters of philosophy, literature, and morality, which are not, so to speak, as old as humanity itself. A contemporary writer, M. Demogeot, *Histoire de la littérature*, observed that the ancients had already laid down the principle of morality without religion. But this theory had no development. Greece was only a prelude to philosophy. Starting with Alexander, the more the world advances, the less it seems able to do without the help of religion; and as the idea has no real novelty until it is first realized, it can and must be said that the separation of faith and morals entered the world with the French Revolution.

Note (E).

OPINION OF SENECA ON REVELATION. — Seneca's thought, as it is presented in the text, may seem exaggerated. He says in the same place: *Quid aliud est natura quam Deus?* Nature, what is it other than God? But there would be much to do if it were necessary to reconcile all the ideas that fall from the pen of Seneca. He is a kind of eclectic, a mind open to all new ideas; sometimes theist, sometimes pantheist, mystic and reasoner, conservative of traditions and apostle of the revolution, a man whose speech is the echo of universal thought, still confused and contradictory, much more than of his own. This is how, after having expressed this idea, reported below (page 54): "To obey God is liberty;" — and this other: "So great a thing that virtue cannot subsist without the help of God," he said: "Are you asking me in what this absolute liberty consists? To fear neither men nor gods. *Quæris que sit ista absoluta libertas? No homines timere, no Deos.*" A thought that can still be explained in the religious sense.

Note (F).

MONOTHEISM. — It is common enough today, even among writers who admit no religion, to make monotheism a prerogative of the Semitic peoples, and its establishment in the civilized world a sort of humanitarian mission of the race of Israel. All this would suppose that the monotheistic conception is more rational, more approaching the truth, more worthy of civilized nations, more moral, more social, finally, than the polytheistic conception, which distinguishes, it is said, the Indo-Germanic peoples.

There are, in these various assertions, almost as many errors as there are words.

First of all, it is impossible to prove, by any monument, that monotheism is more natural to Semitic peoples than to Iaphetic peoples, or, what amounts to the same thing, that it originated and developed among the first, who would then have revealed it to the second. The opposite would rather be the truth.

In remote times, polytheism is everywhere, in Egypt, in Arabia, in Palestine. Monotheism is no less frequent, if by monotheism we mean the adoration, among a people, of a special divinity, to the exclusion of all the others.

Polytheism is found even in the Decalogue. When Jehovah said to the Hebrews through the mouth of Moses: *You shall have no other gods in my presence*, he does not deny the existence of these gods, he only claims to enjoy, to their exclusion, the worship of Israel. It is in this sense that the Israelites themselves understood it, as can be seen from a passage in the book of Judges: where Jephthah, addressing himself to the king of the Ammonites, claims in the name of Jehovah the ownership of the territory of Canaan, just as the Ammonites claimed ownership of their country in the name of their god Chamos. In other passages of the Bible, Jehovah is put on the same line as the other gods, which, I repeat, implies at least theoretical, if not practical, polytheism, each nation being supposed to serve, in a particular way, the god it

had chosen as protector. The same thing takes place in the Greek cities: each, originally, has its national god or goddess; Pallas or Minerva reigns in Athens, Venus at Sparta, Juno at Samos, Diana at Ephesus, Jupiter at Dodona, Apollo at Delphi, etc., like Jehovah at Jerusalem, Astarte at Sidon, Chamos among the Ammonites, Moloch among the Moabites, Baal, Mammon, Beelzebub, etc., in other localities. Here is polytheism and monotheism combined together: in this respect, I repeat, there is no difference between the sons of Japheth and those of Shem. The plurality of gods, *elohim*, is so familiar to the Hebrew language that this plural is continually constructed with a singular proper name: *Jehovah my gods*; *Chamos your gods*; as if the names of Jehovah, Chamos, etc., indicated a divine collectivity, just as those of Israel, Ammon, Moab, etc., indicate a human collectivity. Then, the tribes and the cities approaching, forming alliances, the gods seem to make a pact in their turn: Israel sacrifices to the gods of its neighbors, who on their side send offerings to Jehovah. This is what the Bible talks about *fornication*. The Greek towns use it in the same way; the promiscuity is everywhere: that is polytheism.

In the second place, if it cannot be said that monotheism arose and developed, as an indigenous product, among the Semites, while polytheism reigned among the Indo-Germanic races, it is no more true that the Jews were charged, by a kind of providential mission, to propagate this belief in the world. All of this is an illusion of history, caused by the determination that monotheism received, at the decisive moment of its disclosure.

The dogma of the unity of God, as a principle of religion, is the product of an elimination that has taken place naturally, slowly, among all peoples, much less by philosophical meditation than by the political revolutions of states. The conquest involving, if not the total abrogation of the cult of the vanquished people, at least the supremacy of that of the victorious people, a host of divinities returned to nothingness, simply because the cities they protected had been incorporated into other states. Jehovah would have been lost, like Moloch, Chamos, Tartac, and so many others, if the Jewish priesthood had not succeeded in obtaining from Cyrus, after the capture of Babylon, an edict restoring Judaic nationality. To restore the nation, to rebuild the Temple, it was all one. It seemed so extraordinary, it was such an amazing thing to see a people, a god, so to speak rise from the grave and live a new life, that the Jews thought themselves invincible from that moment, and began to hope for their Jehovah and for themselves destinies similar to those of the empires of Assyria and Persia. All nations, said the prophets, were to come to worship in Jerusalem, as they had gone to Babylon: this is expressed by the honorary titles given to Jehovah of *God of gods*, *Lord of lords*, *God of armies*, *To whom none of the gods is comparable*. It's still polytheism, no longer, it is true, a democratic polytheism as in the past, when the gods walked in tandem, it is a hierarchical polytheism. The courtesy of Alexander towards the great pontiff Jaddus was the height of Judaic exaltation. So when later Antiochus Epiphanes undertook to make the Jews fornicate with the gods of Greece, it was no longer time: a party of puritans form; persecution brought rebellion, and *Jehovah's people* regained its independence for some time under the Maccabees. At that time, polytheism had long been undermined

among Europeans by philosophy; the unity of God was taught in the mysteries, without the Jews, or any nation among the Semites, even suspecting this revolution. The Hebrew language, devoid of abstract terms, is incapable of expressing a metaphysical idea: how do we expect the people to have conceived from the outset, by an intuition diametrically opposed to their genius, the idea of the unity of God, the most metaphysical of all ideas? What proves that monotheism, in the philosophical sense of the word, had not yet entered the minds of the Jews in the first century of the Christian era, is precisely their messianic faith. What is messianism? The supremacy of the god of the Jews above all other gods, and, consequently, the domination of Israel over all peoples. Monotheism is so little a Jewish or Semitic idea that it can be said that the race of Shem has been disavowed, rejected by it: this is expressed in the declaration of the apostles to the Jews, obstinate in their particularism: *Since you reject the word of God, of the universal God, we pass on to the Gentiles.*

Monotheism is a creation of the Indo-Germanic spirit; it could only emerge from there. What caused it to be baptized in Palestine—it received circumcision only under Mahomet—is, as we have said in the text, that monotheism positing itself, as a revolutionary antithesis, in the face of imperial and conservative pantheonism, logic wanted it to start from the most incandescent center of the revolution, to appropriate its theology, cosmogony, liturgy, traditions, and even language.

As for the superiority, theoretical and practical, of monotheism over polytheism, after having been, for nearly 2,000 years, an axiom of metaphysics and morals, it seems today, among lovers of religion, to become doubtful again. We appreciate, more than we had done before, this splendid polytheism, which had given such a magnificent flight to the human personality, and the memory of which is associated, in the memory of men, with the creations of the most poetic, most marvelous and of the most accomplished art. We begin to find that, being losing in reality what it gains in extent, the world might be full of spirits of all sizes, from the spirit of man to that of Sirius, from the spirit of Sirius to that of the largest system, and that the spirit or the universal being was, like Hegel's absolute being, a pure nothingness. If it were up to M. Renouvier, one of our most recent critical philosophers, the religious world would unhesitatingly make this evolution, which at least, if we are to believe the exact and positive philosopher, would have some chance of not being so easily reduced to the absurd.

What is certain is that monotheism, where it was cultivated, could not maintain itself in the purity of its essence. From before Jesus Christ, Plato and others distinguished in God different hypostases; the Gnostics carried the number up to eight, ten, twelve; the Kabbalah got lost in the same speculations, to which the Council of Nicaea put an end, in the year 325 A. D., by deciding that there would be three persons in God, neither more nor less.

The example of Mahomet, who does not *associate*, that is to say who denies the collectivity in God, in no way invalidates the preceding observations. Mahomet did not appear among the still idolatrous Arabs until the sixth century AD. His monotheism is borrowed from that of the Jews and of Arius, whose descent we have just explained. If there is more unitary rigor in the Allah of the

Arabs than in the Christian God and the Jehovah of the Jews (see the *Book of Wisdom*, and *Job*, v. XXVIII), this comes both from the necessity in which the *Believers* found themselves to oppose the old religions, and from their theological incapacity.

Note (G).

RELIGIOUS DEMOCRACY. — An opinion still very widespread among democrats is that religion by itself is, whatever may be said, favorable to liberty, to equality, to the development of justice, but that it has been distorted and dishonored by the priests. This was the opinion of Voltaire, Rousseau, Robespierre and the Jacobins; it was this opinion that prepared the reopening of the churches and the Concordat, and which, nowadays, has procured a certain vogue for the school of M. Buchez, that of P. Leroux and a few others. But the illusion dissipated: little by little we returned to the true principle of the Revolution, to the faith of Diderot, of Condorcet, of Volney, of Mirabeau, of Sieyès, of the Gironde, of Danton, of Cloutz. The religious republican is becoming increasingly rare: we will not find today an assembly of democrats who voted for the preamble of the Constitution of 1848.

Here is what a citizen of Charente-Inférieure wrote to us last year, remaining faithful to the profession of faith of the *Savoyard Vicar*:

“Except for one great thing, genius, which you have more than me, and another less great thing, fame, I think I see enough analogies between us to take the boldness to write to you, and even to hope for a good and cordial response.

“Like you, I am the son of a blacksmith, a former volunteer in '92;

“Like you, I was a language teacher;

“Like you, I have written a grammar, of which I ask you to accept a copy, and on which I earnestly solicit your opinion;

“Like you, I believe that all the priesthoods have compromised the religious idea.

“But I don't believe, like you, that this idea is lost, nor that it should or can be lost. I see in it, on the contrary, the true and indefectible distinction of Humanity; I take the joke seriously: *All animals are reasonable; man alone is religious*.

“You yourself, O confessor and martyr, how religious you are, whatever you may say! religious to the god Justice, who would certainly be the true one, if you recognized in him a personality, the supreme personality, without which my humble logic searches in vain for the effective cause of our little personalities.

“Will you allow me to say how I explain this difference in our fundamental opinions? By the difference of our cults, of our religious education.

“You know: *Omnis repletio mala, perdicum autem pessima*. [“All overeating is bad, but partridges are the worst.”] Catholicism has made you eat too much of its partridges, which, it is said, are a little past their prime. I perfectly understand your indignation; I have seen many other cases with the same cause. As for me, Protestantism has served me, and at my discretion, only unleavened bread and bitter lettuce: I always have an appetite for religious food.

Neither the god of Calvin, nor the god of Hildebrand,  
Satisfied my heart; it has sensed a greater one.

“Ah! this one, when you come to preach it!... Atheists, generous Monsieur Proudhon, alas! they are known by their fruits; and you are not one who bears these fruits.

“Believe therefore in God, in the being *just* in essence, in the formal, although inaccessible, ideal of *Justice*, in the indispensable friend of the People, you child of the People; in the eternal worker, noble smith of thought; and then there won't be a nail that you won't be able to drive.

“It's even, it seems to me, the one and only way to recork those of your real opponents. There is reason to fear that by not employing it you will do their business better than ours, in spite of yourself.

“I also know that nowadays you have to sing above your own pitch to be heard; but your timbre has enough bite to do without this dissonance.

Leave the artifice there, it is not made for you.

“You don't need it any more... than my rash advice, which however, I'm sure, won't displease you: you have too much wit not to say that it's a way, in some dreamers, to show their sympathy and admiration.”

If the author of this letter, as affectionate as he is witty, had read me better, or understood me better, I am not saying that he would not have found anything in my book to reproach, but his observations would certainly have focused on anything else.

Thus, I neither believe nor say anywhere that *the priesthoods have compromised the religious idea*: it is an analogy to be removed between my honorable correspondent and myself. I say on the contrary that it is the RELIGIOUS IDEA that COMPROMISES THE PRIESTHOOD; in other words, it is not the Church that makes religion, but religion that makes the Church; so that if the latter has lost sight of Justice, the fault is not with the corruption of the clergy, as the Calvinists say, but precisely with the religious idea, represented by the Church.

Thus, again, I do not deny that religion, although it has, in my opinion, become incompatible with morality, is one of the traits that distinguish man from other animals. On the contrary, I admit this distinction; I even admit that the mark is indelible. Only, I maintain that religion is only a figure, a poetry, a mythology of Justice, and that this is why Justice, affirming itself, no longer has anything to do with religion. Let this thesis be rejected, well and good: but let it not be suppressed by attacking me; because, as we know, deleting is not answering.

It pleases my correspondent to make me an *atheist*. — But, although I am perhaps of all mortals the one least tormented by the fear of God, I am not an atheist; I have always protested, and in the most serious way, against this qualification. Let us not argue about the nature and attributes of God; let us stick to the vulgar definition: that one is an atheist, who dogmatically denies the existence of this God. Now, I profess to believe and to say that we cannot legitimately deny or affirm anything that is absolute: this is one of the reasons

for which I reject the divine concept of morality. Let it be said that such a doubt is untenable, that by the sole fact that God is possible, he is, and that I can no longer remain indifferent to him. I understand the objection, and if it is made, I'll try to answer it. But don't make me an atheist, when my philosophy itself opposes the qualification.

Catholic education is attacked for the atheism, real or supposed, into which it sometimes happens that Orthodox Christians fall. They much prefer Protestant education, which, at least, they say, leaves us with an appetite for religious things. I confess that in my eyes this would be a sad recommendation for Protestantism. But I don't see that there are fewer atheists among Protestants than among Catholics; I even maintain that there are more of them, were it only for this consideration that Protestantism, by virtue of its principle, tends necessarily, and hardly inconsequently, to deism, which is a disguised atheism, as Bossuet put it so well. What proves it is that a notable part of the Protestants, the most religious, feeling that the faith was going away, have separated from the mother church and form a separate sect, under the names of Pietists, Methodists, etc. To save their religion, in short, the most pious among the Protestants return to Catholicism.

My opponent boasts of having found a *greater* God than the God of Calvin and the Popes. It would be generous for him to let us know him, this God. I am very much afraid that what he takes for an enlarged idea of the Divinity is, on the contrary, its vanishing. The more the idea gains in extent, says logic, the more it loses in reality. This is what happens, for example, when the religious man passes from polytheism to monotheism, from the latter to pantheism, etc.

But let's not quibble over the details: let's get to the point. The fact is that a fraction of the republican party after having denied divine right according to Gregory VII, accepts it according to J.-J. Rousseau, Robespierre and Napoleon. Now here is what, without worrying more about the existence or non-existence of God, we oppose to this party of mired revolutionaries, and that we beg them to refute seriously:

1. In civilization, the religious movement is inverse to that of liberty and science, so that what is progress for the latter means, implies retreat for religion, and vice versa .

2. The intervention of an external authority, natural or supernatural, in the order of Justice and as a sanction of Justice, is destructive of Justice. In other words, Justice asserts and defends itself alone, or it does not exist.

3. The worship rendered to the gods has as its inseparable corollary the disdain, *dedignationem*, of man and his degradation, as the theory of an original prevarication demonstrates.

4. The idea of God, however metaphysical it may be, from the moment it is introduced into social practice, tends to realize itself physically, to constitute a priesthood and to bring back idolatry, messianism and all superstitions.

These fundamental propositions are the main subject of our publication. Let them be refuted, let us be shown how the abstract idea of God can become a positive law of practical reason without entailing all these consequences: then we will see what we have to do.

Note (H).

CONDITIONS OF A NEW RELIGION. — It is certain that religion tends to be rationalized as civilization progresses. Anthropomorphic polytheism is superior to zoomorphism, in that an idol in human form is something higher than an idol in the form of a bull; likewise the monotheism taught by Plato, Anaxagoras, and preached in the mysteries, is superior to polytheism, in the sense that the first testifies to a higher degree of abstraction than the second. This *elevation* of the religious idea is what deludes many people. We see in it a perfection, a progress of religion, and we like to believe that, as Christianity has regenerated society by raising itself above polytheism; all the same it may be, it is probable, even necessary that a new religion, transforming Christianity, and elevating religious thought to an unknown degree, rejuvenates society. A poor sophism, that the slightest examination will make disappear!

What is this alleged perfection of the religious idea? Quite simply the return of man to reason, the retaking of possession of ourselves through philosophy and liberty. In other words, the so-called progress of religion is nothing other than the progress of the revolution that initiates it and assimilates it. In the first moments of this great crisis, the return to reason is concealed in the form of an ascent in religion: thus humanity, in its greatest conversions, testifies to its conservative spirit, and is reluctant to change its mind. But it is obvious that this ascent is nothing but a retreat: this results from the comparison of dogmas, and above all from the increasing pretensions to rationalism.

*The reason in my verses leads man to faith,*

said the younger Racine. Such is the thesis of the Fathers of the Church, of the Doctors, of the Councils, of every Christian, in a word, who aspires to realize his faith. But where does this rationalism lead us?

The ancient gods, including the god of Moses, and in many cases also that of the Christians, while boasting of enlightening men, of warning them by their oracles, take pleasure in confusing reason with absurd mysteries and incredible wonders. The unintelligible and the impossible remain, during the great religious period, the distinctive signs of the divine spirit and the seal of its power. But little by little this smoke dissipates: one comes to conceive that reason in God is of no other form and nature than that which manifests itself in man. It is above all, it is said, from the point of view of intelligence that man was created in the image of God, whose *Word* or *Logos*, the personification of universal reason, even ended up taking our flesh. And because we have discovered that God, as an intelligent and moral being, must resemble man, we imagine that we have come a long way in religion.

Undoubtedly, reason, science, insight, memory, foresight, all the faculties of the mind, are incomparably greater in God than in man; but in the end, in one as in the other, they are of the same nature; and as men, by becoming closer, instruct each other, in the same way God, by communicating with us, even revealing to us some of his secrets, uses our reason, instructs us by virtue of this



reason, in such a way teaches that if we believe in his word, it is no longer so much, as in the past, because this word comes to us from God, as because our own reason approves of it.

Therefore, as far as reason is concerned, we have made ourselves peers and companions of God, although our acquired knowledge is not equal to his, nor our faculties as powerful. Admit that this God deigns to enter into communication with us: at the point where things are, we will discuss him, like Job; we will address him, not prayers, but questions; we will overwhelm him with *how* and *why*; we will examine his decisions, his explanations, his revelations; we could take him for a teacher, but we could not make an oracle of him. But if he refuses to answer, if he withdraws, we will say to him: You are impatient, Jupiter; so you are a fool! And we will laugh at him.

Now, what happens in religion, from the point of view of intelligences, also happens there from the point of view of consciences. For centuries right and law, mingled with a host of ceremonial observances, have been taught to man as a commandment from God; this commandment has been received without discussion, without examination, practiced without discernment, developed without philosophy. For centuries, it was believed that God was the subject of Justice, its author, its inventor, its promulgator, and we worshiped him as sovereign king, master, lord. Little by little, we said to ourselves that the law of God, as well as his Word, was within us; that this law was the expression of our nature, the formula of the relations that we maintain with our fellow-creatures, and that there had been in us a conscience that inclines us to follow it. The Church itself does not deny it; it avows the immanence in us of Justice, at least during the period of innocence, maintaining only that the first man having prevaricated, our soul has been corrupted and our conscience has become impotent. Such is the dogma of the Church, against which all the protestations of rationalism now rise.

Admitting then that a new religious evolution is preparing, what will be its character, from the point of view of Justice?

It is possible, since our mind conceives it, and no experience denies it, that there exists a great Spirit, creator and organizer of the Universe, all-powerful, all-knowing, therefore personal, moral and just. Admitting, between this God and us, a communication, relations, it is obvious that, just as he can help, by his word and his science, the development of our reason, he can also help, by his Justice, the development of our morality. But, as I was saying just now, justice in God will not destroy ours; it will not be of any other nature than ours, any more than his reason destroys our reason or is of another nature than our reason. Our conscience will always pronounce in the last resort on the wisdom of the divine laws; it will always aspire to do good by its own virtue: so that the new, perfected religion, instead of creating, as before, between God and man a relationship of subordination, submission, redemption, will create one of simple commutative Justice, of reciprocal right, of mutual edification, in a word, equality. God, by his good examples and his good counsels, will still be able to render us precious services: he will no longer be for us that justifying, sanctifying, restorative and gracious spirit that the Church teaches us; such a claim would be retrograde and

would offend us. God, finally, if it is true that by a new religious infusion he must draw closer to us, will be for us, in spite of his infinite greatness, an analogue, a companion, an auxiliary if you will, who, if he aids in our justification by the communication of his Justice, will find himself justified, sanctified and glorified by ours. Thus the sun, which attracts both the smallest of the planets and the largest, which illuminates them, warms them, animates them, is in its turn attracted, heated, animated by them. For such is the essence of Justice that communication between beings is reciprocal.

But it is evident that then there is no more religion, no more latria, no more worship: God, by virtue of the supposed perfection of religion, being himself no more adorable than the lowest of the miscreants. We are in full justice: the hypothesis of a religion of progress is reduced to zero.

This is why we maintain that from the religious elements in circulation there will never be formed either a dogma, or a religion, or a new church; why Catholicism, the greatest of religions, is also the last.

#### Note (I).

RIGHT AND DUTY. — One cannot believe how far the horror of right and liberty goes in a certain circle of democrats. It is in vain that the Revolution, before which one affects to uncover oneself as before a crucifix, has posited by its first act the Right of Man and of the Citizen. We do not want this principle, Right; human nature is denied dignity and morality with a category of argument that betrays its Christian origin and the secret thought of another tyranny. Justice, for Mr. Pierre Leroux, is despotism; for M. Louis Blanc, individualism; for almost all, federalism. The true doctrine, the true principle of the Revolution, is DUTY; Duty, whose anteriority and superiority necessarily imply that the true justice-bringer is not man, but God (Catholic theory) or society (communist theory); that man consequently has rights only indirectly, in the sense that each citizen is bound, in the name of the community, to render his duties to his brothers, who in turn must render theirs to him; that thus justice is not commutative by nature, but distributive; so that the social problem consists in creating, in the multitude, a distributing Authority according to the St-Simonian formula, To each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its works.

It has been said many times, and nothing could be truer: It is always communism, feudalism, absolute power, theocracy that these religionaries covered with the mask of the Revolution tend to establish; it is to their detestable influence, as much as to the corruption of interests, that we must attribute the anti-juridical regime of the December 2. What deceives the masses in this doctrine of death is the respect which its partisans affect to show for the collectivity, and their distrust of selfishness: as if the collectivity were everything, the man nothing; as if there were not society and society, just as there are fagots and fagots; as if, finally, the deviations of individualism did not stem precisely from social absolutism!

One cannot take too much care in unveiling these fatal theories, covered in

liberal tinsel. Here is how a young neo-Christian, so-called sworn enemy of intolerance, preaching against the pope, in an infallible tone of dogmatism, the separation of the temporal and the spiritual, consequently affirming the sovereignty (in the temporal) of the people, and maintaining that the sovereign, as sovereign, is of no religion; here is how this so-called zealot of democracy deduces the notion of right from that of duty. Let's put an end to these logomachies, if possible, once and for all:

“What is Right?

“I am obliged to develop, to tend to my end: it is my DUTY .

“My right is that no one prevents me, raises an obstacle to the development of my being. The good, for a given being, is the fulfillment of its being; and as all the ends of all beings concur, by a marvelous harmony, in the universal end of being, to strive for one's end, to accomplish one's being, is to live in the order of nature and according to GOD, who has made beings solidary. Such is my duty; and the duty that my fellow men have of putting no obstacle in the way of the accomplishment of this duty, constitutes my right. (*Revue Contemporaine*, January 30, 1860; review of a work on European law by M. Mamiani.)

To lay bare the poverty of this argument, it suffices to preface the words of the writer a little.

To posit, as a first principle, *Duty*, and necessarily he seeks to posit it on a fact. “I am obliged,” he said, “to develop my faculties, and to tend to my end:” such is this fact. — To develop my faculties, to tend to my end, constitutes for me an obligation ; this obligation is the starting point of science, the alpha and omega of morality.

Let us admit the obligation, if you will. I only ask why I am obliged, what binds me and makes the fulfillment of my being a duty? In what way, why and towards whom would I be guilty, if I refused this accomplishment?

The end of man, replies our doctor, is to live ACCORDING TO GOD. This phrase says it all. It signifies that the end of man is not in himself, but in another who is called God; consequently that Justice is primitively in God, and by derivation only in man, whose whole dignity consists in despising himself and in sacrificing himself, according to the Jesuitical motto: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*. There was no need to put on such grand airs: it would have been better to say simply, like Polyeucte: I am a Christian.

The author then develops his thought:

“If freedom is the right (a negative right, resulting for each of us from the duty that our fellow men have not to disturb us in the accomplishment of our being), it is the right for all. All therefore, as long as we are, think, act, are, according to our duty, responsible towards God, but God alone, because he alone judges thought, principle of speech and conduct, etc.”

Let us complete the deduction.

If I am responsible only to God alone, in whom is Justice, and who is my end, by what right, if I am guilty, will I be judged? I challenge the jurisdiction of my fellow men; I do not recognize human tribunals. Such has been the practice of the Church, which, from the time of Jesus Christ, has constantly tended to substitute itself for the state, and to replace it with its mystical jurisdiction,

instituted from on high (Quodeumque ligaveris, etc.), the justice of free men and the whole system of guarantees and legal reparations. We thus return to indulgences: and as the judgments of the Church, to be enforceable, require force, it follows from this whole theory of duty, not, if you will, that the head of the spiritual concurrently holds the temporal, any more than in the republic of 1848 the legislative power holds the executive, but that it dictates its laws to it, and if need be addresses to it, in the name of God and of the Church, its requisitions.

For us, we say that the end of man is in himself, and that to place it outside of him, were it even in God, is to declare him, *ipso facto*, unworthy, subordinate, and serf; that thus the right and the duty are born for him simultaneously and indivisibly from the consideration of his dignity; that it is this increasingly lofty feeling of dignity that, in the presence of one's fellows, becoming a feeling no longer final but generic, gives rise to sociability and constitutes Justice,

Justice is therefore essentially human, commutative, reciprocal; what makes the bond of right is the conscience, which forbids us to violate the dignity of our neighbor, at the risk of violating our own and destroying ourselves morally. In case of injury, the culprit is responsible towards himself and towards his peers, so that every man is both *justicier* and justiciable. If you abandon this definition, you return to Catholicism; accept it, you reject Catholicism, and with Catholicism any kind of absolutism, religious, theocratic, monarchical, feudal and communitarian.

I understand that we seek in good faith to reconcile these extremes, as eclectic philosophy and constitutional government attempted at the same time, in 1814, 1880 and 1848. What I cannot forgive is that sophists, to put it mildly, decked themselves out in more or less liberal opinions to corrupt popular innocence and lead the Revolution to a new and unworthy evasion. Let those who love liberty beware: the enemies most to be feared by them are not those who fight under the banner of the emperor and the pope; they are among those menders of religion who for seventy years have infected the reason of the masses and serve as the procurers of all our shame.

#### Note (J).

ORIGINAL SIN. — So that we are not accused of ignorance or bad faith, and to remove any pretext for chicanery, we are going to report, in precise terms, the doctrine of the Church on original sin.

“The Council of Trent has decided, *Sess. v, can. 1*, that Adam by his sin lost Holiness and Righteousness, incurred the wrath of God, death, and captivity under the dominion of the Devil; — *can. 2*, that he transmitted to all his descendants not only death and the sufferings of the body, but the sin which is the death of the soul; — *can. 3*, that this sin, proper and personal to all, can only be removed by the merits of Jesus Christ; — *can. 6*, that the stain of this sin is fully blotted out by baptism.”

“From this the theologians conclude that the effects and the penalty of original sin are, 1), the privation of sanctifying grace and of the right to eternal happiness, a double advantage that Adam enjoyed in the state of innocence; 2) the

derangement of concupiscence or inclination to evil; 3) subjection to suffering and death: three wounds from which Adam was exempt before his sin. Whence follows the absolute necessity of baptism to remedy it. Catholic dogma extends no further. (BERGER, *Dict. de Théol.*)

The truth of this dogma is founded on three sorts of proofs: 1) Revelation, 2) the common feeling of all the ancient peoples, among whom the tradition of it was preserved; 3) philosophical reflection, based on experience.

The Church is the depositary of the revelation.

As for the tradition preserved among the ancient peoples, that is a matter of archeology and history. M. de Lamennais collected, in volume III of the *Indifférence*, a mass of passages from the ancient authors, which establish the identity or the analogy of universal consent with the account of the Genesis. Finally, as regards the testimony of reason and experience, it is certain that the problem of the origin of evil is one of those that have most tormented philosophers, and that a very small number, even among the least religious, have succeeded in breaking free from general prejudice.

“One can say that original sin is a notorious and palpable fact. All men are born with depraved inclinations, are prone to all vices and are enemies of virtue. Their life on earth is visibly a state of misery and punishment. It is obvious that man is not as he should be, nor as he came out of the hands of the Creator.

“Cicero, who so eloquently painted the grandeur of human nature, cannot fail to be struck by the astonishing contrasts offered by this same nature, subject to so many miseries, to illnesses, to sorrows, to fears, to the most degrading passions; so that, forced to recognize something divine in a man so unhappy and so degraded, he does not know how to define it, and calls him *a soul in ruins*. (*De Republ.* lib. 3.)

“This is why, in Plato, Socrates reminds his disciples that those who have established the mysteries, and *who are not*, he says, *to be despised*, taught according to the ancients that whoever dies without being purified remains in hell, immersed in mud; and that he who has been *purified* dwells with the gods. Virgil reproduces this doctrine in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*.

“All the ancient theologians and poets said, according to Philolaus the Pythagorean, that the soul was *buried in the body as in a tomb*, in punishment for some sin. This was also the doctrine of the Orphics; and as, at the same time, it was recognized that man had come out good from the hands of God, and that he had lived at first in a state of purity and innocence, the crime for which he was punished was consequently posterior to his creation.

“But how did one man’s crime infect his whole race? How can children justly bear the penalty for their father’s fault? They carry it, this pain, it is a constant fact, which consequently it is by no means necessary to explain. God is just, and we are punished: that is all we need to know; the rest is just *pure curiosity*.” (*Notes* of Mgr. GOUSSET, in the *Dict. theol.*)

Such are the facts of the theory, and such are the proofs. The difficult point, after having recognized this original corruption, was to set its limits and to determine its effects with precision. In this respect, theology is far from being satisfactorily explained. — “If we are asked,” said Bergier, “in what, formally, the

stain of original sin consists, how and by what means it is communicated to our soul, we will humbly answer that we know nothing about it, because, as Saint Augustine says, it is as difficult to know its nature as it is certain that it exists: *Hoc peccato nihil est ad prædicandum nolius, nihil ad intelligendum secretius.*"

To what degree was man infected? We cannot say. Physically, sin does not prevent him from living for a certain period of time, from being well at times, from reproducing; but he is subject to illnesses, to old age, to misery, and finally condemned to die. The same applies to morals: sin has not entirely robbed us of our intelligence, it has thrown it into trouble; it has not taken away our free will, it has made us less strong against the servitude of the senses and the oppression of nature; it has not abolished in our soul every kind of moral sense, every notion of justice and every good desire, it has made us more cowardly and less able to overcome our evil inclinations. In the eyes of God, it is quite true that any unbaptized man will never see his creator face to face and will not enter into sovereign beatitude; but it does not follow that he is damned, if he has not committed a mortal sin, and if he has not taken it upon himself to be baptized. It will be with him as with children dead without baptism, who are gathered in a place where they undergo neither pain nor sadness, deprived only of the presence of God.

To sum up, theology, in a hurry to explain itself, seems to imply that before Adam's sin, Justice was in us more determined, conscience more energetic, liberty more complete, intelligence more limpid than they have been since; that the inclination to evil was weaker, or even nil; concupiscence, the excitement of the senses and of the passions, also weaker, or even without action. It is a diminution of the forces of life, intelligence and will, amounting to a positive inclination to evil, which before did not exist. A question of quantum on which it is obviously impossible to arrive at a precise measurement. In short, Humanity is sick, and through its own fault; the most vigorous among its members are only convalescents. Final healing takes place only after death, and under the prior condition of having received the faith in Christ: take away the transfusion of the blood of this divine mediator, the baptismal ablution, the purgations of penance, the Eucharistic food and the energetic cordial of grace, and all is lost. Not only will Humanity, entered into the tomb, never see its God; but from this very life, evil prevailing, society falls into rot. No religion, no justice, no humanity.

Well, even in these terms, and with the theological restrictions, it remains true that, according to the doctrine of original sin, human nature is fundamentally perverted; that it is incapable of constituting itself according to Justice; that concupiscence is stronger in it than conscience; that consequently it is physically, organically, constitutionally depraved; that God alone, who created it, preserves it by his grace, sustains it by his Justice, saves it from its perverse inclinations and operates in it, by a mysterious therapy, the little good that prevents it from dissolving.

There is therefore nothing exaggerated in the consequences that we highlight, in this Study and in the following ones, regarding the dogma of original prevarication: systematic humiliation of the human person; contempt for the species; denial of human and civic rights; absolutism of power; hierarchy

of fortunes; police, inquisitorial regime; violation of family, home, marital secrecy, liberty. The Church itself, in its religious communities, in its episcopal police and in all its theocracy, has deduced from its dogma all these consequences: it would be in vain, and we will have more than one occasion to show it, that one would claim to separate dogma from discipline, to save the essence of Christianity by sacrificing the clergy to it. Everything here forms an indissoluble chain: to break it at one point is to introduce schism and heresy into the Church, and to crucify Jesus Christ anew.

There remains one last point to be clarified, that of the formation of this dogma, which we attribute, like that of monotheism itself, exclusively to the Christian revolution.

It is obvious, in the first place, that the ancient myth of Adam, Eve, the serpent and the apple, the analog of which is found in all mythologies, does not have the significance that Christian theology supposes. This is what the Cathars, the Montanists and above all the Pelagians maintained from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, reproaching Saint Augustine for outraging the meaning of the Scriptures. The first mythologists admitted, which is natural and true, that man, composed of sensitive, affective and intellectual faculties, is fragile; that it is all the more difficult for him to keep his balance because he has less knowledge and experience, and because the practice of society has developed Justice less in him. They drew the conclusion from this that the first man had been, in this respect, such as his descendants showed themselves after him; and as, in any career or evolution, as well as in any enterprise, the first errors are the most dangerous, because their influence embraces the whole sequence, it was concluded, in the form of an apologue, that the direction of humanity in its mores had not been first of all the most rational, the most learned, the most upright—something that philosophy perfectly admits—and that if, for example, servitude, war, misery, even death, desolated humanity, it was due to some primitive fault, — Christ, added the Pelagians, had had the mission of putting us back on the true path: such was the meaning of redemption, to which the same Saint Augustine gave, according to them, a completely abusive extension. Of an original corruption of the human soul, transmitted from generation to generation, there was, argued Pelagius, no question: antiquity had not even suspected it; it was a product of the imagination of Saint Augustine, who moreover was only the echo of the Gnostics, Marcionites and Valentinians, slanderers of human nature and humanity, teaching the corruption of the flesh and maintaining, as the lutheran Flavius later put it, that *evil is the very substance of man*.

It may be added that the system of practical morality of the patriarchs, among whom the knowledge of the true God had, it was said, been preserved, was quite irreconcilable with the dogma of original sin. Far from man being punished in this life for a sin prior to his birth, unhappiness in the patriarchal period was almost unknown. The one who was struck was struck for a *current* fault, public or secret; death was only an evil when it arrived before its time, like a catastrophe, and when the deceased left no successor of his name. Such is the theory of the book of Job, against which we see that the author has precisely intended to raise an objection, by showing the just punished side by side with the

triumphant sinner. Introduce into the book of Job the idea of original sin, with its two corollaries of redemption and the immortality of the soul, and all this controversy falls away: the mystery of the affliction of the just is explained, at least as much as a mystery can be explained by another mystery.

Pelagius and his adherents were right when they accused Saint Augustine of outraging the meaning of the myths and of innovating in religion. Unfortunately for their thesis, the corruption of morals was such that it formed a mystery more incomprehensible than that of original sin itself. Nothing could then explain such a degradation; no effort of human discipline seemed capable of effecting a cure: the case was truly hopeless. Experience, stronger than all reasoning, seemed here to rise up against Pelagius; and what legitimizes, in a way, his condemnation is that the revival of morals in the converted world was due precisely to the profound humiliation and bitter repentance which the theory of original sin cast in souls.

A final consideration ensured the triumph of the dogma of the fall: it is that religion, well studied, necessarily implies it. Worship is a confession. Under whatever aspect it is considered, religion presupposes this idea, that man is powerless, by himself, to do good; that his existence on earth is not related to his destiny; that alone it is not enough; that his being is sick, etc., etc. : all ideas that imply degradation, anomaly or mutilation, which basically is always the same thing.

Note (K).

INFLUENCE OF THE DOGMA OF THE FALL ON JUDGMENTS.—

“The other judges presume that an accused is innocent; these (the ecclesiastical judges) always presume him guilty. When in doubt, they make it a rule to decide on the side of rigor, apparently because they believe men are bad.” (MONTESQUIEU, *Persian Letters*.)

Of what use, then, is the so-called corrective that consists in saying: “We are slandering the Church by making her say that man is bad: he is *sick*, that is all?” — Are not the consequences of this disease, inveterate, incurable, absolutely the same as if man were the creature of Satan, and had never enjoyed a minute of health?

Note (L).

OF THE PASSIONS. — Nature composed man of flesh and mind; as it gave him reason and conscience, it also gave him passions and senses. By themselves, therefore, the passions are not bad, and deserve no anathema. Self-esteem, the dignity and pride that result from them, ambition itself and the love of glory, have their legitimacy. In this respect, the Phalansterian criticism of the old moralists is unassailable. But it does not follow that the passions must be taken for the basis and the rule of human relations: because they are natural, they are not therefore justified; it is this very justification that is the object of morality and the supreme condition of society. Left to themselves, the passions tend, each in



its own way, to invade the whole man; they would lack their role, and man would remain helpless, if it were otherwise. But Justice is given to us precisely to restore the balance, to call the passions to order and to curb their exorbitance. Such is the first of our duties: whoever forgets it lacks Justice. Let us be proud, ambitious, even glorious, but within the limits of right; let us go, if need be, as far as anger, as the Psalmist says, *Irascimini and nolite peccare*, but without ever letting go of the bridle on our anger, since passion, by its tendency, is selfish and offensive.

Note (M).

IMMANENCE OF JUSTICE. — “Men are born to be virtuous: Justice is a quality that is as specific to them as existence.” (MONTESQUIEU, *Persian Letters*, letter X.)

“Virtue is not something that should cost us; Justice for others is charity for us.” (*Ibid.*, XII.)

“Justice is a *relation of propriety* that really finds itself between two things: this relationship is always the same, whatever being considers it, whether it is God, or whether it is an angel, or finally whether it is a man.”

“When there would be no God, we should always love Justice, that is to say, make our efforts to resemble this being of whom we have such a beautiful idea, and who, if he existed, would be necessarily correct. Free as we would be from the yoke of religion, we should not be free from that of equity.

“Here, Rhédi, is what made me think that Justice is eternal, and does not depend on human conventions; and when it depended on it, it would be a terrible truth, which one would have to hide from oneself.

“When a man examines himself, what satisfaction for him to find that his heart is just! This pleasure, severe as it is, must delight him; he sees his being as much above those who do not have it, as he sees himself above the tigers and bears. Yes, Rhédi, if I were sure of always following inviolably this equity that I have before my eyes, I would believe myself to be the first among men. (*Ibid.*, LXXXIII.)

In these remarkable passages, Montesquieu confirms our theory point by point.

Justice is a *quality*, we say a *faculty*, that is as proper to us as existence. Justice is a relationship of propriety; we say that right, *jus*, is the relation of propriety between the dignity of man and things.

This relationship is *real*, adds Montesquieu; we say the same. This relationship is absolute; it depends neither on human conventions nor on the good pleasure of the Divinity. We have made it the keystone of our scientific and moral system.

Justice finds in itself, according to Montesquieu, its sanction and its reward; this is what we will demonstrate later.

It may be objected that the same Montesquieu wrote later, in favor of religion, this famous passage: “Religion, which seems to concern itself only with the other life, also makes our happiness in this one.” — We do not undertake to

make Montesquieu, or anyone else, agree with himself. It is the right of criticism to seize upon ideas as they arise, to form regular bundles of them, to mark oppositions and incompatibilities. It is then for the general reason to decide on which side is the truth, the safest practice, the healthiest morality.

We know the effort made by Kant to reestablish, through the theory of practical reason, the religious dogma destroyed by the critique of pure reason. Does this impossible restoration, which came, in Kant, from the inexact idea he had of the role, the influence and the movement of religion, in any way affect the truth of the following words of the great philosopher?

“Man carries the moral law within himself; to practice it freely, he needs neither the idea of a superior being nor any foreign motive. The kingdom of God does not assume a sensible form; you don’t hear it said: Look, there it is. Christ said, not only to his disciples, but to the Pharisees: *The kingdom of God is within you.* (Of *Religion within the Limits of Reason*)

This doctrine is traditional among jurists, and independent of their religious opinions. Before Kant and Montesquieu, Grotius had said that reason alone sufficed to give existence to law, independent of the idea of God. Pufendorf is less firm: he recognizes the truth of the principle of Grotius, that *reason alone suffices to give existence to right*; but he maintains that, without the idea of God, the rules of right would not have the *force of law*, which is to substitute for right the theory of original sin.

Heineccius maintains that Justice has its sanction. in itself, in the very felicity of innocence, which excludes all auxiliary religion.

Wolf similarly says, “Always do the things that you can to render yourself more perfect and perfect your state; on the contrary, avoid everything that can deteriorate your nature and make your state worse.” This is the principle of personal dignity transformed into a maxim of Justice, according to the French proverb: *Do what you must, come what may.*

Hutcheson, a Scot no less religious than the preceding ones, is even more explicit. In his *Investigations into the Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, he expressly teaches that “as the principle of the taste we have for beauty, order, harmony, and design, resides in an inner sense, in a sort of instinct independent of reflections—likewise the principle of our inclinations, of our tastes, of our determinations in favor of virtue, must also be placed in an *instinct*, in a *natural disposition* of our souls in an *internal sense*, which he calls MORAL SENSE (the expression has passed into everyday language.) Hutcheson accordingly asserts that the virtue *emanates* from quite another affection than self-love, or personal interest, in which he differs radically from English writers, one might almost say from the English nation, for whom Justice is indistinguishable from utility.

Burlamaqui agrees with Hutcheson’s ideas. He says, in substance, that the soul acts in us by means of FACULTIES or POWERS, the principal of which are *understanding, will, liberty, conscience*. Obligation, considered in its first origin, can be defined as a *restriction of natural liberty by reason*; in other words, what enchains liberty and forms the bond of right is consciousness. — The attraction we feel for virtue, as well as for truth, comes from a special aptitude or faculty, which craves honest and just things as the stomach appeals to food. Finally he

concludes with these words that cut through all uncertainty:

“Does the will of God oblige us because reason approves of it; or rather does reason oblige us because it makes us know the will of God? or, in other words, is reason anterior or posterior to the will of God, in fact of obligation?” — Burlamaqui replies that we are bound by reason prior to the will of God: which no one can support, adds the commentator de Felice, crossing himself.

We see by these quotations, by the reservations they express in favor of religion, by the terror felt by weak souls, such as Pufendorf and de Félice, that the theory of Immanence is not new, and that the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries fully understood its significance. It escapes the heart of all authors whenever they forget to ask themselves what will become of religion with such a theory. Mably, writing in the same spirit, around the year 1760, a little treatise on the *Droits et Devoirs du citoyen*, reprinted in 1793, thought he could not make his thoughts heard better, while preserving an enigmatic appearance, than by plagiarizing, at the head of his work, as a warning to the reader, the following passage from Cicero, preserved by Lactantius, *Divin. Inst.*, lib . 6, c. 3. It is the most eloquent profession of faith of the innateness, universality and supremacy of Justice, under the image of a God who dwells in the conscience of man,

“Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando à fraud deterreat; Quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi nec obrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hâc aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest. Nec verd aut per Senatum aut per lvi hâc lege mus. Neque is quærendus explanator, aut interpres ejus alius; nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia posthâc; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore una Lex, et sempiterna, et immortalis continebit. Unusque erit communis quasi magister et imperator omnium Deus ille, Legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur, atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiamsi cætera supplicia quæ putantur effugerit.”

# NEWS OF THE REVOLUTION.

OF THE DIGNITY OF NATIONS AND OF THEIR DECLINE,  
ACCORDING TO THE EXAMPLE OF DECEMBER 2.

THE DIGNITY OF NATIONS! — This is the theme to which we are going to give some developments in this second part of our Appendix, and according to which we will summarily judge the events of the last month.

As we have expressed above (Note A) any offense to personal dignity is a violation of Justice; likewise, any insult to national dignity is a subversion of justice, and *vice versa*.

The coarse plebs, the egotistical and busy middle class feel such outrages only faintly: this insensitivity is one of the causes of the prolongation of despotism. When the insult is addressed to everyone, it seems to be addressed to no one: in the community of servitude, say the advocates of tyranny, injustice does not exist. Evil passions mingling in it, each comes to rejoice in public slavery, to which he affects to declare himself indifferent. Let, for example, Napoleon III, responsible for giving a Constitution to France, allow himself to say, without any consideration, that the nation that has elected him *is not ripe for liberty*: not a word of protest will rise; the public functionary, the magistrate, the soldier, the priest, all submit, crestfallen, to correction. The bourgeois says to the proletarian: It is to you that the apophthegm is addressed; are you happy? — And the proletarian responds to the bourgeois: You have fallen like me! That is what I demand. — Unworthy of both! Like kids who have received punishment for their childishness, the people and the bourgeois, instead of washing away their common shame in repentance or revenge, soil each other with it. Have no fear for the despot.

Tyranny, said Plato, is both the personification and the punishment of public indignity. We could define it as the government of outrage. It consists in the fact that, by the substitution of interests for laws, the exercise of power has become impossible with respect for right: so that the government, if it wanted to be just, would no longer have any *raison d'être*, it would fail in its mission and would have to step down.

Symptoms of dissolution are showing all over Europe. Everywhere the same divisions, the same apprehensions, the same failings. The tendency to concentration, to militarism, to the repression of the rights of the masses, is universal. A kind of general *coup d'état* hovers over Europe, an unequivocal sign of the decadence of the old world.

France, having preceded the other nations in the development of the revolutionary idea, was the first to begin its movement of retreat. She is not the only one to backslide: everyone follows her. May her example, studied in all sincerity and charity, stop the peoples, if there is still time, on this disastrous slope. The salvation of France, with which the whole of Europe is united, that of civilization, depends on it.

On this occasion, we remind our readers that our invariable rule, when speaking of His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon III, is to treat him as a constitutional monarch, irresponsible and inviolable. It is the condemnation of the imperial regime that one cannot for a single moment take it literally, without doing the cruelest and most irreparable outrage to him who is its chief.

I. IMPERIAL CONSTITUTION. — The Constitution of 1852, like all those which have been given in analogous circumstances, could be defined as the Declaration of Indignity of the French people. Who, first of all, is the author of this Constitution? The common folk, reasoning from the posters in the streets, replies: The same who carried out the coup d'état, Napoleon III. — Yes, as it was the Convention that was the author of the death of Louis XVI; as Louis XVI, in summoning the Estates-General, created the author of the Revolution. When will we see history and politics purged of these pitiful ambiguities?

A Constitution is the product of circumstances. That of 1848, voted in under the pressure of February, gave too much play to new ideas; it alarmed old interests too much for it to be seriously applied. The government of the Republic, delivered to a reactionary majority, was, from December 20, 1848 to December 2, 1851, only a series of violations of the pact. The situation worsening at the approaches of 1852, an explosion of threatened interests became inevitable. Louis-Napoleon made himself its instrument: that is all. Was he then, more than in 1848, conscious of his position? We don't believe it; but what do we care? His name became the corporate name of the anti-legal regime into which the nation rushed *motu proprio*; this honor, to preside over an eclipse of French reason, Louis-Napoleon, without experience of things, without philosophy, without caring for his name, which he imagined he could still illustrate, known only by annoying adventures and by themes in variations on the *Napoleonic Idea*; this sad honor of leading a decadence, we say, Louis-Napoleon wanted it, sought it, and, by forcing the hand of the country a little, ended up obtaining it: this is, as regards the acts of 1848 and 1851, more or less the limit of his initiative.

What now is in the Constitution of 1852? As for the text, it is a copy of that of 1804: in this again consists the whole initiative of Napoleon III. For the basis, and above all for the application, it is something else. From the point of view concerning us at the moment, which is that of the dignity of nations, starting from Justice, all constitutions, whatever their tenor, can be reduced to two sorts: one aims to consecrate right, others to infringe upon it. The first, consequently, carry the national dignity high; at the same time that they constitute the government, they organize control, subordinate power to the law and to the legislature. The second exalt the authority of the prince, abolish control, subordinate the legislator and the law to the will of the master, and make justice dependent on him. Everything for the country or everything for the despot: this is, in a few words, according to one's point of view, the summary of constitutional science. In the first case, the nation deals only with itself, the head of state is its man; in the second, it is the backer of the Constitution who treats the country as he deems appropriate and the citizens become the emperor's men.

Therefore, by virtue of the plebiscite voted following December 2, 1851,

Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, then simply President of the Republic, was called upon to give a Constitution to the French people. This Constitution, improvised in the circumstances that we have described, was accepted, but not discussed: which means that Louis-Napoleon, in taking the purple, laid down his conditions for the people, who on their side had to abstain from making their own to the Emperor. It was inevitable. The work was therefore equal to the situation: it is impossible for a nation to show less concern for its rights, for a head of state to show less consideration for the country he represents, than the Emperor and the French people did on this occasion. When one thinks that it would suffice to write at the head of the Imperial Constitution these simple words, *The dignity of the nation is inviolable*, to destroy all its dispositions, the arms fall and the mind becomes confused. How could a people, that rose in its entirety, four years ago, against a government accused of corruption, attach itself to the pillory? How did liberal France get into what Paul-Louis Courier crudely called *Bonaparte's penal colony*?....

The national forfeiture posed in principle, replaced by the autocracy of one alone, the rest follows naturally. In the first line, the abolition of control. By virtue of Article 12 of the *sénatus-consulte* of December 25, 1852, combined with the discipline imposed on the Legislative Body, the Emperor was almost exempted from rendering any account. The Constitution, duly analyzed, is reduced to this. What serious examination of the accounts of the empire has taken place in France since the coup d'état? Who really knows the financial situation of the country? Who could say what has become of so many millions demanded from taxes, from loans, from estates, from the Bank, from the savings associations, from the consignments and from the army, from the circulation of treasury bonds, now untraceable through so many transfers? As a result, the Imperial Government, by virtue of the Constitution that it has made and of the aforementioned *sénatus-consulte*, is exactly in the position of a merchant who, questioned by his creditors, would claim to be exempted from the obligation to keep books and, consequently, in case of distress, to show his accounts and justify his management. Or again, the imperial government is like the director of a company that would have the right, under the terms of the statutes, not to be accountable to anyone, neither to the board of directors, nor to the supervisory board, nor even to the meeting of shareholders. Indeed, the Emperor, says the Constitution, is *responsible only to the French people, to whom he always has the right to appeal*. But, assuming, despite all the precautions taken by the Constitution to ensure, in case of conflict, the triumph of the Emperor over the Legislative Body, that the people, called upon to render, by a yes-or-no vote, their verdict, give reason to their deputies, what would the responsibility of the emperor mean? France could have been ruined, bankrupted, and their would remain as surety, what? His Majesty's abdication, his head perhaps! A beautiful compensation! Who does not see that the country, to escape a revolution, would prefer to give a new blank check to the so-called head of state, as happened on December 2? Derision and indignity: this, then, is what the constitutional act of 1852 amounts to, as could be said of the Constitutions of 1791, 1793, 1795, 1814, 1830, 1848; they have made a null act, null by the insult done to the nation, by

the unreason of the articles and the monstrosity of the consequences.

It is a surprise given to the country, say the malcontents; it is to force the direction of the constitution, reply the hypocrites of the system, to slander the confidence of the country, and to be unaware of the faithfulness of the emperor... Let us leave the phrases as well as the intentions, and stick to realities. From the moment that a coup d'état was carried out against the Constitution, liberal and legal, of 1848, one could not the next day, by a simple change of wording, restore control, impose on power the obligation to render an account, to ensure its responsibility, in a word, to return to the law. What would have become of the coup d'état? What would have become of Louis-Napoleon, outlawed by the representatives? What would have become of the reaction?

The so-called imperial work is therefore positively the work of circumstances; Louis-Napoleon affixed to it, with his stamp, the stamp of his uncle, without suspecting for a minute that, by the mere fact of his usurpation, he was placing himself in the position of a bankrupt. The French people are shamed by it: for the moment we have nothing else to note. Let France and the Emperor decide.

II. PROPERTY UNDER THE EMPIRE. — When a nation abdicates its dignity, liberty passes away, and property follows closely after. It is logical: no social sovereignty, no property. Property, no longer supported by public right, is no more than a concession of the autocrat; it is favor, privilege, monopoly, gift, anything you like, except right. Property, which believed it could be saved by the violation of the law, now finds itself outside the law; it comes from good pleasure: what a fall!

By virtue of the constitution, which grants the emperor the right to make commercial treaties and regulations of public utility, to authorize limited companies, etc., etc., the imperial government disposes, in a manner one can call absolute, of the fortune of the citizens. Does it please the emperor to bring to the national market, in spite of national interests or prejudices, of national solidarity, products from abroad? He brings them there; — To grant a corporation a portion of the public domain? He concedes it; — To suppress a whole category of industries for the benefit of a great monopoly, he suppresses it; — To close an establishment? He closes it; — To withdraw an office, dearly paid for, and passed to the state of transmissible property? He withdraws it; — To seize upon a kind of exploitation and to reward his creatures with privilege? He seizes what he pleases, gives it to whoever he pleases, and as compensation to the dispossessed entrepreneurs, he makes them issue stock certificates. Of all these facts there are thousands of examples: this will some day be the most interesting part of our economic history. Does it please His Majesty to reserve to a corporation, instituted to prevent speculation, the privilege of futures markets? Nothing is easier for him, thanks to this beloved and loyal Court of Cassation, which orders the expulsion of free brokers with the same seriousness as it prohibits the distribution of electoral bulletins. Does it please the emperor to expropriate a building? He declares the public utility, and seizes the building, If it pleased him to increase or decrease the funds, he would increase or decrease them; things are

arranged in such a way on the Stock Exchange that the transactions, while surrounded by a thousand obstacles, having to be carried out exclusively by friendly hands of power, the drop can never go either quickly or far, while when the rise comes to declare itself, everything rushes. If, instead of indulging in speculation on the stock exchange, the sovereign deemed it preferable to make a profit on a few commercial transactions, nothing would be easier for him. Not only does he possess the secrets of the State, he holds in his hands all the interests, By the ability he has to make commercial treaties, to raise or lower tariffs, to create banks and docks, to authorize or prohibit companies, to activate, slow down, move circulation, he is the absolute master of the market as well as of property. It would be up to him alone to renew, by virtue of his powers, in all categories of production, the famous *Pact of Famine*. Does he want limited partnership to stop? He makes a law against limited partnerships, and the capital no longer goes there. Later, he will find it good that the partnership resumes its course; and, again, capitalists and entrepreneurs will do business. With confidence lacking, capital declining, stores overflowing, consumption ceasing, the emperor ordered people to work all the same. It is made known on his part to the heads of industry that it would be disagreeable to him to learn that the workmen are unemployed; and the unfortunate industrialists bleed themselves, ruin themselves, and make people the work. On the other hand, is the emperor leaving for the army? Orders are given secretly to the establishments to close, so that the workmen can conduct him. Is he coming back from the campaign? The same unofficial notice from the police, so that the workers go to meet him; this is how the imperial regime won its popularity. Do the demolitions required for the embellishment of the capital cause the rents to rise disproportionately? The police intervene between the workers and the proprietors. — Same system in the departments. The communes, indebted beyond their resources, are advised to go into debt again and to open *national workshops*; and the communes, dominated by the prefects, only know how to obey. Is there a mayor who balks? He is deposed. A city council that resists? It is dissolved, And all this, I repeat, is rational; it is not the emperor who wishes it, it is the nation, since, seized with a cowardly terror at the approach of 1852, fearing for its interests the application of some new right, it has sacrificed dignity to avarice, right to force, and has taken refuge in absolute power.

Admittedly, Napoleon III is far from making the most of his position: he simply does not think about it. Never, in his innocence as a candidate, had he suspected what that odious word, despotism, contained; he never dreamed of anything other than the *Napoleonic Idea*. But others have seen further than he: that is what attracts so many solicitations to him, what has won his government the support of all those greedy mediocrities, some of whom have allowed themselves to be seen by justice, while the others, gorged or expecting nothing more, will be the first to cry, on the day of peril: *Down with the tyrant!*

If, between the imperial despotism and the republic, there existed only a question of form, as for example between the so-called moderate republic and the constitutional monarchy; if, in both cases, the national dignity, the respectability of the citizen, right, finally, and liberty were saved, perhaps, whatever



importance one must in all things grant to the form, would we take our part. We are not the ones who would like to set fire to the fatherland for a question of form, any more than for a question of spelling. But it is a question of our dignity as men, as citizens, as taxpayers, as merchants, as industrialists, as workers, as proprietors, a dignity to which the imperial government, in whatever way it justifies its actions, cannot prevent itself, at any moment, from inflicting mortal harm. Even when the imperial government showered us with riches, we would still find ourselves degraded. To be nothing at home, neither in one's house, nor in one's business, nor in one's commerce, nor in one's industry, nor in one's property, when one is not a slave, is the height of derision. We are protesting here against outrage, not against authority. Authority, we could resign ourselves to it, if authority were justice. But we cannot bear the loss of our dignity, because the loss of dignity is moral death, the worst death.

III. *The army fund.* — Since we are addressing questions of money, let us speak of an institution of the Empire still little known, which shows how far selflessness can go among a people, contempt for principles among advisers of the government. A Parisian correspondence, inserted in the Nord of February 22, contains the following:

“Today's decree (February 20) on exemption from military service deserves not to go unnoticed. Until now, families were warned *at least several months in advance* of the price they would have to pay to exempt their sons from military service. As a result of the new decree, the minister of war cannot fix the price of the exemption until ten days before the commencement of the operations of the board of review. The reason for this measure is that *events, depending on whether they have a tendency towards peace or war, can noticeably modify the rate of indemnity for exemption*; it was therefore important to wait until the last limit to make known the figure adopted by the minister of war. In previous years, this figure was published around January; it will hardly be known now until around the month of May.”

This contains quite a revelation. Proponents of personal initiative must have never heard of the division of functions, the basis of all control. Entered in the way of the good pleasure, they launch themselves at full speed, without concern for the public, any more than for the imperial Majesty.

The law of March 21, 1832 on the recruitment of the army had admitted the principle of replacement. It was a slight departure from the principles of '89: but no one complained about it; replacements and replaced found their account there, and, if one had wanted to lighten the weight of the service, the country tending to peace, they would only have needed to decrease the quotas, the duration of the service, the number of exemptions, and to take the organization of the national guards more seriously. These combined measures would have made very bearable the *tax of blood*, the most terrible of all, the one that most directly threatens the population, work and liberty.

Be that as it may, the legislator of 1832, by admitting the principle of recruitment, had refrained from intervening in an order of transactions regarded until then, at least for one of the parties, as not very honorable: we want to talk

about the replacement trade. The imperial government did not have the same reservations: it believed itself high enough in public opinion to be able, without risk of blame, to assume the monopoly of replacements; and here is the incredible position that has been made by the decree of April 26, 1855, on the endowment of the army, combined with article 6 of the Constitution and 12 of the *Sénatus-Consulte* of December 25, 1852.

“The Emperor,” says the Constitution, “commands the armies of land and sea, declares war, makes treaties of peace, alliance and commerce.” These words seem to be copied from the Charter of 1830; but, owing to the excessive difference of positions, the bearing is quite different. In an economic style, article 6 of the Imperial Constitution signifies that the Emperor, in the name and at the expense of the French people, to whom he is alone *responsible*, but to whom we have been told that he is not accountable, is an entrepreneur of military operations: he fixes the number of quotas, and consequently that of subsidies; he exonerates, for a fee, the young people called to the service; he provides, using the benefits paid to him by exempt persons, for replacements; he lends soldiers to the powers that ask him for them, to England to force China, to Piedmont to conquer Lombardy, to the Pope to keep him from the revolutionaries. He would lend them to Austria to defend her from the turbulence of the Hungarians, to the Tsar to contain his peasants, to the Sultan to protect him against the Christians, and no one would have the right to accuse him for his actions.

So it pleases His Imperial Majesty to call 100,000 Frenchmen into service: by virtue of the Constitution he can.

It suits him to enlist only three quarters of the contingent, that is 75,000 men, the other 25,000 left in their homes, ready to leave on first requisition. Under the Constitution he can.

This done, there will be, on the one hand, 25,000 men who do not join will cost the State nothing: but, by virtue of the *Sénatus-consulte* of December 25, 1852, the Emperor has the right to order a *transfer to account* and not to return the excess of funds voted, and as a government is always short of money, the emperor will probably not fail to exercise this right. On the other hand, among these 25,000 men, a good number of young people will ask to free themselves by paying the *prestation* fixed for exemption from service: as many couples of a thousand francs, more or less, which fall into the coffers of the army. The Emperor thus finds himself almost twice paid for the soldiers whom he leaves unemployed: and all this, by virtue of the powers conferred on him, he can do in all good and honor,

What will be the rate of compensation required for exemption from service? It is not fixed; it varies, like the needs of the army, according to imperial policy. The emperor, in charge of the defense of the country, cannot be chained by a number: it would compromise the defense. “Then,” you will say, “since the benefit varies, the rate will be debated between the Legislative body, representing the families, and the government?” No; by virtue of article 6 of the law of April 26, 1855, the emperor fixes the rate of the benefit: take it or to leave it. — At least the families will be informed in advance; will they be able to cope? Again, no: events influencing the price of men, the government reserves the right to take

the favorable moment to make known its conditions: this is what the decree of February 20 says.

Does the political situation seem tense, the peace of Europe compromised? The emperor, who provides for the scarcity of replacements, raises the rate of the benefit: it is within the law. Suddenly, he gets along with the powers; the political horizon clears, the newspapers of the empire sing hymns to peace; military service is more *offered*, less *demande*d; cannon fodder abounds, the price of replacements drops: a good deal for the *army fund*, which received the highest price of the exemption and which will pay the lowest to the replacements, perhaps even will pay nothing at all, if the Emperor deems there is no need to replace. It looks very much like gambling on the blood of citizens, doesn't it? This is required by the law of April 26, 1855, in execution of which the decree of February 20, 1860 was issued.

Despite this abstention from replacements, the Emperor may still have soldiers left over, and the needs of the treasury may still increase. The decree of December 25, 1852 provided him with a new means of getting out of trouble. Sixty thousand men, sent on leave of six months, will go to live at the expense of their families, and will leave, on the war budget, twenty millions available. By means of a new transfer of account, the operation, which under the charter of 1880 would have been qualified as diversion, becomes perfectly regular and legal.

That is not all. Replacements and the re-engaged only receive a fraction, about a quarter, of the price of their re-engagement; the surplus remains in the army fund until the expiry of the service: in the event of death, only a part is reimbursed to the heirs, if there are any. So that the army fund, after having benefited from the difference between the amount of services paid for exemption from service and that of the sums allocated to replacements; after having filled itself with the sums left available from the war budget as a result of sending on leave, still enjoys the interest of the sums for which it is indebted to the replacements, and, if these replacements die in service, becomes their inheritor.

This is how the jurists of the imperial government understand the division of powers, and accounting, and control, and responsibility. That Charlemagne, Clovis, used it in this way, on the one hand with their Franks, who were all soldiers and could neither read nor write; on the other with the Gallo-Roman populations, treated by them as a conquered people: one can imagine that there was no shame for anyone. But in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, among the French, after thirty-six years of parliamentary rule, with universal suffrage as a guarantee of control, it was of such exorbitance that nothing, in our opinion, better demonstrates the perfect good faith of the emperor. What man, I beg you, who was even a little bit shrewd, wanting at least to keep up appearances, would go to such lengths?

What becomes, you ask, of the sums accumulated in this fund? No one could tell; no one knows. "The emperor commands the forces of land and sea, declares war, makes peace; he fixes, in good time, the rate of the benefit for the exemption from the service; he has the right to make transfers from one chapter of the budget to another; finally, he is responsible only to the French people, to whom nothing obliges him to render his accounts." This is called the system of personal

initiative! Please, Sire, a little less initiative: if not for you, who are above suspicion, let it be for the consideration of the French people.

IV. THE PRESS. — The Emperor has heard that thought is free in France: he has said so on several occasions; his ministers have repeated it ad nauseam. How is it, then, that the imperial government *has put its hand over the mouth of the country*, as M. de Lamartine once said under Louis-Philippe? I know of no greater insult from a government, or greater indignity for a nation. This phenomenon has moreover, like the preceding ones, its reason in the same principle. It is not due to a man; it is the effect of the moral degradation of the country. The coup d'état of December 2 having been directed, as we have said, against a revolutionary democracy, to which respect for liberty and legality gave an irresistible ascendancy; the salvation of interests taken for reasons of state and declared superior to justice; the imperial constitution being made consequently counter to right, in defiance of right, the encounters necessarily were and have been:

That the head of state would be omnipotent;

That his power would be exercised without control;

That property, which had hitherto been supported by social sanction, would henceforth come under the gracious authority of the prince;

That the finances of the state would be subject to a secret accounting, as if they were merged with the civil list;

In a word, that public order, the security and the fortune of the citizens would rest in the future, no longer on a system of balances and guarantees, but solely on the genius of one man and his probity.

In this state of things, admit the liberty and the publicity of discussion, and the whole edifice crumbles: society finds itself postponed to the eve of December 2, and interests in the presence of the Revolution. What is to be done in such a situation? The Imperial Government is showing it to us, and the experience is not new. As the press could not be totally suppressed, any more than thought, we decided to make it speak as Philip of Macedonia made the Pythia speak, according to the wishes and the views of the government. The means are not lacking for this, and all are legal means, note this point. To make the press speak well, and the country think well, the System has, in addition to the administrative intimidation aimed at printers and booksellers, the authorizations and refusals of authorization, the warnings, the press releases, the suppressions, the decorations, the subsidies, the transactions, and consequently mystifications. For example, a newspaper had the misfortune to incur suppression. It is allowed to reappear, on condition that it takes for its editor a man devoted to the ministry. Of course, subscribers know nothing of the scheme; they think they receive free speech, but they feed on imperial advertisements. It is at this price that a skeptical nation, which prefers gold and pleasures to the exercise of right, and which has lost its self-respect, can be saved; likewise, that property, truth, today comes under the reason of state. You have to have experienced it, to understand what torture is imposed on the writer by this sword of Damocles suspended over his thought, over his conscience. The vainest flatter themselves, by dint of art,

of consideration, of reticence, with dodging the blow, and flatten themselves; the bravest are generously beaten, and as there is no more spring, no echo in souls, to the bitterness of condemnation is added, for these untimely champions of free thought, the regret of a needless sacrifice.

“The press is free,” say the ministers in their circulars; “All the French people can publish their opinions by complying with the laws.” We have just seen in what net imperial legality holds the periodical press. As for non-periodical writings, they are mastered by other means. Thus, according to imperial jurisprudence, *insulting public and religious morality* implies attacking religion, which is no longer the same thing; the attack on religion implies the attack on the Church, which is something else again. So that, on matters of morals, religion, church, philosophy, it is only permitted to publish, in the matter of books, what suits the Church and what the government permits. — Economic matters are judged in the same way. The attack on the principle of property can be found in any discussion of banks, railroad companies, stock exchanges, wage-earning, workers’ societies, ground rent, the interest of capital, the right to work, etc. It depends on the judgment of the courts. So that, the writer being judged much less on his opinions than on his known or presumed tendencies, it is possible to publish, on economic questions, only what the government allows. — We find the same reasoning again in matters of politics and public right. *The attack on the Constitution, on the rights that the emperor derives from the will of the French, incitement to hatred, etc., etc.*, all of this can be encountered in a philosophical research on the origin of societies, the principle of government, the responsibility of power, the comparison between despotism and the republic, all the more so in day-to-day discussions, which are of more direct interest to the action of the Head of State. So that, on questions of practical or theoretical policy, it is really permitted and possible to publish only what the government considers it is proper to let pass. — Who would believe it? The imperial government is in the process of inventing a new offense, which will completely shield its foreign policy: it is the offense of national *lèse-majesté*. In the warning given to *La Presse*, in connection with the annexation of Savoy, M. Billaut says that the facts published by this newspaper *offend French sentiment*. So that the French writer who would maintain that any annexation of territory, accomplished in spite of the formal wish of the populations, is contrary to the spirit of the Revolution, to the principles of 89, to respect for nationalities, departing from the dignity and the true interests of France, would be a bad citizen, an enemy of the homeland, a foreign agent!

Note further that the right of free discussion is implied, but not recognized by the Imperial Constitution. Indeed, the very explicit article of the Charters of 1814 and 1830, — *The French have the right to publish and opinions by complying with the laws*, — this article has been deleted. The Imperial Constitution does not recognize, in an express and formal manner, this right of publication held by the last two monarchies. It limits itself to saying, in a general way, art. 1, that it recognizes, confirms and guarantees the great principles proclaimed in 1789, which are the basis of French public law. But what are these principles? What does this public right consist of? The Constitution knows nothing about it. It will

be what we want, what the government likes, according to its sometimes extensive, sometimes restrictive system of interpretation, *ad libitum*. The definitions are yet to be made: until then, it is impossible to take judicial advantage of the *great principles of 89*.

The stamp of unworthiness among peoples, as among individuals, is stupidity. *Stupidity and lack of soul!* exclaims Beaumarchais, with redoubled eloquence, pleading against Goësmann. It is a sad thing to see how the French nation, squatting under the master who mounts it, becomes stupid and foolish. Its writers, its academicians, obliged to hold their pens, stammer and gossip; its jurists quibble, its philosophers ramble, its artists grimace, its landlords cry like calves, its businessmen bray with confidence. All ideas are falsified, all principles disguised; by dint of mutilation, reticence, complacency, the clearest notions become equivocal. The truth subordinated to the reason of state, the lie is universal. *You asked for it, Dandins, you asked for it!*

V. JUSTICE. — The facts that we have just reported are today platitudes, banal truths. So it's not as news that we have decided to reproduce them, it is as facts of social psychology. For there is one thing that has not become commonplace, and that it is important that everyone be clear about, it is that public unworthiness, in a day of forgetfulness, created the current despotism; it is that this despotism is something other than a simple substitution of the initiative of the prince for the initiative of the country; it is a system of outrages against society, the straitjacketing of the nation, consequently the overthrow of all rights and all morals. A man, a gang, do not create such monsters: it requires, I repeat, the tacit consent, the felony of the people.

Let one put at the head of acts of public authority, court sentences, writs of bailiffs, minutes of notaries, the name of the Emperor in place of the Holy Trinity or of the Republic one and indivisible: the danger is not great, if Justice is well done, although it would be more appropriate for it to be rendered in the name of the people. It is another thing when the power, by the law of its origin, is led to lay hands on Justice, as on property, as on the press, the stock exchange and the treasury; when it makes the magistrate speak, no longer according to the law, but according to its reasons of state; when it turns and turns again, according to his policy, traditions and maxims. The question then is no longer between monarchy and democracy, between the sovereignty of the people and divine right, between authority and liberty; it is, apart from the qualities of the prince, which his position dominates, and his personal honor, which is not at stake, it is, we say, between probity and prevarication, between the honor of the country and its infamy.

Under the imperial regime, the public ministry, which alone has the right to prosecute, to receive complaints and revelations, which alone is permitted to call rogues to order without being accused of defamation, the public ministry has from the first the ability to leave the law dormant, or to exhume it if it deems it appropriate, and to crack down. This is what M. Billaut meant not so long ago with menace in his circular relative to clerical agitation. Discretionary power, discretionary legislation, discretionary Justice, that, in six words, is the imperial

system. The law is a sword that the government leaves sheathed, as long as it does not feel threatened, but that it draws and brandishes at the first manifestation of indiscipline. — If it were necessary, say our lawyers who have become ministers, presidents of the Senate and of the Council of State, if it were necessary to apply the law in its rigor, society would be intolerable, and government impossible. — Then remake your legislation, above all call the juror, so that the country has the responsibility for tolerance; for, suffer it to be told to you, monarch and advisers, your discretionary Justice, your discretionary law, and all your discretionary faculties, are an abominable hypocrisy:

Discretionary ability to use the law or not to use it;

Discretion to sue or not to sue;

Discretionary ability to transport without judgment, to issue warrants to appear, to search, to arrest, to jail;

Discretionary ability to prolong or shorten trial proceedings;

Discretionary power to order an investigation, to refuse it, to direct it, to restrict it;

Discretionary power, the investigation completed, to indict or order the dismissal;

Discretionary ability to qualify offenses;

Discretionary faculty, in political and press matters, to assess the intention, the circumstances, the meaning of the writings, not from the point of view of society and the law, but from the point of view of reasons of State;

Discretionary ability to authorize or prohibit reporting;

Discretionary power to order closed sessions;

Discretionary right to distribute or to prohibit memoirs;

Discretionary ability to limit, stop, divert the defense;

Discretionary faculty to throw invective at the defendant, to excite against him, against his opinions and his ideas, the hatred of the citizens; .

Discretionary power to increase or reduce penalties in a proportion that may vary from one to one hundred;

Discretionary power to grant amnesty and pardon:

Isn't this the picture of your justice? Add that the emperor enjoys the discretionary power to raise or lower the salaries of the magistrates, to appoint them, to move them, to grant or refuse them advancement, to retire them, to to make ministers, to dismiss them if they are removable: which assures him of their almost unanimous support in all that he does and undertakes by virtue of his discretionary authority. It is not for nothing, and you show it, that it is written in the constitution that *justice is administered in the name of the emperor*. It is the emperor, in fact, who today makes the right and the non-right. In him, as in God, is the principle of all equity and justice. Monarchy by divine right had invented nothing like it: if, in feudal times, the prince had wanted to claim, to the exclusion of the people, the juridical prerogative, the Church could have reminded him that he was only the first of sinners. The voters of December took advice neither from human right nor from divine right. What did Justice matter to them? What they wanted was to be done with ideas, it was to give themselves a strong power, from which they could obtain concessions, subsidies,

bribes, with whom they could traffic all rights and all liberties. Short of that they saw themselves seized by the Revolution, they believed themselves lost. Unworthy generation, whom the emperor treats above its merits, when he is content to qualify its interests as *miserable*.

VI. — SECRECY OF LETTERS. — One fact that, better than any other, shows to what extent the moral situation, of which the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December has become the expression, weighs on Justice, is the judgment of appeal rendered on the violation of the secrecy of letters. Among the prerogatives of imperial authority, that of opening and inspecting the envelopes entrusted to the post office is perhaps the most outrageous. All governments have been suspected of having a black cabinet; only the government of Napoleon III, formed of men who had protested against the immorality of that of Louis-Philippe, gave itself the merit of frankness in this. It does not do things underhandedly: it covers himself with beautiful and good laws, voted by the Legislature; beautiful and good judgments rendered by the judicial authority. If we are well informed, twenty-four advisers of the Court of Cassation, against sixteen, voted for the judgment that authorizes the Minister of the Interior and his agents, in the interest of public safety and *order*, to open the letters and packages entrusted to their care. What does this mean? Lawyers, say the vulgar critics, never fail in bad cases, and plausible grounds are always found for the worst designs. Euphemism is the favorite figure of despotism. For us, who seek the reason of things in things themselves, we declare that it is impossible for us to attribute to a ministerial influence the decision of the twenty-four magistrates, and that, if the imperial system seems to us deplorable, the court de Cassation, at least, did not lack logic. Let no one expect from us a refutation of this memorable decision,

In principle, the Supreme Court wanted to say, the violation of the secrecy of letters is an outrage to the dignity of the citizens and of the nation. Public faith is one of the pillars of social order; it cannot be harmed without this order being shaken. The mission of power is to enforce respect for the public faith, and to set an example of this respect. *If good faith were banished from the rest of the earth*, said King John of France, *it should find its way into the mouths of kings*. In these conditions, and unless in other respects it injures justice, the government need fear treachery from no one. Its existence is intimately linked to the maintenance of the law, which itself has no enemies. So that one can regard as an axiom that the incompatibility between Justice and public authority is a contradiction: the government that would allege such an incompatibility would denounce itself to the animadversion of the citizens. But, continues the Court, considering, in this case, that the government of the Emperor was established, by a serious fault of the nation, under other auspices; that he is the product, not of the conscience of the country, but of the unworthiness of the country; that he consequently represents, no longer the pact of the citizens, but their antagonism; that since December 2, 1851, Justice has been overwhelmed in France by the reason of state, and that reason of state has as its object the maintenance, development and greater satisfaction of established interests; that it is with this view that the discretionary power of the Emperor was created, by the vote of six million



suffrages; that in such a state of things the imperial authority must be considered as taking precedence over the national majesty; that thus the safety of the prince and his dynasty prevails over public faith and honesty, for these reasons, etc.

All the institutions, all the laws, all the acts of the imperial government, are uniformly reduced to these terms: the forfeiture of the country, the preeminence of the prince, the supremacy of his free will over public faith and reason, everything in virtue of interests that otherwise would find themselves compromised: what properly constitutes the indignity of the country, the abolition of national majesty.

In vain the ministers of this government protest their reservations; in vain do they allege that it is only a question for the government of thwarting plots; that use will only be made of the option granted in exceptional cases, etc. All these platitudes about *necessity, moderation, good intentions*, only highlight the immorality of the thing. There is no greater political necessity than that of respecting the law; there is no moderation that renders its violation lawful, no good intention that excuses felony. Everyone knows that his secrets are at the discretion of the police: there is nothing more to be said. No more public faith, no more society, no more nation.

VII. NAIVETÉ OF THE SYSTEM. — What is sad is that neither the emperor nor the country seem to be aware of their position. Anyone who has seen things up close will admit that Napoleon III cannot be called a tyrant, nor the French nation be said to be tyrannized. Nothing could be more naive, better intentioned, more frankly exercised than imperial power; one could even say, nothing more accepted, if history were not there to attest that twelve years ago the nation was quite different, if its conscience did not tell it that it fell by its own forfeiture, if no one knew that at the first crack the explosion would be terrible.

After the attempt of Orsini, the President of the Legislative Body, M. de Morny, in a speech full of anger, pointed out, among the causes of this regicide, the ingratitude of the old parties saved by the coup d'état. Assuredly, M. de Morny was sincere, he spoke from the abundance of his indignation: but this very sincerity proves to what extent the government of Napoleon III, by dint of taking its role seriously, has lost the feeling of national dignity. Let us not haggle over the benefit; grant, if you will, that without December 2 the bourgeoisie, which is accused of having remained faithful in spite of its interests to its former loves, would have run greater risks in 1852 than in 1848, and let us balance the scales. Louis-Napoleon has saved, for the moment, the bourgeois from ruin; but by the extra-legality of his government, he deprives them of honor daily. The imperial government resembles those benefactors who spare their proteges neither recommendations, nor services, nor money, but who take their wives, their daughters, their sisters, and who, at the first sign of discontent, cry ingratitude,

This absence of moral sense is so much in the nature of the imperial government that it can betray it at any time, without it realizing it. We have just quoted M. de Morny; we have just quoted M. Billaut threatening religious congregations with laws that he holds in reserve. Here is another, M. Rouland,

if we remember correctly, who, apropos of the snub made to the Holy Father and the murmurings of the clergy, also complains of episcopal ingratitude. The Church, says this minister, was saved, like the bourgeoisie, by the coup d'état; the Church was showered with the benefits of the Emperor; influence, honors, privileges, money, power; he sacrificed everything to her, even his popularity. And for gratitude, the Church excommunicates him, agitates the population, pushes to revolt!... — What does it mean, I ask you, this complaint from M. Rouland? It means that the Napoleonic Empire has never understood what a church is; that it imagined that that daughter of Jesus Christ, whose visible head is at Rome, in receiving its favors, sacrificed its principles for it; that it flattered itself that it would make her accept its state theology, just as it made her take advantage of its reasons of state, in short, of making her a cog in the wheel of its system. Such is the motive that brought the cardinals into the Senate, to increase the salaries of bishops, parish priests, vicars; deliver primary instruction to ignorantins, caress the Jesuits, encourage religious congregations. There was a tacit pact, according to the Minister Rouland, between the Church and the Emperor, and the Church has violated the pact. But, we are given to understand, the Emperor will know how to do without the support of an incorrigible clergy who have forgotten nothing and learned nothing; the Emperor relies on the faith of the masses, which is not the faith of ultramontanes, hostile to the homeland, which is not that of the Gallicans either, observes M. de Morny, given that Gallicanism smacks of schism, heresy, and leads to revolt; but which is the Catholic, Apostolic, Carolingian and Napoleonic faith; faith that the government of the emperor will be able to defend as well against the mutinies of the episcopate as against the attacks of the voltairians and the ideologues. And there is an echo in France of this mess; there are found so-called democratic, republican newspapers, friends of the Revolution, to support it! Shame and indignity!

VIII. POLITICAL DECADENCE. — People abroad are not convinced enough of that kind of bonhomie in a more-than-oriental despotism that distinguishes the government of Napoleon III; he is credited with infinitely too much trickery, cunning, Machiavellianism. Analyze the current French consciousness: you will have the secret of the policy, internal and external, of the government of Napoleon III. The public conscience failed, in France, on December 2; the imperial government, such as we have just drawn the picture of it, is the expression of this fall. But France has not for that said goodbye to her old sentiments: the Revolution is not dead there; the need for Justice, the disgust with the arbitrary, are there as poignant as ever. Add that every day a new generation advances, which does not believe itself in the least involved by the coup d'état; that out of thirty-six millions of souls who expiate the sin of December, there are twenty-four million innocents. This remorse, these young elements, with which the imperial policy is forced to reckon, give it an air of compunction that foreigners take for hypocrisy, and which is nothing but the somnambulism of a bad conscience. — If the Emperor waged war, it was, as his Minister for Foreign Affairs would tell us, to maintain the balance of Europe, to

protect the weak against the strong, to emancipate nations, to enforce respect for nationalities. If he aspires to great influence, it is to remind governments of equity, of traditions, of principles. Therefore he gives or causes to be given to the pope advice for reform; to Austria, counsels of liberalism; to the King of Naples, counsels of moderation; to the Sultan, counsels of tolerance; to Spain, counsels of legality; to Belgium, peace counsels; to Piedmont, he recommends reserve; to Tuscany, he recalls the Italian federation. Do you know what this gossip proves? It is because France regrets her lost liberties, her conciliatory policy, the rule of law, the works of peace, the confidence of the people, and her own esteem. What the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December has taken from it, the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December strives to restore to it in imagination and in hopes. In this, as in all things, he is sincere, perfectly intentioned, and in the best faith in the world.

Napoleon III, says Anglo-Germanic mistrust, has his eye fixed on the line of the Rhine. — It is because, since December 2, France has been reproaching Napoleon I with having lost it. How can we not see that the imperial government is condemned, by its equivocal origin, to oscillate ceaselessly between the memories of the first empire and those of the July monarchy? The nation, violently driven back by December 2 towards a state of war, divided against itself, suspicious of those abroad, seeks its strategic borders, and complains that it no longer finds them. Did it think about it from 1814 to 1852?

Napoleon III, I continue the enumeration of grievances, repeatedly threatened England with a fall. — We might have believed it, in fact; but after each gesture, he returned to the *entente cordiale*. Look: he does not breathe a word about Perim; of the piercing of the isthmus of Suez, nothing more. Sooner or later, no doubt, the quarrel will start again: what do you want? The memory of fifteen years of war, the memory of fifteen years of peace: beneath the national conscience which cries: I cannot live with shame; glory, Sire, or liberty!

Napoleon III, in defiance of the acts of the Congress of Vienna, has just united Savoy with France. How do you have the courage to blame him for that? Was this most unfortunate initiative rewarded with a sadder result? In 1859, the Emperor went down to Italy: his aim was to drive out the Austrians, which naturally meant to re-establish in their place, in the Peninsula, French influence and the former sovereignty of the Bonapartes. What has happened? Instead of a federative Italy, gravitating like a group of satellites in the Napoleonic orbit, he finds a unitary Italy, ready to stand up as one man against the Emperor of the French, after having expelled the Emperor of Austria. What a disappointment! Also, how eagerly Napoleon III signed the Peace of Villafranca! How much he regretted not being able, without contradicting himself, to demand the restoration of the Archdukes! A little longer, and all of Italy belongs to Victor-Emmanuel. To deal with this eventuality of a state of 26 million souls, which he had neither desired nor foreseen, but which his bad luck caused him to create at the gates of France, Napoleon III obtained authorization from his ally the king of Sardinia to transfer his south-eastern frontier from the foot of the Alps to the crest! Perhaps it would have been better, to make up for such a great fault, to neutralize, between France and Italy, Savoy and the county of Nice, as we neutralized Switzerland between Austria and France. But, to cry out for

conquest, for this meager compensation, dear neighbors, is cruelty.

Through the torrent of invectives vomited against the Emperor of the French by the foreign press, it is impossible not to see how, at bottom, the imperial government finds itself flouted. — You violate the treaties, said jealous England to Napoleon; you are undermining the European balance. We no longer get along; you no longer have our confidence. However, as you promise to let the Italians choose their government, I accept your treaty of commerce, and I declare that the annexation of Savoy does not affect me. — You are violating the treaties, resumed the Tsar; but as, to effect this annexation, you do not intend to avail yourself of universal suffrage, which moreover would not be favorable to you, I declare that this annexation does not concern me. — You are violating the treaties, adds the regent of Prussia: however, as you reject the principle of natural frontiers, which you first invoked, I declare that I will limit myself to a simple protest, and not make war!...

It is thus that a nation that has lost respect for itself becomes a laughingstock for others; it is thus that after moral dissolution comes political decadence. Napoleon III, say the onlookers, will at least be able to flatter himself that he will leave an enlarged France after June. Yes, and more isolated, and better encircled, and in full decomposition. What is an addition of territory when the moral life is no longer there? — Stagnation in the nation, hypertrophy in the state.

IX. FINAL MYSTIFICATION. — M. de Lamartine has said: "Louis Napoleon is an honest man; I know him, I answer for him." — M. de Lamartine is very good: do you ever doubt the honesty of a head of state? Can an emperor not be an honest man? Take away from Napoleon III his intrinsic morality, his probity beyond question, his chivalrous ideas, his candid good faith, what will become of him, — good God! — with the discretionary power that he possesses? And what will become of us?

As for me, I go further than M. de Lamartine, and I believe I am in the strict truth: There are two men in Napoleon III, a victim and a martyr.

Napoleon III is the victim, or rather the scapegoat of our apostasy: this is what earned him his candidacy in 1848, and which made his coup d'état a success. On this point I have nothing to add to the preceding considerations. Napoleon III is the martyr of the *Napoleonic Idea*, an idea that he carries in his heart, as the faithful after communion carry Jesus Christ; an idea that led him to undertake his two enterprises in Strasbourg and Boulogne; an idea, finally, that he represents alone and which would no longer have, in France, the slightest course, if he were not there, in person, with a budget of 1,800 million and 600,000 soldiers, to support it.

Now, insofar as he represents the Napoleonic idea, Napoleon III is in perpetual contradiction with the conservative idea, which took him for its savior: this is what explains how his ministers, his advisers, his generals, his secretaries all his entourage, are constantly busy holding him back, repairing his mistakes, mitigating his errors, concealing his deviations, interpreting his anachronisms. The greatest embarrassment of the imperial government is the imperial prerogative. Up to now the empire has lived on conservative prudence, acting as

a counterweight to the Napoleonic idea, and nothing proves that the genius of the individual will soon outweigh the force of the situation. Already, during his presidency, Louis-Napoleon had shown the deep disagreement that exists between his Idea, and the necessary, obligatory policy of his government. We remember the letter to Edgar Ney, which gave M. Odilon Barrot so much trouble; these eccentric harangues, these fantastic reviews, these messages with a phraseology that was sometimes so odd. The ministers had enough to do, in parliament, to respond to the interpellations. The Emperor has lost none of the originality of the President: thus the task of his menders has become singularly aggravated.

The Napoleonic idea threatens England: M. de Persigny immediately tries to mend the English alliance. What hasn't this excellent M. de Persigny done to prevent his master from marrying an upstart!... The Napoleonic idea proclaims free trade: MM. Baroche and Rouher restore protection. The Napoleonic idea invokes, with regard to Savoy, the principle of natural frontiers: M. Thouvenel disavows the principle of natural frontiers. The Napoleonic idea invites M. About to ridicule the government of the pope; the Minister of Justice has M. About's book prosecuted. One day, the Napoleonic idea sends to the *Moniteur* the decree for the annexation of Belgium; the Minister of State forbids the printing of this decree. The Napoleonic idea claims to direct, from Biarritz, the operations of the siege of Sebastopol: General Pellissier had the electric wire cut to avoid the idea. At that time, the Napoleonic idea had announced its intention of going to the Crimea to share the fatigues of the soldiers, and MM. Baroche and Troplong, throwing themselves at its knees, had had great difficulty in holding it back. In 1859, the Napoleonic idea once again felt the need to command the army in person: this time, who would prevent it? Fortunately, the generals agree among themselves to consider His Majesty's battle plans as null and void. What more can be said? The Napoleonic idea goes astray, the innocent, in the mines, the docks, the canals, the cars, the railways, the banks, the insurances; and from time to time the administration, the prosecution, sweat blood and tears to extricate it from these unfortunate affairs. The Napoleonic idea at grips with the conservative idea, born of July 1830: that is the whole secret of imperial policy. The story of their struggles will be that of the reign. The most skillful have worn themselves out: MM. Odilon Barrot, Dufaure, Léon Faucher, de Falloux, Drouyn de l'Huys, Walewsky, de Persigny, etc. Now, admire the advantage of a regime of silence. The public laughed at the President: they no longer know what to think of the Emperor, whether he is a mediocrity or a genius.

What becomes serious, and heartbreaking, is to see the culmination of this incredible mystification. Everything has an end in this world: could MM. Baroche, Troplong, de Morny et *tutti quanti*, who, out of devotion to the public good, thought it necessary to affix to the government of December 2 the countersignature of their honor, tell us what, according to them, will be the final result?

The government of Napoleon III, in the way it is engaged, in the presence of the ideas that are agitated, of the anger ready to explode, cannot change its maxims. It cannot return to constitutionality, to legality, to liberty, to control. It

cannot want to be accountable, to expose itself lightheartedly to an outburst of public opinion. It is therefore necessary that it compresses still more, that it shortens the chain, that it stifles Justice, principles and liberty more and more. But, while the government obeys the impulse that gave it existence, the nation enters little by little into an opposite current; public opinion is alienated; the Decembrist party is imperceptibly reduced to the personnel of the administration and the police, and the moment is approaching when, as in 1814, it will be possible to say: The empire is the emperor. So, the balance being broken, there will be revolution: is this why the interests have supported December 2?

To avert this danger, will the Napoleonic idea be allowed to take the upper hand over the conservative idea, and, appealing to the worst instincts of the country, will we throw ourselves into the career of conquest? I do not know to what extent the powers of Europe, divided by their selfishness, forgetful of their solidarity, without concern for the dignity of the people, would be in a mood to tolerate new incorporations on the part of France. It is possible that the Tsar, who promises himself compensations from the East; that Prussia, to whom the empire of Germany would be granted; that Austria, which would be allowed to extend on the other side of the Danube; that England, who will know how to do her part, will let France expand to the Rhine? Such a connivance, in determining the organization of militarism throughout Europe, would only result in bringing out more clearly the inanity of the idea, by showing France imprisoned in a circle of great states. And after? Will the empire be more solid, less agitated, when, by new annexations, it will have increased in its bosom the mass of the discontented? War will therefore always be necessary: but then there will be coalition, and, if events follow their natural course, invasion. Is that why the conservatives overthrew the republic?

Could it be that among the multitude of those who have served Napoleon III and who owed their fortune to him, that around him, among his family, among his friends, there could not be found a man with enough heart and intelligence to make him understand what detestable thought he serves as an organ, and on what abyss of ignominy his power rests? Not a man who says to him: Sire, since your imbroglio of December 2, there are no longer in France either principles or liberties. Your government, in the terms posed by your lawyers, hostile to thought, suspect to property, offensive to the nation, resolves itself into a pact of iniquity, into systematic prevarication; your power is an outrage against common sense, and you yourself, the personification of this chaos, are you, unwittingly, an obstacle to morality and public safety?

Perhaps it is written that the powers, that the nations, which, while applauding the coup d'état, have declared themselves in solidarity with it, must, like France, be punished where they have sinned. So, may the destinies be fulfilled! But let it be known: the Republic declines all responsibility in the events.

END THE SECOND STUDY.



OF JUSTICE IN THE REVOLUTION  
AND IN THE CHURCH.

••

GOODS.



CHAPTER ONE.

Position of the problem of the division of goods, or economic problem.

MONSIGNOR,

1. — I am really sorry to have to speak to you again about M. de Mirecourt. But, as I told you, M. de Mirecourt is a sign of the times: so much the worse for the times. M. de Mirecourt receives communications from the episcopate: so much the worse for the episcopate.

My biographer begins in these terms:

“Pierre-Joseph...” — He affects to call me by my first name, quite simply, like a kid. It does well apparently in a pamphlet written for devotees; that flattens a man for you: let us bend our backs under the whip of this Nemesis.

“So Pierre-Joseph is the son of a poor brewer cooper...”

This poverty of my birth returns on every page: it is the beginning, the middle and the end of my story. My attention being directed in spite of me to this insistence of my biographer, I asked myself what he wanted, and here is what I have discovered.

Ordinary men make the mistake of hating poverty, as if it were a blemish in the system of Providence; and those who house it in their homes, the even greater wrong of wanting to expel it. This is at least what those satisfied with the established order suspect, disturbed and scandalized by the cry of misery.

*Poverty is not a vice*, say the good women of Franche-Comté, *but it's worse!* — Worse than vice, do you hear, Monsignor? What a revolutionary thought! This is the first lesson in practical philosophy that I received; and I confess that nothing, as far back as I can remember, has given me so much to think about.

When I was in high school, I was surprised to find in my authors the same sentence, almost a word for word: *Paupertas hoc habet durius in se quèd ridiculos homines facit*: What is most unbearable in poverty is that it makes you look ridiculous. I don't recall who said that anymore. Poverty and derision! it struck my cheek like a slap. M. de Mirecourt reminds me of it when he names me, with a joking tone, Pierre-Joseph.

*Silence to the poor!* This was Lamennais' last word in 1848, when the Constituent Assembly, as a measure of order against the poor, reestablished the security for newspapers. At the assizes of the nation, poverty does not have the floor, it is suspect.

There are moralists, there are some even in the republican party, whose virtue impatiently suffered the fact that these questions of wealth, wages, property, distribution of products, well-being were discussed in front of the masses. — Speak to them of duty, of sacrifice, of disinterestedness, of the celestial origin of the soul and of its immortal hopes, and they will applaud; but of material goods, goodness no! It is wrong that poverty shows itself in a republic: *Silence to the poor!*

Well, yes, Monsignor, I am poor, the son of a poor man; I have spent my life with the poor, and, to all appearances, I shall die poor. What do you want? I wouldn't ask for anything better than to get rich; I believe that wealth is good in its nature and that it befits everyone, even the philosopher. But I am difficult about the means, and those that I would like to use are not within my reach. Then, it's nothing for me to make a fortune, as long as there are poor people. In this respect I say like Caesar: Nothing is done as long as there is still work to do, *Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum*. Anyone who is poor is my family. My father was an apprentice cooper, my mother a cook; they married as late as they could, which did not prevent them from giving birth to five children, of whom I am the eldest, and to whom they left their poverty after having worked well. So shall I do: I have been working for nearly forty years, and, poor bird beaten by the storm, I have not yet found the green branch that must shelter my brood. Of all this misery I would never have said anything, if I had not been made a species of criminal for having broken my ban of indigence, and having allowed myself to reason about the principles of wealth and the laws of its distribution. Ah! If at least the problem were solved for everyone, and that there were only me poor in the world! I would return to my nothingness and would no longer dishonor, by my insolent protests, my country and my century.

II. — Regarding this question of poverty, the Church has quite different maxims:

*Blessed are the poor! — Blessed are those who are hungry! — Blessed are those who weep!*

These words are taken from the Sermon on the Mount, in St. Matthew, ch. v. It is the gospel that is sung on All Saints' Day: my teachers took care to make me recite it by heart for seven consecutive years.

There will always be poor people, said the ancient Law: *Non deerunt pauperes in terrâ habitationis tuæ*. (Deut. xv.) And the creator of the news did



not fail to repeat this adage: You will always have the poor with you: *Pauperes semper habebitis vobiscum*. Here we are far from the opinion of the classics, of the statesmen of the republic, and of the old women of my country!

What do these speeches mean? asked my youthful intelligence.

And the Church, interpreter of the Gospel, answered me:

Poverty by itself is truly shameful, because it is the penalty for sin. But, by the grace of Jesus Christ, those who, living in poverty, will have suffered their pain in this life will be rewarded in the next, as the divine sermonary announces in the second half of the verse: *Quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum*. Such is the order of Providence and the teaching of our holy religion.

It was enough to crush the reason of a hundred philosophers. But childhood is terrible:

How is it then that there are rich people? For if it is not misery that accuses Providence, it is wealth. Explain that.

The rich, replied the catechism, are not rich, as they imagine, by virtue of a right inherent in humanity, but by a mandate from heaven, and their property is only a deposit. This is why they are recommended to practice detachment, *pauperes spiritu*; to unite in heart and through voluntary abstinence with the sufferings of the poor and to give them generosity, *eleemosynam, caritatem*. Without this it is as impossible for them to enter paradise as it is for a camel (others say a cable, I prefer the camel) to pass through the eye of a needle.

Up to this point everything was going fine; the system seemed to support itself:

Poverty, with a few exceptions, general: a fact of experience.

Vice and crime, also with a few exceptions, general like poverty: another fact of experience.

A causal relationship from one to the other: a probable fact.

A great expiation in the present: a possible fact.

A proportional reparation in the future: a desirable fact.

In the meantime, a more or less effective palliative, charity: a commendable fact.

These ideas followed each other, linked together with a certain whole. They seized my understanding, without, however, satisfying it. It was like a sophism that my reason could not refute, but against which my conscience protested. I went a long time without finding a way out. Woe to the Christian who ventures into this labyrinth! He is on the revolutionary slope, he races toward disbelief, he already has one foot in the abyss.

III. — Fourier recounts that the mercantile lies he witnessed when he was still young in his father's shop were for him the first revelation of his mission as a reformer. An entirely opposite fact decided mine. My father, a simple man, could never lodge in his mind that, the society in which he lived being given over to antagonism, the well-being that every industrialist tends to procure is the spoils of war as much as the product of labor; that consequently the market price of a commodity is not measured by the cost price, but by what the need of the public, its means to purchase, the state of competition, etc., allow one to extort.

He added up his expenses, added so much for his work, and said: Here is my price. He did not want to hear any argument, and ruined himself. I was not twelve years old when I reasoned, without knowing it, *supply* and *demand* and *net product*, as Pascal, with *rounds* and *bars*, reasoned about geometry. I fully sensed what was fair and regular in the paternal method, but I also saw the risk it entailed. My conscience approved of one; the feeling for our security pushed me toward the other. It was for me a riddle that confronted Christian theory, a riddle which, if I were to solve it, threatened to swallow up my religion.

Coming out of secondary school, the workshop received me. I was nineteen. Having become a producer on my own account and a mercantilist, my daily work, my acquired education, my stronger reason, allowed me to dig deeper into the problem than I had been able to do in the past. Useless efforts: the darkness thickened more and more.

But what! I said to myself every day while *pushing my lines*, if by some means the producers could agree to sell their products and services at approximately what they cost, and consequently what they are worth, there would be less enriched no doubt, but there would also be fewer bankrupts; and, everything being cheap, one would see much less indigence.

Disappointment! the Church cried out to me immediately. Such an agreement of wills and interests, assuming holiness and justice in human society, is impossible. The Gospel, which knows this well, teaches us that pauperism is unfailing like crime; that the wicked and the poor will always be in greater number, *pauci electi*. (A) And it is in order to combat the overflow of sin, inherent in our nature, and its inevitable consequences, that Christ came to earth, that he preached detachment, resignation, humility, and that he suffered the torture of the cross, pledge for the compensations he promises us in the next life.

This strikes me as dubious.

No positive experience, I replied, demonstrates that wills and interests cannot be balanced in such a way that peace, an imperturbable peace, is the fruit, and wealth becomes the general condition. Nothing proves that vice and crime, which we make the principle of misery and antagonism, do not have their cause precisely in this misery and this antagonism, which Catholic doctrine presents as being its punishment. The whole question is to find a principle of harmony, weighting, balance.

Now if, hypothetically, such a principle existed, if consequently the balance of forces and interests coming to be established, well-being became general, vice and crime diminishing in the same proportion as pauperism, Christianity would no longer be true! For Christianity to be true, the see-saw motion, and consequently misery and crime, must be eternal. Where am I? and to what terms have I just reduced the entire system of religion?... Thus Christianity would be interested in the maintenance of pauperism and speculation; thus, far from being the friend of the poor, their comforter and their refuge, it would be their enemy; on the other hand, far from sincerely wanting the extinction of sin, it would need it, it should protect it, love it!

Consider, Monsignor, what a doubt this question of pauperism casts over the

truth of Christianity and its morality, and how false, while awaiting the solution of this doubt, is the position of the Church! She cannot, with a sincere heart and an effective will, wish for the end of pauperism and crime; she cannot want the happiness of her children in this world. She seems dedicated by her dogma to the odious mission of combating as impious all attempts to abolish poverty; so that, while giving herself the appearance of protecting the poor and thundering against the selfishness of the rich, she exists in reality only to defend the privilege of the latter against the despair of the former!

Whether this is a controversialist exaggeration, or the pure expression of the sentiments of the Church and of her secular practice, the discussion into which we are about to enter will teach us. But before going further, let us try to clarify our ideas.

IV. — The problem of the distribution of goods, or more generally the economic problem, is obviously a matter for Justice. All enjoyment, in fact, presupposes an appropriation. Any appropriation presupposes a community, positive or negative, from which this appropriation derogates, but which authorizes and guarantees it. Therefore, every question relating to goods must be resolved by right.

But here the question is posed in such terms that at first sight it seems insoluble.

We know what Justice is in itself; its definition can be reduced to this formula, which is both imperative and coercive: *Respect your neighbor as yourself, even though you could not love him; and do not allow him or yourself to be disrespected.*

Thus determined, Justice is essentially subjective, in its principle, in its object, in its end.

How then, by virtue of this law of subjectivity, are we going to delimit relations whose object is not us; decree, decide and legislate on possession, sales and purchases, loans, rental, taxes, prescriptions, mortgages, servitudes, etc.? How are we to move from the subjective to the objective, and, by virtue of the right to respect, define the right to work or the right to property? (B)

That's not all.

When we observe the practice of nations, we see that economic forces, labor, exchange, credit, property, considered in themselves, in their free manifestation and prior to any contract, are subject to certain laws independent of the will of man and consequently of his justice. An example is the law of *supply* and *demand*. These laws cannot be disregarded without exposing us to disastrous mistakes: their study is the preliminary condition of all good legislation.

Now, when we know the strong and the weak of the social economy, will we go, in the name of our immanent Justice, to fight its fatality or will we subject our dignity to it? Should man, the intelligent and free being par excellence, the king of nature by his lofty prerogatives, fight against the reason of things or sink into their organism?

One hope remains. As all truths are sisters, perhaps the same conciliation that we have found in Justice between man and man exists between the

prescriptions of the juridical order and the laws of the economic order. What then is this accord between subject and object, between spirit and matter, between justice and fatality? What concessions will the two principles make? What transaction is possible between powers that can only be defined by their mutual exclusion? For example, we have seen that with regard to persons, outside of equality, there is no Justice. Will this severe law be maintained in the distribution of goods and products? And if it is not maintained, what will be the tolerance granted to iniquity?

Before going any further, let's say it once and for all:

By posing the question of right on *Goods*, as we posed it previously on *Persons*, as we will pose it later on the *State*, on *Labor*, on *Marriage*, we in no way claim that society has remained until this moment in absolute ignorance of justice. For four or five thousand years legal matters have not ceased to be agitated among men. Who are we to believe that this immense debate has produced no light? Ah! Let us recognize rather, that if the human genius deserves some praise, it is especially for its persevering efforts, often successful, in the research of right. We possess a magnificent collection of maxims, of formulas, admirable in precision and elegance, of broad and fruitful theories. Languages, religions, literatures, philosophies, empires, even nations have passed; jurisprudence alone has survived. It did more than survive, it has constantly improved,

But it must also be agreed that we do not yet hold this unity and this certainty; that the contradiction exists in the acts of the legislator as much as in everyday practice, in the definitions of the school as in the decisions of the judge; that, if the materials are abundant, the construction is little advanced: so that the just judgment is a thing even rarer today than the just man, given that the sin of ignorance cannot corrupt the conscience, even when it dishonors the understanding.

I therefore say that if the contradiction is in the science, if consequently it infects the law and disturbs society, it comes from the fact that we have not yet arrived, in the matter of Justice, at the first principles, at the mother ideas, at what we will call the organic decree of practical reason, in the various categories of the social order.

This decree, which must govern from above everything related to the acquisition, possession and transmission of goods, is what we seek. After personal right, real right; after political legislation, economic legislation.

And, without going back to pagan antiquity, whose tradition our codes only follow, parallel to that of the Church that the civil legislator has abandoned, I begin by questioning the Church.

Does the Church possess a science of Justice applied to material interests?

To which I respond, as I have already done for persons:

No, the Church knows nothing either of the science of wealth or of its relations with justice.

Regarding all these things she professes ignorance, she denies the possibility of knowing them, and this denial is for her an article of faith. Just as we have seen her, in the name of inviolable Majesty, decide against man the question of

personal right and dignity, so we are going to see her again, in the name of redemption and grace, decide against this same man the question of real right and wealth, and by this new judgment render social immorality irremediable.

## CHAPTER II.

### Doctrine of the Church on the distribution of Goods. — Explanation of pauperism by grace; institution of Authority.

V. — Pagan corruption had resulted, among other things, in the agglomeration in a small number of hands of all the wealth: the immense majority of the inhabitants of the empire were without property, colonists of the tax authority, proletarians of the cities, slaves. A reparation was awaited: Christianity owed to this expectation, which it seemed at first to favor, the best part of its success.

The Gospel is full of anathemas against the rich and promises to the unfortunate. If ever a sect carried the scandal of excitement to envy and hatred far, it is assuredly this one. Blessed are the poor, the Master had said, because they will have their turn; blessed are the pious, because they will possess the earth; blessed are the hungry because they will be satisfied! Such is, according to the first gospel, the beginning of the messianic preaching, a beginning that it is impossible to take in any other sense than that of a claim to property.

The question of division was therefore posed from the first day, by the mouth of Jesus Christ himself. What was the Church going to answer to this question? On her decision depended the future of the Christian people, the unity of the Church, the peace of the world.

The Church, naturally, could only answer according to its religion. Now, what did Christianity say here?

VI. — On the very cause of pauperism and the inequity of fortunes, all the doctors teach that this pauperism and this inequality are, like death, an effect of original sin, and that there is consequently no reason to accuse either providence or society; that such evil is not due to an accident of nature or civilization, but that it has its source in the depths of the moral order, in a prevarication which, after having infected the race of Adam, has sprung up in all of creation.

“Man,” says Dom Calmet, “was created in complete liberty, subject to God alone. If sin had not entered the world with the disobedience of Adam, men would have remained in this equality and this independence with respect to one another.” (*Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans.*)

Malebranche is strongly attached to this same principle, that vice is the only cause of inequality among men.

“It is a certain truth,” he said, “that the difference of conditions is a necessary consequence of original sin, and that often quality, riches and elevation derive their origin from injustice and the ambition of those to whom our ancestors owe their birth.

Force, or the law of brutes, which has conferred the empire of animals on the lion, has become the mistress of men." (*Treatise on Morality*, XIV, 1, 4, 6.)

"Five or six good-for-nothings," said Domat, one of the doctors of Port-Royal, quoted by M. Cousin, "share the best part of the world and the richest; that is enough to let us judge what good wealth is before God!"

Thus the cause of the evil not being, according to the Church, of the temporal order, the remedy does not belong to it either. Before dealing with the things of the earth, it is necessary to clarify the affairs of heaven. The problem of pauperism being linked to that of sin, it is through the science of salvation in eternity that we must arrive at well-being in this life, if indeed salvation and wealth are not mutually exclusive.

What then, according to the Church, is this principle of salvation, our last resource against misery?

VII. — This principle, the opposite of sin, is *grace*.

"By grace we generally mean a gift that God grants to men out of pure liberality, without their having done anything to deserve it, whether this gift relates to the present life or relates to the future life.

"There are several varieties of grace:

"Natural grace and supernatural grace;

"Internal grace and external grace;

"Habitual grace and actual grace;

"Prevenient or operative grace, and cooperating or subsequent grace;

"Sufficient grace and effectual grace;

"Grace granted for the salvation of others, and grace granted for one's own salvation, or as the academics say, *gratia gratis dé, et gratia gratum faciens*." (BERGIER, *Dict. de Théol.*)

One observation before moving on. By *natural* graces we mean, says Bergier, the advantages of nature and of society, life, health, strength, beauty, spirit, nobility, fortune; by *supernatural* graces, those whose object is more especially salvation, such as the sacraments, good thoughts, revelations, the gift of miracles; or which, having only present happiness as their object, can be regarded as extraordinary liberalities of Providence, for example the wealth with which it showered the patriarchs, the protection with which it surrounded them, etc.

In this way, nature and grace henceforth form a single whole: nature, following the original prevarication, becomes incapable of fulfilling its destiny; grace, previously reduced to the creative act, and then forced to return to the charge in order to salvage the debility of nature, and correct its morbid influence.

; good, tends to free himself from sin and misery, man is therefore entirely enveloped by grace, which is essentially gratuitous, absolutely necessary, and which, moreover, is not denied to anyone. It is now a question of knowing whether, with this gracious reinforcement, the stain of original sin being washed away by the blood of Christ, the Church is in a position to put an end to the inequality of conditions and to extinguish pauperism. For in the end, the neophytes of the first century, as well as the socialists of the nineteenth century,

could say with reasonable insistence, you admit that earthly goods are of a completely inferior order, and cannot be compared with eternal salvation and the hopes of life beyond the grave. That is not the question. But however contemptible these goods may be, it is still necessary to deal with their distribution, if only to spare the faithful from formidable temptations, and the Church from frightful iniquities. The spiritual world is bound up with the regularization of the material. Now here we are all free, all brothers: what will be the law of labor, of property, of exchange, of lending, of wages? How to apply the grace of redemption to the extinction of pauperism?

The response of the Church has never been, as far as we know, formulated in a precise manner. It exists nonetheless, in veiled terms; it results from the whole of the evangelical doctrine, and it is with complete certainty that we are going to summarize its substance.

VIII. — By original sin, continues the Church, man was delivered into the power of Satan and forever separated from God. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ has made reconciliation, and consequently beatitude, possible for us, but without completely freeing us from concupiscence, which remains in us as the mark of sin. So much for the spiritual.

In the temporal, things happen in an analogous way. The faith of Christ does not deliver us from sickness, poverty and death, other effects of sin: it softens, by grace, our severe trials; gives us courage, patience, resignation, detachment; renders suffering less cruel, death less horrible through the sublimity of its hopes; as for pauperism, it diminishes its leprosy by the outpouring of charity.

Let us leave sickness and death aside for the present, and concentrate exclusively on the question of goods. To properly appreciate the service rendered by the Church, one must first know how, according to her, inequality results from original sin, and what the state of society would be without this accursed influence. For it is evident, according to the declarations of the Church, that if redemption has not had the effect of entirely restoring humanity to its normal condition, at least it brings us closer to it by a few degrees, puts us on the road, gives us a foretaste of it and, by grace, communicates to us the strength to go forward.

To this decisive question, the Church, questioned in her tradition, in her establishments, in all her practice, replies that before sin men were governed by the law of love; that then, just as there was no lust, neither was there selfishness, no distinction between *thine* and *mine*; the fruits belonged to everyone, and the earth to no one. But, once the will of man was corrupted by sin, pride, ambition, jealousy and hatred entered the world; discord has troubled all relationships; division became inevitable, and from this division, subordinated to a multitude of random chances, to all the speculations of greed, came pauperism.

It is thus, continues the Church, that misery is the effect of original sin, and, in this life, absolutely incurable. *Five or six ne'er-do-wells* enjoy; the multitude is doomed to poverty. The Church may well try to convert these *ne'er-do-wells* to her maxims: if she succeeds in doing so, she will extract from them some alms for her poor; but that is all. She cannot make labor, property, income, nor talent

and diligence, accrue to everyone in equal measure. As long as men remain in their mortal condition, carried away by their passions, deformed by original sin, this is absolutely impossible. In a corrupt and unequal nature, there is, there could be no more commutative justice than distributive justice, no more reciprocity than charity. No certain law in the state, capable of restoring the standard of conditions; no spontaneity in individuals. All the philosophers who have dealt with the matter, all legislators, jurists, economists agree. On this indestructible inequality of sin were then molded institutions that nothing can reform, that cannot be abolished without causing society a disturbance deeper than that of inequality itself: these are, among others, property, inheritance, loans at interest, rent or farm rent, free trade, competition, wages. From all this it follows that wealth, obtained by conquest, invention, succession, change of place, combination of labor and capital, etc., is distributed according to chance, or rather Providence, which, by a divine judgment permits this disorder in order to make more apparent to all eyes the necessity of redemption and the Monsignor, of which the Church is both the teacher and the organ.

To conclude, the Church, starting from the double mystery of original sin considered as the cause of the inequality of fortunes, and the partial restoration of charity by the grace of Jesus Christ, teaches us two things: 1) that social perfection, as for the distribution of goods, being given in the law of love, which sets aside all selfishness, all property, it is up to the Church to realize, as far as she is capable, this blessed society, that for which she has worked incessantly through her cenobitic institutions, and subsidiarily through her benevolent establishments; 2) that the perfect life being the prerogative of the few, although all are indiscriminately called to it, it is appropriate for the lay multitude to accept the *status quo*, by simply substituting a reasoned hierarchy for an inequality of chance.

Inequality, says the Church, is, through a judgment of God, given in nature; this inequality is invincible; pauperism necessarily results from it. Only God could change this law, which our duty is to consider as the expression of Justice. What is best for us to do is therefore to conform to it, with reflection, however, and discernment (C), while softening with works of beneficence what would be too hard in the legal order, while all raising ourselves, more and more, through charity.

Such is, as regards goods, the organization conceived by the Church. She understood that, slavery abolished, the unfortunate classes would not resign themselves to bear the weight of this fatality alone; and she has made the inequality of fortunes a decree of Providence, a principle of public law and of religion. At the same time, and to soften the rigor of the decree, to make it more tolerable, she lavished hopes on the poor; she threatens the great and the rich; she makes, for them, alms a condition of salvation; she multiplies religious communities, hospitals, hospices, asylums, refuges, and all charitable establishments.

IX. – That's not all. The Church has also perfectly understood that with providence as with fate, with the law of love as with the law of servitude, society



is completely arbitrary: The decrees of Providence are just as incomprehensible as the strokes of chance; inequality, like charity, knows no law. In general theory, the doctrine of the fall, of redemption, of Providence, of the social hierarchy, of any organization of charity, could pass: the proof is that for centuries society lived on it ; in the daily application, the difficulty remained complete, and it was enormous. Once dogma had been established, rules were needed, to speak reason, to observe at the very least the laws of logic. How are we, at all times, for the smallest details, to invoke incessantly the decree of Providence, and original sin, and grace? How to escape the reproach of ignorance, inconsistency, contradiction, immorality and arbitrariness? This is the objection that Bergier himself presented, with frankness, in his Dictionary.

“One sometimes hears,” he says, “good Christians complain that the code of evangelical morals is not sufficiently complacent, sufficiently detailed, to show in all cases what is commanded or forbidden, permitted or tolerated, sin, grievance or slight fault. We are fully persuaded, they say, that the Church has received from God the authority to decide morals as well as dogma; but by what organ does she make her voice heard? Among the decrees of the councils touching mores and discipline, some forbid what others seem to permit; several have not been received in certain countries; others have fallen into disuse and have ceased to be observed. The Fathers of the Church are not unanimous on all points of morals, and some of their decisions do not seem right. Theologians dispute morality as well as dogma; rarely are they in agreement on a case that is at all complicated. Among casuists and confessors, some are rigid, others relaxed. Preachers deal only with subjects that lend themselves to the imagination, and neglect all others. Finally, among the most regular people, some allow themselves what others regard as forbidden. How can we clear up our doubts and calm our scruples?”

Such is the difficulty, formulated by Bergier, the solution of which must put the seal on Christian society. To this, what does the candid theologian reply?

“We reply to these virtuous souls that a rule of morality such as they desire IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE. In the state of civil society, there is a *prodigious inequality between conditions*; what is luxury, superfluity or excess in some is not in others; what would be dangerous in youth is not so in mature age; the different degrees of knowledge or stupidity, of strength or weakness, of temptation or aid, make a great difference in the extent of the duties and in the gravity of the faults. How are we to give to all a uniform rule, to prescribe to all the same measure of virtue and perfection? The *lights of reason are too limited* to fix with the utmost precision the duties of the natural law; and *the knowledge acquired by revelation does not enable us to see* with more justice the obligations imposed by positive laws.”

In short, with the *inequality of conditions* as a principle, whether we attribute it to pure fatality, like the ancients, or whether we project it on original sin, as does the Church; whether we stick to this hard law, after the manner of the ancient patriciate, or whether we bring to it the alleviations of the Gospel, the situation is the same: that is to say, there is no possible morality, since one cannot govern oneself by certain rules, logically deduced, which exclude all respect of persons, all partiality, all arbitrariness.

We must change the hypothesis, a philosopher would say, abandon the

principle of inequality, and look elsewhere for the principle and the rules of the moral law. For it is more probable that this law exists, than it is that the inequality of conditions is a law of nature or a judgment of Providence.

But the Church does not shrink from arbitrariness. She is established on mystery; she worships an impenetrable Providence; she believes neither in the justice of man nor in his reason; she is convinced of the necessity of misery, and she finds it more beautiful to believe than to reason. The Church will therefore complete her work with the help of a new principle, just as little philosophical as the previous ones, but fundamentally religious:

“It is for this reason,” continues our Theologian, that an ever-subsisting AUTHORITY is needed in the Church, in order to establish the *discipline* suitable to times and places.”

This is the last word of the System. Instead of principles, logic and exact rules, Authority; by way of Justice, discipline; for temperament, chastity. Transcendence agrees with itself: to explain a fact, it invents a mystery; to support the mystery, it supposes a revelation; to guarantee the revelation, she invokes her Authority. Of morals, none; of justice, she disdains it: does she not have charity? of reason, she rejects it: whoever believes will be saved, whoever does not believe will be condemned.

So, for persons, discipline; for goods, discipline; for all that concerns government, education, work, marriage, etc., discipline and more discipline. The law, we do not know it. We admit it without blushing, and for the greater glory of God. But Authority, it will be there for everything; there will be plenty to spare, and woe to the recalcitrant!

X. — In summary, here is what the Church replies when questioned on the question of goods:

Before the fall, men lived in perfect community, brotherhood and charity. Original sin, by unleashing concupiscence, introduced inequality and misery. The grace of Christ alone can bring some alleviation to this evil: on the one hand, by reawakening charity in hearts, by organizing benevolence, and founding model societies everywhere; on the other hand, by putting more order into inequality itself.

But all this does not form a regular system, governed by exact laws, logically deduced from Justice. The intervention of authority therefore becomes necessary: religion alone can create this authority and cause it to be received.

Such is the system of the Church, to which we are now going to give a philosophical expression.

Wherever there occurs, outside the conditions of science and right, a principle of mysticism, the followers of this principle tend to constitute themselves in a separate society or, to use the consecrated term, in a church.

This church aims, on the one hand, to develop its principle, that is to say its dogma, then to organize the social life within it in accordance with this dogma.

The dogma that served to found the society being superior, by its mystical nature, to all reason and to all will, it follows first of all that society, or the church, organ of the dogma, is superior to each of the initiates who compose it;

its dogma is its authority: *Qui non audierit ecclesiam, sit vobis sicut ethnicus et publicanus*. Then, as the spiritual is essentially linked to the temporal, a second consequence is that this church, not content with substituting its doctrinal authority for the free reason of its members, its right for their right, its collectivity for their individuality, still tends to have the upper hand in the direction of interests, finally to attract to it all the properties.

It is thus that the Christian Church, after being formed on the messianic dogma, that of the original sin, of redemption and grace, manifested its dogmatic authority through its bishops, its councils, its popes, its tribunals of inquisition; that afterwards she extended her hand to the temporal, through her penitentiary, her ecclesiastical properties, her pact with Charlemagne. So initiates say that religion is what *connects* them, taking the effect of religion for religion itself. They are indeed linked in all their powers and faculties. It is proper to mystical ideas to subjugate the understanding by superstition, to enchain the will, to regulate actions, in the last analysis, to absorb all particular interests into an anonymous interest.

One can verify the accuracy of this observation in all mystical sects, existing or dead: the rule is without exception. Materialism itself, which we are inclined to define as the mysticism of matter, does not escape it. Destutt de Tracy admitted with rather good grace that what is called *economy* is only a collection of routines, imposed by necessity, by virtue of which he condemned nine-tenths of the human race to serve the other tenth in perpetuity. *Necessity*, such was the principle on which Destutt de Tracy and J.-B. Say made a kind of mystical reason, to excuse the innumerable contradictions of their theory. Basically, the theory of the so-called economists, so cynically formulated by Malthus, is the same as that of the Church, with this difference that, according to the Church, the inequality of conditions is not a natural institution, it is of satanic institution; while, according to the Malthusians, it is of physical and economic necessity. So charity and benevolent establishments are supremely repugnant to them. And just as the Church, convinced, as Bergier admits, of the impossibility of laying down a rule of mores, makes up for it by *Authority*; likewise the school of Malthus, knowing perfectly well what to believe about the value of its sophisms, makes up for it by *Liberty*, which means by *bayonets*.

Now that the question of pauperism arises again, as in the first century of the Church, should we be surprised that the answer is, above all, a thought of despotism? Socialism, from Lycurgus to Cabet, affects authority, Robespierre, neither more nor less than Napoleon, governed by authority; the Saint-Simonians govern by authority; Robert Owen, August Comte, by authority. Tomorrow we will see biologists, phrenologists, magnetizers, governing by animal fluid, turning tables, magic, *sagie*, that is to say always by authority. How your soul must be rejoiced, Monsignor, to see these innovators of the last days, so proud of their little knowledge, so arrogant about their progress, confess unanimously that there is no Justice for the human species, that constraint alone can overcome its perversity, and thus fully vindicate your faith!

But perhaps the practice of the Church will be worth more than its theory; perhaps by following right reason, by obeying the spontaneity of conscience, she

will find rules whose wisdom will cause her theology to be forgotten.

Alas! The door of the Church is like that of hell, it does not even leave hope to those who enter. If the man who sees correctly gives only imperfect works, according to this principle that all realization lags behind the idea, what will happen when the idea itself is false? This is what we are going to judge presently.

## CHAPTER III.

### Practice of the Church from its origin until the Revolution.

XI. — If the reader has followed the preceding analysis with some attention, he knows what to expect from the economic system of the Church; he possesses the key to it.

By a contradiction that is proper to it and results directly from its dogma, the Church, as far as the organization of labor and property is concerned, is at once communist and feudal.

She is communist, in that she considers pure community, without distinction of thine or mine, as the ideal of human association; this ideal, according to her, would have been realized in the terrestrial Paradise, and she hopes, with the grace of Jesus Christ, to realize it again by her cenobitic establishments.

The Church is feudal, by virtue of original sin that destroyed the law of charity, and forever created inequality among men. Now, as this inequality is invincible, as, on the other hand, not everyone can enter religious communities, the Church has judged that the most suitable thing was to regulate inequality by giving it a hierarchical form, and softening it either by the counterweight of its communities or by charitable institutions. In this plan, the interests of the nobility are united with those of the Church; they support each other, at the same time as they contain the plebs. History proves that the nobility and the clergy have usually remained united and that they have had less to complain regarding each other than regarding the monarchy, which always tends to absolutism.

Let us now follow the history of the Church.

XII. — After the death of Jesus, the first who had received the word managed to live as *brothers* and lead the *perfect life*. They put their assets in common, and organized the *agapes*. Much nonsense has been spouted about these communities of the first and second centuries, whose success was as unimpressive as that of our modern communists. As much as the Church today loves to recall these meals of love for the edification of the good people, so much she formerly displayed eagerness and perseverance in abolishing them. Decent people, including the bishops most of all, had little taste for this promiscuity. She seized the opportunity of some scandals to suppress love feasts, which I praise the episcopate for, but without replacing them with anything that meets messianic hopes, which I would complain about, if the absence of any economic idea did not serve here as an excuse. The Roman right of property, the prerogative of the patriciate, the first cause of pagan corruption, against which the Gospel had

risen, thus returned triumphant to Christianity: we have before our eyes an example of this reversal in the school of Saint-Simon, who in 1834 attacked property and in 1848 spoke out against socialism.

From this moment, a double current appears in the Church: the democratic or communist current, and the episcopal, feudal and proprietary current. This is not to say that the people, driven by pauperism, were therefore always enemies of property, worshipers of convents and ecclesiastical immunities, or that the bishops on the other hand proscribe all community. They were the natural representatives of these two principles, property and community, like, later, the Ghibellines and Guelphs: each party frequently took the maxims of the other, according to the passions of the moment and the contradictions of history, and we saw the plebs, like the nobility and the kings, envy the goods of the Church, demand the suppression of the tithe and of the convents, while the episcopate multiplied religious communities around them and took them under its protection.

The ancient Gnostics counted on an early return of Christ to have their share of temporal enjoyments; they rejected poverty, judging it immoral, irreconcilable with the messianic promise, and were always in rebellion against the bishops, depositaries of the treasures of the Church, of the alms of the faithful, whose insolence and luxury were accused early on. I don't know which emperor said that if he weren't Caesar, he would like to be a Christian bishop. The Gnostics became dangerous, first by the insoluble problem that they posed to the Church, the problem of the extinction of pauperism, then by the reproach of spoliation that they produced among the pagans to hover over all the Christians. The Church condemned the Gnostics as impure, misunderstanding the meaning of the Gospel, and perverting tradition. Orthodoxy accused them of all the turpitudes of which paganism itself accused it: so be it, I think the accusation may not have been entirely without foundation. But these heretics were also justified in asking if Christ, who came to perfect the law, had intended to perfect only the quiritary law, the privilege of the rich, and if he had brought nothing but words to the poor.

The Circumcellions and the Donatists protest in their turn against misery; more than the Gnostics, they accuse the mystification of the Gospel and the betrayal of the bishops, gorged, they said, with the goods of the poor. We guess that the clergy, through whose hands so much wealth passed, retained a good part of it. Who would believe it? The Circumcellions are denounced as partitioners and anarchists to Constantine, who exterminates them. Undoubtedly, I want to believe that these unfortunate people took the word of the Messiah, whose empire is not of this lower world, in the wrong way. But why not have warned them, from the beginning, that the law of the twelve tables was part of the New Testament, that Appius Clodius had been a precursor of Christ, as well as Moses, Elijah and John the Baptist; as Papinian, Ulpian, Modestinian, all the members of the council of state of Septimius Severus, the harsh persecutor, were to be considered as Fathers of the Church, neither more nor less than Tertullian and Origen?

XIII. — The history of the Church, from one end to the other, is filled with the cries of the people against poverty. The discipline invented by the Church was never accepted as Christian, although it was the purest expression of the thought of Christ. In spite of original sin, and Providence, and Charity, and Authority, and Grace, and blessed immortality, one could not accustom oneself to a regime that professed mercy only the better to cement selfishness; that, after having freed the slaves in the name of redemption, made the condition of the colonist and the mercenary worse than before; that, by organizing benevolence, only succeeded in fattening the clergy; that, finally, after having proclaimed the common life as the perfect life, reserved it for a few chosen groups, the terror of the families whose inheritances they monopolized, worms gnawing at the society to which they returned nothing. Nothing so outrageous had been seen, either before Jesus Christ, when the world was delivered to the devil, or since Jesus Christ, under the reign of the persecutors.

What was the heresy of the Albigensians in the Middle Ages, and later of all these multitudes—shall I say fanatical or starving?—who filled France, Italy and Bohemia? A protest against the clerical-feudal regime. — That's not in the Gospel! they cried; it cannot be. There must be another existence for Christians. — Who then took up the defense of the threatened privilege? Who preached the crusades? Who initiated the excommunications? Who lit the stake? The Church, united with and participating in feudalism; the Church, who, in addition to the goods of her communities, possessed episcopal, curial, and canonical properties; the Church, for whom the principle of the inequality of fortunes had become an article of faith; finally the Church, who, in the absence of a positive economic law, had had to make a discipline of the institutions of sin, and who then found itself under the necessity of covering those institutions with its authority, in spite of their impure origin, and of defending them with the same zeal that it defended the Trinity, the real presence and the holy images. The heretics burned, the inquisitors did not fail to confiscate their goods: always, in the Church, spoliation followed torture. As much was to happen, under Luther, to the peasants of Westphalia and the Rhine, so that it might be demonstrated, by the example of the Reformed as well as that of the Orthodox, that the depravity of Justice, and the misery that is its continuation, is not the deed of the priesthood; it is the deed of religion.

It is thus that in all ages the Testament of Christ has been resolved into a frustrating pact for suffering peoples, who in their naivety summoned Christ, in the person of the Church, to keep his promises.

So far, however, we have little to reproach the Church for, except her mystical illusions, her ignorance of the laws of economy, at most the sensual selfishness and inertia of her ministers, living generously from the altar, while the patrons of the altar starve. We are going to see it undertake in earnest to disorganize society through general dispossession.

XIV. — The primitive communities and *agapes* having therefore not obtained the success that had been hoped for, the *perfect life*, that ideal life of contemplation to which Christians tended, sought to establish itself in another

milieu. As it was considered incompatible with the occupations of the century, people took refuge in solitude: the prolonged persecution of Diocletian determined this movement. Paul, Anthony, Hilarion filled the deserts of Thebaid with the noise of their holiness and their miracles. Many imitators joined them; Pacôme, the first who gave his disciples a rule, united under his direction up to five thousand monks. The fourth century was the golden age of monasticism. The stories told by Athanasius, Rufinus, Jerome, Theodore, and all the pilgrims who visited them, inflamed the West with a spirit of religious competition. Groups of cenobites began to form on the model of those of Egypt: Martin, in Gaul; Cassian, in Marseilles; Honorat, in Lérins, were the main initiators. Cassiodore, Colomban, Benoît Biscop, followed closely. The most famous of all was Benedict, founder of Monte Cassino, the true father of the conventual system, which almost swallowed up Christianity.

In principle, the purpose of the perfect life was to *enjoy God*. To achieve this goal, the means was to live *alone*, that is to say, free from all affection, all attachment, all interest, all business. To conquer solitude, one must be satisfied with little and be self-sufficient: a simple thing in the Thebaid, where the heat of the climate and the sobriety it imposes made these conditions easy to fulfill. In Upper Egypt, the greater part of the day was employed by solitaries in contemplation and prayer; they devoted themselves little to work, submitting to it as an instrument of discipline, rather than as a means of subsistence.

But under the European climate, in the forests and mountains of the north, hermit life became much more difficult than in the oases of Arabia and Thebaid. In 480, when Benedict was born, monasticism, embraced in a moment of fanatical exaltation, was in full decadence, on the eve of perishing, still less from lack of rules than from lack of resources. Frightful excesses were committed in this mob of hallucinators and vagabonds, all of whom aspired to prophecy and miracles, simulating as best they could the romantic life of the desert. In 520, Benedict, already famous, to whom a long practice of the contemplative life had taught its abuses and resources, began this great reform, which was nothing other than the decisive application to the races of Europe of the principles of the *perfect life* and Christian *discipline*.

These principles are reduced to four primary ones: the obligation to labor, the renunciation of all property, meditation or the interior life, that is for the monk; the indefinite enlargement of the conventual domain, that is for the Church.

The rule of Monte Cassino, rapidly propagated throughout Europe, thus constituted a way of life apart, equally outside of the ordinary or secular clergy and of lay society, which, according to Benoit, had no Christian elements except baptism and participation in the mysteries. This regime, as close as possible to the life of the blessed, who no longer need to work, to pray, to read, to possess anything, since they possess God, realized the ideal of Christianity, which would reign unchallenged in the day when all property would have entered the system, when all will would be subject to its laws.

Here is how the founder proceeded to this great work. The first and the principal means of monopolization consisted in the donations that the families seldom failed to make to those of their members who embraced the cenobitic life.

After having condemned property as something detestable, diabolical, worthy of the fire, Benoît continues:

“If the neophyte has any goods, he will distribute them to the poor before making profession, or he will *give them to the monastery by a solemn donation*, without reserving anything at all to himself, knowing that from that day he does not even have the free disposal of his own body. This is why, from that very hour, he will be stripped of his clothes that he had on him, and will be clothed in the clothes of the monastery. However, the clothes that have been taken from him will be put in the cloakroom, to be kept there with care, so that, if it happens that by the suggestion of the devil he wants to leave the monastery (which God does not want to allow), we strip him of his monastery clothes, and that, having restored his own, he is expelled. However, *they will not return his pledge*, which the abbot will have removed from above the altar, *but it will be kept in the monastery.*”

It is obvious that the alternative presented to the neophyte, to distribute his goods to the poor or to give them to the monastery, is only there for convenience. What neophyte, full of zeal for the house of God, entering the house of such holy personages, and having wealth, would have liked to live at their own expense? Besides, did not this property given to the monastery, which received the poor as well as the rich, always belong to the poor?

*But the miserly Acheron does not let go of his prey.* If the cenobite’s zeal grows cold, he can withdraw whenever he wishes; he is free, the monastery does not retain him. They will give him back his layman’s clothes; but, admire this, all of you who have a notion of the just and the unjust, **THEY WILL NOT RETURN HIS PLEDGE!** The monastery keeps the goods, the donation of which will not benefit the salvation of the apostate, as the pledge is withdrawn from above the altar, but which will benefit the monastery, which keeps the title in its archives.

Doesn’t that seem to you, Monsignor, to border on fraud? And if morals were something in the Church, do you think that the fortunate and blessed Benedict would not deserve, for this edifying stipulation, to be damned to all the devils?

Let us quote again: I know of nothing more useful to science than this discipline of the men of God.

“If there is encountered any noble person who offers his son to God in the monastery, and the child is very small, the father and mother will make a written request to be received into the monastery, and, in addition to the offering, they shall wrap this request and the child’s hand in the altar cloth, and offer it in this manner. As for the goods that may belong to this child, they will promise with an oath in this writing that they will never give him anything, neither by themselves, nor by any intermediary, nor in any way whatsoever, and that they will not give him the opportunity or the means to possess any property. That if they do not want this and they wish to give some alms to the monastery out of gratitude, that they make a donation to the monastery, reserving, if they want, the usufruct during their life. Finally, let all things be established and ensured so that there remains for the child no subject of doubt or suspicion that could be a snare for him, to doom him, God forbid! as we have known from experience. Those who have few goods will do like the rich; but those who have nothing at all will simply make their promise in writing and their offering, and present their son in the presence of witnesses.”



Could there be a cruder and at the same time more infernal ruse? The children will be received to make profession on the presentation of the parents, but on condition that these parents will swear to disinherit them. To disinherit my child because I want to dedicate him to the service of God! What barbarism! What a sacrifice to demand of a father's heart! Yes, replies the legislator of monasticism; middle point between religion and property. If, however, he adds, in consideration of this dear child, you want to benefit the community in some way, you can make a donation to the monastery. But things must be ensured so well that the child, having become a man, is left with neither doubt nor suspicion that he possesses anything!

This, however, is what earned this famous Benedict of Nursia the honors of canonization, and his rule a mad success. His order, multiplying in a thousand forms, absorbing all the others, soon filled Europe. In the cities and in the countryside, the congregations are numbered by the hundreds, the monasteries by the thousands, the religious of both sexes by the millions. In the twelfth century, the congregation of Cluny alone numbered ten thousand monks; that of the Camaldolese, three thousand; that of Fontevrault, thirty monasteries.

From the eleventh century, the order became so powerful, its revenues were so well assured, that good religious people think of rising a degree in the *perfect life*, by relieving themselves of the work of the hands, a coarse occupation, full of distractions, unworthy of a true ascetic. It was then that Jean Gualbert, founder of Vallombreuse, instituted the *Lay* or *Secular Brothers*, responsible for the heavy tasks. From this moment, the pious cenobites renounce the pickaxe; they engage in the copying of manuscripts and other minor literary duties; they will end up *doing nothing and fattening up*, as Boileau says, *from a long and holy idleness*.

But that time is still far off. In 1224, about a century after the important modification introduced by Jean Gualbert, Francis of Assisi, whose marvels were to eclipse those of the prophet Elijah, put the finishing touches to the work by instituting, under the name of the *Friars Minor*, a new congregation, composed of married men and women. The constitutions of these couple-monks were approved 68 years later by Pope Nicolas IV: this is what was called the *Third Order of Saint Francis*.

Now the Church can recruit by itself; Christendom is complete. The people gave to these lay and married Franciscans the names of *little brethren*, *Fratricelli*, *frerots*, *bequins* or *beggards*, *picards* and *turlupins*. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, François de Paule outdid Francis of Assisi again by instituting the *Minimes*, nicknamed *Good Men*, as the Albigensians and other rigid devotees had been long before. It was the culmination of ecclesiastical power, and the supreme effort of its discipline. The devil, who is found where there are women and where there are none, came to disturb this magnificent plan. The introduction of marriage into cenobitic life brought back, together with the idea of property, the reveries of the Gnostics of the third and third centuries. In 1254 the *Eternal Gospel* [Joachim of Fiore] appeared; a schism breaks out; the Third Order of Saint Francis falls under the popular animadversion. Sixteen years later, the publication of the establishments of Louis IX completed the victory of secular and free society over

the monastic utopia. As for unisexual establishments, immodesty, laziness and ignorance there became such that three centuries of Renaissance, Reformation and Revolution have not yet been able to erase their horror.

The *Encyclopédie nouvelle* appraises in these terms the enterprise, too forgotten in our time, of the religious orders:

“At the heart of lay society, the monastery was, in the person of its abbot, a kind of living monster, a layman having several bodies to carry out his will, possessing an intelligence that dominated as many active forces as there were monks living together under his law. What power of invasion must he have had! With what strength he must have drawn to himself the riches of the outside world! Let him attack the earth, still uncultivated under the thick bark of the forests; whether it took the members of society hand to hand, one by one, isolated, reduced to the strength of their own individuality, or engaged in the bonds of coalitions rained on by an infinite multitude of jealous rivalries, opposed, tearing up inside, the monastery or the abbot had to come out of this struggle always victorious. There was nothing in that monastic organization that was not an organ of prehension, and the eye cannot discover in it a cause of dispersion of wealth. The most severe economy reigned within. Free from all the cares and all the struggles that the possession of things incessantly coveted entails, each monk was a vital force at his disposal, which the abbot directed outward against the world, with a common and hostile aim, in a place fixed in advance and according to a concerted plan. Death itself disturbed nothing in the forecasts of the intelligence completely directed towards the goal: the monk who died left behind him no void, no cause of trouble and division; he was the living molecule of an organic body whose death has no influence on the life of the being of which he was a part.

“The monastery was therefore an extremely powerful being, thanks to its means of grasping. Lay society had nothing like it to oppose to it; so it was not long in fearing and dreading its incessant invasions. As long as this activity and this power of the monastic society seemed to be devoted only to exploiting the fallow land, to cutting down the forests, to populating the deserts and the summits of the mountains, to teaching the people to read, the lay society applauded. But when the monks, growing in number under the shadow of the cross, descended on the cultivated countryside and the cities, and threatened to absorb, with soil and wealth, the free population itself, then secular society began to resist them, until the day when, loudly declaring war on them, it crossed out, with its powerful and victorious hand, the charter that constituted them into so-called religious communities within the nation.”

XV. — When the French Revolution broke out, the clergy possessed a third of the territory in France. The National Assembly having decided that the property of the clergy should be collected and sold, the deputies of this order, supported by royalty and the nobility, protested forcefully, crying spoliation and invoking the right of property. Those who answered them asserted in turn the intention of the donors, the abuse of ecclesiastical property, the compensation offered to the clergy, the need of the treasury, and so on. The state, according to Kant, could never be bound by the authorization it had formerly given to the clergy to possess such property. As if the right to property were a concession of

the state! The real truth was not told by anyone.

Now, the truth is that the principle of appropriation, without which there is no public economy, is of polytheistic and anti-Christian origin; that such has been, since the age of the apostles, the doctrine of the Church; that the Antoinès, the Pacômes, the Benedicts, all those heroes of communism whom the Church has made saints, have had as their object only the destruction of this damnable institution, by monopolizing, in the name of the Church, the goods and property of families; that thus the formation of ecclesiastical property was the effect of a conspiracy directed by the Church against property itself; that consequently the nation, henceforth obeying other principles, had to return these goods surreptitiously obtained; that the Revolution was made against ecclesiastical parasitism as much as against feudal tyranny; and that by revoking these superstitious donations, by dispersing the flock of Jesus Christ by the suppression of the convents, it only restored things to the state in which they were when Barnabas, selling his patrimony and depositing the price at the feet of the apostles, gave by his example the signal for universal disappropriation.

Between the Revolution and the Church, the question relative to the goods of the clergy was not, as it seemed to superficial observers, a question of property, in the sense posed by the Abbe Maury; it was a useful question of social economy.

If the principle of property is a just principle, indispensable to the order of societies, why does the Church teach the contrary in her cenobitic constitutions? Why this development of religious orders, going as far as the absorption of society as a whole? Why this continual invasion of family property? What does this conspiracy against the social order mean? Why, still in the nineteenth century, did the vicar of Jesus Christ excommunicate Piedmont and Spain, guilty, like France of 89, of having reestablished the true practice of property, by selling the goods of the clergy?

If, on the contrary, the principle of property is false, incompatible with the faith of Christ, with the discipline of the Church, with human destiny, why did the Church condemn the communists of the first centuries, gnostics, Circumcellions, etc.? Why did it massacre the Albigensians, the Waldensians, the Anabaptists, who all claimed to belong to the primitive tradition and the agapes? Why, before our eyes, did it anathematize the socialists and provoke their extermination?

May the Church deign to tell us what is, in the final analysis, her juridical principle, what is her morality?

The morality of the Church, her economic law, as I have said, is double, communist and proprietary at the same time, which means that in economic matters the Church has no law, she does not admit in principle that there is one. This is why she created a *discipline*, where community is the rule, property the exception; according to which whoever, people or government, citizen or prince, interferes with the establishments of the Church or the fiefs that she authorizes, is equally guilty of disobedience and incurs excommunication.

The vulgar, completely occupied with material interests, are inclined to judge the conscience of the clergy according to their own; I attribute to motives of cupidity and ambition a cordiality which among laymen it is impossible, in fact,

to explain otherwise.

But it is evident, and you cannot but subscribe to this opinion, Monsignor, that independent of the worldly considerations which may direct her members, the Church is governed by an idea; that, if this idea had something in common with the secular practice, the Church and the age would long be in agreement, and that the spiritual power regulating her interests according to the same law as the temporal, the fusion would be made, or, to put it better, there would never have been a split. We would not have waited, for example, until 1789 to assign to the ecclesiastical functionaries their legitimate salary; The Church had no need for that to preach community to the perfect, and to expose itself to the reproach of spoliation. It sufficed to establish a fixed and proportional tax on the mass of the Christian people.

But the Catholic Church could not, without abandoning her tradition and denying her faith, lend herself to this transaction of entirely human Justice, accept as the rule of her morals a principle of rational law, which tends to nothing less than to chase the Divinity from his temple, by substituting even in the sanctuary the theory of immanence for that of revelation.

Certainly, the declamations of an Abbe Maury and the excommunications of a Pius IX make me want to laugh; but how do the so-called *ministers of the holy Gospel* dare to call themselves Christians, when this word of God that they announce is charged to them like a lesson in eloquence? Don't they know that the priest of Christ, by the nature of his dogma, is outside the vulgar economy; that his service is not exchangeable and venal material, and cannot, any more than love, be subjected to wages; that as an organ of communist thought, he is supposed to live in community with the faithful, of whom he is the spiritual leader; that he is the steward of this community, whose transcendent dogma takes precedence over all laws; and that on the day when pastor and sheep come out of joint ownership, it is as if they were breaking the religious *bond*: the Church tends to dissolve, and Christianity is in danger? Saint Paul made tents, so that it would not be said that he lived from the Gospel, like the artisan of his trade; others received aid from the COMMUNITY, — from the community, do you hear? — which excludes the idea of an exchange.

Let us therefore be logical: it is the only way for you, Monsignor, to remain blameless, and for me, who accuses your religion while respecting your person, to be just. The goods that the Church accumulates are the *treasury of the poor*, that is to say, of the inferior multitude doomed to non-property; just as the indulgences she dispenses are the *treasure of the souls in purgatory*. Her entire economy, in this world and in the next, is included in this double attribution. When she fills the first of these treasures by pouring on the world the riches of the second, who could accuse her of simony? The true simonist is he who, forgetting the Gospel decree, assimilates the priesthood to a salaried function, and thus makes preaching and the administration of the sacraments an object of exchange.

Once again, if such were not the pure doctrine of the Church, if its constant discipline had to be interpreted differently, I ask, how could this incessant work of reconstituting ecclesiastical property be justified, these acts of capture and all

this traffic to which the Church delivers itself without shame, and which shocks the social economist no less than vulgar morals?

But this touches on the deeds of the contemporary reaction, and deserves to be treated separately.

## CHAPTER IV.

Practice of the Church since the Revolution.

XVI. — When on the night of August 4, 1789, the Constituent Assembly abolished the feudal system, it did not touch the properties of the nobles: the confiscations that took place later were the effect of the penal laws passed against emigration, in no way a measure of war directed against the nobility. Those who remained in France kept their possessions, and 36 years later, in 1825, the nation compensated those of the emigrants who had lost them.

And yet the feudal system did not recover; the nobility, even retaining its titles, was no longer anything. Even today, despite the reaction that carries society away, it cannot reform or be reborn. Why is that?

It is because in 1789, in attacking feudalism, war was not waged either on persons, or on families, or on memories, or on a class of citizens, but on a principle. It was the system, the idea, that was blamed; it is the principle that is directly and nominally demolished; and as one only demolishes a principle with principles, feudalism disappeared forever in the deluge of revolutionary ideas.

It was not the same for the Church.

When the same constituent assembly seized ecclesiastical property, giving the clergy a *civil constitution*, assigning to the priests a salary out of the budget, suppressing the convents, abolishing the monastic vows, etc., it doubtless believed that it had extirpated from the bosom of the nation this unsocial property. But it did not touch the idea; it respected the principle; in short it made a profession of religion itself; and sooner or later the religious idea, saved from the shipwreck of 93 by the Robespierres, the Grégoires, the Laréveillère-Lépeaux, the Bonapartes, brought back into fashion by the Bernardins of Saint-Pierre, the Chateaubriands, the de Maistres, the de Bonalds, the Lamennais, the Lamartines and the whole romantic school, the religious idea, I say, was to reappear in its material organism, the soul to return to its body, the Church to reform her domains.

The Church wants to take her properties back, and, the interdict that weighed since 1789 on her having been lifted, the reaction of the time letting her go, she will take them. *The earth belongs to Jehovah*, says the Scripture; which the Gospel translates as follows: *Blessed are the pious, — hassidim*, that is to say the monks, — *because they will possess the earth!* The hour has come for the Church to reap the fruit of that promise, and she sets to work with a courage, a certainty of success, that bears witness to the good dispositions of the century, not to say its complicity. Already, at the news that the Spanish government was seizing ecclesiastical property, as the constituent assembly had done in 1789, the

French clergy, according to a newspaper report, had the idea of buying it up en bloc: how prosperous is the business of our Gallican Church! Doubtless it feared the outburst of such a gigantic operation; it preferred to let the storm pass, to act in detail, in the shadows and without noise.

It is said, Monsignor, that since your accession to the Archdiocese of Besançon you have, on behalf of the Church, purchased so many buildings that you will soon own a quarter of the town and the department. I do not ask you if your deeds of acquisition are in order, nor what you can do with all this wealth: I know your ability in business, and I have heard of your sobriety. But since it is proven that in all this the Church, devoid of principles, obeys a discipline that is proper to her and, on the other hand, that this discipline has been solemnly condemned by the country; that the Law that forbids you property still endures; that you have implicitly submitted to it by accepting a salary, entering into the Concordat, by occupying a seat in the councils of the nation, I ask you then what guarantee you have of the loyalty and honesty of your actions? In evading, by violating as you are doing, the law and the Revolution to which you have taken an oath, do you feel absolved in your heart of hearts? And doesn't this revelation, which leads you to such a strange lack of faith, against which the moral sense of the people protests, raise in your soul any doubt?

I know that you are taking advantage of the authorization of the government. According to the legislation governing the clergy, any increase in the ecclesiastical domain, any donation made to the Church, *inter vivos* or by will, must be approved by the Council of State. It is a guarantee that the legislator of 89, in allowing the cult to subsist, had taken against the encroachments of the clergy. Now, you answer, if the power authorizes it, what have we to complain about? Is it not the representative of the public conscience and the guardian of property?

Let us go further: I wouldn't want to hide anything that could serve as your excuse.

From whom does the Church receive the goods that come to her every day? From the country itself, from the possessing class, from the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie, at this moment, is redoing in its own way the work of Charlemagne. Having become devout for fear of socialism, it began to equip the clergy, some a little bit, some a lot. The wealth that the bourgeoisie accumulates, God knows how, it shares with the Church. *Ce qui vient de la flûte*, says the proverb, *va au tambour*. — *Easy come, easy go*. The government, the savior of the bourgeois, only gave the *exequatur* to their wishes.

Then, it is fair to recall, in connection with these embezzlements of inheritances that the Church is accused of, the complicity of the modern sects, of the Saint-Simonians, the communists, and the majority of the democrats. When so-called innovators attack heredity with such fury, what wonder that the Church, so far as it is in her, corrects these chances of birth, these caprices of fortune, these abuses of property? A quarter, a third, a half of successions are demanded for the state: the Church does the same for herself. Is it up to *Père Enfantin* to complain?

If we argued in front of the judge, I would certainly be wrong. But it is not a

question here of the policy of the government, which can go astray as well as the conscience of the country, but of the influence that the government obeys, the source of which is, in the last analysis, religion. The political power has never presented itself as the master of theology; it is to the Church that public opinion attributes this prerogative, before which power bows. Strengthened by this direction of souls, which is not disputed, the Church has always made the power what she wanted. Under Louis-Philippe, the Jesuits of Lyons and Nantes, condemned by the law of 1828 to leave the kingdom and to get rid of their properties, were secretly authorized to keep them. What did the Jesuits do? They continued to acquire, and they acquired more than ever.

The question is therefore higher than the Council of State. The Temporal may not know what it is doing, *Ignosce illis, Domine!* But the Spiritual knows it, and it is you, Church of Christ, that I call upon; it is you whom I summon to justify your acts, in their principle, in their aim and in their form. What is the meaning of these *concessions*, these *donations*, these *subsidies*, this accumulation of *employments*, these *monopolies*, these *privileges*, this *commerce*, this *industry*, these *banks*, and all these more or less licit means, borrowed from secular practice, that the Church uses to earn money and extend her possessions?

XVII. — Everywhere the Church labors to change its condition, conspires against the division and circulation of real property, a prelude, though its restorations and redemptions, to the conversion of democratic and free property into ecclesiastical and mortmain property. To achieve her ends, no means is repugnant to her. In the first rank must be placed those contributions in pennies and deniers that she knew how to levy on the piety of the faithful, and whose proceeds reached fabulous sums.

“The papacy,” M. Blanqui, the professor of political economy, said one day at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, before a meeting of five hundred people, “presents the strange phenomenon of a state founded solely on begging. There, for centuries, the alms of the universe have flowed. It is on these subsidies that the pope, cardinals, the entire Roman clergy, with its police and its small army, live, while the Transteverean populace swarms around them in barbarism and superstition. While elsewhere the state, functionary of the nation, derives its income from national production, here it is the people who live on state salaries, who are nourished and sustained by the piety of the Orthodox throughout the world. The only men who do a little business are the Israelites, confined in the Ghetto, objects of the most humiliating insults.”

This manner of procuring revenues is an apostolic institution, and there is no one in Europe who cannot observe its effects. It was modeled on the practice of the pontificate of Jerusalem, which in the last days of the nation received the offerings of all the Israelites spread over the globe. We see, in the book of *Acts*, Paul and Barnabas, appointed by the Christians for the apostolate of the Gentiles, seizing the synagogues of the provinces, diverting for the benefit of the sect the funds intended for the Jewish temple: this was not the least reason for the hatred that the Pharisees and the priests vowed against them.

The Christian priesthood, foreign to economic notions, has never agreed to

regard its function in society as a useful one, analogous to the magistracy, the university or the army. It placed himself above and outside; so that the priest, unable to live on nothing and aspiring to absolute domination, found himself to be only an organ of prehension, a parasite. Charlemagne's and Princess Mathilde's donations, and those much more important donations from individuals, did not change anything in this respect in the primitive spirit. The indigence of the priest disappeared, but the genius for absorption remained in him.

After the ordinary and extraordinary contributions, come the pious legacies, the donations *in extremis*. The newspapers told the public about the lawsuit brought by the Boulnois heirs against Mgr Bonamie, archbishop *in partibus* of Chalcedon and superior of the house of Picpus: the sum claimed was 668,000 francs. The claim of Madame de Guerry against the same house of Picpus, whose properties today exceed 3 millions, is even more considerable: 1,303,783 fr. The case was pleaded under a ban on publishing the debates, as if it had acted as an insult to public morals. And the Bourdeau succession, for which you, Monseigneur, did not disdain, it is said, to make the trip from Besançon to Vesoul in person: how much has it produced for the Church? 1,400,000 francs, I was assured. It is believed, it is true, that the fees of the testamentary executor, nephew of one of your vicars general, will have diminished it somewhat: he at least will have worked for his money.

Similar deeds happen every day, and what tricks are used to escape the surveillance of families and the prescriptions of justice! What pious frauds! What trials! We must see with what a light conscience these *heroines* of the Church learn to lie to the law, with what disdain for their kinship they dispose of these fortunes from which they have not earned the first penny! It is above all to young heiresses that the Church addresses herself; and it is always the confessor who is the architect of this kind of abduction. Flattered, exhilarated, these young girls imagine themselves clothed with the honors of holiness, their names inserted in the calendar.

A young person, heiress of half a million, but more devoted to piety than was befitting the safety of her fortune, sees herself cajoled by the priests, who, by dint of repeating to her that she can save the religion, becoming a Judith, a Jahel, ends up pushing her, against her father's will, to the convent. The goods coming from the mother and the young girl having reached her majority, she is urged to donate her 25,000 pounds in pension to the Church. Caresses, sweets, jams, praise, everything is used to seduce her. If she says that the goods were not the product of her labor, therefore it seemed right to her to leave in her family, one resorts to discipline: penance, mortifications, ill-treatment, sequestration. For two years the letters that her father wrote to her, those that she addressed to him, were intercepted; so much so that the worried father threw himself at the bishop's knees and demanded to see his daughter. Then everything is revealed, the indignant young person leaves the convent, and asks to be released from her vows. But see the column! The court of Rome consented to relieve her of the vow of poverty, that is to say that the Church renounced the donation; but she maintained the vow of chastity, which evidently she cares much less about.



Revenge of the priests! The property escapes; the owner is caught by celibacy.

I find in the *Memorandum* published by Madame de Meillac, superior of the community of Notre-Dame de Bordeaux, against the archbishop-cardinal Mgr. Donnet, the state of the situation below, which shows how quickly, in even slightly skillful hands, ecclesiastical property increases (D).

“When Madame de Meillac took over the house of Notre-Dame de Bordeaux in 1839, she found there only debts, which she has paid; she leaves it, in December 1854, in the following situation:

1. House rue du Palais Gallien, chapel, classrooms, gardens	133,300 fr.
2. Establishment of nuns	86,660
3. Hôtel du Pavillon, <i>ibid.</i>	86,660
4° Caveau de la Chartreuse	2,000
5. Furniture inventoried	18,989
6. Receivables inventories	19,910
	-----
Total	347,519
To be deducted, mortgages and unsecured claims	139,150
	-----
Net	208,309

“The revenues of the establishment, if it had not been destroyed, were sufficient to release the community, at the end of the terms, from what it owed.”

This is what Madame de Meillac’s attorney says. But if the establishment, then devoted to the education of young people, gave, under the administration of Madame de Meillac, such handsome revenues, the said revenues were not the only resource of the community. According to another statement published in the memorandum, the community had collected, before the year 1839, the following sums, the use of which could not be justified:

“Sister Saint-Étienne, for her trousseau	2,500 fr
“Sister Saint-Léon, for her dowry	9,000
“Sister Saint-Pierre, for her trousseau	7,000
“Sister Saint-Joseph	8,000
“Sister Marie-Thérèse	58,981
“Miscellaneous deposits	4,000
	-----
“Total	89,481

To explain how, with these ladies, the trousseau for one is 2,500 francs, while for the other it is 7,000; the dowry for this one 8,000, and for that one 60,000, obviously cannot be accomplished by any commutative rule of justice, or any summary of expenditures. In community, everyone must bring everything that they own; the slightest restraint is a crime against the Holy Spirit, worthy of capital punishment, as seen in the tragic story of Ananias and Sapphira. In this respect modern communities, authorized or not, use it absolutely as did Saint Benedict. Expropriation, under the name of vow of poverty and obedience, is the first article of all constitutions, the first condition of admission. This is how the *grasping organ* works, according to the statutes and providences of the inventor Benoît. When the sister passes away, the goods remain; the community is enriched, and by spreading it extends the temporal power of the Church. The

revolution has changed nothing in this regime. (E)

A suffering widow had a son and a daughter. The young man devoted himself to the arts and embraced a career in the theater. On the day that she was old enough, the sister, left alone at the bedside of the patient, escapes, enters a convent; and when, in the middle of the night, the young man arrives, he finds his mother abandoned. Compensation for the works of Satan: one goes up on the stage, the other enters religion. That's the spirit! But isn't it strange that it is the reprobate who practices the fourth commandment, and the saint who breaks it?

A priest is called to confess an old woman who was known to have some money. Already she has glassy eyes, her head lolls. The confessor sends out the nurse and remains alone for an hour, urging the old woman, who is a tightwad. From the next room, the maid heard the sound of a key in a lock, then a door closing, then nothing. Five minutes later they saw the confessor come out, a bundle under his cassock. The heirs picked up the clothes, but found no money. Do you think, Monsignor, that I accuse this priest of theft? Heavens, no! He was only guilty of righteous works. The bag well and duly handed over to the Church, he would have accomplished his duty as confessor and Christian.

Thus this law of the family that enjoins the children to look after their authors until death, you do not respect it. This law of inheritance which, despite its inevitable imperfection in an antagonistic society, forms the link between generations, you violate it. These protective forms with which the legislator has surrounded the faculty of giving and testing, in order to guarantee the family against the passion or the madness of its members, you evade them as far as you are able. While by natural succession the legislator maintains family perpetuity and individuality, you, with your communism, break this filiation; or if, in favor of the noble caste, you maintain inheritance, you immediately corrupt it, according to your views, by introducing into it the right of ancestry, biblical right, Christian right, by virtue of which the superfluity of aristocratic reproduction is driven back into plebeian misery.

XVIII. — Let us talk about your commercial operations: I have to cite some facts to you that you will not challenge.

When I was a printer in Besançon, in 1840, I sold a hundred catechisms, five sheets in-42, paperback and trimmed, for 18 francs, that is, at retail, 20 centimes a copy. A few years later, having left the profession, and passing through my town, I found things all changed. Monseigneur Mathieu having claimed, by virtue of I don't know what law from the former Constituent Assembly, that all liturgical books belonged to the archdiocese, had assumed the exclusive exhibition and sale of them. What happened? The price of the catechism increased 20 cents, to 40, where it remains: that is to say, on the 400,000 copies, at least, that form the importance of the annual consumption of the diocese, a net product of 20,000 francs.

Do you believe, Monsignor, that what you have done is essentially right? Notable economists all teach that certain objects—water, air, light—cannot be appropriated. Your predecessors had thought that, the divine word being incomparably precious, the sale of prayer books should be made at a lower price,

without profit especially for the Church, and consequently left to free competition. You, using or abusing the letter of a state law that did not look so closely at things, changed the cheap regime into one of forced contribution. You have used your right, if right there is, I suppose: a narrow right, *jus strictum*, right of ownership. I could ask if a possession that dated at least from Mgr. de Durfort, that is to say more than two centuries, did not form a sufficient preservation against your recent monopoly; I leave this plea of law, which would provide you with material for reply. Besides, I do not claim that the 20,000 fr. go into your nest egg. But isn't it true that by making the people your diocesan pay twice the value for the catechism, despite having it, your intention is to *free* the Church, as you say, and to reestablish what you call the *patrimony of the poor* that thus you pursue a work of discipline whose final object, theological and transcendent thought, is to inculcate, in the interests of salvation, charity to the detriment of justice?

Now, if such is your secret goal, and you cannot allege another, I will ask you a new question: Is it permissible, in order to achieve even an honest goal, to employ a means that obviously is not, such as monopoly? For, in the end, however much you say that the discipline of the Church is above economic definitions, monopoly is the abuse of force, condemned by the Gospel.

In addition to the sale of Catechisms, Hours, Conducting Angels, Pensez-y-biens, Missals, Graduals, Antiphonaries, Breviaries, etc., the clergy also seizes those of crosses, medals, images, rosaries, scapulars, chasubles, and of all kinds of Church furniture and ornaments. It holds fairs for missions, jubilees, novenas and retreats. The Parisians were able to admire, in January 1833, during the reopening of Sainte-Geneviève, formerly the Pantheon, an exhibition of this kind. It was not as pretty as the World's Fair, for sure, but it was getting there. More than sixty stalls offered to enthusiasts the products of ecclesiastical industry. Under these vaults erected by Soufflot, formerly consecrated to humanitarian worship, the exhortation took place, what the people call the *boniment*. A large reliquary in gilded cardboard—we will have it one day in solid gold—which seemed to be a gift to the Saint, especially attracted the attention of those present.

That the Church traffics, despite its canons, and makes profits, I would understand that if it is a trading house, if it does nothing else, according to the rules of political economy, than collect from its products and services what in mercantile practice are called profits and wages. Sermons, prayers, Gregorian chants, baptisms, weddings, masses for the dead, if you equate all that to venal things, I have nothing to say. I even allow you, in the interest of the sale, to employ with your customers all the prestige of eloquence, within the limits of the truth. But beware: by bringing into play certain feelings, unrelated to the intrinsic value of objects and to the composition of their price, like that dealer of the Roman railways who, in the interest of the premium, appeals to the piety of the orthodox, you make yourself guilty of the *maneuvers* provided for in article 405 of the penal code. To monopoly you add trickery.

In a mission preached in the provinces, a missionary announced the sermon of the day after tomorrow in the following terms: *Tuesday, we will preach to the*

*men; everyone come: IT WILL BE DIRTY!...* So, in the hope of scandal, as much as 3 francs was paid for places. — At Chartres, at the procession of the Black Virgin, the cords of the reliquary were held by four ladies of the highest quality, who each had to pay, it is said, for this signal honor, 1000 francs. Fifteen had requested it on the same terms. We can say with the Church: Blessed Virgin, pray for the pious women! *Intercede pro devoto fœmineo sexu.*

But I realize that by following the Church in the operations of its industrious discipline, I will call into question the very morality of its purpose, the morality of its Paradise and of its God.

The clergy today speculates on everything, makes money from everything; no trade, no industry is prohibited. We know what scandal was produced in the last century by the revelation of the trade of the Jesuits in the four corners of the world; *La Presse* of March 26 delighted its readers in connection with the monopoly that the good fathers made of cinchona bark. Here is a lesser known fact, which proves how much the Company was always in unison with the clergy. In 89, during the drafting of the notebooks for the Estates General, the clergy of Colmar expressed the wish that the faculty of lending money be taken away from the Jews throughout Alsace; at the same time the clergy of Schelestadt expressed the desire that the religious houses should be invested, for the same province, with the privilege of banking. The feature deserves to be preserved. While the old oak tree of landed feudalism fell under the revolutionary axe, the Alsatian clergy, long before Fourier, Saint-Simon and the Pères, divined financial feudalism: they organized the bankocracy in their minds, always of course, through the spirit of religion.

Currently, it seems to have taken on the task of realizing this great idea. Master, or nearly so, of public instruction, it seized institutions and boarding schools, rehearsals at home as well as primary and secondary schools. In one department there are as many as sixteen clerical establishments: how would secular education hold up against this competition? By itself, through its creatures or through its sponsorship, the clergy exploits the printing press, the bookshop, journalism; it commands the academies, it imposes its candidates on them, it furnishes the railway libraries, it has control over the theaters, it reigns supreme over the republic of letters. A little longer, there will be no scholars other than those it maintains in its pay. Father Migne, director of the Petit Montrouge typographical establishment, in a very honest letter, moreover, proposed to me last year the correction of the proofs of the Greek Fathers, of which he is currently preparing a new edition. What printer today would dare undertake such an enterprise?

The clergy have their hands everywhere. It is they who have the direction of the hospitals, the refuges, the asylums, the ambulances, and our soldiers have not always had to praise them for it. An officer in the Crimean army complained that the so-called Sisters of Charity neglected the sick who did not confess. By public benevolence, the institution of which is entirely Christian, the clergy insinuate themselves into public utility, industry and commerce. They practice medicine and pharmacy, place the servants, perform the deliveries. They have marriage agencies. A friend of mine tells me that in the West, especially in Deux-Sèvres,

the medicine of the sisters has completely ousted that of the doctors. They bleed, they suck, purge, pop back into place, cauterize, *clysterium donare*, and the rest. Yesterday I was told of a shipping company sponsored, it was said, by Jesuits. What shall I tell you? Father Coquand, having put the church of Saint-Eugene into action, was prevented from doing so, one does not know why, by Bishop Sibour; and everyone knows that the famous lottery of Saint-Roch, with a capital of 120,000 francs, recommended by the Bishop of Montpellier, has also received by special writ the approval of the Holy Father. Society newspapers are scandalized by this traffic. Innocents! Their sensitivity assures the triumph of the Church: it proves that the century still believes in the morality of the religious institution.

The Republic of 1848 had given rise to a host of workers' societies, which were soon dissolved, for the most part, by poverty, inexperience, and the animadversion of power. The clergy seizes this lever: it has its own world, its professional schools, its workshops, its stores, by means of which it reorganizes as well as possible the brotherhoods and corporations. In Vesoul, all the workers joined the brotherhood of the Virgin: they felt that it was not good for them to evade the protection of the clergy. The bourgeois hires himself in his turn: there is no longer any way of defending himself against it. The trader, the badly rated industrialist sees a void forming around him; his clientele diminishes, his credit weakens: he is lost. Finally, like everyone else, the clergy speculates; it has his share of the securities quoted on the Stock Exchange, and by the Stock Exchange, as by education and power, it makes its decisive return to the temporal. It disposes of jobs, pensions, sinecures, benefits. For it, prefects or ministers have no refusal. Dominating by its spiritual and extra-spiritual influence all transactions, it will soon be able to lay down the law on industry and commerce, as it hopes to do later, by the recomposition of his properties, on agriculture. It does not lack men; it has them for all the specialties: agents all the more indefatigable because no human affection burdens their soul and because, in the solitude that religion gives them, they find a kind of misanthropic voluptuousness in the use of all their might to procure the defeat of society, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*.

This alliance of mercantilism with holy ministry sometimes produces comic scenes. A parish priest from Franche-Comté... Hey! Monseigneur, you knew him: he was Abbé Petit-Cuenot, parish priest of Pierre-Fontaine, the one who one day lost the good Lord in a pile of wood. The whole country laughed at it, as one only laughs in Franche-Comté.

M. Petit-Cuenot, in addition to the service of his parish priest, carried on a considerable trade in wood, for construction and heating. No one could compete with him, either on the quality or on the price. He was an extraordinary man, of the strength of the former superior of your seminary, Father Breuillot. One day he was called to give the sacraments to a sick person who lived in a barn, far from the village. There was a section to cross which he had just successfully purchase, where he made the woodcutters work. The priest, having dispatched his patient, wanted to make a round in the section and count his *moules*: this is the name given to a pile of logs, about one cubic meter. The wafer-box hindering him, he

placed it in a pile, but in such a distracted state that, when his round was over, he could not find the place and take away the holy ciborium. It was not until several months later, when the wood was sold and people came to load it, that they discovered the hosts between two logs, covered with mold, half devoured by ants.

Sacrilege apart (this question does not concern me), do you find, Monsignor, this traffic in which the clergy indulge, an honorable thing? The proverb says: *Each one to his trade, the cows are well kept*. It is from this proverb that political wisdom has deduced, as far as administration and justice are concerned, the principle that prohibits accumulation, in electoral matters that of incompatibilities, in matters of government that of the distinction of powers. For my part, I find this proverb, while a bit rustic, as sublime as the famous *Love one another*.

How did the Church, charged with the service of worship and the teaching of morals, for this purpose endowed with properties by the country, salaried by the State, elevated above the sphere of interests, enjoying for all these reasons an exaggerated consideration, an imprudent confidence, dare to interfere in the operations of industry and exchange! It is an axiom that the State cannot and must not by itself take charge of any industrial enterprise, any mercantile speculation, intervene, from near or far, in the production and circulation of wealth. More than once, Napoleon III has declared, through the organ of the *Moniteur*, his intention to comply with this law. How would the Church, higher placed in the opinion of the people than the State; the Church, which the former Constituent Assembly, by withdrawing its goods and subjecting it to wages, had warned of its inability to possess and acquire, be relieved of an exclusion on which the entire order of societies depends? Is it not obvious that, by the mere fact of the centralization of the priesthood and by the entirely spiritual nature of its functions, any matter of interest handled by an ecclesiastic, apart from the needs of his personal consumption, is tainted with abuse? Will you tell me, Monsignor, by which *direction d'intention* you justify your daily practice?

What! Here is a corporation spread over the entire surface of the empire, disposing of unknown resources, marching as one man, for which there are no secrets; this corporation is paid for a function, which has been devolved to it without sharing, and it secretly exercises another, which paralyzes the nation, which strips it and places it in vassalage! From the point of view of the spiritual constitution of the Church, which has received, with the keys of heaven, the power to bind and to loose, that is to say, to define what is good and what is bad, there is no doubt that this insidious invasion of the clergy into the secular domain seems to you a holy and glorious work. But from the point of view of the universal conscience, such conduct is dishonest. And since the end cannot be separated from the means, since the two form a connected and interdependent whole, how do you expect me, who has no other guide than reason, without admixture of any revelation, not to say that your end, that is to say your Paradise, is a robbery, and the God you serve the Devil?

XIX. —However, it must be recognized that in attracting property, industry, and income to itself, the Church not only aims to reconstitute the commoners into regular communities and brotherhoods: the wealth created, it must flow. Without that, what good is wealth? What would be the use of producing?

The Church, just as it has its theory of society, therefore also has its theory of consumption. In the order of faith, as in the profane economy, wealth and luxury find their employment. But let not flesh and blood rejoice; the devil will gain nothing. The Catholic priesthood, dedicated to continence, to abstinence, which suffers when looking at the pleasures of the people, which sighs when seeing women dancing, will not allow its flock to fatten up for hell. It will be able, by displaying to their eyes the prodigies of industry, to push them to heaven by a path of brambles and stones.

The clergy divides the wealth it accumulates into two parts, one destined for the religious establishments that are multiplying on all sides, according to the views of Benedict and Ignatius; the other reserved for worship, for the intoxication of popular imaginations. For to God alone belong wealth and glory, *Dignus est... accipere divitiam, et honorem, et gloriam*. It is with the Church and with religion as with royalty: the more she surrounds herself with magnificence, the more the people admire; and the more they admire, the more they worship.

Who could count the millions that are gobbled up each year in the fancies of worship?... I disregard what the worldly ecclesiastics say about it, they who profit and make their families profit from the Lord's vintage and the patrimony of the poor.

Sainte-Geneviève, 1 million francs.

Sainte-Clotilde, several millions.

Saint-Eugène or Eugénie, 1,400,000.

Notre-Dame, 10 million.

The churches of France, together, and by a single decree, 60 million. (F)

The poorest towns, the smallest hamlets, follow the bustle of the capital: it is there above all that this waste must be studied.

In a commune, whose department I will not mention, in order to leave to each of my readers the pleasure of recognizing it in his own, a new church is being built, which will cost 300,000 francs. The town has no fountain.

Elsewhere, the municipal council, under the influence of the priest, voted one fine day 6,000 francs for a bell. But the commune is in debt; it has no fire pump, no covered laundry for the women, who have to wash their laundry with their feet in the mud and their bodies in the rain. For five years the winegrower has not harvested anything and has abandoned the vines. Not to mention that they didn't urgently need a bell, since the church had one. But how to do without two bells, one for the *Angelus*, the other for high mass?

In another parish, which has at most six hundred souls, and whose budget is far behind, the municipal council, still under the same influence, votes 13,000 fr. for a curial house. The old one, which had been in use for two centuries, could be repaired. But the archbishop wants each of his servants to have at least eight

bedrooms, with cellar, attic, courtyard and barnyard, garden, orchard, lavatories and outbuildings. However, the schoolmaster barely receives four hundred francs, both from the commune and from the State: he gives science for four hundred francs. *Abuno disce omnes*.

A certain prelate, visiting his native country, which he had not seen since his promotion to the episcopate, stops at D... He finds the priest, his nephew, lodged in a manner unworthy of the Church, and complains to the prefect of the department. He is assured, however, that the cure was very roomy, solidly built; never leading to any complaint. A few days later, the mayor of D... received a letter from the Prefecture roughly in these terms:

“Mr. Mayor, His Eminence the Cardinal of •••, has complained about the pettiness of your parish house. I therefore invite you, as soon as this letter has been received, to convene your council and vote the funds necessary for the construction of a new vicarage; failing which I would find myself in the need to provide for it by decree, and to send the workmen.”

I haven't read the letter; but a person who had read it reported it to me, and I saw the masons at work.

On all sides abandoned churches are being rebuilt, chapels are being restored, monasteries are being exhumed, abbeys are being revived, cathedrals are being built. Gold, silver, bronze and steel; painting, statuary, goldsmithery, tapestry, embroidery; the most precious materials, industry, science and art, everything is put in requisition to decorate worship and erect monuments to it. In a department of the south, a statue of the Immaculate Virgin ninety feet high is erected on a mountain. Visitors to the Exhibition have admired the astronomical clock that you have acquired for your metropolitan church: it is assured that it will cost no less than 40,000 fr. For the administrator, the expense was not of primary necessity, far from it, but for the bishop, what an edification!

I quote the following fact from a serious newspaper:

“The Queen of Spain, Isabella II, sent the Pope a tiara estimated at 400,000 francs. The pope sent her in return the body of Saint Felix, martyr, which was brought back to Spain by the archbishop of Toledo, and solemnly deposited in the chapel of the palace of Aranjuez.”

While the Spanish ministry sold the goods of the Church, the queen protested her devotion to the Church, and presented a tiara to the Pope: the dear lady wished to free her cause from that of her subjects. Seventy years ago, in France, this would have passed for treason; but that's not what it is about. The pope, an old monk exhausted by austerities, who makes his meal of a boiled egg and drinks only water, the pope wears three crowns on his cap. This is the symbol of Christian happiness and of clerical economy. (G)

And all this prodigality, all this pride, married to all this destitution, so that the Chateaubriands of the future, witnesses of some new 93, write lamentations in poetic prose on Christian genius, the ogival style, the sound of bells, the cake of kings, the procession of Corpus Christi, and the poor country vicar, walking at midnight through the heather, the sacrament in his hands, towards the dying peasant who waits for his God on the leafy ground, while his old wife recites to



him the prayers of the dying! O, chatterboxes!

XX. — I summarize.

Christianity having come to reform society, its leaders had to understand that the reform had to bear as much on the conditions of fortune as on the freedom of persons. These terms were correlative; without the current of opinion pushed there, the Gospel would have been shaky.

Now has the Church responded to the expectations of the peoples? How did she understand the role of wealth, the laws of its production, its distribution, the relationship of labor to capital, the functioning of property? On these essential points, has the Church, developing the Christian idea, produced an economic, juridical theory, a moral science?

We know the answer.

Faithful to her dogma, the Church condemns wealth, of which God alone is worthy, and is content to show it to man, in the exhibitions of worship, as a prospect of celestial beatitude. She affirms, as invincible and providential, the inequality of conditions; she makes pauperism a judgment of God; then, organizing charity as a palliative, she pushes the working masses with all her might, by the agglomeration of goods in the hands of the clergy and the nobility, in part to conventual communism, in part to serfdom or feudal wage-labor.

After having created the *good man*, the Church glorifies the *good poor*. A common class of Lazares, Lazarilles, Lazzaroni, side by side with a fat bourgeoisie, a resplendent aristocracy and a deified clergy; this is her ideal. This is why the Church preaches alternately, indifferently, white and black; why it declares property an institution of sin, and yet sustains property; why it affirms community as the original, divine form of society, and why, however, while multiplying its congregations, its brotherhoods and its convents, it fiercely fights the communists, as enemies of the family and of religion.

Is it justice, logic, this artificial classification, imagined for the need of the religious cause, of a nation into owners, contractors, speculators, lords, clerks, and communiers, mainmortables, serfs or wage-earners. Is it just good faith?

The Decalogue had said in two words: *You will not kill, you will not steal*. It belonged to Christian theology to investigate whether servitude, even disguised under the name of wage-earning, was not an indirect way of killing body and soul; if wage-earning did not imply spoliation of the worker, usurpation to his detriment by the capitalist-entrepreneur-proprietor. Theology has not extended its researches in this direction: the idea that inspired it did not trouble it. It stuck to the letter that kills; it has neglected the spirit that gives life.

The Church is incapable, by its morality and its canon law, of marking the limits of *yours* and *mine*: hence these strange solutions of the casuists, of which the author of the *Provincials* would have accused the whole Church, and not the Jesuits, if he had been in good faith. The philosopher Pascal could have a notion of justice and property: the Christian Pascal could not. He had only to cast his eyes over the *community* of Port-Royal, listen to what was preached there about the unworthiness of man and the inequality of conditions, to be convinced of it.

Moreover, such is here the discipline of the Church, such will be that of any

religious corporation.

Religion, whatever it may be, having the aim of serving as a principle, a means and a sanction for Justice; making justice flow from its dogma, creating a church for the purpose of propagating dogma and incessantly bringing back to it morality, religion, I say, implies, in the soul of the faithful, the subordination of right to faith, of reason to authority, of personality to community, hence the destruction of Justice. For Justice, like religion, is nothing if not everything: whence this consequence, that as Justice withers in the shadow of religion, all the same religion is annihilated under the autocracy of Justice. The so-called reformed churches provide an example. There, dogma having been dissolved by free inquiry, and the teaching of morality reduced to the principles of pure reason, the evangelical ministry is no more than a human professorship, a scientific school, whose authority, religion, God, is the conscience of the hearer. This is what Cardinal Maury has perfectly demonstrated, with regard to Massillon, in his *Essai sur l'éloquence de la chaire*, when he showed by the example of Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Fénelon and all the great sermonizers, that morality could not be separated from dogma, on pain of suicide for the Church and Christianity.

## CHAPTER V.

### Principles of the Revolution on the distribution of wealth. — Accord of the laws of Economy and Justice: EQUALITY.

XXI. — I have told you, Monsignor, how my first doubts arose, both about the economic constitution of society and about the transcendental explanation provided by the Church. I am now going to tell you how I arrived at the discovery of a principle that, without borrowing anything from the religious hypothesis, being even diametrically opposed to it, seems to me to satisfy both the justice of man and the reason of things.

Let's first listen to my biographer. My biographer, Monseigneur, I have the right to say that it is you.

"The distress of the family increased day by day, and Pierre-Joseph, instead of drawing from the house the principles of resignation and patience, found there only the bitterness of complaint, blasphemy and gloomy despair. The word of Christ had no echo in this desolate house. Instead of looking to heaven, they looked at the earth... They saw the rich there. Proudhon ate the bread of envy."

To obtain these interior details, the date of which goes back thirty-five or forty years, you must have established an investigation and questioned all the old devotees of the parish. But let's move on.

*The bread of envy!* This is not entirely correct. And however skillful your doctrine of inequality has made you in anticipating the feelings of the poor and their secret murmurs, I dare say, Monsignor, that experience would have taught you still more. Let me tell you exactly what happens in the brain of a poor child,

when by chance he is forced to reason about his poverty.

I was baptized into the Catholic Church and then, and to a large extent, raised by it. The starting point of my education, on the subject that occupies us, was thus the distinction of the classes, in other words the unequal distribution of wealth. An unhealthy principle, the influence of which causes the perdition of thousands of souls, which the Church should pursue as the equal of idolatry and heresy.

The first feeling that the spectacle of my relative inferiority inspired in me was shame. I blushed at my poverty as a punishment. I confusedly felt the truth of the old woman's words, that *poverty is not vice, but is worse*; that it belittles us, debases us, and little by little makes us worthy of it.

Unable to live with shame, indignation succeeded. At first it was only a noble competitive spirit to raise myself, by my work and my intelligence, to the level of the fortunate: so true is it that there is not a passion that, taken in a certain measure and by a certain bias, cannot become a virtue. But the calculation had soon shown me that by remaining in my sphere of workman I would never become rich: then the ambition changed into anger, and the anger led me, you guess where, to seek, a little better than Rousseau had not done, the origin of the inequality of conditions and fortunes.

Another would have become a smuggler or a cellar rat: the most cowardly, the most sensual, become thieves. I resolved to study in depth, piece by piece, this economic machine that the Church absolved, and that inevitably produced, according to J.-B. Say and Destutt de Tracy, inequality. To know is to possess, I tell myself, since science is wealth and capital; with science, I will have my share. And I promised myself, if I managed to know something, not to be stingy with my discoveries: for to give is still to possess, it is the *nec plus ultra* of possession.

I therefore began by discarding from my belief Christian morals and all kinds of morals, taking as a rule to recognize as good or bad only what my conscience, assisted by my reason, would have clearly demonstrated to me to be such, seeking within myself, as Descartes had done for metaphysics, the first principle of laws, the *aliquid inconcussum* on which I could establish the edifice of my rights and my duties, conforming myself moreover, in all my conduct, to established institutions, without rejecting or accepting them.

XXII. — At the end of 1838, I came to Paris to follow my studies. You know, Monseigneur, to whom I owe this advantage; you were, I believe, one of the academicians who gave me their vote: allow me to show you here my gratitude.

Leafing through the catalog of the library of the Institute, I came across this division: POLITICAL ECONOMY. It was just eighty years since Quesnay published his *Tableau*, without my having heard of it. I said to myself: Who are these people? And I started to read.

Reading the economists soon convinced me of two things, for me of capital importance:

The first, that in the second half of the eighteenth century, a science had been announced and founded outside of all Christian tradition and all religious

suggestion, a science whose object was to determine, independently of established customs, legal hypotheses, prejudices and the routines governing the matter, the natural laws of the *production*, DISTRIBUTION and *consumption* of wealth. — This was my business, by God.

The other thing of which I also remained convinced was that in political economy, as it had been given to the founders to conceive it and as it was taught by their disciples, the notion of right did not enter for nothing, the authors confining themselves to exposing the facts of the practice, as they happened before their eyes, and deducing the consequences, independently of their agreement or disagreement with Justice.

For example — this observation is from Rossi — it is demonstrated, and the proper object of economics is to make this demonstration, that the *division of labor* is the most powerful process of industry, and the most fruitful source of wealth, — but that it tends at the same time to brutalize the workman, and consequently to create a class of serfs. The two phenomena are equally certain and intimately linked, to such an extent that, if industry were to submit to the law of personal respect, it would have to, it seems, abandon its creations, which would bring back the society of poverty; and reciprocally, if justice were to be subordinated to production, pauperism, vice and crime would develop continuously, in proportion to production itself.

It is up to a superior science, adds Rossi, to reconcile the two terms. But what cannot be doubted is that on the same phenomenon the economy seems to say yes, Justice no. (H)

The question is therefore to know how society will preserve the benefits of the division of labor by always developing it; how on the other hand it will satisfy Justice, by preventing the depravity of the working classes. That is where we are. The problem is difficult, the situation perilous; but confess, Monseigneur, that Christian theology would never have found such things.

XXIII. — Immediately generalizing Rossi's observation, I had no difficulty in convincing myself that what he had said about the division of labor, the employment of children in factories, unhealthy industries, could and should be said of *competition*, of *loans at interest* or *credit*, of *property*, of *government*, in a word, of all economic categories, and consequently of all social institutions. Everywhere you discover an immorality that unfolds in proportion to the economic effect obtained, so that society seems to rest on this fatal and indissoluble duality, *wealth* and *misery*, *improvement* and *depravity*. And as economists further demonstrate that Justice is itself an economic power, that wherever Justice is violated, whether by slavery, or despotism, or lack of security, etc., production is attacked, wealth diminishes, and barbarism reappears, it follows that political economy, that is to say, society as a whole, is in contradiction with itself, which Rossi had not perceived, or which perhaps he hadn't dared to say.

Faced with this antinomy, which you will find extensively exposed in my *Economic Contradictions*, what side does the scholarly and official world take?

Some, outspoken disciples of Malthus, come out bravely against Justice.

Above all, they demand, at all costs, wealth, of which they hope to have their share; they dispense cheaply with the life, the liberty and the intelligence of the masses. Under the pretext that such is the economic law, that such is the fate of things, they sacrifice, without any remorse, humanity to Mammon. This is how, in its struggle against socialism, the *economist* school has signaled itself: let this be its crime and its shame in the face of history.

The others recoil frightened before the economic movement, and look back with anguish towards the times of industrial simplicity, of domestic spinning and the communal oven: they become retrograde.

Here again I believe I was the first who, with a full understanding of the phenomenon, dared to maintain that Justice and economy should not limit each other, making vain concessions, which would only lead to a reciprocal mutilation, and would advance nothing, but to suffuse one another systematically, the first serving as a law for the second; that thus, instead of restraining the economic forces, the exaggeration of which assassinates us, it was necessary to balance them one by the other, by virtue of this principle, little known and even less understood, that opposites must not destroy each other, but compensate each other, precisely because they are opposites.

This is what I would gladly call the application of Justice to political economy, in imitation of Descartes, who called his analysis the application of algebra to geometry. (I) In this, says Rossi, consists the new science, the true social science.

XXIV. — At first glance, this conciliation seems impracticable; it seems repugnant to the subjective nature of Justice.

We indeed know what Justice is with respect to people: *Equal and reciprocal respect*. But we do not therefore see clearly what it can become in terms of properties, functions, products and exchanges. How will *personal* equality, which is the essence of justice, become equality of fortunes? Is it only to be presumed that the latter can and must be a consequence of the former?... Such is the problem that arises, like a trap, before theologians, philosophers, jurists, economists and men of State, who all, to date, have agreed to decide in the negative.

The equality of goods and fortunes, they say, is not justice; they even go so far as to say that it is contrary to justice.

“It is by breaking equality that society was born,” says M. Blanc-Saint-Bonnet; “this is why charity is the last law of the earth...”

“You repeat that the Gospel proclaimed the equality of men: this is false. Equality is a false name for Justice. The Gospel knew so well the inequality that results from our liberty, that it instituted charity for this world, reversibility for the next. Equality is the law of brutes; merit is the law of man.” (*De la Restauration française*, p. 90 and 124)

This is what Christian wisdom says, through the mouths of its apologists. According to the Church, for since the discovery of economic science the Church has also wanted to say its word on the matter, political economy is a corollary of revelation. Sin having invaded nature, equality of misery has become the

primitive, fatal fact from which civilization emerges only through religion, that is to say here through the consecration of inequality, having charity as a counterweight.

Those who affirm inequality as a principle of religion will be very surprised when later we will prove to them that their alleged principle is in contradiction with the laws of universal mechanics. Let us grasp the difficulty, shine the torch of analysis upon it, and soon we will blush at the temerity of ancient judgments.

The laws of economy, public and domestic, are, by their objective and fatal nature, freed from all human arbitrariness; they impose themselves inflexibly on our will. In themselves, these laws are true and useful: the contrary would imply contradiction. They appear to us harmful, or, to put it better, vexing, only through the relationship that we maintain with them, which is none other than the eternal opposition between necessity and liberty.

Every time there is an encounter between the free spirit and the fatality of nature, the dignity of the self is offended and diminished; there it encounters something that does not respect it, that does not do it justice for justice's sake and leaves it only the choice between domination and servitude. The self and the non-self do not balance each other. This is the principle that makes man the steward of nature, if not its slave and its victim.

This established, the problem of the agreement between Justice and the economy arises in these terms. I take the example cited above of the division of labor:

Given a society where labor is divided, one asks who will suffer the disadvantages of this division.

It is conceivable that in the circle of the family, or even of the tribe, the prerogative of the chief is higher than that of the children, apprentices, companions, servants. Not only does the practice of nations demonstrate that this is possible without injustice; the very order of the family, its security, demands it.

It is on the basis of this type of family hierarchy, in which the personal prerogative decreases, from the prince to the slave, that societies have been organized.

We therefore ask what Justice prescribes here: if the principle of hierarchy and authority must embrace society as a whole, like a large family, in which case the consequences of economic fatality will weigh more and more on the lower classes and less and less on the upper ones; or else if families are to be considered as equally respectable, in which case the economic fatality is distributed, like a risk, among all the members of society, the servitude that it created is canceled and can even become a principle of order.

From this double hypothesis are born two systems which we will call, from now on, one, the system of the *subordination of services*, the other, the system of *reciprocity of services*. (J) Need I add that the first of these systems is that of the Church, the second that of the Revolution?

I will not waste time demonstrating how the principle of the reciprocity of respect is logically converted into that of the reciprocity of services. Everyone understands that, if men are equal with respect to each other before Justice, this

equality will not cease in the face of necessity, and that he who claims to discharge on his brothers the servitudes of nature is unjust.

What I only want to point out is, first of all, that such a simple idea could have seemed an abominable paradox until the Revolution: it is, secondly, the absurd sophism on which the so-called law of *inequality* is based.

XXV. — The year 1789 has struck. All the old legal hypotheses, hitherto accepted as the pure expression of Justice and sanctioned by religion, are reproached by the new legislator: seigniorial rights, hierarchy of classes, nobility, third estate, vilainie, corporations, commands, privileges of functions, steeples, provinces, bankocracy and proletariat. In place of this systematic inequality, created by pride and force, consecrated by all the priesthoods, the Revolution affirms, as identical propositions, 1. the equality of persons; 2. political and civil equality; 3. equality of functions, equivalence of services and products, identity of values, balance of powers, unity of law, community of jurisdiction; from which results, except what the individual faculties, exercising themselves in complete freedom, can bring about modifications, 4. the equality of conditions and fortunes.

Such a thing had never been seen, neither since the beginning of the world nor since the origin of Christianity. The insistence with which the Revolution proclaimed this principle Equality, so new, so odious to the Church, and still so little understood, deserves that I dwell on it.

*Declaration of July 27 – August 31, 1789:*

“Art. 2. Nature has made men free and EQUAL IN RIGHTS.”

And to bring out the human origin of this equality, its independence from any superior sanction, the Declaration adds that equality of rights has as its foundation and guarantees their MUTUAL RECOGNITION:

“Art. 5. To ensure the free and entire use of his faculties, each man must recognize and facilitate in his fellows the free exercise of theirs.”

*Constitution of September 6, 1791:*

“Art. 1. Men are born and remain free, equal in rights.”

*Declaration of February 15-16, 1793:*

“Art. 1. The natural, civil and political rights of men are: liberty, Equality, security, property, social guarantee, resistance to oppression.”

*Declaration of June 24, 1793:*

“Art. 2. These rights are: equality, liberty, security, property.

“Art. 3. All men are equal by nature and before the law.”

*Constitution of Year III (August 22, 1795):*

“Art. 1. The rights of man in society are: liberty, equality, security, property.

“Art. 2. Equality consists in the fact that the law is the same for all, whether it protects or punishes.”

*Constitution of Year VIII (December 15, 1799):*

“The Constitution is founded on the true principles of representative government, on the sacred rights of property, of equality, of liberty.”

“Citizens,” add the consuls in their proclamation, “the Revolution is fixed on the

principles with which it began; it is finished.”

*Charter of 1841 :*

“Art. 1. The French are equal before the law.”

(One thing to note: the draft Constitution of the Conservative Senate, decreed on April 6 to be proposed for the acceptance of Louis XVIII, made no mention of the *equality of the French*; it was the king who recalled it.)

The Constitutions of 1830 and 1848 only copied the old ones.

Thus, after the Revolution, Justice, in its application to the economy, found its formula; the economic order has its law of equilibrium.

Before 89, it is worth repeating, men were not all *equal in rights, equal by birth, equal before the law*. There were legal inequalities that manifested themselves even in torture: and everyone knows with what jubilation Paris witnessed the execution of the unfortunate Marquis de Favras, hanged like a simple commoner. Paganism, for 2,000 years, Christianity in its turn, for forty-eight centuries, witnessed, without a word of protest, this monstrous iniquity.

Since 1789, and not before, equality before the law, equality before the servitudes of nature, has entered into public right: by this principle the social economy has been virtually changed, and all the problems to which the question of goods may give rise can, when one wishes, receive their solution. An immense division of moral science, cut up to now by the saber of despotism, the lance of the noble and the sword of the Church, will be worked out in rigorous equations, apart from theological reason, which has known nothing, seen nothing, understood nothing, and whose calumny, for 70 years, protests with rage.

*Reciprocity of respect*, first article of the revolutionary code; *reciprocity of service*, that is, reciprocity in property, in labor, education, credit, exchange, taxation, criticism, power, judgment: second article.

This is what the Church protests against; with what complaint she fills her pulpits, her schools, her councils; why she accuses the Revolution of preaching materialism, sensualism, Epicureanism, and of losing morals.

It is evident in fact that if, by a simple deduction from the idea of Justice as we have previously defined it, men can be made equal and kept free, the spirit of mores and laws is changed from top to bottom. No more subordination of man to man, consequently no more hierarchy, no more Church, no more dogma, no more faith, no more transcendental reason. All these things having no *raison d'être* except in the presumed necessity of making society prevail, either by religion or by force, against selfishness, they disappear in a system where right, having become adequate to liberty, found its guarantee in the conscience, where the maxim of Justice cannot delay consequently to appear identical with the maxim of happiness itself.

The least that can happen to Christianity here is to be declared superfluous. This is what the school of MM. Buchez and Ott, modern representatives of Christian Democracy, understand. It follows from their publications (see among others the *Traité d'économie politique* by M. Ott, Paris, Guillaumin), that equality is not really the product of economic forces balanced by Justice, but the decree of a society whose principle and motive can only be given by religion. To be



associated, and by this means to become equals, according to MM. Buchez and Ott, one needs a faith, a supernatural grace, a theology. On this account, Messrs. Buchez and Ott agree with the episcopate: they are wrong to make a schism. Is it not the glory of the episcopate to be able to say: Idolatry, philosophy, political economy, justice and nature had made you enemies; the Gospel alone has made you brothers?

XXVI. — I come to the argument of the theoreticians of inequality.

Justice, they say, is egalitarian; nature is not. Now, economic phenomena belong to objective fatality; to pretend to bend them to the proprieties of justice would be to want to put nature on the bed of Procrustes, to do violence to necessity.

This argument has been done to death by economists and theodicasters, shouting at the top of their voices that equality does not exist anywhere, that it violates nature and humanity, that inequality is the law of the world, the law of art, the law of morals.

Mr. Jobard, the bitter *monautopoliseur* from Brussels, who, like so many others, with all the wit in the world never looks at things except with his left eye, does not have enough hisses for this unfortunate equality:

“It is certain,” says this scoffer, “that if we had learned to model our institutions on the laws that govern the universe, we could no longer deceive ourselves so grossly as we have so often done, by taking, for example, *equality* for a natural law, when Providence has taken care to write at the beginning of all the pages of its great Bible: *inequality, inequality*, in everything, everywhere and for everything: so much does it seem to have taken it to heart to spare us this disastrous mistake.” (*Organon de la propriété intellectuelle.*)

In my turn, I will ask Mr. Jobard:

Good man, who sees so many things,

where then have you seen inequality in nature other than as an *anomaly*?

Yes, everything is variable, irregular, inconstant, unequal in the universe: this is the raw fact, which the first glance cast at things reveals. But this variability, anomaly, inconstancy, this inequality, in short, is confined everywhere within narrow limits, set by a superior law to which all the raw facts are reduced, and which is equality itself.

The days of the year are equal, the years equal; the revolutions of the moon, variable within a certain limit, always reduce to equality. The legislation of the worlds is an egalitarian legislation. Let us descend to our globe: is not the quantity of rain that falls each year in every country sensibly equal? What is more variable than the temperature? And yet, in winter, in summer, by day, by night, equality is still its law. Equality governs the ocean, whose ebb and flow, in their averages, work with the regularity of the pendulum. Consider animals and plants, each in its own kind: everywhere you find, under restricted variations, *caused by external influences*, the law of equality. Inequality, to put it bluntly, does not come from the essence of things, from their intimacy; it comes from the environment. Take away this influence of chance, and everything returns to

absolute equality. Leaf equals leaf, flower equals flower, seed equals seed, individual equals individual. The world, says the Sage, was made with *number*, *weight* and *measure*; everything it contains is weighed in the balance, that is to say, subject to equality. Look for a fact, a single one, whose law is not an *agreement*, a *symmetry*, a *harmony*, an *equation*, an *equilibrium*, in a word, EQUALITY? There exists an order of knowledge created *a priori*, which, by an admirable harmony, happens to govern at the same time the phenomena of nature and those of humanity: this is mathematics. Now, what is mathematics, but the science of EQUALITY, *in everything, everywhere and for everything*, as M. Jobard says? No industry can manufacture a perfect sphere: does that prevent us from saying that all the radii of the sphere are equal? And would the ball, pushed by the hand of the player, fulfill its function if it were cut on the principle of inequality?

A statistician unfavorable to socialism, A. Guillard, has glimpsed this truth:

“Certainty in human knowledge,” he says, “is in direct proportion to the application of the idea of equality. If economics has been uncertain and contested up to now, it is because it has more or less rejected the idea of equality. When social science, freed from the filth of acquired abuses and the false brilliance of systems, will be no more than the pure development of this idea and its application to all the relations of men among themselves, this science will reach the highest degree of certainty and self-evidence. (*Éléments de statistique humaine*, p. 209.)

Nothing, it is said, is equal in nature. Do we mean that a man is less fat than an elephant? The idea would be ridiculous. The equality we intend to deny is that of similar beings. Now we have just seen that this negation is precisely the opposite of the truth; it results from a superficial appreciation of things. Applied to man, it has its point of departure in religion.

Just as it is the law of the world, so equality is the law of the human race. Outside of this law there is for him no stability, peace or happiness, since there is no balance: it is strange that such an elementary truth encounters contradictors. To want society to be founded on inequality is to maintain that a thing can be balanced by nothing, established on nothing, which is absurd.

All the individuals of which society is composed are, in principle, of the same essence, of the same caliber, of the same type, of the same magnitude: if any difference between them manifests itself, it comes, not from the creative thought that gave them being and form, but from the external circumstances under which individualities are born and develop. It is not by virtue of this inequality, singularly exaggerated moreover, that society sustains itself, it is in spite of this inequality.

XXVII. — The law of nature as well as the law of justice being equality, the wish of both identical, the problem, for the economist and for the statesman, is no longer to know if the economy will be sacrificed to Justice or Justice to the economy; it consists in discovering what will be the best advantage to draw from physical, intellectual, economic forces, which genius incessantly discovers, in order to re-establish the social equilibrium, momentarily disturbed by the

hazards of climate, of generation, of education, of illnesses, and by all the accidents of *force majeure*.

One man, for example, is taller and stronger, another has more genius and skill. One succeeds better in agriculture, another in industry or navigation. The latter embraces at a glance a vast set of operations or ideas, the former has no rivals in a more restricted specialty. In all these cases, a compensation is indicated, a leveling to operate, a source of energetic emulation and happy competition. To balance emerging superiorities, to constantly create the equality of new means in the unknown forces of nature and society, the constitution of the human soul and industrial division present infinite resources.

Such, then, is the radical difference, irreducible forever, that separates the Christian, Malthusian economy, an economy that is both materialist and mystical, from the revolutionary economy.

The first, judging from the accidental anomalies of things, does not hesitate to declare men unequal by nature; then, without taking the trouble to compare them in their works, without waiting for the result of labor, education and the separation of industries, being careful above all not to seek with exactitude the share that belongs to each in the collective product, and to measure the endowment with the contribution, it concludes from this supposed inequality on the consecration of privilege, as much of exploitation as of property.

The Revolution, on the contrary, starting from the principle that equality is the law of all nature, supposes that man in essence is equal to man, and that if, in the test, there are those who remain behind, it is because they did not want or did not know how to take advantage of their means. It considers the hypothesis of inequality as a gratuitous insult, which the progress of science and industry denies every day, and it works with all its might, by legislation and by the increasingly approximate equation of services and wages, to redress the balance tipped by prejudice. This is why it declares all men *equal in rights* and *before the law*, desiring, on the one hand, that all industries, professions, functions, arts, sciences, trades, be considered as equally noble and meritorious; on the other, that in any dispute, in any competition, the parties, except for the evaluation of products and services, be deemed equal, and, in order to achieve more and more in society this egalitarian justice, that all citizens enjoy equal means of development and action.

It is insisted: The human races are not of equal value or quality; there are some whose best education will only ever serve to show their inferiority, let us not avoid the word, their degradation.

I do not know. Catholicism, however, makes a great noise about the original unity of our species, as recounted in the Bible. But let it be as it is claimed, that the races of Africa, America, and Oceania cannot bear comparison with the Caucasian, and that no cross-breeding can redeem them. So it will be with these ill-born or bastardized races, as it is in our civilized society with the sickly, puny, counterfeit creatures, objects of the charity of families, who cease to contribute to the population: they will be absorbed and will end by passing away. EQUALITY OR DEATH! such is the law of the Revolution.

XXVIII. — This theory of social equality, so clear, so rational, so well founded in fact and in droit, which frees man from economic fatalism, aristocratic tyranny and communal absorption; on which we have seen the Revolution express itself in such an explicit manner; this theory, I say, has not yet been able to make itself understood, even by socialists, even by republicans. So hard is it for the human mind to return to nature once despotism and theology have driven it away.

We know the religious, not to say monastic formula of the communists:

*To each according to his needs; from each according to his means.*

It is the family law applied to society. There, in fact, there is no question of equality or non-equality of forces, talents, means; it is pure *fraternity*, as between parents and children, between brothers and sisters. But the family is the sphere of authority and subordination; and when communism is logical, it will recognize that by taking the type of society from the family it ends in despotism. To obey such a law, a revelation is necessary, says M. Buchez very well. This revelation was missed at the Luxembourg.

*To each according to his capacity, to each capacity according to its works,* replied the Saint-Simonians, boldly drawing the conclusion from the communist principle.

Here, no more equality, either in fact or in law. Under the pretext of saving the flesh, the Church of Saint-Simon professes the deepest contempt for the person. Here, it can say, here one judges and gauges capacities; intelligences are priced, souls and bodies are stamped, a trademark is affixed to the mind, to the character, to the conscience. It was M. Enfantin who found these beautiful things: may posterity be light to him! *Nolite judicare, not judicabimini.*

In the phalanstery, another system. No more assessor-sworn priesthood; it is the producers who, through the *cabbalist*, evaluate each other mutually. The reciprocal is there: so we have always maintained that the phalansterians, by caballing against each other, would end in equality.

How much simpler, above all more worthy, is the immemorial practice of humanity, of which the Revolution has only given the juridical formula! No estimation of capacities, neither on the part of the superior, nor on the part of the equal: it is an offense to personal dignity. One appreciates only the products, which saves the self-love, and brings back all the economic organization to this simple formula, the EXCHANGE.

What do you think, Monsignor, of this judiciary? Do you find that it is not worth your discipline, so foolishly renewed by the Saint-Simonians and the Icarians? Doesn't it seem to you that the inspiration of 89 was at least as happy as that of the Gospel, and that, if it had to be done again, the revolutionaries of the Constituent Assembly and the Convention would have something to teach the Apostles?

I will not leave this study without touching on some of the more practical questions of Economics. It is not a mediocre task in society to establish the balance between Right and Duty, or, to use technical words, between *credit* and *debit* in Justice. It is a very delicate enterprise to accord respect to persons with the organic necessities of production; to observe equality without infringing on

liberty, or at least without imposing on liberty any hindrance other than Right. Such problems require a science apart, objective and subjective at the same time, half fatality and half liberty; a science as simple as it is sure, which has its principles at the very source of the mind, at a greater depth than mathematics, and of which you will forgive me for only being able to give here a very imperfect idea, through the example of some of its results.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Economic balances.

XXIX. — If Justice, in what concerns persons, is established on a religious basis, that will be all that is desired, except respect for humanity; — if it is established on the authentic laws of conscience, and without any transcendental consideration, it will be respect for humanity, and it cannot be anything else. I demonstrated this proposition in my previous study.

I continue my discourse, and I add:

If Justice, as regards goods, has a theological idea for its basis, it will be anything that you want, except equality; — if it rests on the principle of human reciprocity, given in consciousness by the feeling that man has of his dignity in others, it will be equality and nothing but equality. I demonstrated this in the first five sections of this study, and I will demonstrate it even better presently.

All human morality, in the family, in the city, in the state, in education, in speculation, in the economic constitution, and even in love, depends on this single principle: Equal and reciprocal respect for human dignity, in all relations that have as their object either persons or interests.

The theory of divine justice, which is nothing else, as we have seen, than a combination of authority, inequality and community, inevitably leads to mutual spoliation, organized robbery, to social war. It is this theory that produces this system of privileges, monopolies, concessions, subsidies, prelibations, bribes, bonuses, where the goods of the prince are confused with those of the nation, individual property with collective ownership; a system whose last word is the extermination of citizens by one another, represented by the Christian myth of hell.

The theory of human justice, in which the reciprocity of respect is converted into reciprocity of service, has as a consequence more and more approximated equality in all things. It alone produces stability in the state, union in families, education and well-being for all, according to our fifth axiom, misery nowhere.

The application of justice to the economy is therefore the most important of the sciences. The order of intellectual development wanted it to be the last.

### XXX. — *Workers and Masters.*

From time immemorial the class of PRODUCERS has been divided into two sections, the *workers* and the *masters*.

How did the latter arise from the former? In the same way that despotism

constantly arises from democracy. As he belongs to the animal kingdom, man obeys various instincts, which Justice aims to rectify, and one of the most powerful of which is that which pushes the multitude to give themselves bosses, commanders, *imperatores*, ΤΥΡΑΝΝΟΥΣ, absolutely like wild horses and other so-called sociable species, which one might as well call servile.

Christianity received this distinction without expressing any reservations. It contented itself with recommending to servants to obey their masters, to masters to be benevolent towards their workmen: which certainly did not require a great effort of genius and could not have fatigued the Holy Wisdom very much.

The Revolution, which first posed in 1789, along with the principle of equality, the right to work, did not want to sow hatred between citizens by imposing *ex abrupto* a ban on this age-old distinction. It contented itself with abolishing corporate privileges, the privilege of oversight, ensuring competition, and letting time do its work.

Now, by virtue of this equality of respect enshrined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, Economy and Justice, henceforth inseparable, asked one another whether the labor contract between the master and the worker, as practiced in large workshops, is established on equitable principles, whether reciprocity of service is observed, in other words, whether the determination of wages is just

For the service to be reciprocal, the master, I mean the representative of the enterprise, must render to the worker as much as the worker gives him: which implies, not the equality of all wages between them, including those of the chiefs, since it is possible that the services are not equal, since the social equality of the people does not prejudge the effective equality of the services; but which implies equality between the *wages* of each workman and his *product*.

*Equality of product and wages*, this is here the exact translation of the law of reciprocity; such is the principle that, since the Revolution, is supposed to govern labor. This principle will be great in history and will be well-deserved by the workers who will have made a truth of it.

However, setting aside the contract at fixed price or flat rate, by which many workers like to free themselves from the uncertain chances that weigh on the contractors, a contract which in itself has nothing immoral when it is free, nothing dangerous when it does not multiply beyond measure, it is obvious, today, that Justice does not preside over the condition of the immense majority of workers, who do not have freedom of choice, and for whom the salary allocated by companies or entrepreneurs is far from expressing reciprocity.

Here is what happens in a clothing house that I can cite. I cite the fact for its very eccentricity.

A skilled worker can earn up to 1 sou per hour, or, for a 12-hour working day, 12 sous: the ordinary day is paid 50 centimes.

A worker employed at home presents her bill after two months, amounting to 30 francs. She therefore, during these two months, gave credit for her work to the manufacturer. Do you think we're going to count his 30 francs? Not at all: it is deducted from the sum, by way of discount, at the rate of 6% a year, for three months, 45 centimes, nine sous. It was in Paris, in the year of grace 1857, that

this scrounging took place.

I know everything that can be said about business risks, competitive necessities, trade charges, etc. It is not the bourgeois who made the regime in which he is engaged: a fair remuneration is due to his initiative. Let this compensation be settled on an equitable basis; I have no objection to it. But this holdback of 45 cents for a so-called credit of three months, whereas the worker has made one of two months which she has not taken into account, isn't this a fact that cries out for revenge? The tale of the widow's mite, so well recounted in the Gospel, moved me to tears; this half-cent stolen day by day from a young girl sets me ablaze with fury. And it is not the spoliation alone that I am considering; it is the outrage.

Now, if I reflect that in order to decrease the daily wage of the seamstress to 50 centimes it was necessary to go through a series of similar acts of pillage, successively transformed into principle and passed into tariffs, if I add that this particular case is that of the immense majority of the workers, am I not entitled to conclude that the lack of reciprocity is here the first cause of the misery of some and of the fortune of others, so that this much celebrated inequality of fortunes is not most often anything other than the expression of iniquity itself?

I will return, in a special study, to the question of work; but I say it from now on: Do justice, and you will have suppressed, in our industrial society, the primary cause of inequality, the inaccuracy of wages.

But what am I saying? The case seems foreseen by our Christian legislation, enemy of equality, which has done everything for the security of usurpation, nothing for the right of the producer.

Let the bosses get along, let the entrepreneurs coalesce, let the companies merge, the public prosecutor can do that much less about it as the governmental power pushes for the centralization of capitalist interests and encourages it. But let the workers, who have the feeling of the right that the Revolution has bequeathed to them, protest and go on strike, the only means they have of having their claims admitted, they are chastised, transported without pity, doomed to the heat of Cayenne and Lambessa. Was the serf of the Middle Ages otherwise attached to the soil?

### XXXI. — *Sellers and Buyers.*

If it is a consequence of Justice that the wage is equal to the product, it is another that, two dissimilar products having to be exchanged, the exchange must be made on account of the respective values, that is to say of the cost of each product.

By *cost of production* or *cost price* we generally mean the expenditure on tools and raw materials, the personal consumption of the producer, plus a premium for the accidents and non-values with which his career is sown, illnesses, old age, paternity, unemployment, etc

Reciprocity in exchange only exists on this condition. Any addition, fictitious or forced, to the cost price is a commercial lie; any sale of merchandise whose value is overstated or surcharged with extraneous charges, is theft. If, for example, between the producer-consumers who exchange their products there

exists a series of intermediaries, whose commissions, interest, brokerage, artificially increase the price of the goods, as in the end this surcharge is levied on the goods themselves, it will happen that the said producer-consumers, each bringing a value of 100 to the exchange, will all receive only 15, 20, 30, 50 at most. Their position is the same as that of the worker we were talking about earlier, who for a labor of 100 receives only a salary of 15, 20, 30, 50, the surplus making the profit of the boss.

*Equality in exchange*, here, then, is another principle outside of which there is no justice. Now this principle, the Church and all antiquity misunderstood; nowadays the conservative economists of privilege strive to stifle it under the mystification of free trade.

If equality in commerce were realized, a new progress, an immense progress would be accomplished towards equality of fortunes. But, by persevering in this egalitarian direction, what would shortly become of the hierarchy, the system of subordination and authority?

In recent times the imperial government has tried to regulate the trade in meat and bakery, the production of spirits, etc. By the use of fines it succeeded in having its taxes observed; but, as it does not depend on the government to assign the natural price of things, much less to eliminate from the current price the surcharges with which parasitism burdens it, the government only succeeded in officially noting that bread was expensive, meat overpriced, spirits unaffordable, and giving its sanction to this dearness. The government, which does not guarantee any invention, has suddenly decided, for the good of the people, to guarantee subsistence at a high cost: what philanthropy!

However, a capitalist (M. Delamarre), taking advantage of a socialist idea, says to himself: I do not aspire to fix the price of things; but I will make truthful trade, a cheaper cost of living, if not quite still equal trade. I will engage in commerce faithfully, not by virtue, like the police make soup, but by speculation, and I will get better results than the police.

Mr. Delamarre has therefore opened a vast store where he offers to the public, at cost price, all kinds of products, subject to nature, quantity, quality and weight. — By *cost price* Mr. Delamarre means the producer's costs, which he does not discuss, increased by 10%, namely, 5% profit for the producer, 2½ for store costs, 2½ for the benefit of himself, Delamarre. It is, as he says himself, commercial loyalty; it is not yet equality, since in the producer's costs and in the 10% supplement there are still a large number of parasitic elements. (K)

What would it take for reciprocity to be complete?

It would take, independently of the absolute expurgation of parasitism, which supposes first of all the reciprocity of services, as we said just now, then the reciprocity of credit and property; it would be necessary, I say, that the general store, or dock, instead of being at the account of a contractor of loyalty and guarantee, was at the account of the producers themselves, guaranteeing loyalty and sincerity to each other.

To whom can it belong to discuss and fix, according to the hour and the place, the exact price of each thing, if it is not with the producer-consumers, reciprocally interested, either in the sale or in the purchase? Nothing could be



simpler than this system, which would make three-quarters of the shops disappear, and would restore to production a multitude of intelligence and hands, absorbed in useless traffic.

But the majority rightly prefers traffic to labor; the owners of houses applaud this regime, which brings them enormous sums in rent; the bank encourages it, in the interest of its usurious circulation; the treasury favors it by its patents; the speculator reserves his Capital for himself; finally, the academic school advocates it, under the name of freedom of trade. It will take no less than a catastrophe to settle this problem of equal exchange, the simplest of all economics.

The outright refusal that we oppose to this reform, ordered by Justice, is the difficulty of getting along. All in good time! No one claimed that justice should cost no effort. To vegetate in a shameful license, it is pointless; to apply right, and by this means to arrive at order and wealth, one must will: is this not a powerful exception!

Last year, English capitalists, anticipating a rise in sugar prices, bought everything that existed in stores: their mediation cost consumers 12 million. This year, three harvests are purchased in advance by the trade. And the shop to admire, as the rabble admires the winning numbers of a lottery, as our soldiers in Africa admire a raid. It wouldn't be the shop, indeed, if it had the discernment of the just and the unjust.

There is manufactured in France, each year, for 400 to 500 million silks: with 40 million in cash, we would monopolize all the raw material used for this manufacture. What would we say if the whole of Paris were mined, and the first wind was allowed to set fire to the powder! Now, it is not only on silk and sugar that speculation operates: it is on grains, drinks, meat, coal, wood, on all the foodstuffs of prime necessity. A Bordeaux merchant, well informed on these matters, assures me that the rice, which is currently sold for 20 francs the small quintal, could cost only 7 francs. In 1856, the wine harvest was purchased unharvested. Special monopolizing societies, coalitions of merchants exist at all points of the territory, sometimes with the privilege of the State, sometimes without privilege and under private seal. (L)

To ward off such perils, to create serious guarantees for producer-consumers, the police are useless: Right is needed. A dock system would solve the issue; but the government *concedes* the docks, that is to say, in place of the thousands of retail traders, it creates monopoly companies. We have seen the signs. Once, however, Power got angry, during the provisioning of bacon for the Army of the East. Half a dozen chairmen were fined by the criminal court: the shop cried foul; then everything returned to rest. One day we will *concede* the trade in pigs, and those who eat them will think no more of it.

And you ask where do revolutions come from? From the fact that Justice is excluded from human transactions, the social economy given over to privilege, when it is not left to chance.

### XXXII. — *Circulation and Discount.*

Note that all the operations of the economy revolve around two antithetical terms: *workers-bosses, sellers-buyers, creditors-debtors, circulators-discounters,*

etc. It is a perpetual, systematic dualism, leading to an inevitable equation. Economics is by essence, by its principle, by its method, by the law of its oscillations, by its goal, the science of social equilibrium, which means of the equality of fortunes. This is as true as it is that mathematics is the science of equations between quantities. You will see a new example.

Everyone knows that the mass of cash that circulates in a country is very far from representing the importance of the exchanges which take place in this same country. This can be seen by the Banque de France, whose cash on July 40, 1856, was 232 million, and obligations 632.

To provide for this insufficiency, which incidentally cannot but exist, since cash only has value insofar as it forms, as metal, a proportionate fraction of the wealth of the country, traders are accustomed, while waiting for their turn to be reimbursed in cash, to drawing *bills of exchange* on each other, or else, which is the same thing, but in the opposite direction, of reciprocally subscribing to *promissory notes*, the circulation of which serves, until a designated day that is called *maturity*, as money.

The banker is the industrialist who undertakes, in return for interest and commission, to operate in time and place the liquidation of all these debts; consequently, to make to the merchants, in exchange for their titles, the cash advance of the sums that they need.

This operation has the name *discount*.

Just as exchange does not take place without a loss of time, and consequently gives rise to a special service which is that of the merchant, similarly discounting does not take place without a penalty either, and like all service that deserves a salary, that of the banker is legitimately remunerable.

But everything has its measure; and since we have made the balance of the rights of the merchant, we must also make that of the rights of the banker.

Recently, the bookkeeper of a banking house asked me to explain the mechanism of the *Bank of the People*, naively admitting that he did not understand anything about it. — Nothing could be easier, I said to him: in ten minutes you will know as much as I do. How much does your house make, on average, from its capital? — 15%. Here is the perfectly exact account of it: Our house, one of the best order that exists, takes up paper only at 30, 45 days at the most. Interest is charged at 6%. Let us suppose the average maturity of the paper at one month, consequently the number of operations during the year of twelve, the product of the traffic, for a capital of 400 fr. in cash, will be:

1. Interest on capital at 6% per annum	6 fr.
2. Commission for the admission of paper, 1/4%, or 25 c. by each operation, X by 12 =	3
3. Cash remittance commission, 1/4%, or 25 c. by each operation, X by 12 =	3
4. Add: Miscellaneous registration fees, ports, etc.; plus the credit the banker enjoys at the Banque de France, which gives him 4 or 5 per cent of the specie from which he draws 6 per cent, or another 25 c. x 12 =	3
	<hr/>
Total interest and commissions	15

With that, I began again:

— You will observe first that your boss works on his own account, at his own risk and peril, without commitment on the part of his clientele, with whom he is not bound by any legal relationship. Under these conditions, which are those of a state of war, the price of the service can only be limited by war, that is to say by competition.

Now, this is not the position of the Banque de France with regard to the public: it is bound by a synallagmatic or reciprocal contract, the articles of which only need to be determined with precision.

In the first place, the share capital of the Bank, fixed at 94 million, is invested in annuities on the State, which pays the interest. On this side, therefore, nothing is owed by discounting trade, since the State, which pays the Bank the interest on its Capital, is none other than society, trade itself, and it is principle in commerce that the same service cannot be paid for twice.

But, you ask, on what capital does the Bank operate, since its own is invested in State income? — It operates, in the first place, on circulating cash, for which it gradually replaces the notes that it has the privilege of issuing, and which thus comes to engulf itself in its cellars: it is thus, when the Bank issued denominations of 400 and 50 fr., that we have seen its cash balance rise to the enormous sum of 600 million. — Secondly, it operates on public credit, represented by its portfolio, each security of which, bearing three signatures, carries in itself a guarantee equal to that of cash.

The share capital of 94 million, invested in annuities on the State, only serves as security for the punctuality and prudence of the Bank, like the security of a notary or a receiver-general. (M)

This was the thought of the note of May 29, 1840, drawn up by order of the Emperor.

“A well-administered public bank,” said this Note, “must *operate without capital.*”

It therefore remains to pay the Bank, in remuneration for the service it renders to the public, (1) a premium for the risk that its capital runs in such a large enterprise; (2) a commission for its administration costs.

Let us count it.

Let us suppose that the capital, credit and specie, represented by the issue of notes, on which the Bank operates, be 600 millions. — On July 31, 1856, the circulation figure was 667 million.

Let us also assume the average maturity of the paper received at the discount of forty-five days. The renewal taking place nine times in the year, the mass of transactions will be 8 billion 400 million. — In 1856, it reached 3,809 millions, including 4,676 million for discounts.

With a deduction of 1/8%, or 42 cents. 5, for commission, exchange, *agio*, insurance premium, etc., the proceeds of the Bank for the year will be 6,730,000 fr. — In 1856, this product was 37,059,226 fr. 40; or 63 cents. 8 tenths per hundred on a mass of operations of 5 billion 809 millions, supposing the average credit granted by the Bank at forty-five days.

The ordinary expenses of the administration, according to the report of 1856, were 5,100,000 fr.; the loss figure, from unpaid tickets, zero. There remains, therefore, for the benefit of the Company, on the assumption that we have made, 1,630,000 fr., or 48 fr. per share, which brings the interest on the capital, including the dividend, to 5 fr. 80 c. per hundred. Honest remuneration, with which the most difficult are content in ordinary times. — In 1836, the product of this capital, increased by the privilege, was 272 fr. per share, or 27 fr. 20 c. per hundred.

I therefore say that the Bank of France, to which its privilege constitutes a synallagmatic commitment with regard to the country, fails in reciprocity, since, while the State pays 3,686,481 fr. for interest on its capital, it, on its side, pays nothing for the 600 millions, cash and guarantee, which it has; that it thus awards itself 24 millions of interests which do not belong to it; that for this purpose it arbitrarily encumbers the discount, at the average maturity of forty-five days, of 43 c. 3, in other words, from 3 fr. 70 c. per hundred the year; and that consequently, for all these reasons, the Bank's balance sheet should be adjusted.

Deducting therefore 24 millions, unduly collected, from the 37,059,226 fr. 40 c. forming the product of 186, would remain 43,059,226 fr. 40 c., which, the ordinary expenses paid, would leave the Company 7,959,226 fr. 40 c. of profit, or, with the interest paid by the State, a net income of 12 fr. 72 per hundred.

Revenue, you will say, much higher than the 5.80 to which the hypothesis led us just now. Yes, but do you believe that if the law of 1840, instead of purely and simply extending the privilege of the Bank; if, on May 9, 1857, the Legislative Body, instead of extending this prorogation by thirty years, had put it up for auction, as was first done for the railway companies, it would not have found capitalists who, for a lesser income, would have consented to discount French commerce at the average rate of 20 and even 15 cents per hundred for paper at forty-five days, that is to say at the rate of 1 fr. 80 and 1 fr. 35% per year? Finally, do you believe that it would not have been possible before 1897, the date on which the privilege expired, to lower this discount to 10 c., which would have been nearly the same thing for the commerce as settling all trades in cash?

It was said to this that the low price of the discount would soon bring about, by the demand for reimbursement of the notes, the departure out of the country of all the specie.

Well! Do you, on the contrary, want this same low price to bring all the money from abroad to the Bank? The means is easy: it is to add to the ordinary rate of discount an *agio* of 3, 4, or 3 per cent, when specie is demanded in preference to notes. The difference made them quickly sought out, and the species flowed in from all points of the globe.

This was the famous BANK OF THE PEOPLE. There is no utopia here: it is the most elementary practice, as the Emperor Napoleon I understood it, and the most positive law, as understood by the Code. The Church has not found it, it must be admitted; the school of Malthus does not want to listen to it, I still agree; the shop does not understand a drop of it, can it understand anything? Parasitism and speculation would not put up with it, I humbly confess, and parasitism and

speculation are the masters; the government draws its share of the system by the loans which it makes with the Bank, and I pity my country for it; finally, the old democracy makes fun of my ideas and holds them suspect. All these people are as devoid of civic sense as of moral sense; but you, young reader, who had not left college

When the Republic appeared  
in the lightning of February,

do you believe that I deserved anathema for having said that there was no advantage for commerce in paying 4.5 cts 6 fr. a service that he can get at 90 cents. and below?

XXXIII. — *Lenders and Borrowers.*

The balance of discount leads directly to that of credit or loans.

If there is a question on which the Church, communist by her dogma, patrician by her hierarchy, pulled in opposite directions by the double spirit of her constitution, has varied, wandered and prevaricated, it is without a doubt this one.

It is a fact that all antiquity, pagan and Jewish, agreed to condemn the loan at interest, although this loan is only a form of rent, which is universally admitted; although trade derives great benefit from the loan and in no way can do without it; although it is impossible, even unjust, to require the capitalist to advance his funds without emoluments.

All this has been demonstrated by the casuists of our century as well as by the economists; and it is known that I have no difficulty in recognizing the legitimacy of interest, in the conditions of inorganic and individualistic economy in which the old society lived.

Since the Church, following the example of philosophy, returning to common sense, thought it necessary in recent times to recant on the question of interest; since she abjured her ancient doctrine, was she therefore wrong, was she iniquitous and senseless, when she proscribed this same interest at a time when it combined all the characteristics of necessity, and therefore of right? How does the Church justify this variation? She who never ceased to raise an outcry against the Jews about their usury, and who was the cause of so many spoliations and massacres, how did she end up on the side of the publicans, the Cahorsins, Lombards and Jews? How did she bow down to Mammon?

The Church, you will say, has not changed its maxims. Understanding the necessities of the times, she just adapts her discipline to them; she practices tolerance.

In truth, the Church plays with misfortune: she prohibits lending at interest when the world needs it most and when there is no possibility of free lending; she authorizes it when we can do without it.

In 1848 and 1849 I proved, in many publications, that, the principle of Justice being the reciprocity of respect; the principle of the organization of labor, in a well-constituted society, the reciprocity of service; the principle of commerce, the reciprocity of exchange; the principle of the Bank, the reciprocity

of discount, the principle of the loan had to be the reciprocity of service, all the more so since the loan is basically only a form of the discount, as the discount is a form of exchange, and exchange a form of the division of labor.

Let us organize, as I said, according to this principle, real estate credit, personal property credit, and all kinds of credit. From then on, no more usury, no more interest, neither legal nor illegal: a simple fee, very modest, for verification and registration costs, like a discount. The abolition of usury, so long and so vainly pursued by the Church, is accomplished by itself. Reciprocal lending or free credit is no more difficult to achieve than reciprocal discount, reciprocal exchange, reciprocal service, reciprocal respect, JUSTICE.

Certainly, having to defend here, with the interest of the masses, pure revolutionary morals and Catholic tradition, I had to count on two kinds of auxiliaries, the democracy and the Church. The socialists, who preached workers' association, were to open their arms to me. What, in fact, is the reciprocity of credit if not the sponsorship of labor substituted for the sponsorship of capital? Let the governmental power, in the absence the spontaneous action of the citizens, set the ball rolling, and in one day, in one hour, all these reforms, all these revolutions can be accomplished.

But see the misfortune! This broad application of Justice to the economy, displacing the focus of interests, inverting relations, changing ideas, leaving nothing to arbitrariness, nothing to force, nothing to chance, aroused against it all those who, living on privileges and parasitic functions, refused to leave an anomalous position in which they were established, for another, more rational, but which they did not know. It confounded the old school of so-called economists; it seized unexpectedly the old people of the republic, whose education had to be redone; what is worse, it annulled the recent decisions of the Church on the question of interest, and by the chaining of ideas, killed its dogma.

Too many interests and self-esteemes were compromised: I was bound, in this first instance, to lose my case. A man was found to defend, in the name of individual liberty and general happiness, subordinate labor against reciprocal service, speculative trade against equality of exchange, the 15% discount against discount at 1/8%, homicidal usury against gratuitous, agricultural and industrial sponsorship. M. Bastiat, who had not even broached the question, satisfied that I had declared the former lenders, on account of their good faith and necessity, not guilty, by a unanimous vote was declared victorious. The economists uttered a cry of joy; the politicians of the Revolution, no doubt counting on jobs in the republic, applauded the defeat of *anarchy. People's Bank! Free credit!* FOLLIES! once again wrote, after Daniel Stern, M. de Lamartine. The socialists saw with happiness the rout of this egalitarian Justice, which threatened to engulf both the holy hierarchy and the gentle fraternity.

Unfortunate Bastiat! He went to die in Rome, in the arms of the priests. At his last moment he exclaimed, like Polyeucte: *I see, I believe, I know, I am a Christian!*... What did he see? What all mystics see who imagine they possess the Spirit, because they have the blindfold of faith over their eyes: that pauperism and crime are indestructible; that they enter into the plan of Providence; that such is the reason for the inconsistencies of society and the contradictions of

political economy; that it is impiety to claim to make Justice reign in this chaos, and that there is truth, morality and order only in a superior life. *Amen.*

However, Monsignor, despite the rigor of the regime inflicted on the press, despite the threats of hanging and the guillotine that the retrograde parties vomit against free thinkers in unison, we are no longer quite in the century when questions which had the misfortune of displeasing were smothered on the scaffold. I can say, casting my eyes around me, that I am the vanquished of the vanquished: so be it! I have no desire to recommence the controversy of 1848; but even if I remain silent, the public conscience, your conscience is there, summoning you to answer.

The Church has alternately condemned and supported the loan at interest.

“Since the councils of Elvira, Arles and Nicaea, in 300, 314 and 325, more than eighteen councils have prohibited lending at interest. Moreover, the decretals and encyclicals of more than fourteen popes, from Saint Leo to Benedict XIV, have anathematized those who want to earn interest from money lent. From Saint Jerome, the Fathers, down to Saint Thomas and Saint Bernard, preached that it was illicit in itself to receive a prize for the use of money. This principle was applied in France for nine centuries, from the Capitularies of Charlemagne to the approach of the reign of Louis XIV. (BLANC SAINT-BONNET, *De la Restauration française*, p. 70.)

This whole discipline is changed. The Church, at the hour when I speak, makes common cause with the great privileges, whose hierarchical and usurious exploitation she blesses. Let the Church therefore explain herself once and for all.

What finally is her doctrine on lending at interest? Let's not talk about the difficulties of the moment: I understand, I accept the need for transitions, and do not impose miracles on anyone, not even the Church. I ask what is the direction of progress? Is it toward equality or inequality? Toward equality by mutual credit, or to inequality by prelibation of interest? Will you explain this change of tactics, as the pious writer I have just quoted does, by the desire to put obstacles in the way of the formation of industrial capital, the cause of our corruption? Will you say that it was with a view to salvation that the Church took so much care to stop the development of credit, first by the prohibition of interest, then by the dearness of interest? — *Beware of credit!* exclaims M. Blanc Saint-Bonnet. Is this also your opinion? You owe us an answer, decisive, categorical, as it belongs to a Church with the power to teach, and whose decisions are infallible. Are you today, as before, against the interest on the loan, with the Bible, the Gospel, philosophy, the Fathers, the councils, the doctors, the popes, the Revolution? Or are you for the interest on the loan, with the mixed casuists of the last century and ours, Grotius, Saumaise, Bergier, Cardinal de la Luzerne, assisted by Adam Smith, J.-B. Say, David Ricardo, Malthus, Bastiat, Lamartine, Daniel Stern and the counter-revolution? You must answer, Monsignor, or let it be said, God forbid, that you are a Church of disappointment and dishonesty.

#### XXXIV. — *Proprietors and Tenants.*

Since I am going to talk about property, let me first clear up a question of ownership. It is a question of a personal fact.

I wrote somewhere, everyone knows it, that *Property is theft*; and later, I couldn't say where, because I hardly reread myself: "This definition is mine; I wouldn't give it up for all the Rothschild millions." [The sentiment appears in Chapter XI of *The System of Economic Contradictions*.]

Now, here is what Louis Blanc and Daniel Stern, the first in his *Histoire de la révolution française*, the second in his *Histoire de la révolution de 1848*, reproach me for having stolen this definition from Brissot de Varville, the leader of the Girondin party. It was Brissot, whom I have not read, who was the first to say: *Property is theft!*

Through the tribune and the learned woman, I am attacked and convicted of having *brissoté* Brissot. A few words made my glory; it has delighted me. All I have left is the shame of plagiarism.

Alas! How true it is to say that there is nothing new under the sun! A little more, and I see myself stripped of all my feathers. *Reciprocal credit* no longer belongs to me; the *bank of the people*, that poverty, according to Danid Stern, we have just discovered that it is the invention of Napoleon I; *free credit*, that madness, according to M. de Lamartine, to which adhesions in France and abroad are beginning to come, will sooner or later be found in Ricardo or some other Jew; *anarchy* was seen everywhere. Poor Herostratus that I am! What temple of Ephesus remains for me to burn, so that posterity will speak of me?

But the proprietor, precisely because he is a thief, does not allow himself to be divested: his instinct for rapine forbids it. And I won't give up either. Brissot, after Rousseau, was able to say the word, without this having any consequence: in philosophical matters, for it to have apprehension, and therefore property, the IDEA, not the word alone, must have been apprehended, that is to say understood; otherwise it remains in joint possession. The division of labor apparently existed when Adam Smith observed it in a pin-maker: which does not prevent Adam Smith from being credited with the priority of observation. If someone proves to me that Brissot knew what he was saying, I pass judgment; if not, I in turn accuse Louis Blanc and Daniel Stern of calumny or, what is worse, of stupidity.

The difficulty of the problem consists in the fact that property first appears as a fact as necessary to the existence of the individual as to social life, and that one then demonstrates, by a rigorous analysis, that this fact, indispensable, fruitful, emancipatory, savior, is of the same nature, in substance, as that which the universal conscience condemns under the name of theft.

From this contradiction, presented in all its clarity by me, which should never have been dragged into the public square, it was concluded that I wanted to DESTROY property. To destroy a conception of the mind, an economic force, to destroy the institution that this force and this conception engender, is as absurd as to destroy matter. *Nothing can return to nothing*: this axiom is as true of ideas as of atoms.

What I was looking for, from 1840, in defining property, what I want today, is not destruction, I have said it to satiety: it would have been to fall with Rousseau, Plato, Louis Blanc himself and all the adversaries of property, into communism, against which I protest with all my might; what I'm asking for property is justification; it is that we make its BALANCE.



It is not for nothing that the genius of the people has armed Justice with this precision instrument. Justice, in fact, applied to the economy, is nothing other than a perpetual balance; or, to express myself in an even more exact manner, Justice, with regard to the distribution of goods, is nothing other than the obligation imposed on every citizen and on every state, in their relations of interest, to conform to the law of balance that manifests itself everywhere in the economy, and the violation of which, whether accidental or intentional, is the principle of misery.

The economists claim that it is not for human reason to intervene in the determination of this balance, that we must let the scale oscillate as it pleases, and follow it step by step in our operations. I maintain that this is an absurd idea; that it would be as well to reproach the Convention for having reformed the weights and measures, for the reason that, not knowing the meter that God used to organize the world, the safest thing was to let everyone make an arbitrary measurement Freedom of weights and measures! This is the consequence of free trade. This precious corollary escaped Bastiat.

Just as everything is in continual oscillation in nature, so everything is subject to the law of number, of weight and measure, to the law of balance; I only add that, once the formula of equilibrium has been found, it is our right and our duty, as intelligent and moral beings, to conform to it, on pain of social subversion. It is this obligation of balance that I call Justice, or reciprocity, in the economy.

Thus, balance or reciprocity of labor and product, balance of supply and demand, balance of trade, balance of credit, balance of discount, balance of population, balance everywhere: the social economy is a vast system of scales, the last word of which is EQUALITY.

What is the balance of property?

Before answering this question, it is necessary to know this property in itself.

If I question the theologians, philosophers, jurists and economists on the origin and essence of property, I find them divided between five or six theories, each of which excludes the others and claims to be the only orthodox, the only moral theory. In 1848, when it was a question of saving society, definitions arose from all sides: M. Thiers had his own, opposed today by M. l'abbé Mitraud; M. Troplong had his; M. Cousin, M. Passy, M. Léon Faucher, as before Robespierre, Mirabeau, Lafayette, each had his own. Roman right, feudal right, Germanic right, American right, canon right, Arab right, Russian right, everything was brought to bear without any agreement being reached. One thing only emerged from this mix of definitions, which is that by virtue of property, which everyone else agreed to regard as sacred, and unless another principle came to correct its effects, we should regard the inequality of conditions and fortunes as the law of the human race.

Certainly there was a task for the Church worthy of her high mission, and of the breaths of that Spirit who never abandons her. From the uncertainty of the definition, in fact, results that of the theory, from which then arises the instability of the institution itself. What a service the Church would have

rendered to the world if she had been able to define this principle of social economy, as she has defined her mysteries!

It is a strange thing, that after having spent fifteen years continuing the war on property, I am perhaps destined to save it from the clumsy hands that defend it, from the empire that absorbs it into its domain, from the Church that converts it into mortmain, from the bankocracy that monetizes and monopolizes it! And do you believe, Monsignor, that I need to retract a single word of my criticism for that? You would be making a big mistake. Property is really what I said, and what the theologians qualify it *in petto*. It would no longer be an economic force, it would cease to function and serve, if it could become anything other than what I have said. But what no one could foresee, as ignorant are we of the laws of economy and morality, is that the Revolution, applying its egalitarian formula to property, penetrating it with Justice, subjecting it to the balance, would know how to one day to make this institution of sin, this principle of theft, the cause of so much hatred and massacres, the solid pledge of fraternity and order.

Tell me, Monseigneur, what you smoke or inhale in tobacco, what you taste in kirsch, what you eat in vinegar, aren't these poisons, and the most violent of all poisons? Well! It is thus with certain principles that nature has placed in our souls, which are essential to the constitution of society: we could not exist without them; but however little we extend or concentrate the dose, however we alter the economy, we infallibly perish by them. In the regime of scales and false weights in which we live, the division of labor is just as fatal to the worker, prompting disastrous competition, wanton speculation, crushing centralization, as property is immoral and fatal. Like the bitter almond, reduced by chemical analysis to the purity of its element, becomes prussic acid, thus property, reduced to the purity of its notion, is the same thing as theft. The whole question, for the use of this formidable element, is, I repeat, to find the formula for it, in the style of an economist, the balance: something that the lowest clerk understands perfectly, but which goes beyond the scope of a religion.

Is it then so difficult to understand that property considered in itself, being reduced to a simple psychological phenomenon, to a faculty of grasping, appropriating, possessing, dominating, as you please, is foreign by its nature, or to use a milder term, indifferent to Justice; that if it results from the necessity in which man finds himself, an intelligent and free subject, to dominate nature, blind and fatal, on pain of being dominated by it; if, as a fact or product of our faculties, property is prior to society and to right, it nevertheless derives its morality only from right, which applies the balance to it, and outside of which it can always be reproached?

It is through justice that property conditions itself, purges itself, makes itself respectable, determines itself civilly, and becomes by this determination an economic and social element.

As long as property has not received the infusion of right, it remains, as I demonstrated in my first memoir, a vague, contradictory fact, capable of producing good and evil indiscriminately, a fact consequently of an equivocal morality, which it is impossible to distinguish theoretically from the acts of prehension that morality condemns.

The error of those who undertook to avenge property for the attacks of which it was the object was not to see that property is one thing and legitimation by the right of property another; it is to have believed, with Roman theory and spiritualist philosophy, that property, the manifestation of the self, was holy by the sole fact that it expressed the self; that it was of right, because it was of need; that the right was inherent in it, as it is in humanity itself.

But it is clear that this cannot be so, since otherwise the self should be reputed to be just and holy in all its acts, in the satisfaction all the same of all its needs, of all its fancies; since, in a word, it would reduce Justice to egoism, as the old Roman law did by its unilateral conception of dignity. For property to enter society, it must receive its stamp, legalization, signature.

Now, I say that to sanction, to legalize property, to give it the juridical character that alone can make it respectable, this can only be done under the condition of a balance; and that apart from this necessary reciprocity, neither the decrees of the prince, nor the consent of the masses, nor the licenses of the Church, nor all the verbiage of the philosophers on the self and the not-self, serve as at all.

Let us cite facts.

We know what rise in rents has taken place, mainly in Paris, since the *coup d'état*. If I had the fatuity to take advantage, for the justification of a theory, of public feeling, I could say that everyone today thinks about property like the publicist who, in 1840, gave such an energetic definition of it. The scandal has gone so far that one day the *Constitutionnel* after a virulent outburst against landlords, announced the intention to examine the right of the State to *intervene in the fixing of rents*, and a pamphlet appeared some months ago, with the *laissez-passez* of the police, under this title: *Pourquoi des propriétaires à Paris?* I don't know what this trial balloon may hide; but it cannot but please me to see the sheets of the empire rival, with regard to the term, *Le Représentant du Peuple*.

A merchant hands over his stock: naturally his purchaser continues the rent. But the landlord says to his former tenant: You have no right to assign your lease without my consent; and he demands, as compensation, a bribe of 3,000 fr., plus 100 fr. per year for his doorman. And the two contracts were forced to go through it. — Theft.

Another, established on the boulevard, occupied a warehouse at 4,000 francs. He was supposed to do excellent business; the house was known, busy. When the lease comes to an end, the landlord increases the rent from 4,000 to 15,000 fr., plus a gratuity of 40,000 fr. And the industrialist still had to submit to the law. — Theft.

Such facts abound.

A father rents an apartment, agrees on the price with the owner: the furniture moved in, he lives with two children. The owner cries out: You didn't tell me you had children, you won't come in; you must remove your furniture. And he takes it upon himself to drive out this family and close the doors. The father first tries some representations, gets angry in his turn: they quarrel. The proprietor allowed himself insults accompanied by assault, so much so that the tenant, in a fit of rage, seized him round the body and threw him from a third

floor, through the window. He got off with a few bruises. In another district the thing did not happen so fortunately: the owner having wanted, and for the same reason, to snare a tenant, was thrown against the wall with such violence that his head broke on it; he perishes instantly.

Here I will not say, as before, Theft; I say, Contempt for mores. Every adult citizen must be considered married and a father: it is the celibate who is the exception.

Moreover, it is fair to remark that not all landlords are like these: I have been told of some who since 1848 have refused to increase their rents. This moderation is very laudable, but it cannot make a rule, and we have to determine what in property constitutes the right and the non-right.

Note that as a general thesis the law protects the proprietor. The lease expired, he is free to leave or take back his thing. The ancient Roman right, which made property depend on individual, unilateral dignity, on the pure self, independent of any consideration of reciprocity, justifies it. The Malthusian school, fatalistic and unpredictable, joins hands: rise and fall, it says; it is the law of *supply* and *demand*. The Church, which has always authorized the tithe, the mortmain, the *droit du seigneur*, which very recently rallied to the doctrine of interest, the Church approves: its silence at least is equivalent to an approbation.

And yet conscience says that such a principle, followed in its consequences, is immoral; the press is moved by it, the governmental Power is indignant. What! There are thirty thousand houses in Paris, owned by twelve to fifteen thousand proprietors and used to lodge more than a million souls; and it depends on these fifteen thousand proprietors, against rhyme and reason, to ransom, squeeze, if not expel, a million inhabitants! To encumber labour, products, commerce, in consequence of ruining the bosses, and starving the workmen! We no longer work, we no longer earn, people cry out on all sides, except to pay the rent!... No, that is not possible: the Code and tradition have understood nothing of this, the economists lied, the Church is absurd.

How to get out of this mousetrap?

Let us analyze, if you please, and we'll soon find a way out.

What do we blame in the proprietor?

Is it the fact of *prehension*, I mean the act by which he gets paid rent?

No, since, as has been recognized above, prehension, or the simple fact of appropriation, is by its nature indifferent to right; since it is not distinguished from the fact of enjoyment, use or consumption, essential to all living beings; since it constitutes the eminent domain of man over things, a domain that is primitively summed up in these terms, hunting, fishing, gathering, grazing, dwelling, and outside of which man would be a slave to things themselves, but a domain that stops before the respect that I owe to others.

Now, the price of the lease represents the prehension that the owner has made of a certain part of the ground, on which he has erected or caused to be erected a building, of which he then relinquished possession in favor of the tenant. In itself, the price of the rent may seem a natural, normal and, as such, legalizable fact.

What we blame and that against which public opinion rises is the *proportion*

of prehension, which we find exorbitant.

Where does this exorbitance come from?

It is obviously in the fact that there is no compensation between the sum demanded and the service rendered, in other words, that the owner is a leonine mercantilist.

The proprietor has taken the land: so be it. He possesses it by conquest, work, prescription, formal or tacit concession: we will not search for the cause. The Revolution, it is true, abolished the *jus naufragii*, and the most vulgar probity obliges us to report to the commissioner of police any object lost on the public highway: no matter, it is granted that the landowner could seize that which apparently was not occupied by anyone. What is required of him is not to exact from his property, when he presents it for exchange, more than it is *worth*, such a claim implying double theft, theft to the second power, which society cannot tolerate.

Are we therefore going to tax rents, as we taxed bread and meat? We know the result of such taxes: it is not brilliant enough to persist in, still less to generalize. We must return to the balance, the only way of determining *values*.

Note that any act of appropriation of an unoccupied thing, whether it be the earth or its products, an instrument of labor, an industrial process, an idea, is primitive, prior to justice, and that it falls under the empire of right only when it enters the sphere of social transactions. Seizure, usurpation, conquest, appropriation, whatever you please, does not therefore constitute a right; but, as everything in the social economy has its beginning in a preliminary prehension, it is agreed to recognize as the legitimate proprietor the first who seized the thing: this is what is called, by a fiction of the law, the right of *first occupancy*. It is only later, when this first occupant enters into contact with his fellows, that the property falls definitively within the scope of Justice.

Now, if we have already been able to find the balance of the worker and the boss, of the producer and the consumer, of the financial discounter and the merchant who circulates, of the lender and the borrower, why should we not find the same balance not only from proprietor to proprietor, not only from proprietor to municipality, but from proprietor to tenant?

What did I say? It is essential that we find this balance; since the entrepreneur, the worker, the seller, the buyer, the banker, the merchant, the capitalist, the borrower, being all, from various points of view, only proprietors subject to the balance, it is impossible for the landowner to escape the common condition. Without this he would profit, as worker, trader, borrower, from the profit of the balance, and not submitting to it as proprietor, he would be in *debit* with regard to others, he would violate their personal rights: he would be a thief and, if he claimed the use of force, a brigand.

Therefore, let the said owner provide his accounts; let it be known what property costs him, in capital, maintenance, supervision, tax, even interest and rent, where rent and interest are paid. The price of the rent, equal to a fraction of the total, will be considered, according to the convenience of the parties and the nature of the building, either as an annuity reimbursed, or as the equivalent of maintenance and depreciation costs, plus remuneration for custody, service

and risks of the entrepreneur.

Such is the principle, I am not saying of the fact of property, which by itself has no juridical character, but of the consecration of property by right and consequently of its balance. I will not dwell on the execution, a matter of police and accounting, the mode of which can vary *ad infinitum*.

The clearing of the ground, the construction of buildings, etc., in view of which the occupation of the ground takes place and subsequently the recognition of the property, are industries like the others, subject consequently to the same law of reciprocity and balance. From the moment, therefore, that the owner makes an act of industry, that to this act he adds another of commerce, his property, hitherto a simple manifestation of his autonomy, falls definitively under the rule of right, which is reciprocity or equivalence. For this reason alone it becomes respectable and sacred, it is part of the social pact.

The application of Justice to property has never been made, except by chance and in an irregular manner. Neither Roman right, nor canon right, nor any ancient or modern right, has recognized its exact theory. Hence those innumerable antinomies, which jurisprudence has hitherto remained powerless to resolve and which are the shame of the school. The Revolution called for a radical reform: its lawyers, strangers to economic science, who defined Justice like the moneylender, gave us the Napoleonic Code. Everything remains to be done.

#### XXXV. — Taxation and Rent .

We have left nothing to say about taxation. All the combinations of which it is susceptible have been tried, proposed, discussed; and, whatever has been done and said, it has remained like an insoluble enigma, where arbitrariness, contradiction and iniquity intersect endlessly.

The land tax acts on agriculture like fasting on the breast of a nurse: it is the dwindling of the infant. The government is convinced of this; but, it says, I must live!

The tax on doors and windows is a tax on the sun and the air, which we pay in pulmonary afflictions, scrofula, as much as with our money. The tax authority does not doubt it; but, it always repeats, I must live!

The tax on patents is an impediment to work, a pledge given to monopoly.

The salt tax an obstacle to the rearing of cattle, a prohibition of salubrity.

The tax on wine, meat, sugar and all articles of consumption, by arbitrarily raising the price of things, stops the sale, restricts consumption, encourages falsification, and is a permanent cause of scarcity and poisoning.

The inheritance tax, renewed by mortmain, is a spoliation of the family, all the more odious since, in the majority of cases, the family, deprived of its head, of a useful member, sees its power diminish, and falls into inertia and poverty.

The tax on capital, which claims to simplify while generalizing everything, only generalizes the vices of all the other taxes put together; it is a decrease in capital. What a fine idea!

There is no tax that cannot be said to be an impediment to production, an impediment to taxation! And since the most glaring inequality is inseparable

from all taxation, there is no tax that cannot also be said to be an auxiliary of parasitism against work and justice. Power knows all these things, but it can do nothing about it: it must live!

The people, always taken in by their imagination, are in favor of the sumptuary tax. It also applauds the progressive tax, which seems to it to have to throw on the rich class the burden that crushes the people.

I know of no sight more distressing than that of the masses led by their instincts.

What! You want us to reduce patents, rents, interest rates, customs taxes, traffic and entry fees, all reforms that naturally would allow the production of so-called luxury goods in greater quantities, and, that done, you ask that those who buy them be chastised! Do you know who will pay the luxury tax? The luxury worker: this is of mathematical and commercial necessity.

You want wealth to be taxed as it is formed, which means that you forbid anyone to get rich, on pain of progressive confiscation. Exemption on oat bread, tax on wheat bread: what an encouraging prospect! What economy!

There is a lot of talk about a securities tax. In terms of tax, it is difficult to imagine anything more pleasing to the people, who generally do not receive dividends. The principle would lead to taxation of the income from sureties, the interest of the consolidated debt and the floating debt, the pensioners of the State, which would be equivalent to a general reduction of rents and salaries. But do not be afraid that the tax authority will proceed with this generality, nor that it will do great harm to the capitalists whom the measure must affect. Reducing, through taxation, the capital to the minimum portion, after having called it into sponsorship and borrowing for the lure of a large profit, would be a shocking contradiction, which would doom the credit of the State and companies and disrupt the system.

There are rich people, so-called friends of the people, who find these inventions superb: hypocrites, who know thoroughly how to deceive the multitude, and who, in the consciousness of their iniquity, judge it prudent to make sacrifices to the popular misery!

Is the balance of products and needs, of circulation and discount, of credit and interest, of sponsorship, of the right of invention and of business risk, established? If so, you have nothing more to ask of industry and commerce, nothing of their shareholders, nothing of the anonymous. If not, it must be done: until then your tax project can only be used to safeguard parasitism, while seeming to strike it: it's a jugglery.

I said to one of these skillful people:

There exists, apart from the fiscal series, a taxable subject, the most taxable of all, which has never been taxed; the taxation of which, pushed to the point of the integral absorption of the matter, can never prejudice in any way neither labor, nor agriculture, nor industry, nor commerce, nor credit, nor capital, neither to consumption nor to wealth; which, without encumbering the people, would not prevent anyone from living according to their faculties, in ease, even luxury, and from fully enjoying the product of their talent and science; a tax which, moreover, would be the expression of equality itself.

— Indicate this matter: you will have deserved well from humanity.

— The land rent.

Come, false philanthropist, leave there your sumptuary tax, your progressive tax, and all your adulations to the envious multitude; tax the income of all that you would like to deduct from the other taxes: no one will feel any embarrassment. Agriculture will remain prosperous; commerce will never experience obstacles: industry will be at the height of wealth and glory. More privileged, more poor: all men equal before the tax authorities as before economic law.

To demonstrate this proposition is to establish the theory of rent and tax at the same time, and, after having explained their nature, to work out their balance.

Economists are not in agreement on the nature of rent: I am going, by saying what it is myself, to show the cause of this disagreement.

There is no wealth without labor, if only that of simple apprehension: everyone is in agreement with this first principle.

There is no work without expenditure of forces, which expenditure can be reduced to four categories: *food, clothing, housing, general expenses*, including the education of the subject, retirement pension, unemployment, illnesses, disasters. This second point likewise offers no difficulty.

Taking any labor, the cost of this labor will therefore be equal to the average of what an average worker spends on food, clothing, lodging, etc., during the whole time of labor.

This being said, three cases can present themselves:

If the product obtained by the work reimburses the costs, there is compensation: the man is said *to live by working, to live from day to day, to make ends meet*. This condition, for some time, may seem tolerable; over time, it is insufficient.

If the product, after having reimbursed the work of its advances, yields a surplus, this surplus is said to be profit or benefit; when said of the land (woods, meadows, vines, arable land, etc.), it takes the name of *rent*.

If the product does not cover the cost of the work, there is a deficit: the worker is ruined, and if he persists, he is infallibly consumed and dies. When the work is not reimbursed by the product, it is reimbursed by the blood, which cannot go far.

But, starting from the hypothesis of an *average* expenditure and an *average* worker, we started from an essentially variable datum: who says average supposes variation, ad infinitum. We therefore conceive that rent, however clear the idea, is basically indeterminable: it is impossible to separate it distinctly and precisely from wages.

Indeed, if the demand for labor increases, with more product offered, rent falls and tends to be extinguished; everything goes to wages, and there is nothing left for rent. If, on the contrary, there is demand for products and supply of labour, rent is reborn and multiplies; the *rentier* grows fat while the worker withers away.

In simpler terms: if by any means labor reduces its costs or is forced to reduce



them, the share regarded as profit will be greater, whether it all goes to a master or proprietor, or a part remains in the hands of the worker, if the costs increase, the rent goes there, and there is no surplus for anyone.

Rent is therefore in itself something eminently variable, arbitrary and random; something of which the comparison of the product of different lands gives us the concept, but which is really defined only by the contract, that is to say by a juridical act foreign to the thing, as we have seen that the property is defined by law. In this definition, which operates solely the will of the parties, the figure that serves to designate the rent may not be exact; were it exact, moreover, at a given moment, that the next moment it would no longer be so. By the contract, on the contrary, assuming equal freedom and good faith on both sides, this figure is deemed to be fair; what falls above or below the average does not affect the right, it is the material. It is this inherent variability of rent, which the will of two contracting parties is alone capable, by a fiction of law, of fixing, that makes economists ramble so much, most, if not all, endeavoring to give a fixed definition of a thing that by its nature cannot entail one, and to subordinate the whole of science to such a definition. (See in the *Dictionnaire de l'Economie politique* the opinion of MM. Ricardo, Carey, Passy, Bastiat.)

But there is yet another cause of division for economists, which has its principle in the first: it consists in the fact that, rent being in itself indeterminable and not being able to be clearly distinguished from wages, it is impossible, *a priori* and by pure theory, to say to whom the rent should be attributed, to the owner or to the worker.

M. Blanc Saint-Bonnet sees in rent the source of capital. "*Property*," he says, "*is the reservoir of capital*." This theory of capital formation takes on a mystical air from his pen, which makes it almost an eighth sacrament. So be it: I will not refute an idea older than Aesop, whose analysis has demonstrated, in our day, its poverty and insufficiency. It remains to be seen to whom the capital will be allocated.

At base, and considering the fact in its crudest form, rent is the reward for labor; it is its legitimate wage, it belongs to it. It does not occur to the mind of the savage, when he has killed a deer and is about to eat it with his family, to make two parts of his hunt and to say: This is my income, this is my salary. And if, because of the economic conflict and the exercise of property, the custom has become established among proprietors and contractors of reducing the wage of the worker to the smallest expression, in order to increase their rent by the same amount, we must not imagine for that that rent is given in the nature of things, to the point that we can recognize it without difficulty, as we recognize a walnut tree in the middle of a vine. In fact, salary and rent, originally, merge: this becomes noticeable when the land is very divided, and all the cultivators being proprietors, each lives on his own harvest. If it were necessary, *a priori*, to decide to whom the rent must be awarded, in the cases where it exists, the presumption would be acquired by the worker.

Indeed, it is accepted in principle that any work undertaken under good conditions must leave the worker, in addition to a moderate consumption, a surplus, a rent. The reason is that consumption itself is variable; that, the first

needs satisfied, others appear, more and more refined and expensive, whose satisfaction consequently requires that it can be largely provided for the others. The surplus of product is therefore completely in conformity with human dignity, with our faculty of forecasting, speculation, enterprise; in a word, this excess is our right. The presumed rentier would therefore be, I repeat, to consult only the raw fact, the worker.

However, social practice did not want it to be so; and, however wronged the working class may say it is today, whatever claim it had to the right to rise, it is not without a serious reason that this fundamental distinction between rent and wages has been made. This is what I will put my finger on.

For labor to be fruitful and to be able to leave a rent, many conditions are required, several of which do not depend on the worker, do not result from his free will:

1° Conditions in the labor: choice of instruments, method, talent, diligence;

2° Conditions in the soil and climate;

3° Conditions in society: demand for products, ease of transport, security of the market, etc.

From this classification it follows that, if the first and necessary condition of all rent is labor, another series of conditions depends on nature, and a third pertains to society.

From which it follows that rent, always supposing that it exists, belongs in part to the worker, who makes it perceptible; for a second part to nature, and for a third part to society, which contributes to it by its institutions, its ideas, its instruments, its outlets.

The share of rent due to the worker will therefore be paid to him with the wage, from which, in practice, it is indistinguishable;

Nature's share is paid to the landowner, who is deemed to be the creator and beneficiary of the land;

The share due to society comes to it, partly through taxes, partly through the reduction in the price of things, resulting from the facility of relations and the competition of producers.

The whole question is therefore to regularize this distribution, by making an exact balance of the *debit* and the *credit* of each party.

First of all, there is one of those accounts which, if we relied on the partisans of the indivisibility and inalienability of the soil, should disappear: it is the second, this legal fiction by which a part of the rent is assigned to the ground, represented by the tenant or proprietor. Property, they say, is the act of prehension by which man, prior to any justice, establishes his domain over nature, on pain of being dominated by her. But by that very fact it implies a contradiction that this act of prehension becomes for him a title of perpetual royalty over the worker whom he replaces on the ground, since this would be to attribute to him in respect to the latter a legal action under a non-legal title, prehension; since moreover it would be in fact subordinating the worker to the land, while the owner who renounces exploiting it would obtain over it a metaphysical domain, or, as the jurists say, *eminent*, which would take precedence over the effective action of the worker: which is repellent. Society

permits prehension, in some cases encourages it, even rewards it; it does not pension it. Such is the right which, after the emancipation of the serfs and the reimbursement of the seigniorial rights, would govern the commune in Russia.

There would therefore remain two stakeholders: the worker exploiting the land and the society.

What will be the share of one and the other? And the sharing done, who will collect for society?

The rent being defined conventionally — as *That which exceeds the average of the operating costs* — my opinion is that, this average being known, or as much as possible approximated, the operator must take, in addition to the reimbursement of his advances, a portion of the rent, variable, according to the circumstances, from 25 to 50 percent of the rent, and the surplus belongs to society.

It is not possible to give an absolute formula for sharing for an account whose elements can vary *ad infinitum*. All that it is important to say, for the present, is that the operator must be served first, in accordance with the principle of wages; and that the social revenue, or tax, must be mainly in the rent. It was the thought of the Physiocrats that ground rent should discharge, if not the whole, at least the greater part of the tax; it is this same thought that caused the land registry to be established.

However, it would not seem to me good for the State to absorb each year for its expenditure the totality of the rent, and this for several reasons: first, because it is important always to restrict, as much as possible, the expenditure of State; in the second place, because it would be to recognize in the State, henceforth the sole rentier and proprietor, a transcendent sovereignty, incompatible with the revolutionary notion of Justice, and because it is better for public liberty to leave the rent to a certain number of citizens, exploiting or having exploited, than to hand it over to officials; finally, because it is useful to the economic order to preserve this ferment of activity that, within the limits and under the conditions which have just been determined, does not appear susceptible of abuse, and provides on the contrary, against the invasions of the tax authority, the most energetic counterweight.

Of the 50 or 75 percent remaining of the rent, a portion will therefore be deducted for the budget; the other will belong to the proprietor.

Let it be said, if you will, that the proportion according to which I propose to distribute the rent lacks precision, it is a disadvantage that I recognize all the more willingly in that it expresses the fundamental fact on which the whole theory rests, namely the indefinability of rent.

But what I will never be made to regard as fair is that, while the State only grants to patentees of invention a enjoyment of fourteen years, it delivers the rent of the soil in perpetuity; it is that it reserves nothing of it for the farmer; it crushes industry, commerce and labor with taxes, while it prostrates itself before a too often parasitic prelibation, which can only invoke in its favor the prejudice of centuries, the silence of the multitude and the mythology of the cult.

What! The community has innumerable charges, works to execute, a police, an administration, schools to maintain, and you claim to cover these costs,

balance these expenses with a deduction from my salary? But my salary, the average of what an average worker spends per day, my salary is my blood, it is my life, life weighed, measured, balanced, numbered, with all the severity of Justice. Take the rent!

You want to impose circulation, display, habitation, mutations, personal initiative, day, night, air, water, fire, birth, marriage, death!... But all these things are like labor and wages: the balance made, there is nothing more to be gained from it. Your income cannot be there, because there is no surplus, no remainder. Again, address yourself to the rent.

The rent, portion of the king, portion of the lord, portion of the Church, among all nations in the feudal state, the rent is the natural revenue of the State, where the king, the noble and the priest have disappeared to make room for the democracy; and, after the State, naked property, object of universal competition, mark of the highest civic dignity. Rent, in a word, is still equality, it is taxation. (N)

### XXXVI. — *Population and Subsistances.*

If we reflect on the equations whose formulas I have just given, we will see that they are all based on these four principles: on the one hand, that nothing can be drawn from nothing, be produced by virtue of nothing, be balanced by by nothing (ax. 2, 3 and 8); on the other, that man wants to be respected in his possessions as in his person, failing which Justice is violated.

Any transaction between man and man relative to the objects of their consumption and their industry therefore implies that product is balanced by product, labor by labor, expenditure by expenditure, service by service, credit by credit, privilege by privilege, in short, VALUE by VALUE.

There is no longer balance, there is injustice, hence theft, disorder, crime and latent war, as soon as one is obliged to furnish a greater value for a lesser value.

In the uncertainty that one almost always experiences regarding the exact value of things, it is not an easy thing to establish these balances: so one can say that as much as *agiotouse* speculation, based on anarchy, is interested in maintaining uncertainty, so much society is interested itself in surrounding the transactions with all possible light and guarantees.

But there are not only *values* to equalize in society; it is also necessary to find the balance of FORCES.

Forces in economics are of two kinds.

I call by this name, in the first place, any principle of action, any motive of the soul or passion, any combination of means serving for the production and multiplication of values. Work is force; the division of labor or its grouping is still a force; property, competition, exchange, credit, science applied to industry, ambition, even luxury and rent, within the limits we have just assigned to them, are forces, the true forces of the economic world.

All force requires, in order to manifest itself and act, a place, a matter that receives it, from which it leaves as lightning leaves the cloud, the heat of the sun, the attraction of the grave body. The focus of economic forces, such as we have just enumerated, is found originally in the forces of nature, which thus become

for the economist a second kind of force: earth, heat, electricity, water, air, vegetation, chemical affinities, life, etc., primitive *capital* of humanity, instrument of its industry and raw material of its wealth. Man himself, whose education is so long, can in his turn be considered as a natural force: so that, depending upon the point of view from which we orient ourselves, he participates in two kinds of forces, and forms the transition that unites the social world to the universe.

According to these definitions, population is a force, one of the great forces of the economy. Association, the political organization, the family, are also forces.

All these forces must be balanced among themselves, in each category, and from one to another category.

On this terrain, science has advanced very little. Economists generally understand by *forces of production* only natural forces; and among the problems that the balance of forces raises, they are hardly occupied with a single one, the one whose materiality was to strike their imagination the most, the problem, as they call it, of population and subsistence.

This is the one whose solution we are going to attempt.

XXXVII. — Man is simultaneously a power of production, a power of consumption and a power of generation. He creates wealth and he consumes it; moreover, by producing and consuming, he multiplies. Insofar as he gathers in his person all the forces of the first kind, labor, credit, exchange, etc., his productive power can be considered, like his generative power, as unlimited. But the natural forces at his disposal have a limit; and we can foresee the day when the earth and all that it contains fails man, when the natural capital will not be in proportion to the working group and its consumption. We wonder how the equilibrium will be accomplished.

The solution proposed by Malthus is well known. I dare to say that the public conscience, at least in France, has decided irrevocably against his school, and my vanity will be forgiven for believing that I am not entirely irresponsible in the blame that has struck it. Socialism can boast of having been, on the question of population, the avenger of public honesty: it will be so until the end.

I regret that M. Joseph Garnier, whose perfect loyalty and frankness I cannot help recognizing, believed himself authorized by the example of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences to attach his name to Malthusian turpitude; but, since he has, in a recent publication, thought fit to raise this scabrous controversy in which my name is involved, he will not find it amiss that I reply to him.

Let us first see how Malthus posed the problem and how he understood the equation. His disciples are in the habit of accusing their adversaries of not having read him and of knowing only the famous passage to which Malthus owes his fame. I begin by declaring that I have read Malthus perfectly, as well as the last work of M. Joseph Garnier, his disciple and successor, from whom I will borrow a few passages.

The doctrine of Malthus, since there is a doctrine, can be summed up in five propositions.

1. — In PRINCIPLE, said Malthus, and after him M. Joseph Garnier, we can take it for certain that the population, if no obstacle opposed it, would develop incessantly, following a geometric progression and without assignable limits, to the point of doubling in a few years.

A part of Malthus's book is employed in collecting the facts that prove this tendency of the population.

2. — In *fact*, we are in a position to pronounce, starting from the present state of the inhabited earth, that the means of subsistence, under the circumstances most favorable to industry, can never increase more rapidly than according to an arithmetic progression.

Then follows the account of the facts that, according to Malthus, demonstrate this second proposition.

3. What happens, then asks the laborious compiler, when the population, obeying its *tendency*, exceeds the means it has of subsisting? — The surplus is expelled by famine and disease, to which must be added infanticide, abortion, exposure of children, war.

A large space is devoted by the author to the exposition of these *repressive* means, which nature and man employ to restore balance.

4. But, Malthus observes here, this system of *repression* is abnormal; he accuses the lack of foresight of man; reason rejects it, and morality with it.

What the force of things executes by famine, and the despair of man by carnage, our liberty must accomplish by the preventive limitation of the number of births, or to speak better of pregnancies. This means of prevention is what Malthus calls *moral restraint*.

5. Here Malthus and his school sensed perfectly that public modesty would be startled; that it would find the *preventive* system as deplorable as the *repressive* system, and no less immoral.

The Malthusians therefore uphold the morality of onanism, which they recommend under the name of moral restraint. They combat the biblical prejudice that has made this practice a shameful and detestable thing, *rem detestabilem*; and they endeavor to destroy scruples, by showing that the voluntary loss of germs is a thing as insignificant in its nature as the pollutions that occur in sleep, by frightening the parents with the consequences of their indiscretion, etc.

They insist above all on the uselessness of the means proposed as remedies for the excess of population, such as emigration, increase in produce, reduction of public charges, destruction of parasitism, social reforms, &c.

Such, as a whole, is the so-called Malthusian theory. Lest I be accused of quibbling over words, I will point out, with the whole school, that Malthus, in contrasting the geometric progression 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, to the arithmetic progression 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, etc., the first representing the tendency of the population, the second the effective increase in subsistence, did not mean to say that either were the literal expression of two economic laws, but only a comparison serving to explain the relationship of two movements, one tendential and, if nothing delays it, unmistakable, that of the population; the other effective, that of wealth.

“In short,” says M. Joseph Garnier, “population has an organic and virtual tendency to increase more rapidly than the means of existence: whence results the progress of misery.”

Moreover, the economists of *moral restraint*, MM. Joseph Garnier, Gustave de Molinari, Rossi, Dunoyer, Jon Stuart Mill, Guizot, the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, complain of the unpopularity which, in England and in France, has attached to the name of Malthus. They accuse the clergy of all the churches of maintaining on this point ignorance, superstition, that is to say generative incontinence, and consequently pauperism; they commend the recipe to the attention of statesmen, demand that it be preached from the pulpit and taught in the schools, as well as the ten commandments of God, affirming that there is no other remedy for pauperism and crime, no other preservative against socialism and the Revolution.

XXXVIII. — If anything has ever surprised me, it's that educated men, academicians, professors experienced in the rules of logic and mathematics, have been able to discover in Malthus' five propositions a shadow of common sense.

Is this then how scientists proceed in the construction of those beautiful theories that have for their object to explain the phenomena of nature and the order of the universe?

In the first place, Malthus denounces to us a *tendency* of the population to double, if nothing prevents it, in a short period, that is to say every eighteen, twenty-five or thirty years.

For my part, I regard the tendency to doubling as empirically proven, and what has been said to invalidate it is pure verbiage. It is a law of nature. All economic forces are in the same situation: if nothing brings them into balance, they tend to develop *ad infinitum*, and to invade everything. Presently we will cite an example. It is this general tendency of forces that calls for a law of balance, without which society, left entirely to anomalies, is no more than a theater of catastrophes.

It is therefore a question of knowing what creates the tendency of the population to double, perfectly normal in its nature, meeting no longer any counterpoise, and marching faster than the production of subsistence, translate into a disastrous reality. Because nothing has been said, I repeat, by acknowledging a trend and pointing out its effects. We must say how and why the balance is disturbed. Would the precession of the population, if I dare say so, manifest itself in a society constituted according to economic law, where the forces of energy would be balanced? This is what we need to know, and about which Malthus and his followers say nothing.

I deny, for my part, that this precession takes place in an egalitarian population; I impute it, where it is rife, to the lack of balance between forces, services, salaries and values; and I therefore maintain that, the balance restored everywhere, first between values, then between wages and services, finally between economic forces, the population *ipso facto* will return to its bed: I will explain this equation shortly. Will Malthus and the Academy of Moral Sciences maintain that this preliminary balance is useless; that the difference of the modes does not change anything in the phenomenon; that the economic order does not admit anomalies, subversions, disturbances, monsters?

Let us pass to the second Malthusian proposition.

After having denounced, without understanding it, the tendency to the doubling of the population in a short period, Malthus points out a much more frightening fact: it is that, while the population would follow, if nothing opposed it, a geometric progression, the increase in subsistence would only take place according to an arithmetical progression.

I admit the fact of the *delay* in production of foodstuff in the same way as I admitted earlier that of the *precession* of the population, that is to say as an empirical result of observation.

But I repeat my question: are these two facts, so manifestly correlative in their inversion, not due to the same cause? Do we have here the expression of the development of wealth compared to that of the population, in a regular environment? Or should we not see a new phenomenon of subversion, resulting from a lack of balance in the system?

It is demonstrated that the balance between the parts of the social ledger does not exist anywhere; that everywhere there is error, fraud and rapine; that the inequality of conditions and fortunes, supposedly natural and providential, results on the contrary from the violation of justice in economic relations; finally, that it is the absence of Justice in the distribution of products, the lack of balance in transactions and accounts, that prevents the development of the economic forces, stops production and creates the deficit. All this is proven today. Malthus and his school have certainly not established the contrary. They trust the *status quo*; they do not justify it.

The generative power, if nothing hinders it, will double the population in a short period: this is proven. But conversely can it not be that the productive power, if nothing stands in its way, also tends to double and more than double the wealth in the same period, so that, this second tendency compensating for the effect of the first, the things would stay in perfect order? This is what must be examined: until then, we do not have the right to accept as definitive and conclusive the *excess* that manifests itself on the one hand and the *deficit* that is recognized on the other, in order to accuse the extravagance of nature and the improvidence of man.

I insist on this point, which is crucial in the question.

According to official statistics, the population of the United States, meeting no obstacle to its trend, doubled, from 1782 to 1850, about every twenty or twenty-five years. But we forget to add that the wealth of the United States, not encountering any obstacles either, has doubled and more than doubled in the same period. And it is quite simple. Men who associate, who combine their efforts, who add to manual labor as a means of action the great economic forces, the division of labor, the grouping of forces, mechanics, etc., men placed in such conditions develop more wealth than population; they produce faster than they beget, and while the movement of generations among them seems to confirm Malthus's theory, the movement of production contradicts it.

"I suppose that two men, isolated, without instruments, competing with the animals for their food, create a value equal to 2. Let these two men change their diet and unite their efforts; let them multiply their power by division, by machines, by the emulation



that follows, their product will no longer be like 2, it will be, I suppose, like 3, since each one no longer produces only by himself, but also with his companion. If the number of workers is doubled, the division becoming, because of this doubling, greater than before, the machines more powerful, the competition more energetic, they will produce like 6; if their number is fourfold, like 12. This multiplication of the product by the division of labor, machines, competition, etc., has been demonstrated many times by economists: it is one of the finest parts of the science, the point on which all the authors are unanimous.

“So if the genital reproductive power is like 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, the industrial reproductive power will be like 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96. — In other words, in a regularly organized society, while the population increases according to a geometric progression whose first term is 2 and the multiplier 2, production increases according to a geometric progression whose first term is 3 and the multiplier 3. (*Système des Contradictions économiques*, T. II, p. 319, edition of Garnier frères.)

This is what I wrote in 1845, after having read Malthus. Could it be a bias among his disciples, after having cried that they are not read, not to read their adversaries?

XXXIX. — From these two corrections, as much on the tendency of the population as on that of production, it already follows that the problem was badly posed by Malthus. He should have said:

1. In *principle*, the population considered in its purely organic cause *tends* to increase, if nothing hinders it, according to a geometric progression, by each period of 18, 25, 30 years or beyond. In this respect, it is with the human race as with all animal and vegetable species: its reproductive power is of itself unlimited, and it acts with prodigious rapidity.

2. In *principle* also production, if nothing hinders it, *tends* to increase in its turn according to a geometric progression, even faster than the first.

So that production in a working society goes faster than the population, and there would remain at the end of each period a balance of unconsumed wealth, an expression of social progress in industry and well-being.

8. Now, in fact, and notwithstanding the few examples that can be cited of this rapid and simultaneous increase in population and wealth, it is not thus, in our old world, that things happen. On the one hand, neither the population nor the production are progressing this way, and, what is stranger, the second is always behind the first. On the other hand, it is obvious that, the earth being limited, consequently the natural capital of humanity having limits, population and wealth cannot increase indefinitely.

4. Several questions therefore present themselves to be resolved.

In the first place, reason, work and justice, the three great faculties that distinguish man from the rest of the animals, do they not modify, by their development, the natural fertility of the species?

What, on the other hand, disturbs the development of production and retards its progress?

Finally, having eliminated the subversive and abnormal elements whose presence may be indicated in the two series, what is the law of equilibrium of the population, in its relations with the wealth produced and with the extent of the globe?

There is no doubt that, if Malthus had posed the problem in these terms, he would have arrived at quite different conclusions.

He would have understood that the balance sought had to be found between two correlative forces acting in complete liberty, consequently freed from all the disturbing causes that falsify their expression.

He would have said to himself that if famine, disease, war, infanticide, prostitution and abortion are the abnormal and violent means that nature employs against undisciplined and exorbitant populations, there would be no more reason in the *moral restraint* devised by him to replace the above means; that such an intervention of free will, far from remedying the evil, would only consecrate it, by accusing the anomaly of nature, the absurdity of science, and the ignominy of society.

XL. — Let us dwell for a moment on this strange morality of Malthus, publicly taught and encouraged by the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences.

If you said to a child: Here is a watch, I give it to you; it does not work on its own; but, each time you hear the clock chime in the city, you have only to push the hand and set it to the hour, that child would laugh at you. — If it doesn't work on its own, he would say, I don't need it.

So it is with the social organism, with this difference, however, that society does not need to be reassembled any more than the planetary system; movement is given to it and its balance assured for eternity. All it asks of us is to walk with it, that is, to labor and to practice Justice. On this condition the earth, although it is only ten thousand leagues in circumference, and three-quarters of its surface is covered by the ocean, will not be lacking to us, nor will shelter.

The school of Malthus is not of this opinion.

This school, which on occasion affects the deepest respect for religion and Providence, on the question of population shows a brutal incredulity. This school, which in everything and everywhere professes *laissez faire laissez passer*, which reproaches socialists for substituting their conceptions for the laws of nature, which protests against any intervention by the State, and cries out for liberty, nothing but liberty, does not hesitate, when it is a question of conjugal fertility, to cry out to the spouses: Stop, unhappy man! What demon solicits you? Can't you make love without having children?... Do you forget that the population tends to grow in geometric progression, while subsistence increases only in arithmetic ratio?

In short, the school of Malthus teaches that, the movement of the population going too fast, without it being able to say why, it is necessary to tighten the brake. We owe no mediocre thanks to M. Joseph Garnier for having finally had the courage to put the dogs to shame, and to say in categorical terms in what consists the preventive recipe of Malthus, or *moral restraint*.

You know, Monsignor, the story of this grandson of Jacob who, invited by his father Judas, by virtue of the levirate, to approach his sister-in-law Thamar, who had become a childless widow, and to create through union with her a posterity to his deceased brother, deceived nature, *semen fundebat in terram*, and was struck by God for this abomination, *quèd rem detestabilem faceret*. The name of

Onan has passed on to posterity through its infamy: it is used to designate the shameful vice that decimates youth, of which Tissot made such a frightening painting, *onanism*.

Well, onanism, double onanism, we understand, is the preventive means indicated by Malthus against the over-production of children: this is what he calls *moral restraint*. It is thus that science knows how to raise up the very works of sin. Henceforth we must no longer say onanism, we must say Malthusianism.

The reasoning is very simple: If the fundamental thesis of Malthus is proven—the tendency of population to increase in geometrical progression, while subsistence increases only in arithmetical progression—is it not better, by a wise foresight, to prevent conception than to give birth to beings condemned to starve?

Mr. Joseph Garnier cites his authorities.

In 1832, M. Ch. Dunoyer, now a member of the Academy of Moral Sciences, being prefect of Amiens, did not hesitate to give the poor classes of his department the advice of Malthus.

“The classes most to be pitied in society,” he said, “are able to free themselves from their painful state only with a great deal of activity, reason, prudence, *prudence especially in the conjugal union*, and in taking extreme care to avoid *making their marriage more prolific than their industry*.”

These words were strongly criticized by the clergy of the diocese and part of the Parisian press. M. Dunoyer replied to this in a *Mémoire à consulter*, Paris, 1835:

“It is incredible,” he said, “that the action of calling men to life, the one without a doubt of human actions that has the most consequence, is precisely the one that we have felt the least need to regulate, or that we have settled the worst. They have included, it is true, the manner of the civil act and the sacrament; but, the marriage once contracted, it was desired that its consequences should be left, so to speak, to the will of God. The only prescribed rule was that it was necessary either to abstain from all coming together, or to omit nothing that could make the union fruitful. As long as spouses can believe that they are not doing a vain work, the morality of casuists finds nothing to reproach them with; let them doom themselves, let them abuse each other, let them dispense above all with thinking of the absent and perhaps unfortunate third party whom they are going to call to life without worrying about the fate that awaits him, it matters little: the essential thing is not that they abstain from a triply harmful act, the main thing is that they avoid doing a vain act. Such is the morality of the casuists, a morality contrary to all common sense and all morality, because, what good sense and morality want, it is surely not so much that one refrains from doing vain acts as from doing harmful acts.

“So the truth, in spite of these serious follies, is that, if spouses should not regard as blameworthy any coming together that would not tend to increase their posterity, they have nevertheless, even in the most authorized of such acts and the within the most legitimate union, consideration to be kept, either towards themselves, or towards each other, or both towards third parties who may be the fruits of their union.”

Consulted on various occasions by MM. Louis Leclerc and Joseph Garnier on the morality of such caution, Mr. Dunoyer replies that he finds such a doubt

unreasonable. He goes so far as to say that the precept of Malthus is just as modest as the sixth and ninth commandments of the Decalogue, and that after this couplet:

L'œuvre de chair ne désireras  
Qu'en mariage seulement,

it would be appropriate to place this other, much more essential recommendation:

L'œuvre de chair accompliras  
En mariage prudemment.

Mr. John Stuart Mill, in his *Elements of Political Economy*, 1845, expresses himself with the same straightforwardness as Mr. Dunoyer, and he makes this reflection:

“The people have little idea of the cost to them of this prudery of language. We can no more prevent and cure social illnesses than bodily illnesses without talking about them clearly.”

And elsewhere :

“There is no other safeguard for wage-earners than the restriction of the progress of population. Unfortunately sentimentality, rather than common sense, dominates the discussions that take place on this matter.”

According to these gentlemen, it is in the interest of the people, in the interest of women as well as in that of the unfortunate children destined to perish, that they insist on the Malthusian commandment.

Rossi goes so far as to accuse the exploiting class, the bourgeoisie, of driving excess population out of a motive of greed. By multiplying the workers beyond measure, he says, it assures itself of the low price of labor. If such a slander fell from a socialist mouth, Justice, judging without a jury, would condemn the slanderer to three years in prison and the loss of his civil rights.

“The simple do not understand and will never understand the question. Social economy is for them a closed book. They see in the affair only the lively beginnings of the game of age, and the danger that these suppressed flames will not burst into some disorder.

“The skillful, on the contrary, know the essence of things: for them these platitudes (providence, confidence, hope) are not the expression, but the disguise of the truth. They know that the more workers there are, the more, other things being equal, wages are low and profits high. Everything is explained by this formula, and in particular the pact of alliance between the clever and the simple. They are of the same opinion, because some do not understand, and others know very well the essence of the question...”

“As for us, we will say to the workers, to the young people: Let prudence enter marriages and preside over the establishment of each family, and we will no longer have to worry about the fate of humanity...”

I do not recognize in this language the prudent economist who, apropos of the division of labor, pointed out that political economy is one thing and morality another; that, if the application of the principle of division leads to consequences incompatible with human dignity, this does not invalidate the value of the

principle, but raises a problem to be solved later by social science.

Why didn't he do the same for population! In the present state of things, he would simply have said, there is a lack of balance between the movement of the population and that of subsistence. This disproportion reveals both a lacuna in science and a disorder in social practice. It raises a problem that political economy, in agreement with physiology, psychology and morality, must solve, but which Malthus decided without hearing it.

Bastiat himself, the chaste Bastiat, brings to the thesis the pomp of his style. The others had spoken in the name of humanity, in the name of morals, in the name of the sacred interests of woman and workman; he will speak in the name of modesty.

Onanism practiced in the fashion of Malthus, for the purpose indicated by Malthus, following Bastiat, is a law of modesty itself. He finds the proof of it in the reserve with which honest love surrounds itself, in the severity of opinion that stigmatizes fornication, concubinage, incest, even in the sacred institution of marriage. All of these things, in his view, have meaning and value only because they are a spontaneous revelation of *moral restraint*:

“What is this holy ignorance of infancy, the only ignorance no doubt that it would be criminal to dissipate, that everyone respects, and over which the fearful mother watches as over a treasure?

“What is the modesty that follows ignorance, the young girl's mysterious weapon, which enchants and intimidates the lover, and prolongs, by embellishing, the season of innocent loves?...

“What is this power of opinion that stigmatizes illicit relations, this rigid reserve, these sacred institutions; what are all these things if not the action of the law of limitation manifested in the intelligent, moral, *preventive* order?

“Is it possible to deny that intelligent humanity has not been treated by the Creator like brutal animality, and that it is in his power to transform repressive limitation into preventive limitation? (*Economic Harmonies*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)

Mr. Joseph Garnier gives the report of a session of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in which MM. Dunoyer, Villermé, Guizot, Léon Faucher and Lord Brougham successively took the floor on the question of population. All, as far as *moral restraint* is concerned, are of Malthus's opinion. If they make any reservations, it is on the mathematical statement of his first two propositions: as regards the *foresight* recommended by Malthus and his morals, not the slightest difficulty. M. Passy recognizes the eminent services that Malthus has rendered to science; M. Guizot praises him for legislation and politics; M. Léon Faucher, speaking to say nothing, agrees with the opinion of M. Passy, which is confirmed by that of M. Guizot.

Finally, says M. Joseph Garnier, the ideas of Malthus have been professed and defended by most modern economists, among whom J.-B. Say, Destutt de Tracy, James Mill, Mac-Culloch, Sismondi, Duchâtel, Chalmers, Dunoyer, Rossi, Thornton, John Stuart-Mill, Gust. de Molinari, Dupuynode, seem to him to deserve special mention. I could name many other names; I don't think that their bearers want it. (O)

XLI. — It seems to me that I wrote somewhere, I don't know where, about this morality of the Malthusians, *morality of pigs!*... I beg your pardon for the crudeness of the epithet, which I certainly do not intend to apply to anyone. But what sentiment can I experience at the sight of this cénacle of so-called economists, old practitioners of *moral restraint*, redoing the laws of modesty, caricaturing the Decalogue, deciding with gravity that it is urgent to cure the people of their scruples with regard to conjugal masturbation, and all that for the honor of a pretended doctrine which would be the shame of science, if it were not be the shame of morality?

It is at the Palace of the Institute, at the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, the supreme tribunal of French morals, that these conferences are held. Those who take part in the deliberation are the highest placed in the administration and in education. M. Dunoyer was prefect; Mr. Duchatel, Minister; Mr. Léon Faucher, Minister; M. Guizot, minister and professor: he has been nicknamed, I don't know why, the *austere*. Rossi was a teacher; J.-B. Say a professor; Mr. Joseph Garnier is a teacher; all are defenders of religion, morals, marriage and the family, against anti-Malthusian socialism, and, apart from what concerns the procreation of children, partisans of *laissez faire, laissez passer*.

Do you see the French youth, those who follow the courses of the college of France and the Sorbonne, all these students of the school of law, the school of medicine, the normal school, the polytechnic school, the school of mines, the school of bridges and roads, instructing himself, at the age of eighteen, in the practice of preventive restriction, passing from the lessons of Malthus to the exercises of the Closerie des Lilas, and preparing by free love, guaranteed without offspring, the sterility of marriage, which they will later, as magistrates, professors, doctors, engineers, propagate among the people?... M. Thiers, who does not pride himself on austerity, had the misfortune to qualify this debauchery as an *outrage to nature*: he was proven to have no common sense. A simpleton, in fact, whoever is going to take seriously work, property, heredity, the Revolution also without doubt, and who does not notice that the economic and social question is resolved in a word, the expulsion of unnecessary germs!

The rabbit, in the interest of its pleasures, castrates its young; the tomcat devours his own. Antiquity, obeying this brute instinct, practiced abortion, the exposure of children, castration, prostitution, polyandry; over seventeen centuries before Christ we see *moral restraint* in use among the patriarchs. Add slavery and war: it is thus that, under the law of inequality, the balance is established between subsistence and population.

But the conscience of the people has never ceased to protest against this hideous system. Slavery has partly disappeared; abortion, castration, exposure of children are considered crimes; prostitution has withered; international trade softens the blow of food shortages; war itself tends to disappear. There remains onanism, which is irrevocably condemned among the solitary, but it will not be because of Malthus, Guizot, Dunoyer, Rossi and others, if we do not make it a virtue in marriage!

Am I deluding myself? And when, calling *moral restraint* by its true name, I place it in the series of *repressive* means that Malthus himself rejected; when I make onanist practice the last term or the first, as you like, of an abominable series, am I the sophist, as I have had the honor of hearing said of myself so many times, and are the others the true scholars, the true moralists, the true sages?

Can we not understand, first of all, that between the mechanical means advocated by Malthus and by the Academy of Moral Sciences, and abortion, there is, from the point of view of morality, no essential difference; that, if the spouses have *considerations to keep*, as M. Dunoyer says, *towards the unconceived third party*, they have no less towards this same third party after it has been conceived; that consequently the father, the mother, or both, soon we will say the State, being judge of the fate that awaits this *unfortunate third party*, there is no more crime in the ministry of the midwife who destroys a fetus of forty days or three months than in the act of the father who suppresses the germ, *semen fundit in terram*, before conception? And once this step has been taken, the *repression* does not stop: we are retrograding from term to term to cannibalism.

On the other hand, it is so difficult to conceive that, *moral restraint* being henceforth the obligatory condition of amorous relations, marriage, considered up to now as a sacramental union, resolves itself into simple fornication; that with it the family vanishes, so that we escape overpopulation only to fall into depopulation?

For my part I declare, at the risk of seeing myself once again called Cassandra, if the *ideas* of Malthus should one day prevail, it would be the end of humanity. . . . .

XLII. — I will say in a few words what the balance of population consists of, referring to other studies for the development of the principles on which this whole theory rests.

The moral world, like the natural world, exists by itself, based on certain laws, balanced in all its parts.

Just as in mercantile and industrial transactions, value balances or pays for value, as wages balance the product, rent the loan, service the service, so, in the general economy, power or force balances force. It is by their mutual opposition, not by an arbitrary restriction, that economic forces restrain each other, that property, for example, serves as a counterweight to community, collective force to division, competition to privilege, etc.

In the problem of population and subsistence, what is the force that drives the multiplication of subjects? — The generative force.

While Malthus, as a true doctrinaire, dares to intervene between man and woman at the moment of union, and to stop, by a process that in no way differs from the means of *repression* condemned by himself, the absorption of seed, it is simply a question for me of discovering the force whose development must balance the generative power, and of allowing it to flourish.

This force, what is it?

In my *System of Economic Contradictions*, published in 1845, I thought I had

discovered it in LABOR.

The man who makes a considerable expenditure of force, whether muscular or cerebral, cannot, I said, attend in the same proportion to the works of love: he would quickly exhaust himself. — There is therefore an opposition between the two forces; and, in a well-ordered society, established on Justice, equality of condition, equivalence of education, the sum of labor always increasing for society and for individuals, the chastity of mores going at the same pace, it is rational to assume that the equilibrium will establish itself.

Such was in substance the theory that I opposed in 1845 to the pretended doctrine of Malthus. It offers this undeniable advantage of being conceived on the principles of economic science, which is none other than the science of the balance of forces and values; moreover, it is irreproachable from the point of view of ethics. It pleased MM. Joseph Garnier and Gustave de Molinari to see in this theory a disguised adherence to the *ideas* of Malthus, a *moral restraint* of a kind perhaps more modest, but which ultimately fell within the scope of Malthusian *prevention*. I leave it to the reader to judge this assimilation.

In the milieu created by traditional inequality, and defended as legitimate by the Malthusians, man, as I will demonstrate later, is lascivious and incontinent; like the beast, whose condition he shares, he tends to an unlimited, blind multiplication. Hence the repressive system unleashed by nature, of which Malthus retains the first term, onanism.

On the contrary, in the regime of applied justice, and consequently of general equilibrium, which the aim of the Revolution is to establish, man, chaste by predilection, orderly in his marriage, in his loves, in all his life, no longer needs to be held back: he is what he should be, and the population finds itself, like him, in balance.

This theory, incomplete as it was, had struck Bastiat, who tried to approach it in his *Economic Harmonies*, and would no doubt have done justice to the author, if it were not a principle among the Malthusians that a socialist can never be right.

New reflections have led me to modify this theory, the serious defect of which was to rest too exclusively on a physiological basis, whereas it must rest above all on a moral principle, in the presence of which physiology no longer plays anything but a secondary role.

XLIII. — Man, an intelligent and free being, capable of enthusiasm, rejects by his soulful nature the fatalism of the flesh. Already freed from the rut, the periodic return of which dominates the lower animals, he tends to free itself still further from the reproductive orgasm, yielding to love only under the excitation of the ideal.

It is therefore not so much the generative power that it is a question here of balancing as it is the erotic drive; what we will achieve by the development of a superior faculty, JUSTICE.

Through Justice, man, already transfigured by the ideal, transfigures himself a second time. The happiness he sought before in enjoyment, he now seeks in chastity, the supreme form of love, and which in woman is liberty and dignity



itself. Marriage is the act by which this new human life is defined and constituted, in their heart of hearts.

Thus under the combined action of all these causes, — labor, study, liberty, chastity, — there comes a moment for the spouses when cohabitation is more painful than continence; this moment comes all the more quickly as they devote themselves more to labor, to study, to Justice and its works. The woman especially, as she participates in intellectual and social life, loses her aptitude for motherhood: with the conditions of childbirth, the line of love must cool. For nature does nothing for nothing: how could Malthus and his school forget this axiom? The love of children completes the purge of all eroticism from conjugal affection; the respect they inspire is the sign that the passion is close to dying in the hearts of parents.

This law of equilibrium, subject in particular cases to innumerable variations, but true as regards the average of the results, manifests itself only in a very obscure manner in the actual state of societies. So it is not so much as a result empirically obtained that I present it, as as a necessary induction of philosophy and of religion itself.

Moreover, the anomaly of which Malthus wanted to make a law is self-explanatory. Justice is still only a myth for humanity; balance is not found anywhere in the social economy, any more between forces than between products. The immense majority of humans, enslaved to a uniform labor, many not working, without study, without responsibility, without initiative, without goal, without home, delivered to the fatalism of the senses and to the intoxications of the ideal: in such an environment, population balance is impossible: it would be against logic for it to be established.

Misery is prolific, the economists observe with humor. The ancients, who had made the same remark, said that Love is the husband of Poverty. What's amazing about that? Love is almost the only faculty of which the people have full exercise: by what would it be held in balance? Justice, that is to say equality, liberty, all the reforms that the practice of law entails, can alone counterbalance it. Now, after the excess of population, the school of Malthus holds nothing so much in horror as equality. So love overflows, the population and misery following it; or else, in the event that the aphorisms of Malthusian foresight prevail over the slackness of incontinence, the renunciation of the family and depopulation. Rome and Italy, under the emperors, offer the example. France is at this hour on the same slope. Besides the fact that the last census shows a halt in the growth of the population, M. Legoyt, head of the bureau of statistics, has noticed for the years 1854 and 1855 a considerable diminution in the number and fertility of marriages. The school of Malthus did not fail to applaud this discovery. Provided that the Academy of Moral Sciences takes care of it, public lust helping, sterile concubinage replacing prolific marriage, we are marching towards the destinies of imperial Rome. And such is today the thirst for pleasure and the cowardice of consciences that I would not be at all surprised to see the contemporary generation reject the Revolution, for the sole reason that by establishing Justice everywhere it threatens to make us chaste.

In summary: In the state of non-equilibrium in which society lives, the

balance does not exist anywhere, neither between services, nor between values, nor between forces and faculties; the inequality of conditions and fortunes being the basis of the economy, injustice having become systematic, respect for man abolished, it is inevitable that civilization should fall back under the law of instinct; consequently, that the population tends at the same time, on the one hand to exceed the measure of the terrestrial capital, on the other to increase according to a progression more rapid than subsistence.

To repress or neutralize this tendency, the economic *status quo* being preserved, there is no other means, with famine, pestilence, war, infanticide, abortion, but *Malthusianism*, that is to say, the depravity of marriage, with the inevitable consequence of cohabitation, free love, the destruction of the family and of the human species. Such is the doctrine of the economists, supported and advocated by the Academy of Moral Sciences.

On the contrary, in the state of equilibrium pursued by the Revolution, the general balance of forces, products, services, wages, rents, faculties, resulting from the application of the rights and duties of man and citizen; Justice becoming a truth; humanity, freed from instinct, waking up to a higher pleasure; marriage, contracted under legitimate conditions, becoming, if I may express myself thus, the amortization of love, there is a tendency for the population to develop according to a progression less rapid than the increase in products.

Such is the theory that I oppose to that of Malthus and the Academy of Moral Sciences. If after that, to maintain the honor of the school, MM. Joseph Garnier and Gustave de Molinari persist in saying that I am more malthusian than Malthus, I admit that I have nothing more to answer. (O)

XLIV. — I will not multiply the examples any further. I would have to approach an order of ideas too far outside my subject, to give definitions, to pose axioms, to formulate theorems, to explain a method, of which this is not the place to speak. After the legal demonstration will come the economic demonstration. I have said enough to convince the reader that society is a vast system of balancing, the point of departure of which is liberty, law, justice, the result an equality of conditions and of fortunes that more and more approached, finally, the sanction, the accord of public felicity and individual felicity.

Balance of markets and transport (roads, canals, railways, ports, docks, stock exchanges);

Balance of public services and private companies;

Balance of imports and exports. A supporter of the absolute liberty of international trade, M. Émile de Laveleye, summarizing in a brochure what has been published on the question, concludes in these terms:

“Free trade, applying to the entire universe the principle of the division of labor, will stimulate the production of wealth; IT WILL NOT MODIFY THE DISTRIBUTION.”

I have never, for my part, in combating the theory of the free traders, claimed that it should bring about any modification in the distribution of wealth. And it is precisely for this reason that I would point out to M. de Laveleye that, if free trade leaves open the question of distribution, for that very reason it is an evil for

the working population of all countries, since inequality becomes all the more profound as labor will have been more universally divided, and capitalist exploitation organized on a larger scale, the misery of the masses will be in proportion to the wealth acquired and their servitude all the more complete: double danger, which provides the friends of equality with a sufficient reason to declare themselves, in the state of things, against free trade. Europe is witness to this: more, under this regime of non-equilibrium, international trade expands and capitalism becomes more centralized, more so, alongside growing wealth, the difficulty of living increases, pauperism multiplies, feudalism is reformed and liberty diminishes. First make the balance of wages, then that of values, after that of discounts, then that of credit and property: you will then be able, from people to people, to proclaim liberty of trade. Beyond that, you only prepare the serfdom of the nations.

Balance of economic forces, property, community, division of labor, collective force, competition, legal privilege, labor, capital, credit, etc.;

Balance of employed capital and circulating capital;

Balance of production and consumption;

Balance of cities and countryside;

Balance of industry and agriculture;

Balance of crops, livestock, extractions, fisheries;

Balance of industrial and literary property (patents of invention);

Balance of risks (insurance);

Balance of overheads, fixed and mobile;

Balance of schools and faculties:

Balance of successions and inheritances (abolition of infinitesimal parcelling as of piecemeal work);

Balance of the family (rights and duties of the father, wife, child);

Balance of municipalities, provinces and nations;

Etc., etc., etc.

It is with this system of more and more exact weightings, all of right, that we must replace the system, half of fatality, half of chance, that has governed us since the origin of civilization: a system that has as its principle ignorance, as its guarantee faith, as its formula, its organ the Church, its result pauperism, its palliative charity, its institutions everything that, under the text of alleviating misery, actually serves as home and food: asylums, crèches, heating rooms, workrooms, workers' housing estates, hospitals, hospices, refuges, *workhouses*, free schools, home help, free consultations, maternity wards, hospitals for the blind, canteens, societies of patronage, foundling hospitals, soup kitchens, pharmacies for the poor, convents, prisons, barracks, etc.

It was to the exposition of this system that I precluded in 1845 by the publication of my work on the *Economic Contradictions*, in which I demonstrated that there is not a principle, not a force in society that does not produce as much misery as wealth, if it is not balanced by another force whose useful side neutralizes the destructive effect of the first. (P)

It was still a thought of social balance that directed me in 1848, when, with regard to the *Bank of the People*, I dared to say that the principle on which this

Bank was established summed up all economic science, all right, all society. The apostles of love, the reformers of religion and government, laughed out loud; it was natural: the metaphysics of the absolute understands nothing of the mathematics of the Revolution.

Christian sentimentalism has exhausted itself in filling up, by the precept of voluntary giving, *eleemosyna*, the abyss dug by pagan selfishness; it has only succeeded in showing its impotence. The problem of society did not consist, in 1848 any more than in the century of Augustus, in changing the human heart; it was only a question of finding a balance; it was enough to do Justice by invoking the right of man: *Porro unum erat necessarium*.

It is saying nothing to claim, with Bastiat and the others, that things *tend* to balance themselves, that all one has to do is let the economic *bascule* act, *supply* and *demand*, and that liberty will lead us to the solution. Malthus's theory proves how little at times the *laissez-faire* economists hesitate to repudiate their maxims.

Undoubtedly the average engaged in the variations of value ends up appearing: but the question is to know if, this average recognized, it is up to us to make a rule of it, or if we must remain in perpetuity in the indefinite and the variation. It is certain, for example, that *products are exchanged for products*, and that by virtue of this principle the wage of the laborer tends to be put on a level with his service: is this a reason for retaining eternally, by *agiotage*, the worker in the wage-earning system? It is certain that Justice tends to occupy a greater place in the heart of man than love: is this a reason to retain populations in animality, even if it means advising them afterwards, when they become too numerous, to pursue Malthus' remedy?

I therefore say that we are bound, by our right and our duty, to procure, as far as it is in us, the order that is revealed to us by the very agitations of our existence: culpable towards science, towards our brothers and sisters, and towards ourselves, when the harmony is broken by our fault; only worthy and honorable when it is the fruit of our loyalty and our diligence.

It is by this law of balance, common to society and to the universe, that the subjective law and the objective law agree, and that immanent Justice, Justice freed from all transcendental respect, finds a first sanction, which I will call *external sanction*.

You have arranged everything, says Wisdom, with number, with weight, with measure; *Omnia in pondere, et numero, ed mensura disposuisti*. How has the Church not demonstrated that in this truth, so well demonstrated by profane science, there was an axiom for her theology, a law for her morals, a commandment for her discipline? The Christian economy, like the pagan economy, has been left to chance; it has become an economy of iniquity. And such is today the depth of the evil, the immensity of the fault, that to return to Justice is to renounce Christianity.

How much more prudent, more generous, more truly inspired was our Revolution when it said through the mouth of Condorcet:

“It is easy to prove that fortunes tend naturally to equality, and that their excessive

disproportion either cannot exist, or must promptly cease, if the civil laws do not establish artificial means of perpetuating and uniting them; if the liberty of commerce and industry causes the disappearance of the advantage that any prohibitive law, any fiscal right, gives to acquired wealth; if taxes on agreements, the restrictions placed on their liberty, their subjection to cumbersome formalities, finally the uncertainty and the expense necessary to obtain their execution, do not stop the activity of the poor and do not swallow up its small capital; if the public administration does not open to a few men abundant sources of opulence closed to the rest of the citizens, etc.”

Such words, alas! were worthy of martyrdom: the executor of reactionary revenge, Robespierre, did not fail in his task. The only man who in 93 glimpsed equality, outlawed and discovered by the tribune’s police, was forced to poison himself to escape the executioner. The blood of Condorcet, of Danton, of Vergniaud, of Lavoisier, of Bailly, has spilled over even on us, and we await the Republic.

XLV. — And now, Monsignor, answer me.

Socialist criticism has convicted the old economy of error, the iniquity of feudal law has been demonstrated, the formula of the lender reduced to absurdity. The identity of all these terms: Justice, equality, mutual guarantee, well-being, progress, has become a commonplace. We know what hurts us and what would do us good, and the responsibility for our sorrows has been transferred to the Church, the teacher of modern society.

Do you protest against this accusation that rises from all sides? Will you say, with some young theologians whose eyes have been opened by the movement of civilization, that freedom, justice, equality, reciprocal respect, the balance of forces, and the guarantees that result from them, that all these principles, these rules of right, of which I have shown the origin in the pure conscience of man, are also of Christianity; that Christianity knew them before the Revolution, and that the Church asks nothing so much today, as in the past, as to see her children put them into practice and conform their lives to them?

Begin then by reforming your teaching, and especially your discipline. Accept for yourself, as for others, the balance of right and duty; give back to despoiled families those goods that superstition has devolved to you; be satisfied with your wages; regulate this *casuel*, miserable in the countryside, scandalous in the cities; abstain from these levies of subsidies, especially from this accumulation of industrial, mercantile and pedagogical functions, as contrary to the dignity of the priesthood as to public probity. Say, finally, in your schools, in your colleges, in your seminaries, in all your churches, say and proclaim aloud, and prove by your actions, that the democracy has misunderstood you, that you are in agreement on all the principles of morals with the Revolution. Affirm with us liberty, equality, fraternity, just property, social balance, guaranteed labor, organized inheritance, equal *rente* for everyone. Do that; and since you enjoy an unlimited influence with the Power, concern yourself first of all with asking it again for those liberties that the Revolution has caused to blossom, and whose withdrawal nothing justifies or compensates.

Should society wait until you have reconciled your ancient maxims with your present duties! But whose fault is it, I pray you, if events precede you, if your profession of faith, with its eighteen centuries of antiquity, is today behind the times? Why did you not grasp in time those great truths that the new science is revealing every day to civilization? Why hasn't the Church, instead of clinging blindly to its appalling dogma, made these discoveries, made or merely foreseen, the basis of its morality? Why, always affable to the great, has it not ceased to trample on and drive back the unfortunate? The Church, if she had resolutely embraced the cause of justice, would always have been queen; the hearts of the people would have remained with her; one would not have seen in her bosom either heretics or atheists. The distinction of the powers would never have been made; and Pius IX, sole sovereign of the globe, would reign over ideas as over interests. No one would have called into question the authority of the priesthood, any more than the certainty of its revelation, for no one would have been led into this doubt by the spectacle of social calamities, ecclesiastical tyranny and the inclemency of heaven. It is the misfortune of his destiny that pushes man to accuse his religion and his God. Do you not see at this moment that your herd consists exclusively of the rich, and that those who leave you are the poor? *It disappears*, answered me one day a peasant whom I had known to be very assiduous at the offices of the church, and to whom I expressed my surprise at his lack of devotion. Yes, *it disappears*, and much more quickly, I fear, than is necessary for the happiness of our nation. O holy Catholic, Apostolic, Roman and Gallican Church, the Church in which I was brought up, and which received my first oath! It was you who made me lose faith and trust. Why, instead of a mother, did I find in you only a stepmother? Why, spouse of Christ, redeemer of the proletariat, have you made an alliance with the enemies of Christ, the exploiters of the proletariat? How did you become an adulterer, if you had ever been legitimate?

Useless regrets! *What is written is written*. The Church will not change: the veracity of the human spirit would not allow such a deviation from the Christian faith. To each age of humanity its significance; to each idea its flag. The Church is established outside of Justice, of which she does not possess the notion; outside the economy, whose laws she systematically rejects. *Non datur Ecclesia in œconomiâ*. Man has no rights, said one of your last prophets, M. Donoso Cortes. I do not know, Monsignor, that either you or any of your colleagues protested against this blasphemy. The pope did not put him in the *Index*: on the contrary, M. Donoso Cortes died in the odor of sanctity.

And you pretend to the government of consciences, and you accuse us of immorality, you whose first article of faith is to stigmatize the human person, the second to dedicate it to misery, the third to dispossess it of the earth, of which you assign yourself the best part leaving the others to the nobles! You who, in order to consummate this dispossession, do not fear to deliver yourselves, under your archbishop's mantle, to the most equivocal practices of mercantilism; who teach by word and example that the glory of the Church is the supreme law, that this law purifies everything, legitimizes everything, even usury, formerly condemned by you, even the depravity of the worker, even the transportation of

these thousands of mouths that your execrable system has rendered useless!

Oh! Monsignor, do you know what consoles me? It is that you believe in your religion; it is that at least your conscience serves you as an excuse, and that it cannot even fail to honor you as much as to pity you. This is why, while you point me out, because of my opinions, to the horror of the faithful, I, by virtue of these same opinions, can always say, showing you to my co-religionists: The man is better than the God.

## APPENDIX.

### NOTES AND CLARIFICATIONS.

#### Note (A).

REGARDING THE SMALL NUMBER OF THE ELECT. — Theologians argue among themselves about the meaning that should be given to the words of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, *that there are many called, but few CHOSEN*. Some claim that it is only a question of the vocation to the faith, which the great majority of the Jewish people resisted, and by *chosen* or *elect* they mean the small number of those who adhered to the faith of Christ, in a word, to the faithful. The others take these words in a higher sense, of which the first would be only the figure: they say that by *called* we must understand those who are on the way to salvation; who, since the coming of Jesus Christ, have received baptism; who, before redemption, had received circumcision or who knew the true God; and by *elect* they mean the saved. According to this second interpretation, Jesus Christ would therefore have wanted to say that, even in his flock, there will be few men saved, so great is man's inclination to evil and the severity of God's judgments.

One can imagine the despair that can be sown among Christians, even the most robust, by this strange revelation of the Redeemer, that, in spite of the virtue of his sacrifice, only a minority of the faithful will be saved in the end. So the theologians endeavor by their interpretations to attenuate the meaning of the words of the Gospel, especially to remove from them any character of necessity. — “When we should,” said Bergier, “take the words of the *chosen few* in the most rigorous sense, what would follow? That the greatest number are of those who did not want to be saved, who resisted grace, who died voluntarily in final impenitence, without contrition and without remorse. Can the obstinacy of these unfortunate people have any influence on the fate of a Christian who sincerely desires to be saved and to correspond with grace? If salvation were a matter of luck, the great number of those who get lost would be able to frighten others; but it is the work of our will as well as of grace, and the latter is not denied us.” (*Traité de la vraie religion*, tome VIII.)

We see by this reply that the author of the *Traité de la vraie religion* himself leans towards the second meaning. Indeed, the real difficulty is not to know whether the number of the saved will be greater or less than that of the reprobate, but to explain how, after the coming of Jesus Christ, after the

preaching of the Gospel and the institution of the sacraments, there may still be reprobrates. How is grace so weak? How is the human heart so hard? How is God's justice so terrible? Was it worth it that Jesus Christ had himself crucified, if, as a result, the virtue of Christians should not be greater than that of the patriarchs, and baptism should not have more efficacy than circumcision? To this question, Bergier answers with liberty: It is the man, he says, who still does not want to save himself!... Mystery and always mystery: *o altitudo!*

In fact, the opinion of the small number of the elect is common in the Church; in right, it alone seems to agree with the body of doctrine. We know by revelation that Humanity, after having been created holy in Adam and destined for eternal happiness, prevaricated in this same Adam and was condemned *en masse* to hell; that from Adam to Jesus Christ a very small number of believers have arrived at salvation; that since Jesus Christ the immense multitude has remained in the power of the devil; that among the baptized, damnation claims all heretics, schismatics, and unbelievers; that finally, among the Orthodox who die provided with the sacraments, it is still necessary to deduct the hypocrites, those who do not satisfy, etc., etc., which reduces to almost nothing the faithful who die in the grace of their God.

Let us add that the opinion regarding the small number of the elect finds a striking corollary in the small number of the fortunate. All have been called to wealth, very few achieve it, even by laboring: it is only the chosen ones of fortune who, most often without laboring, enjoy. How is it that we are told, after that, that if there are few saved, it is because there are few people who want to be saved? Salvation is like wealth: two things are needed to achieve it, to want and to be able. However, most of the time, whatever one may say, the worker and the good man are reduced to desire: one has nothing to amass, the other nothing to sustain his faith. *Domine, adjuva laborem meum; Domine, adjuva ineredulitatem meam.*

Note (B).

RELATIONSHIP OF JUSTICE TO POLITICAL ECONOMY, or TRANSITION FROM PERSONAL RIGHT TO REAL RIGHT. — All the argumentation of the so-called economists against the complaints of the proletariat and the attacks of socialism can be reduced to this reasoning:

“The *phenomena* of political economy and the laws that govern them are phenomena and laws *sui generis*, objective, shielded from the will and the choice of the individual, neither more nor less than the phenomena and the laws of physics, astronomy, chemistry, physiology. Justice does not have to modify them, to change them, to twist them; it only intervenes in them to consecrate them and to submit to them; it would cease to be Justice, it would become sovereign iniquity, if it had the pretension to act otherwise. ‘A morality,’ says M. Léon Walras, that would allow itself to contradict the theorem of the square of the hypotenuse, the laws of refraction, the fact of the circulation of the blood, or the results of the theory of exchange value, would be a ridiculous and obsolete morality.’



“Thus,” says J.-B. Say, “it is certain that the owner is more advantaged than the non-owner; it is an inconvenience for the latter. But seeing that property is a fact necessary to society, that without it there is no economy, and that it cannot exist under other conditions than those we see, we maintain that Justice commands, not to abolish it, but to consecrate and defend it. — Likewise it is certain that the capitalist who draws 5 percent and more from his capital is more favorably treated than the worker who has to subsist on only a modest wage: but, since labor cannot do without capital, since on the other hand capital cannot be given for nothing, and since it is only formed under conditions that exclude free service, we further maintain that justice is not to make a foolish war on capital, but to protect it, to maintain it in the exercise of its rights, and that it would be folly and iniquity if it were otherwise.”

Such, in short, is the argument of the Economists. Add to this the accusations of ignorance addressed to their adversaries, and the claim, as impertinent as it is naive, that, criticism being of more recent date than the School, cannot balance the authority of the School, knows nothing to the theories of the School, is not skilled in judging the facts and the laws to which the School testifies, in a word, must be put, without any other form of trial, out of the picture.

It is to this reasoning of the economists, as well as to their retention of scientific monopoly, that we have responded, over the past twenty years, in a series of publications, by proving that the facts and laws of political economy have all been badly observed, badly understood, badly reported and badly formulated by said economists; that in particular the facts do not have the character of fixity that one supposes in them, that they are subjected to an incessant variability, that they present themselves uniformly with an antinomic character, that thus their true law is a law of balance, of leveling, of compensation, of equality; but that this law, which is discovered in averages, realizing itself only very rarely in the spontaneity of facts, it is up to Justice to make it a principle of public right and to procure its realization everywhere in practice.

It was impossible to answer in a clearer and more direct way the dismissal proposed by the so-called economists. What did they reply to this? Nothing. First, they don't read their critics; they are sure of their infallibility. Then they repeat that we do not understand them, that we rebel against phenomena and against the laws of phenomena; that they don't know what we mean with our *antinomies*, our *contradictions*, our *syntheses*, our *balances*, our *reciprocity* of services and credit; that they have never heard of such things, which means that their century-old tradition must trump all further investigation, and belated truth must recuse itself before decrepit routine. (See below, page 167, note H.)

Note (C), p. 18.

ORIGIN OF FEUDALISM. — After many reflections and readings, we stick to this judgment: it is that feudalism is essentially Christian, that it was born of Christian thought, that it is the exterior form, in the temporal realm, of Christianity. Here are the principal reasons on which our opinion is based.

1. Feudalism is not of Germanic origin. The institutions of the barbarians were democratic, federative; they have retained this character to the present day. The king among them is a military leader, war being their habitual state.

2. The feudal idea was born from the celestial hierarchy, imported from ancient religions into Christian gnosis; from the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which early became the expression of the first, and from the imperial hierarchy, organized by Diocletian under the same conditions and under the same influences.

3. The word feudal, or feudatory, *feudum*, seems to us to be derived originally from *fides*: that is to say, feudalism is nothing other than faith, the very religion of Christ.

4. The most ancient authority among Christians is that of the bishop: under the Caesars, the bishops set themselves up as magistrates, and form a state within a state; after the fall of the empire, they become chiefs of the cities; they are the ones who direct the business: the pope takes the place of the emperor. The first place was reserved in advance, in feudalism, for the clergy.

5. Charlemagne's pact, an unwritten pact, but universally believed and affirmed, is the decisive moment of feudal formation. By virtue of this pact, the emperor reports to the sovereign pontiff, who crowns him; and the sovereign pontiff, as a temporal prince, is in turn dependent on the emperor. The clerical hierarchy and the military, noble hierarchy join to form just one dualized hierarchy.

6. Papal preponderance is essential to feudalism. Take away the pope, and the system collapses: there is no longer any right for the king, nor for the count, nor for any of the barons; the serf is free: Christianity is dissolved. This explains why the decadence of feudalism and the defeat of the great feudatories are contemporaneous with the subalternization of the pontificate.

7. Any attack on the feudal system is heresy, and as such struck by the wrath of the Church: hence the war against the Albigensians; hence also the opposition made by the bishops to communal liberties.

8. As nations convert to Christianity, they imitate the institutions of feudalism; they create for themselves a nobility and serfs, and their king reports to the emperor. The history of Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, Muscovy, and generally of all the Slavic peoples is largely explained by this.

9. The *Establishments of Saint Louis* can be considered as a return of the communes, heretical by their emancipation, to feudal orthodoxy. The industrious and proprietary bourgeoisie becomes, after the clergy and the nobility, a third hierarchical caste, a *Third Estate*. Each profession is placed under the invocation of a saint: it looks like the conversion of new Gentiles. — And that is why the Church today shows itself so favorable to capitalist, industrial, and proprietary feudalism; why the Voltairian bourgeois gets close to the Church, and procures for it funds, troops, a general. Through its Emperor Napoleon III, new Henry IV, new Frederick II, France is Ghibelline; through its bourgeoisie, reconciled with the Church, it becomes Guelph again: the leader of the opposition, at this hour, is no longer either M. Guizot or M. Thiers; it is General de Lamoriciere.

10. A last motive is the division of the clergy into *regular* clergy and *secular*

clergy, a division that is nothing other than an application of feudal dualism to the Church itself. It is as if to say spiritual clergy and temporal clergy. The first leads a life in common, is subject to a strict observance, devotes itself to works of spirituality and charity, conducts missions, cares for the sick, in a word, represents the heavenly, ideal Church; the second takes care of the ecclesiastical administration, which embraces a part of the temporal, directs the militant Church, and enjoys own goods or feudal properties,

Note (D).

The facts clarified in the text guarantee the accuracy of the others. We possess a copy of Mademoiselle Bourdeau's will, in which Mgr. Mathieu played the principal role: he is a model of foresight and clerical shrewdness. The most scandalous rumors circulated during this trial: among these rumors, some accuse the morals of the ladies of the Community, others accuse the archdiocese, and all have their source in the reciprocal recriminations of the parties. Justice has refrained from investigating anything; criticism therefore has nothing to say. — As for the young sequestered person, the fact happened in the diocese of one of the honorable bishops who figured in the Constituent Assembly in 1848: it was he himself who had the young lady released.

Note (E).

PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS. — Since, by the will or by the awkwardness of the imperial government, the Pope was stripped of a part of his estates, the convents continue nonetheless to multiply in France, the cult to be flourishing, and ecclesiastical property to increase: proof that between the Pope and the Emperor it is only a question, as in the Middle Ages, of a divergence of views, a conflict of prerogatives, and that at bottom the policy of either is immutable. The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul was suppressed as hostile and seditious: a kind of warning from the temporal to the spiritual. But it will reform under another name: the devil and the good Lord will lose nothing by it. The Emperor is devoted to the Church, to the Jesuits and to their works, except for his prerogative, which naturally in his eyes must take precedence over everything. How do the priests, so skillful, not understand that if he retreated before the insurrection of the Romagnas, it was because it was *force majeure* for him? Must he not claim in turn the Revolution, the sovereignty of the people, universal suffrage, as well as religion, authority and property? Must he not here glorify nationalities, and there treat by virtue of divine right? Must he not profess liberty of thought, seizing the books of the philosophers? Quite recently, the municipal council of Paris, which is none other than one of the private councils of the emperor, voted to build three churches. Suppose that tomorrow the government takes it into its head to return the Pantheon to the revolutionaries, it would only be compensation, and if the chauvinists were satisfied, of what could ultramontanes complain? But the Church does not hear from that ear. No one, she says, can serve two masters: You have to choose

between Christ and Belial. And we are completely of the opinion of the Church: We must be in the Revolution, or in the counter-Revolution.

Note (F).

WEALTH OF THE CLERGY. — We would be making a great mistake if we imagined that the passion for wealth is peculiar to the Catholic clergy. Every church forms a state within a state: every priesthood is a government personnel whose dowry varies according to rank, and whose power is measured by income. Protestantism has nothing in this respect with which to reproach Popery. In a statistic published by M. Ledru-Rollin (*Décadence de l'Angleterre*, vol. IV, 1850), we find that the income of the Anglican Church is almost equal to that of all the other Christian churches, Roman, Reformed and Greek, put together. This revenue is 236,489.125 francs for the Church of England, and only 248,725,000 francs for all other churches. The country from which the church enjoys the smallest revenue, proportionate to the number of flocks, is Russia. It is also the least religious country in Europe. So that faith is measured by what it costs: in this respect England is in the first rank; then, but at a great distance, Spain, then and successively, Portugal, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, France, the United States, etc.

Note that the income of the Anglican Church comes from the same sources as before the Reformation: tithes figure there for 162 million; the bishoprics, 5 million; cathedral and collegiate churches, 9 million; the incidental, 12 million; pious foundations, 23 million; presbyteries, 6 million, etc. — The avowed and avowable revenue of a bishop varies, according to the importance of the diocese, from 22,000 to 700,000 francs. But, observes the writer, this is only the smallest part of his emoluments. The high reverends, with the aid of Jesuitical interpretations and maneuvers, easily found a way to elude the statutes. Thus it was proved in the House of Commons, April 4, 1849, that the Bishop of Durham, limited by law to 8,000 lb. st. (200,000 fr.), however received in a single year £26,000 (650,000 fr.), and another year, £37,000 (925,000 fr.). In 1845 the Bishop of Salisbury received £26,000 (425,000 francs); the last Archbishop of York, during the time he occupied his seat, gleaned £2,000,000 (*fifty million francs*) from the field of the Church; a single relief earned him £30,000 (750,000 fr.)

What is most odious is to see Catholic Ireland obliged to pay the Anglican Church a tribute of 18 million francs for absolutely no service; the only Protestants there were in Ireland at the time when this statistics was compiled belonged to the conquering race, and almost none to the conquered people. Mahomet effected conversions with the scimitar; the Anglican Church uses tithe, parish tithe, episcopal tithe, canonical tithe, deaneries, prebends, etc. Also nothing is more common than to see an Anglican bishop, *in partibus Hiberniae*, having nothing at all to do, leave on dying to his heirs one, two, three, six, seven, and up to ten million francs. Believe, after that, in reforms!

Now, as goes the church, so goes the monarchy. From the accession of George III, in 1760, until 1850, the upkeep of royalty cost England *two billion five*

*hundred sixty-two million four hundred forty-five thousand one hundred seventy-five francs*, or 28,471,618 francs per year. The total revenue of the crown is now 41 million. — The civil list of Louis-Philippe, an quasi-legitimate and scarcely devout king, was only 13 million. That of Napoleon III, an eminently religious prince, is 25 million; according to some, it is as much at 36 million. So goes the world:

God bestows all goods  
On those who vow to be his.

Note (G).

AGREEMENT OF POLITICAL ECONOMY AND MORALS. — The socialist critique has struck a blow. Doubt begins to be felt within the Malthusian school; the newcomers no longer swear, as much as they did in 1840, by A. Smith, J.-B. Say, Ricardo and Malthus. It is recognized that the light is not shed in science; we agree that the basis has yet to be established, the starting point to be fixed, the definitions to be found, the method to be determined, the problems to be posed and the solutions to be given. Of course, nothing that comes from the socialist critique is accepted: but is it not something to have forced economic pedantry to come back to study?

The question that seems above all to preoccupy economists today is the agreement of the current data of their science with morality. Since the first edition of this book, there has appeared at Guillaumin, Paris, rue Richelieu, 14:

*Manuel de morale et d'Économie politique*, by RAPET, 1 large volume.

*Études de philosophie morale et d'Économie politique*, by BAUDRILLARD, 2 volumes.

*Tout par le travail, manuel de morale et d'Économie politique*, by LEMAIRE, 1 volume.

*Le Juste et l'Utile, ou Rapports de l'Économie politique avec la morale*, a work awarded by the Académie des sciences morales et politiques, by DAMETH, 1 volume.

*L'Économie politique et la Justice*, examen critique et réfutation des doctrines économiques de M. P.-J. Proudhon, par LÉON WALRAS, 1 volume.

These titles alone prove that if the interests are worried, consciences are no more calm, and that the sect, after having changed its maxims several times already since Quesnay, does not believe itself today better assured in its statements. Political economy, a science to be constructed, a science both juridical and physico-mathematical, having to bring together all sorts of certainties, certainty of right, certainty of experience, certainty of number or of proportions; political economy can be compared to a steep summit that everyone, seeing it from afar, fancies themselves reaching, but on which no one to this day can boast of having planted the flag.

Our project is to later take up the economic critique and recognize its principles; on this occasion, we will report on the current movement. The last twelve years have changed the attitude of the school: and what is better, and promises more, the hitherto indifferent public has begun since the February

revolution to take an interest in the debate. This generation will not pass, it is to be hoped, without the most important questions being resolved. But what was most urgent was to recognize, at least in a general way, the principle that must play the first role, right.

Note (H).

APPLICATION OF JUSTICE TO POLITICAL ECONOMY. — I purposely allow the comparison between the application of justice to economics and the application of algebra to geometry to subsist in the text, although this comparison perhaps leaves something to be desired as far as correctness is concerned. Every comparison leaves something to be desired. If M. Léon Walras had stuck to this observation, I would have submitted to his criticism in all humility; but since he starts from there precisely to conclude, against the *economic doctrines* of M. Proudhon, that it is up to Justice to subordinate itself to political economy, not to political economy to receive its law and its constitution from Justice, I cannot do otherwise than take up the words of my censor, and maintain the exactness of mine.

I had believed until now that algebraic analysis, in generalizing by means of abstract formulas the demonstrations of geometry, had added something to the sublimity of this science. All truth gains from being seen from several sides; any generalization, although it adds nothing to the reality of things, making them more highly intelligible, adds to their certainty. I supposed, therefore, that algebra, by its profound generalizations, was a powerful aid to the geometrician. If I am wrong, if algebraic analysis is nothing more than a mathematical curiosity, as one might infer from the somewhat pedantic criticism of M. Léon Walras, I have only to withdraw my words, and to ask pardon of algebra for having formed such a high opinion of it.

Whatever the more or less exact idea I had of the application of algebra to geometry, here is, by analogy, how I understand the application of the rules of right to economic questions.

What distinguishes all the facts of the economic order is their excessive variability. For example, what is the market price (exchange value) of wheat in France on April 30, 1860? Consult the price sheets: this price varies *ad infinitum*. It not only varies from market to market, it also varies, in the same market, from merchant to merchant. The causes of this variation are innumerable, and they are themselves due to the variation in value of the elements that constitute for each merchant the cost price of his corn. So that we can say that everything is variation in the price of things, and variation *ad infinitum*. And the same is true of all economic phenomena: division of labor, use of machines, yield of land, capacity of the worker, movement of the population, collection of taxes, etc.

Now, political economy, as the representatives of the Malthusian tradition teach it and claim to maintain it, would have the sole aim of recognizing these variations, of noting them, of showing the greater or lesser differences, but without asking them to account for their greater or lesser legitimacy, without

aspiring to contain them within just limits, to dominate them by a superior reason. Political economy, in a word, has hitherto remained a science of capricious facts, for which the whole philosophy of economists consists in claiming the greatest liberty. *Laissez faire, laissez passer* is the alpha and omega of their science. You don't need algebra for that.

However, philosophical reason, like vulgar reason, asks itself, it cannot fail to ask itself what is, through these innumerable variations, the real truth? What is, for example, the fair price of wheat, what is the fair wage, what is the true form of taxation, how far should the division of labor go, etc., etc., etc.? Reason, I say, asks itself these questions, and all the more legitimately because they are suggested to it by the facts themselves. On the one hand, we see the economic phenomena each oscillate below and beyond a fixed point, between *maxima* and *minima* that, compensating for each other, give what are called averages. On the other hand, it is proven by the same experience that the distribution of profits and losses in society has its main cause in these same variations: those whom the rise favors become richer, those whom the fall hits become poorer.

The question is therefore to know whether and to what extent this oscillatory fatality can be controlled, in such a way as to prevent dangerous deviations from it, to allow of all these variations to remain only those that come from the nature of things, and to distribute among all producers and consumers, as equitably as possible, the advantages and disadvantages. So there is plenty of wheat; the grain falls at a low price: it is the plowman who suffers. On the contrary, wheat is scarce; the price rises by 25 or 50%: it is the consumer who pays, while the farmer and the speculator get richer. One asks whether it would not be possible, in both cases, to regulate things in such a way that abundance would be equally profitable, scarcity equally burdensome to all?

To tell the truth, it is at this moment that the mission of the economist begins. So far he has collected facts, variable facts, none of which consequently proves anything rigorously. In order to obtain a just and complete idea of the phenomenon, it is necessary to compare the facts with each other, to compensate for the *minima* and *maxima*, to bring out the averages; then — unless one maintains that political economy is like algebraic analysis, according to M. Walras, that is to say that it is a matter of pure curiosity — to seek how, the average of each oscillation obtained, we can use it for the greater good and the lesser evil of all.

The problem thus posed, minds are divided. Some, — they are our so-called economists, — maintain with M. Walras that it does not belong to the reason of man to intervene in an order of phenomena that touches him so closely; that value, the division of labor, etc., must be left to oscillate as they please; that equilibrium will establish itself; that all there is to do is to make all forces, all industries, all commerce as free as possible; to secure oneself, each according to his foresight and his interest, against the variations of fortune, against its avalanches and its reversals; and that done, to resign ourselves to what Fate will have decided for each of us. It is seen that, in this system of the *libertist* economy, all the fatalities that besiege man must remain free; only reason and conscience have nothing to say or do. To the one it is forbidden to generalize and to conclude,

to the other it is forbidden to act. Economic science, for these gentlemen, ends where fatality ends, where free will and consequently morals begin.

I maintain against the economists that it is precisely then that it is up to Justice to intervene, and, by the application of its maxims, to construct, according to reason and for the common utility, the materials collected by observation. This is what I call, with more or less accuracy, the application of Justice to the economy.

Political economy, as taught and defended by the adepts of the old school, is a purely objective and fatal science, a science that has nothing human about it, and is reduced to collecting and describing phenomena. It is wrongly called political economy, given that the political, social, legal element has nothing to do with it, everything having to remain subject, according to the economists, to the chance of fate. The very name of economy (household legislation) does not suit it, the household, public or private, necessarily implying the subordination of things to the use of man, consequently, a certain legislation of labor, exchange, property, etc.

Political economy, as the Malthusians want and preach it, reduced to phenomena of pure fatality, is not even a science, because it is not true. The economic world is, as I have said, a world of phenomenal variations and oscillations; in these oscillations are constantly noted a *thesis*, an *antithesis* and a *SYNTHESIS*, or if you prefer, a *maximum*, a *minimum* and an *AVERAGE*. In an order of phenomena where reality is essentially variable, constantly increasing and decreasing, it is certain that the greatest sum of truth is in the averages, the smallest part in the *minima* and *maxima*, in other words in the extremes. And since economic science has for its main object the well-being of man, since this well-being is due to the truth known and put into practice, it is rational to say that the economy of a people is as much more perfect, consequently science all the more advanced, as all things are there regulated more closely by the law of averages. Now, this is not how the economists of the old doctrine understand it. For them all variations are equal; the truth is the same everywhere; they do not admit realities, truths, ideas, which increase and decrease; with much more reason, they reject the claim of socialism to put order into this chaos, to seek the greatest clarity, to prevent the loss of light, and to turn to the general good phenomena that are half of our lives, governing them by the very law that characterizes them. That would be, they say, remaking nature, putting fantasy in the place of reality, and violating liberty!

As for me, taking up economic questions in 1840 at the point where they had left off then and where the old school still claims to maintain them today, I said, and I believe I have proven, that this variable, oscillatory, antinomic nature — the word doesn't matter — of the phenomena of the economy, was the index of a scientific construction to operate, that is to say of a social revolution. I now say that this construction, which has nothing in common with the utopias with which the imagination of philosophers and the despair of the multitudes have been regaled for twenty-five centuries, can only be carried out by Justice, by virtue of its authority and with the aid of its formulas.

Society cannot persevere much longer in the economic chaos into which it



has fallen: it is indignity, the reciprocity of theft and cannibalism. Already civilization is no longer advancing: this is the principle of all the corruptions and failings of the time.

To get out of this chaos, we must appeal to the right of the masses, so unworthily exploited through this darkness; to universal Justice, in which resides all reason and all certainty. To reorganize the social household, no longer at the chance of leonine transactions, but according to the law that governs all transactions: this is what Justice prescribes to us, and, what is better, what it provides the formula for.

I have given this formula in the text, accompanied by numerous examples on which I ask the reader to meditate: it is RECIPROCITY.

*Reciprocity of respect*, such is the principle of personal right;

*Reciprocity of service*, such is the principle of real or economic right. The second is an application of the first: hence the expression I have used, application of justice to political economy.

Justice does not create economic facts, as people seem to make me say; it does not misunderstand them; it does not disguise them for her use; it does not impose foreign laws on them. It confines itself to noting their variable and contradictory nature; in this antinomy, it grasps a law of balance; and of this law of balance, similar to itself, it makes a practical principle, a general truth for society, an obligation. Isn't this how algebra proceeds with regard to geometry?

Political economy, in the state in which the economists want it, with the integrity of its oscillations, the inviolability of its deviations, the conflict of its oppositions, is not a science: for it answers both *yes* and *no*, it demands the least and the most, it consecrates indiscriminately the just and the unjust. Under these conditions, political economy is nothing more than a mass of organic matter, a storehouse of shreds of science. Justice alone, by its law of equilibrium, its formula of reciprocity, can restore order there, create unity, in short, reduce all this variable and contradictory phenomenality to a general and constant law: is it not an analogous service, though assuredly much lesser, that algebraic analysis renders to geometry?

*"The first formula of analysis,"* says M. Walras, *"implies geometry as a whole."* — I can say the same, and with much more reason, of Justice. Its first formula implies all that is called today, but improperly, Political Economy, that is to say that the law of reciprocity, or of equilibrium, implies, as given, the oscillation of phenomena, their antinomic relation, their growth and their decrease, etc. Only, while figurative geometry exists by itself, to a large extent, and without the help of algebra, political economy, without the help of justice, is reduced to a chaos of contradictory elements and antagonistic forces, refractory to any scientific construction and any social order. The lack of harmony that can be seen in society, the faint gleams diffused in economic science, come, make no mistake about it, from Justice. If Mr. Walras, very competent, I like to think in algebra, had looked at it more closely, he would not have attacked me on my principle; he would have sought to catch me at fault on the applications.

I will not expand further at this moment on the *refutation* that M. Walras flatters himself to have made of my doctrines. I have been *refuted* for twenty

years, and I am still here. For a refutation to deserve a response, the person who refutes must first have understood the work he is refuting, and then he must know what is in question in the said work. Now, it does not seem to me that M. Walras has meditated sufficiently on the nature of economic facts, much less that he has done me the honor of understanding me. In this he resembles most of his co-religionists in economics. M. Walras denies, with his young and new authority, facts long recognized by the teachers of the school; he calls J.-B. Say *impertinent*; he claims that morality (I say Justice, Law) is not a science, but an art: what does the *Academy of Moral and Political Sciences* think of it? He wreaks havoc on the antinomy, in which he was unable to recognize a phenomenon of the understanding that is just as positive as that of exchange value. What can I have to reply to a critic for whom there is nothing more acquired, neither philosophy, nor logic, nor the classification of the sciences, nor competence, I take care not to say the infallibility, of the masters, nor their observations, nor the facts? It was not with the refutation of M. Proudhon that M. Walras should begin, but with a renovation of philosophy and a reform of experience.

Note (I).

RECIPROCITY. — The principle of *reciprocity* was laid down for us with brilliance in 1848, in the midst of the revolutionary effervescence, in a pamphlet of 50 to 60 pages, entitled *De l'Organisation du credit et de la circulation*. It was then that for the first time was affirmed and theoretically demonstrated the corollary, since so famous, of the *gratuity of credit*. Since that time the principle of reciprocity has slipped into discussions, into newspapers, into books: it can be said that at this time it has become part of the public consciousness. But it is not quite the same with its corollary, *reciprocal credit*, that is to say, credit *without interest*. One admits without difficulty the reciprocity of respect, because a tip of the hat costs nothing. One also admits the reciprocity of services, serfdom being abolished, but with the stated reservation that certain categories of employment must be paid more than the others, which destroys, as we will prove elsewhere, reciprocity. But we recoil before the reciprocity of credit, which would entail the almost total abolition of discount charges and interest on capital. So true it is, for the mass of men, that to the certainty of reason and the law of conscience must be added the homologation of egoism!...

The economists have reached this point. Do they accept, yes or no, in all its consequences, the principle of reciprocity? We have been waiting twelve years for their response.

Note (J).

DELAMARRE ESTABLISHMENT. — This establishment still existed, in the center of Paris, in 1858. We do not know if it has since been closed, or if, as the founder announced, it added branches. Nor can we say whether the entrepreneur made a profit, although, by the quality of his goods, he must have won the best

customers. It is conceivable that, alone of its kind, an establishment such as this succumbs, without the principle on which it was created being compromised in the least. There are innovations that cannot be the result of private initiative: they require the cooperation of interests, the support of the government or of public opinion. Now, the pauperism is such, the stupidity so great among the consumers, that many prefer the cheapest to the quality; add the competition, very capable of following the innovator on his own ground and, after having effaced and ruined him, of crying: Victory to commercial anarchy!

Note (K).

SPECULATION ON MERCHANDISE. — As soon as the treaty of commerce between the Emperor of the French and England was signed, an increase was produced immediately and everywhere in wines. On the other hand, prices fell and orders came to a halt. Thus is verified what we said in our first installment, page lxxiii, with regard to free trade: the French proletariat will have cotton cheaper, but he will pay more for wine; the result for general well-being, zero. And since, thanks to the treaty, the operations will be carried out on a larger scale, there will be, on the one hand, an increase in capitalist power, on the other, a reduction in the middle class, a development of the proletariat, and consequently, the decadence of the nation. Thus is verified again what we advanced in the second installment (*News of the Revolution*, page 140): Under a government without principles, where the good pleasure of the autocrat takes the place of laws; where property, labor and trade are the prerogative of the prince; where the public economy is subordinated to reasons of state, the subsistence of the people depends on the whims of power, which can make of it both a means of extortion and an instrument of rulership. Today the Emperor serves the wine interests, while he sacrifices spinning mills and forges. In 1854 he served agricultural interests, which were sacrificed in turn a little later. Thanks to the railways and the electric telegraphs, it is just as easy to centralize the operations of commerce as those of the police, and the pretexts would not be lacking. Suppose it pleases the Imperial Government to authorize *sociétés de garantie* for the trade in wine, wheat, iron, coal, etc., nothing prevents it. So the pact of famine is decreed, universalized. What a situation! What a regime!

Note (L).

BANK OF FRANCE. — The capital of this establishment, which in 1857 was 91 million, already more than sufficient to guarantee the country against a risk of suspension of payments that had become illusory, was increased in 1858, by virtue of a simple imperial decree, to 200 million. It is a forced loan, without authorization from the Legislative Body, without consent from the country, without discussion or examination. If there is ever an accounting regarding it, it will be after the fall of the Imperial throne. In exchange for this loan, the privilege of the Bank was extended until the end of the century; the Country, therefore, which could have the discount, guaranteed in all circumstances, at 3%,

at 2½, at 2, at 1, at 0.50, the Country is condemned to pay 4, 5, 6, 7% for forty years, unless it is redeemed by a large indemnity. Isn't it as if the State, which no longer balances accounts and whose policy hovers over the country like a hailstorm, was selling the nation to the capitalists? And notice that after having thus burdened French products with a commercial interest of 4, 5, 6, and 7%, paid for as many times as those products, by changing hands, give rise to new transactions, the imperial government speaks of reducing tariffs and entering the path of free trade! Wouldn't it have been better to reduce the costs of commerce and industry, by reducing the capital of the bank and demanding better conditions from the company?

But the imperial government needed these 110 million to fulfill commitments that the nation does not know, to balance accounts that are not submitted to it, to support a luxury that makes that of all previous governments pale, to meet the expenses of expeditions undertaken without leave, whose only result is to consecrate the state of war in perpetuity. From then on, there was no hesitation; and no one will contradict it. France pays for her glory: what could be fairer? But she squeezes her stomach: if the situation lasts, England will drink the wines of France, eat her wheat, her meat, her butter, her game, her vegetables; she will have her silks, her fashions, cheaper than the French. Because England is richer than France: for what the latter pays 4, England can pay 6, which means that the more glory we acquire, the faster, with the commercial treaty helping, we will be cheered up by the English.

Note (M).

RENT AND TAXATION. — To fully understand this theory and grasp its correctness, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that it implies and presupposes, as a prerequisite, the balance of products, services and wages, the repayment of the debt, the organization of credit and mortgages, the purchase of railways, canals and mines, the reduction of large salaries and the institution of workers' societies. In the present state, where commerce, agriculture and industry are delivered up at the same time to anarchic competition and to private exploitation, where monopoly and privilege are a political institution, where the nobility flourishes again, it is clear that the exclusive allocation of ground rent to taxation would be iniquitous.

The proprietors living off their farm rents are not today the most advantaged class: there exists outside this framework a host of capitalists, state rentiers, bankers, company shareholders, pawnbrokers and mortgage lenders, speculators, contractors, concessionnaires and senior civil servants, who would also have to be made to pay, and whom the tax authorities have difficulty reaching. Privilege calls privilege, *abyssus abyssum invocat*; and it is the working multitude that in the final analysis pays for everyone. Barring a revolution, it cannot be otherwise.

Note (N).

MORAL RESTRAINT. — One day, in Paris, I received a visit from a poor devil,

looking, like so many others, for a little work that would give him and his family enough to eat. He told me that he had been a Saint-Simonian, that he had followed the Father in his retreat to Menikmontant, and that after the dispersion of the sect he had married and resumed the exercise of his profession. — “Don’t your superiors in Saint-Simon, now enriched, help you a little?” I asked him. “They call me a false brother,” he replied. “I went to see M\*\*\*: he asked me why I had married, how many children I had, and how old they were. On my answer: How! he exclaimed, you are past fifty, and you are having children for your wife! You don’t deserve to have others interested in your fate. Go, go, my friend, and remember that prudence is the first duty of married people!”

This is how the apostles of the Flesh welcome the unfortunates who cultivate it too indiscreetly. They are unaware, and I congratulate them on it, that poverty is like war, that it irritates the reproductive appetite and drives man almost irresistibly into heat. They haven’t had the sad experience that continence requires well-being; that the father and mother of poor families have only one bed; that the contact of bodies is electric, and that poor people already have enough of their poverty without adding to it the horror of Malthusian sterility.

Note (O).

MORAL RESTRAINT. — For 25 or 30 years, according to the testimony of a certain Abbé Lelong that has been reported to us, a revolution has been taking place in the practice of confessors on the facts of usury and marital onanism, or *moral restraint*. The new casuists, a hundred times worse than those whom Pascal mocked, excuse, tolerate, permit, almost encourage it. A friend of ours, a very learned man, moreover a fervent Christian, but opposed to the episcopate, assured us that he had read from a casuist of the Society of Jesus something which would constitute a semi-Malthusianism. We know nothing positive in this respect: it is rather the opposite excess for which we have heard confessors reproached. But the Church is on the slope, and the principle of its discipline carries it along. Without speaking of the erotic excitement, inherent in all religion, we will remind our readers that the Church, which condemns concupiscence, nevertheless sacrifices to it, when it recognizes the inequality of conditions as the foundation of the social order, when afterwards it admits the legitimacy of the loan at interest. Moreover, Malthusianism is not new in the Church, although it has never been received as orthodox: it was part of the Gnostic turpitudes, indicated in the Apocalypse, and condemned *en masse* by the Puritans of the Third century.

Note (P).

ECONOMIC CONTRADICTIONS. — In connection with this work, I renew here the observation already made, on page xxxi of the *Program of Popular Philosophy* (1<sup>st</sup> installment), regarding Hegel, on whose example I had adopted the idea that the antinomy should be resolved in a superior term, the synthesis, distinct from the first two, the thesis and the antithesis: an error of logic as much as of

experience, from which I have retreated today. THE ANTINOMY DOES NOT RESOLVE ITSELF; therein lies the fundamental vice of all Hegelian philosophy. The two terms of which it is composed BALANCE, either between themselves or with other antinomic terms: which leads to the desired result. A balance is not a synthesis such as Hegel understood it and as I had supposed after him: this reservation made, in the interests of pure logic, I maintain everything that I said in my *Contradictions*.

## NEWS OF THE REVOLUTION.

Brussels, April 20, 1860.

GENERAL REGRESSION. — Those of our readers who like to seek the explanation of events in ideas need only remember what we said in our first two installments, namely, that the revolution of December 2 was made in hatred of the principles and aspirations of social democracy, and to follow what is happening.

STATE OF WAR IN PERPETUITY. — The Revolution of 1789 was federative; it asserted itself as such in its *federations*. It is therefore anti-centralizing, anti-unitary and, consequently, opposed to the spirit of conquest. It proclaimed the universal federation. The military system is incompatible with the liberty of the man and the citizen, with the liberty of the commune, of the province, of the departments; with free inspection, free tribune and free press. Annexations, questions of natural borders, do not exist for the Republicans. Republicans want the homeland as they want property, for everyone. But what do we see? Since the Revolution was proscribed, the state of war became general throughout Europe; the bourgeois, industrious and peaceful, becomes the child of the soldier and the priest. This state of hostility results in the abolition of treaties, with which we cannot live, without which we cannot agree. This is where the excessive reaction leads us: it won't stop; it must break.

DISSOLUTION OF PARTIES. — All want the economic and social *status quo*, and for this purpose power; all are equal, so all recognize each other. The old Jacobin-chauvinist party recognizes itself in its emperor, and gravitates toward the Tuileries; Orleanism and legitimacy are getting closer: all four pay their court to the Church, which for twelve years has been spoiled for choice. Their language is not the same to me, no doubt; but, in principle, all declare themselves faithful to God and to his Christ: a word to the wise is enough. The political and religious shades fade away, in hatred of the economic revolution. Is it clear that there are only two parties left in Europe, the party of capital and the party of labor; only two peoples, the fat people and the lean people?

ECONOMIC SITUATION. — Always and increasingly bad, bad in proportion to the rise that is manifested on the Stock Exchange. For a month, the 3 percent has risen above 70: but at the same time an economist warns us that the public debt

has increased, from 1852 to 1860, by *three billion five hundred and ninety-seven million one hundred five thousand and four hundred francs*. So it is a question of a new conversion. Waste, prodigality, deficit, bankruptcy: this is the balance sheet of the party of order. More serious business: fortunes tend to shrink into smaller volume, in more portable form. — Gambling, speculation, deportation, postponement: do we need land, houses, machines for that? All you need is gold and banknotes. Where is the bourgeoisie going with this regime? To misery.

CHURCH AFFAIRS. — General de Lamoriciere has taken command of the pontifical army. The Emperor's government, which could refuse his authorization, did not dare to do so, but, while before the Legislative Body it avails itself of its condescension, it has the general denounced in its newspapers. What does this double game mean? On the one hand, there is a rapprochement between the Orleans-Legitimist party and the Church, an insurance contract between the conservatives against the whims of His Imperial Majesty; on the other hand, there is the desperate effort of the Senate, of the Council of State, of the ministers, of the Legislative Body, to bring this precious support of the clergy back to the *Napoleonic Idea*, which a formidable opposition disputes with it. The empire attacks the leader of Catholicism; the Catholic world unites against the empire. It is therefore a question of repairing an immense fault: but the empire again spoils its position by becoming Gallican; the fusion loses ground by inclining towards ultramontaniam and by moving away from this eclectic happy medium celebrated by M. Thiers and formulated in the Concordat. Where will they both stop? At pragmatic-sanction, or at the pact of Charlemagne?

ITALY. — All the progress obtained for a year is compromised: notice to the nations who call the autocrats, instead of principles, to their aid. The pope, aided by Catholicism, does not lack money: he has an army, a good general; he will soon have Zouaves. Let the Sicilian insurrection be suppressed: what can Piedmont do, enclosed between Austria, the Pope and the King of Naples? The italic movement would be stopped; the patriots mystified. At the slightest shock, Victor Emmanuel could have Lombardy and Tuscany taken from him: would he then have Nice and Savoy returned?... The Revolution failed Italy. Italy has been forever pontifical and imperial: could anyone believe that it would suffice, to deprive it of this character, to make it constitutional, Jacobinic and bancocratic? If Italy retreats, it is because the spirit in which its emancipation was undertaken was already a retreat.

PARIS. — The disorder of the minds, so far as it is permissible to judge from a distance, appears to be at its height. The daily and weekly press is hounding Béranger: yet another idol down, It is the Napoleonic idea that is being knocked out on this poor corpse. On the other hand, one glorifies, across the board, the last volume of M. Thiers, a *reductio ad absurdum*, in 900 pages, of the first empire. We make fun of the *Constitutionnel*, became a theologian, and we appreciate, as if we accomplished it ourselves, the conquest of Nice and Savoy. It is all for the best. But who ordered M. Jules Favre, orator of the Republic, to be flattened in

the midst of the Legislative Body by M. Granier de Cassagnac? Can you conceive of a leader of the Republican opposition who, persisting in judging the Italian question from his Jacobin point of view, finds that the Emperor is wrong to reduce the army, who demands that the contingent be kept at 140,000 men, that we start again, if necessary, the Lombard expedition, and if necessary that we carry it on the Rhine?... Also, by what unfortunate inspiration does a newspaper of the same opinion risk saying, apropos of General de Lamoricière's proclamation, that REVOLUTION is a meaningless word, a label without an idea, that should now be replaced by this other, Liberty? Are we therefore going to return to the liberalism of the fifteen years ago? Liberty, certainly, is an excellent thing; unfortunately it serves as a standard for all parties, for M. de Montalembert as well as for M. de Girardin. Whereas the Revolution is right, human right, which the Church does not want; right, which you cannot name without insult before the Emperor; right, I say, with which you have everything, including liberty. Ah! Please, let us not blush at the Revolution.

The drop in the barometer indicates the approach of the earthquake. Is it a European December 2 that is approaching, or a February 24? Austria, it is said, is taking a step forward: *He is quite mad who trusts it!* What is certain is that the Tsar is backing down; he no longer dares to speak of the emancipation of his peasants.

END OF THE THIRD STUDY.