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THE

RIGHTS OF PROPERTY;

A REFUTATION

OF

COMMUNISM & SOCIALISM.

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BY LOUIS ADOLPHE THIERS.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following treatise, intended to refute the dangerous doctrines entertained by a large class of Frenchmen, has recently appeared in the columns of the *Constitutionnel;* and as such doctrines are not without their advocates and supporters in our country, it is hoped that this endeavour to present M. Thiers' able work in an English dress, will not be unacceptable to those who may be desirous of gaining information relative to the new movement against Society. Much has been heard of *Communism*, *Socialism*, and *the Right to Labour*, but few, perhaps, are familiar with the meaning of the words. Happily for us their advocates are ignorant and obscure; yet, as suffering is credulous, they find listeners, whose numbers. according to the testimony of all parties, are rapidly increasing. Such will ever be the case in times of distress: the drowning man catches at a straw; the starving mechanic is ready for any scheme that promises not only to alleviate but to remove his evils for ever. Fourier, George Sand (Madame Dudévant), Louis Blanc, Cabet, Proudhon, and Considérant are the chief apostles of the new movement: their theories may differ, but their object is the same,—"to suppress the miseries of the people." A most desirable object, and one which should be uppermost in the mind of every statesman and philanthropist; but the following pages will show to what the schemes of the new school, if carried out, would inevitably lead.

When the poor actually lack their daily bread, is it unnatural that they should listen to the recital of some golden dream, some tale of the Barmecide, if merely to divert their minds from brooding too intensely on their misfortunes? And although each of the multifarious schemes proposed for the re-organization of labour, and the removal of pauperism, contains some weighty points, claiming reflection and consideration, to each is attached such a mass of impracticable phantasies, that common sense rejects them *in toto.*

M. Thiers' treatise is full of hope; and while he opposes those who would cut up society, and throw its mangled limbs into the renovating cauldrons of our political Medeas, he deduces the most cheering conclusions from the history of the past. All social improvements must be slow and progressive:—as in the physical, so in the political world, violence and destruction go hand in hand. Much of the suffering endured by the working classes may be easily diminished, as it arises from ignorance and bad habits. They are ignorant and do wrong because they know not how to do better; or because they have neither the inclination nor the resolution to do right. In periods of distress, the ignorant labourer thinks to raise his wages by burning his master's ricks, or breaking his machines. Ignorance, during the last visitation of the cholera (and recently at St. Petersburgh) raised the mob against the lives of the physicians, who were endeavouring to stay the progress of the pestilence. Ignorance is the cause of intemperance, and intemperance ruins its thousands yearly; the money spent in the gin-shop or the tap-room would provide a fund for many a "wet day." Remove the ignorance of the people, and you make them provident. Then they will begin to respect themselves, and all virtues follow in the train of self-respect. But the workman cannot do this of himself; it must be done for him by the whole nation embodied in, and represented by, the government. As a

good parent trains up his child to honesty, and virtue, and self-reliance, so should the government, which stands *in loco parentis* to the State, lead its children in the paths that conduct to happiness and honour.

The chief strength and greatest interest of the treatise we now proceed to lay before the English reader, lie in the rapid and irresistible series of deductions,—a close-linked and brilliant chain of observations and reasoning, which leave no issue for sophistry. The style of the original, which it is almost impossible to transfer to another language, is simple and nervous, lit up now and then by a vivid and touching eloquence, inspired by a profound sentiment of the dignity of human nature, and by a high intelligence of the works of the Creator.

The enemies of the existing state of society have been most active in multiplying the number of their books, and by this means have perverted many minds and deceived many souls. Accordingly it is but right that the defenders of society, in the foremost rank of whom stands M. Thiers, should imitate the zeal of the false philosophers whose doctrines have been so effectually propagated as to procure no less than 66,960 votes in the department of the Seine, for the Communist Raspail, the leader of the tumult of the 15th of May, and a prisoner in Vincennes. The main work, the true policy of the present day, is to strengthen the social principles, and to this M. Thiers has devoted his admirable talents, not only in the tribune by his speech on the Organisation of Labour, but by the present bolder and most original treatise.

In explanation of the concluding words of the author's preface, it may be necessary to observe that General Cavaignac, struck with the ruin caused by false doctrines, requested the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences "to concur in the defence of Social principles, attacked by publications of all sorts, feeling persuaded that it was not enough to re-establish material order by means

of force, if moral order were not established by means of sound opinions, and that it was necessary to pacify the minds of the people by enlightening them." The Academy accepted the task with alacrity, and on the 12th of August resolved to publish a series of periodical treatises, illustrative of the principles on which are founded the rights of property, the well-being of domestic life, the liberty of nations, and the progress of the world. M. Victor Cousin inaugurated the series by an Essay on *Truth and Justice*.

PREFACE.

As society in France has reached that state of moral perturbation, in which ideas the most natural, the most evident, and the most generally recognised, are either doubted or most impudently denied, we may be permitted to demonstrate them as if they required proof. It is a wearisome and difficult task; for there is nothing more wearisome, nothing more difficult, than the desire of demonstrating evidence. It is put forth, and is not proved. In geometry, for instance, there exist what are called *axioms*, at which the teacher pauses as he comes to them, and their evidence is allowed to declare itself. Thus the student is told,—two parallel lines will never meet each other; and again,—the straight line is the shortest line from one point to another. Having arrived at these truths, we reason no longer, we cease all discussion, we allow the clearness of the fact to operate upon the mind, and we spare ourselves the trouble of adding, that if these two lines ever meet, it is because they are not at a constant equal distance from one another; that is, they are not parallel. In like manner we do not care to add, that if the line traced between two points is not the shortest,

it is because it is not straight. In a word, we stop at evidence,—we do not go beyond it.

We had attained that point also with regard to certain moral truths, which we considered to be axioms, in consequence of their very clearness. A man labours and receives the reward of his labour; this reward is money; this money he changes into food and clothing; in short, he consumes it, or, if he has too much, he lends it, and interest is paid for it, upon which he lives; or else, he gives it to whom he pleases, to his wife, children, or friends. We had considered these facts as the simplest, the most legitimate, the most inevitable, the least susceptible of dispute or demonstration. It was not so, however. These facts, we are now told, were acts of usurpation and tyranny. Of the truth of this, a few writers are endeavouring to persuade an excited and suffering multitude; and while we, relying upon the evidence of certain propositions, allowed the world to go on its way, as it went in the time when a great politician remarked, *Il mondo va da se*,—we found it undermined by a false science; and if we wish to prevent society from perishing, we must prove what, out of respect for the human understanding, we should at one time have never thought of demonstrating. Be it so: we must defend society against dangerous sectarians;—we must defend it by force against the armed attempts of their disciples,—by reason against their sophisms; and to that end we must condemn our own mind as well as that of our contemporaries, to a long and methodical demonstration of truths, hitherto the most generally accredited. Yes! let us confirm those convictions which have been

shaken, by endeavouring to give an account of the most elementary principles. Let us imitate the Dutch, who, when they learn that a devouring insect has began to penetrate their dykes, rush to those dykes to destroy the vermin that is preying on them. Yes! let us run to the dykes! Just now it is no question of decorating the homes of our families, but of preventing them from falling into the gulf; and to do that, we must set our hands to the very foundations by which they are supported.

I shall proceed then to set my hand to the foundations on which society is based. I beg my contemporaries to aid me by their patience, to support me by their attention in the tedious argumentation upon which I shall enter, for their welfare more than for my own; for having already attained that ripe period, which will in a few years become old age,—having been a witness of several revolutions,—having seen the failure of institutions and characters,—expecting nothing and desiring nothing of any power on earth,—asking Providence only that I may die with honour, if die I must, or live attended by esteem, if my life is spared, I labour not for myself, but for society in peril; and if, in all that I say, or do, or write, I indulge in a personal feeling, it is, I must confess, owing to the deep indignation inspired by those doctrines, the offspring of the ignorance, pride, and wicked ambition of that faction which aims at rising by destroying, instead of rising by building up. I appeal, therefore, to the patience of my contemporaries. I will endeavour to be clear, brief, and off-hand in proving what they never thought it would be necessary to prove,—viz., that what they

earned yesterday is theirs, fairly theirs, and that they are at liberty to support themselves and their children by it. This is the point we have attained, and whither we have been led by false philsophers in coalition with a misguided multitude.

The substance of this work was conceived and drawn up in my mind some three years ago. I repent not having published it then, before the evil had spread its destructive ravages so widely. The pre-occupations of a life, divided between the laborious researches of history and the agitations of politics, alone prevented me. Having retired to the country some three months back, to enjoy the repose which the electors of my native place had procured for me, I drew up this essay, which had only been projected in my mind. The appeal made by the INSTITUTE to all its members, determined me to publish it. I declare, however, that I have not submitted this sketch to the *Class of Political and Moral Sciences,* to which I belong. I show my obedience to it by this publication; but I by no means render it responsible; and if I execute its order, it is my own ideas only to which I give utterance, and in my own language —free, earnest, and sincere,—as it has always been, and always shall be.

Paris, Sept., 1848. A. THIERS.

ON PROPERTY.

BOOK I.

ON THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE PRESENT CONTROVERSY.

Showing how it has come to pass that property is called in question in our times.

WHAT can have happened, that property, the natural instinct of man, child, and animal, the sole end and indispensable reward of labour, should be called in question? What can have led to this aberration, unprecedented in any time or country, not even at Rome, where the contests of the Agrarian Law concerned only the allotment of the lands conquered from the enemy? What can have done it, we shall see in a few lines.

Towards the close of the last *régime*, the men who combatted the government of 1830 were divided into several classes. Some, unwilling to destroy, but on the contrary desirous to save, did not place the question in the form of that government, but in its course of proceeding. They demanded real liberty,—a liberty guaranteeing the affairs of the commonwealth from the twofold influence of the court and of the streets, a wise

financial administration, a powerful organization of the public strength, a prudent but national policy. Others, either from conviction or from zeal, or delighting to distinguish themselves from those against whom they were contending, disliked the very form of the government; and desired a republic, without daring to give utterance to their wishes. Of the latter, the most sincere consented to wait until the trial of the constitutional monarchy was complete, and they waited with the most perfect good faith. The most ardent, endeavouring to gain distinction even among the republicans, looked forward to a republic with greater impatience; and, to frame a language for themselves, spoke continually of the interests of the people,—interests forgotten, overlooked, and sacrificed. Others, seeking notoriety by still more striking signs, affected to despise all political discussions, called for a social revolution, and, even among the last, there were some who, having a more distant aim, desired a complete and absolute social revolution.

The quarrel became more envenomed as it was protracted; and at length, when royalty, forewarned too late, would have been willing to transfer the power from one party to the other, in the midst of the general trouble it let the sceptre fall from its hands. It has been taken up. Those who are now its possessors, enlightened by the commencements of experience, are not eager to keep the imprudent engagements which many of them, however, never made. But those who have not the power, and whom no experience has enlightened, persist in demanding a social revolution. A social revolution! To accomplish this, is it sufficient to will it? If we had the strength, which may be sometimes acquired by agitating a suffering people, we must find the materials: we must have a society to reform. But if it has been reformed long since, what is to be done? You emulate the glory of accomplishing a social revo-

lution; be it so, but you are born sixty years too late; you should have entered on your career in 1789. Without deceiving, without perverting the people, you would then have had the means of arousing their enthusiasm, and, after arousing, of sustaining it. In those times, every one did not pay taxes. The nobility contributed only a part, the clergy none at all, except when it pleased them to accord voluntary gifts. Every one did not suffer the same penalties for crime: there was the gibbet for some; for others there were a thousand ways of avoiding infamy or death, however richly deserved. All could not, whatever might be their talents, occupy public offices, being prevented some by birth, some by religion. There existed, under the name of feudal rights, a mass of dependences not having their origin in a contract freely entered into, but in a usurpation of the strong over the weak. The peasants were bound to bake their bread at their landlord's oven, grind their corn at his mill, buy exclusively in his markets, suffer the penalties inflicted in his (the manorial) court, and permit their harvests to be devoured by his game. The various trades could not be exercised but by admission into certain companies, and according to the rules laid down by them. Each province had its customs-frontier, with intolerable formalities, for levying the dues. The amount of these was overwhelming. Independently o the enormous estates devolved upon the clergy, an held by mortmain, the cultivators of the soil had pay, under the denomination of tithes, the greater portion of their produce. This concerned the rura population, and for the body of the nation there were censors for those who were tempted to write; the Bastille for the unmanageable; parliaments for such as Labarre and Calas; (1) and intervals of centuries between the meetings of the States-General, which might have reformed so many abuses.

Accordingly, in the immortal night of the 4th of August, 1789, all classes in the nation, nobly represented in the *Constituent Assembly*, had the power of offering something in sacrifice on the altar of their country. (2) They all had in fact their gift to lay on it: the privileged classes their exemption from taxation, the clergy their wealth, the nobility their feudal rights and their titles, the provinces their separate constitutions. In a word, all classes had a sacrifice to offer, and they did so amidst a joy without example. This joy was, not the joy of a few, but the joy of all,—the joy of a people emancipated from vexations of every kind,—the joy of the third estate upraised from its humiliation,—the joy even of the nobility, at that time keenly alive to the pleasure of doing good. It was an intoxication without bounds,—a kind of frenzy of humanity, inducing us to embrace the whole world in our ardent patriotism.

For some time past numerous attempts have been made to agitate the popular masses as much as possible. Has the outburst of 1789 been reproduced? Certainly not; and why? Because what has been done, can be done but once; because in a second 4th of August we should not know what to sacrifice. Does there remain in any quarter a manorial oven or mill to be suppressed? Is there any game which you may not kill, when it comes on your grounds? Are there any censors, other than an irritated multitude, or the dictatorship which is its representative? Are there any Bastilles? Are there any disqualifications on account of religious creed or birth? Is there any elevated post to which you may not aspire? Is there any inequality beyond that of mind, which is not imputable to the law, or of fortune, which depends on the right of property? Attempt, if you can, another 4th of August; erect an altar to your country, and tell us what you will place on it.—Abuses! Cer-

tainly, there is no lack of abuses, and never will be. But a few abuses, on an altar raised to your country, under the open vault of heaven, it is too little! You must bear other offerings. Seek, then, seek in that society broken up and reconstructed so frequently since '89, and I defy you to discover aught else to sacrifice but property. Accordingly this has not been overlooked, and it is the deplorable origin of the actual controversies on this subject.

All the partisans of a social revolution do not desire, it is true, to sacrifice property to the same degree. Some would abolish it entirely, others in part; these would be content to remunerate labour in some other way, those would proceed by taxation. But all alike attack property to keep the kind of half-promise they have made to accomplish a social revolution. We must therefore combat all these odious, puerile, ridiculous, but disastrous systems; sprung, like a swarm of insects, from the decomposition of all governments, and filling the atmosphere in which we live. Such is the origin of this state of things, which will entail upon us, even should society be saved, either the contempt or the compassion of the succeeding generation. God grant that there may be room left for a little esteem in favour of those who may have resisted these errors, the eternal disgrace of the human mind!

CHAPTER II.

OF THE METHOD TO BE FOLLOWED.

Showing that the observation of human nature is the true method to be followed in demonstrating the rights of man in society.

BEFORE proceeding to demonstrate that property is a right, a right sacred as the liberty of coming and going, of thinking and writing, it is important to fix on the method of demonstration to be pursued in this matter.

When it is said, man has the right of moving, labouring, thinking, and expressing his thoughts freely, what is the foundation for this language? Whence has the proof of all these rights been derived? In the wants of man, reply certain philosophers; his wants constitute his rights. He needs to move freely, to labour in order to live, to think; when he has thought, to speak in accordance with his thoughts; therefore he has the right to do these things. Those who reason thus have approached the truth, but not reached it; from their manner of reasoning it would result—that every want is a right, a true want like a false want, a natural and simple want like one proceeding from perverse habits. If these are true wants, there are also false ones, originating in false habits. Man, by indulging his passions, creates exaggerated and condemnable wants; such as those of wine, women, expense, dress, idleness, sleep, ill-regulated activity, revolutions, combats, wars. As a man of pleasure, his mistress must be "the cynosure of neighbouring eyes;" a coarse wine-bibber, he must have hogsheads of drink which will brutalize him; a conqueror, he must have the whole world to ravage.

If wants were the source of rights, Cæsar, at Rome, would have had the right to take the women, the liberty, the wealth, the glory of the Romans, and in that case, vice would have given the right.

I know that the philosophers who have reasoned thus, have distinguished and said, "True wants make rights." It then remains to inquire what are true wants, to distinguish the true from the false, at which end we arrive,—how? by observation of human nature.

The exact observation of human nature is, therefore, the method to be followed in order to discover and demonstrate the rights of man.

Montesquieu has said: "Laws are the relations of things." With due deference to this great genius, he would have spoken with more exactness had he said: "Laws are the permanence of things." Newton observed heavy bodies: he saw an apple fall from a tree (to use popular and familiar language). Comparing this fact with another, with that of the moon attracted towards the earth, of the earth attracted towards the sun, he perceived in a particular and insignificant fact a general and permanent one, and said: "Heavy bodies are attracted to one another, in proportion to their mass," and called this phenomenon the law of gravitation.

I observe a man; I compare him with an animal; I see that, far from obeying vulgar instincts, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, and then repeating the same round, he oversteps these narrow limits, and that to all these natural habitudes he adds others far more elevated, far more complicated. He has a penetrating mind; with this mind he contrives the means of satisfying his wants; he makes a selection of these means, not limiting himself to seizing his prey on the wing, like the eagle, or by lying in wait for it, like the tiger; he cultivates the earth, weaves clothing

exchanges his own produce with that of another man, traffics, defends or attacks, makes war or peace, rises to the government of states ; then, mounting higher still, attains to a knowledge of God. In proportion to his advance in this various knowledge, he is governed less by brute force and more by reason ; he is worthier of participating in the government of the society of which he is a member ; and all that considered, after having recognised in him the sublime intelligence which is developed by exercise, after having seen that by preventing its exercise I cause him to lose it altogether, making him wretched and almost deserving his wretchedness as a slave,—I express my astonishment and say : " Man has the right to be free, because his noble nature, accurately observed, reveals to me the law, that a thinking being ought to be free ; as the fall of an apple revealed to Newton, that heavy bodies tend towards each other."

I defy then, any one to find any other way of establishing rights than a straight-forward and profound observation of beings. When their constant manner of proceeding has been observed, we infer the law that governs them, and from the law infer the right. Yet I must add one remark to obviate contradiction. " From the law which inclines heavy bodies towards each other," it may be asked, " do you infer the right ? Will you say : The earth has the right to gravitate towards the sun ?" " No," I reply with Pascal : " Earth, thou knowest not what thou doest. If thou crushest me, thou knowest it not, but I know it. I am then thy superior !"

No, right is the privilege of moral, of thinking beings. I should almost be tempted to say, but I dare not, that the dog which follows you, and loves you, has the right to be well treated, because that affectionate and attached animal falls down at your feet and licks them tenderly. And yet, were I to express myself

thus, I should be wanting in strict accuracy of language. If you owe anything to that faithful creature, it is because you comprehend his wants. As for the dog himself, he has a right to nothing, because he desires without knowledge. This word *right* has regard solely to the mutual relations of thinking beings. All beings, moral as well as physical, have laws in this universe; but as regards the former, *laws constitute rights.* After having observed a man, I see that he thinks, that he wants to think, to exercise this faculty; that by exercise it is developed and enlarged; and I say that he has the right to think and speak, for thinking and speaking are one. I owe it to him, if I am the government, not as to the dog mentioned above, but as to a being who has the feeling of his right, who is my equal, to whom I give what I know to be his due, and who receives proudly what he knows belongs to him. In a word, it is always the same method, that is to say, the observation of nature. I see that man has such and such a faculty, such and such a want to exercise it. I say that the means must be given him; and as human language reveals in its infinite shades the infinite shades of things, I say, when speaking of a heavy body, that it tends to gravitate because it is forced thereto. I say of the dog, do not ill-treat him, for he feels your bad treatment, and his amiable nature has not deserved it. Arrived at man, my equal before God, I say, he has the RIGHT. His law, his peculiar law, assumes this sublime word.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE UNIVERSALITY OF PROPERTY.

Showing that property is a permanent fact, universal in all times and in all countries.

THE method of observation being recognised as the only good one for the moral as well as for the physical sciences, I examine, firstly, human nature in every country, in every age, in all states of civilization, and everywhere I find property as a general, universal fact, without any exception.

The publicists of the last century, desirous of making a distinction between the natural and the civil state, imagined an epoch when "wild in woods the naked savage ran," obeying no fixed law, and another epoch in which he had assembled with his fellows and submitted to the restraint of contracts entitled laws. The supposed conditions of the first state were termed *natural right;* the real and known conditions of the second were styled *civil right.* This is a mere hypothesis, for man has nowhere and at no time been found isolated, not even among the untutored savages of America or of the islands of the Pacific. As among animals there are some which, guided by instinct, live in bodies, (such as herbivorous animals, which graze in company, while carnivorous animals live isolated that they may chase without a rival,) so man has always been observed to live in society. Instinct, that first and oldest of laws, draws him towards his fellows, and constitutes him a social animal. Were it otherwise, what would he do with that intelligent look with which he questions and replies before he can speak? What would

he do with that mind which conceives, generalizes, qualifies things; with that voice which points them out by sounds; with that speech, the instrument of thought, the very bond and chain of society? A being so nobly organized, feeling the want and having the means of communicating with his like, could not be made for isolation. Those wretched inhabitants of Oceania, more nearly resembling the monkey tribe than any others to be met with, occupied with fishing, the least instructive of every kind of existence, have been found drawn near each other, living together, and communicating with one another by harsh and savage sounds.

Nay, more: man has been always found to possess his own dwelling, and in that dwelling his wife and children, forming the first agglomerations, called families; these being placed in juxta-position to one another form tribes, which by a natural instinct defend one another in common, as they live in common. Observe the stag, the deer, the chamois, grazing quietly in the beautiful glades of our European forests, or on the grassy slopes of the Alps or Pyrenees: if a breath of air carries to their acute senses a sound forewarning them of danger, they give, with voice or foot, a sign of emotion, which is instantly communicated to the whole herd, and they flee in common, for their defence is in the marvellous agility of their legs. Man, born to create and to brave the cannon's mouth, instead of flying, seizes his weapons, be they more or less perfect, takes up a pole, to the end of which he fixes a sharp stone, and armed with this rude lance, unites with his neighbour, opposes the enemy, resists or yields in turn, according to the orders he receives from the most skilful or the most daring member of the tribe.

All these acts are accomplished by instinct, before anything has been written either on laws or acts, before any contract has been thought of. The instinctive rules of this primitive state,—rules the most

rudimentary, general, and necessary of all, may well be called natural right. Now property exists from this moment; for it has never been seen that, in this state, man had not his hut or his tent, his wife, his children, with a few accumulations of the produce of his fishing or hunting, or of his flocks, in the shape of provisions for his family. And if a neighbour, having a precocious instinct of iniquity, should seek to wrest from him some of the simple goods constituting his possessions, he applies to that chief at whose side he has been accustomed to stand during the fight, calls upon him for redress and protection, and the latter decides according to the notions of justice developed among the tribe.

Among every people, then, how rude soever they may be, we find property, at first as a *fact* and then as an *idea*,—an idea more or less clear according to the degree of civilization they have attained, but always invariably settled. Thus the savage hunter has at least the property of his bow, his arrows, and of the game he has killed. The nomad, who is a shepherd, has at least the property of his tents, and of his flocks and herds. He has not as yet admitted that of the soil, because as yet he has not thought fit to exert his faculties upon it. But the Arab who has raised numerous herds clearly understands that he is the proprietor of them, and exchanges his produce for the corn which another Arab, already fixed to the soil, has grown elsewhere. He measures with accuracy the value of the object he gives against the value of that which is offered him: he clearly understands that he is the owner (proprietor) of the one before the bargain is struck, and of the other after. To him as yet immovable property has no existence. At times, however, he may be seen, during two or three months of the year, fixing on land which belongs to nobody, tilling it rudely, casting in the seed, gathering it when

ripe, and then removing to some other place. But during the time that he is employed in tilling and sowing this land and in harvesting the crop, the nomad feels that he is the owner of it, and would rush to arms against any who should dispute its fruits. His property endures in proportion to his labour. By degrees, however, the wanderer of the desert settles and becomes a husbandman; for it is in the heart of man to have his *home*, as a bird has his nest, and the rabbit his burrow. He ends by selecting a territory, by dividing it into patrimonies, where each family settles, labours, cultivates for itself and for its descendants. Just as a man cannot let his affections wander over all the members of his tribe, and that he needs a wife and children of his own, whom he may love, tend, and protect; in whom are concentrated his fears, his hopes, his life indeed; he needs a field to himself, which he may cultivate, plant, enclose, or embellish according to his taste, and which he hopes to deliver to his descendants covered with trees that have grown up, not for himself, but for them. Then to the movable property of the nomad succeeds the immovable property of an agricultural people; the second property arises, and with it complicated laws, indeed, but still such as time renders more just, more foreseeing, but without changing the principle, which is applied by judges and by the public force. Property resulting from a first effect of instinct becomes a social contract, for I protect your property in order that you may protect mine; I protect it either by my person as a soldier, or by my money, by devoting a part of my revenue to the support of a public force.

Thus man, careless at first, little attached to the soil which affords him wild fruits or numerous animals to devour, without any great trouble to himself, takes his place at nature's table laden with spontaneous viands, and where there is room for all without jealousy or

dispute, by turns sitting down, leaving it, and returning to it, as to a banquet always spread by a liberal master, —a master who is none other than God himself. But by degree he acquires a taste for viands more refined; he must produce them; he begins to grow attached to them, because they are worth more, because he has had to labour hard to produce them. He thus portions out the earth, becomes strongly attached to his own share, and if nations in a body dispute his right to it, he contends also in nations; if within the city where he dwells, his neighbour disputes his little spot of earth, he pleads before a judge. But his tent and his herds first, his allotment and his farm afterwards, successively attract his affections, and constitute the different modes of his property.

Thus, in proportion as man expands, he becomes more and more attached to what he possesses, or in other words, more *proprietary*. He is scarcely so at all in a barbarous state; in the civilized state he is eminently so. It has been said that the idea of property was growing weaker in the world. This is a mistake. Far from being weakened, it is regulated, determined, and strengthened. It ceases, for instance, to be applied to what is not capable of being a possession, that is, to man; and from that moment slavery ceases. It is a progress in the ideas of justice, not a weakness in the idea of property. For example; the landlords, the *seigneurs*, alone had the privilege during the middle ages of killing the game bred on the land belonging to all. Whoever, now-a-days, falls in with a hare on his own grounds may kill it, for it has been bred there. Among the ancients, the land was the property of the republic; in Asia, it belongs to the despot; in the middle ages, it was the property of a few lords. With the progress of the ideas of liberty, by arriving at the enfranchisement of man, his possessions, his goods, were enfranchised also; he was declared proprietor,

owner of his land, independently of the republic, the despot, or the lord. From that moment confiscation was abolished. The day that restored to him the use of his faculties, individualized his property still more; it became still more attached to the individual himself, still more property than it had been.

Let us take another example. In the middle ages, or in despotic states, the surface of the earth was conceded, but not what lay beneath. The right of excavating mines was a royalty, leased out for money and for a season to certain workers of the metals. With the progress of time it was understood, that as the interior of the earth might become the scene of a new kind of labour, it ought to become the scene of a new property, and the property of mines was constituted; so that now there are two properties connected with the soil,—that of the husbandman above, of the miner below.

Property is therefore a general and universal fact, increasing and not decreasing. When naturalists observe an animal which, like the bee or the beaver, constructs a habitation, they declare unhesitatingly that the bee and the beaver are constructive animals. On similar grounds, cannot philosophers, who are the naturalists of the human race, say, and say truly, that property is a law of man, that he is made for property, and that it is a law of his kind? And it is not enough to assert that it is a law of his kind, it is a law of all living things. Has not the rabbit his burrow, the bird his nest, the beaver his hut, and the bee his hive? Has not the swallow—that joy of our climate in the young spring-time—her nest, to which she returns, and which she will not yield without a struggle; and if she had the gift of thought, would she not be disgusted by the theories of our sophists? Grazing animals live peacefully in a body, like the wanderers of the desert, in certain pastures, from which they never remove, for

in them property is manifested by habit. Carnivorous animals, as the lion, like the savage hunter, cannot live in herds; they would incommode one another; each has around him a circle of destruction, in which he dwells alone, and from which he expels all of like habits who might wish to share his spoil. He also, if he could think, would declare himself a proprietor. And now, returning to human beings, observe that child, governed by instinct no less than the lion. Notice with what simplicity the inclination for property is revealed in him. I sometimes observe a little boy, sole heir to a considerable fortune, already understanding that he will not have to share with brothers that mansion to which his mother conducts him every summer, —knowing that he is the sole proprietor of that fine park in which his childhood is spent,—he has no sooner arrived, than in these extensive gardens he desires to have his own garden, where he may cultivate fruits which he will not eat, and flowers which he will not gather, but where he will be master—master of a little parcel of the estate until he becomes master of the whole.

After having seen that in all times and in all countries man appropriates all that he touches, first his bow and his arrows, then his land, his house, his palace,—invariably establishes property as the necessary reward of labour,—if we reasoned concerning him, as Pliny and Buffon have reasoned on animals, we should not hesitate to declare, after having observed so general a manner of being, that property is a necessary law of his kind. But this animal is not an ordinary animal; he is a king,—king of the creation (as would have been said formerly), and yet his titles are contested. This is reasonable; we must examine them more closely. Fact, it is said, does not constitute right: tyranny also is a fact, a very general fact. We must therefore prove that the fact of property is a right, and deserves the title. We have, however, done something

by showing that this fact is increasing instead of diminishing, for tyranny decays and disappears instead of extending. Let us proceed, however, and you will see that this fact is the most deserving of respect, the most fertile of all, the most worthy of being called a right; for by its means God has civilized the world, and led men from woods and wilds into cities, from cruelty to gentleness, from ignorance to wisdom, from barbarism to civilization.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE FACULTIES OF MAN.

Showing that man possesses in his personal faculties a primary incontestible property, the origin of all others.

PROPERTY, I have said, is a universal fact: let us submit this fact to the unbiassed judgment of the human conscience, and examine whether this tendency in man to appropriate either the fish he has caught, the bird he has snared, the fruit he has grown, or the field that he has watered with his sweat, is on his part an act of usurpation, a theft, committed to the injury of the human race.

To leave nothing unexplored, let us begin at home. Let us first consider our own persons, and go as closely as we can. My clothing is very nigh me; I can, if I have woven or paid him who has woven it, maintain that it is mine; for to all appearances these garments, which protect me from the wet or the cold, are not such an excess of enjoyment as to be considered prejudicial to the rest of the human race. But I desire to com-

mence still nearer the examination of what does or does not belong to me, and I stay to consider my body, and in my body the living principle by which it is animated.

I feel, I think, I will; these sensations, these thoughts, this will, I refer to myself. I feel that they are taking place within me, and I regard myself as a being separated from all that surrounds me, distinct from that vast universe which by turns attracts or repels me, charms or amazes me. I feel that I am placed in it, but I distinguish myself clearly from it, and I confound my person neither with the soil on which I tread, nor with the beings more or less like me who come near me, and with whom I might sometimes be tempted to confound myself, so dear they are to me,—such as my wife and children. I distinguish myself, therefore, from all the rest of the creation, and I feel that I belong to myself.

Let the philosophers who endeavour to search into the reality of our knowledge inquire whether all this spectacle of the universe be true or not,—whether or not the Almighty is making sport of my credulity by placing around me spectres, mere shadows of things, which deceive me, and which have no reality; what has that to do with the subject of which I am treating? That mass of rock against which my bark founders,—that fiery steed rushing on me to trample me beneath his hoofs,—are neither rock nor horse, are a mere image! That rock which threatens my frail boat, that horse which threatens my person, are sufficient objects of my belief to turn me aside from them: the sensation is sufficient to determine me. From that moment, viewing the spectacle of the world seriously, and leaving to metaphysicians the discussion of its reality, I place myself in that reality, and first appropriate my person, the sensations it experiences, the judgments it forms, the will it conceives; and I think

I may say, without being either tyrant or usurper: the first of my possessions, my properties, is myself.

This recognition once effected, I pass a little from this interior, this centre of my being,—I go forth, and without proceeding far, observe my feet, my hands, my arms. There assuredly I am at the extreme limit of my existence, and I say: These feet, these arms, these hands, incontestibly belong to me. Men may dispute the horses that lend me their active limbs to carry me rapidly over the earth. Perhaps, in the name of the plundered human race, they may be taken from me, and I may be told they do not belong to me, but to all. Well, be it so. But my feet, my hands—no one has yet imagined that they belong to the whole human race. They may tell me so, but I shall not believe it. If any one touched them, or insolently trod upon my feet, I should grow angry, and if strong enough, fall upon the offender to avenge the insult.

These feet, these hands, these varied organs, which put me in communication with the universe, are therefore mine, that is, I make use of them unceasingly, without scruple, without remorse at having the goods of another; which I never dream of surrendering to any one, unless I desire to aid one that I love, and who is deprived of the use of his limbs. Still, I never confound them with those of another.

Now these feet and hands, which serve me to carry or to seize the objects I want; these eyes which help me to see; that mind which helps me to discern all things, and to use them with profit to myself,—these feet, hands, eyes, mind, which are mine and not another's, are they equal to my neighbour's? Certainly not. I remark in my own faculties and in those of my neighbour very notable differences; I observe that some, by reason of these differences, are in misery or abundance, unable to defend themselves, or in a position to domineer over others.

Is it really true that one man has great physical strength, another very little? that one is strong but awkward, another weak but clever? that one will do but little work, another much? Is it true that, setting aside the traditional inequalities of birth and fortune, taking two workmen in any manufactory, one will exhibit extreme skill, indefatigable diligence, earn three or four times more than the other, accumulate his first gains, and form a capital with which in turn he will speculate and become immensely rich? These happy faculties, moral or physical, are certainly his own. This will not be denied; and with no misapplication of language, it may be said they are his property. But this property is unequal; for with certain faculties this man remains poor all his life, with certain others that man becomes rich and powerful. They are the essential cause that one has much, the other little.

Here, then, is a primary kind of property, which will not be taxed with usurpation: firstly myself, then my faculties, whether physical or intellectual, my feet, hands, eyes, brain,—in a word, my soul and my body.

This is a primary, incontestible, indivisible property, to which no one has yet thought of applying an agrarian law; of which no one has ever thought of complaining neither to me, nor to society, nor to its laws; for which I may be envied or hated, but of which none will ever think of taking away a portion to give it to others, and for which they can complain of God alone, by calling Him unjust, wicked, or powerless,—reproaches, from which I hope to justify Him before the close of this book.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF MAN'S FACULTIES, OR LABOUR.

Showing,—That by the exercise of man's faculties there is produced a second property, which has labour for its origin, and which society protects for the benefit of all.

A MAN has, therefore, very unequal faculties, relatively to certain members of his race, but which are indisputably his own. Now what shall he do with them? Has God given them to him, like song to the bird, that he may sing uselessly in the woods, occupy his idleness, or excite the reveries of the solitary wanderer? One day, perhaps, his voice may be that of a Homer or Tasso, a Demosthenes or Bossuet; but, meanwhile, God has imposed on him other cares than those of describing nature, or deploring the fall of empires. He has destined him to labour, to labour severely, from sun-rise to sun-set, to water the earth with the sweat of his brow.

Nudus in nudâ humo,—such is the state in which man was placed on the earth, says Pliny the Elder. By dint of labour man provides for his necessities. He must clothe himself, by tearing from the lion or the tiger the skin which covers them, to hide his own nakedness; then, as arts are developed, he must spin the fleeces of his sheep, and, weaving the yarn together, form a continuous web to serve him as a garment. This is not sufficient: he must shelter himself from the changes of weather; construct a dwelling in which he may counteract the irregularities of the seasons, ward

off the torrents of rain, the heat of the sun, and the sharp frosts of winter. After having attended to these cares, he must eat, eat every day, several times a-day; and, while the animal, deprived of reason, but covered with feathers or fur as a protection, finds, if it is a bird, ripe fruit hanging on the trees, if it is a beast of prey, his food prepared in the animals of the pasture,—man is obliged to procure provisions by making them spring out of the ground, or by disputing their possession with animals stronger and fleeter than himself. He must take a branch from the tree, bend it into a bow, discharge from it the winged arrow, which brings down the animal he destines for his meal; then it must be exposed to the fire, be cooked,—for his stomach is averse to the sight of the blood and the palpitating limbs. Here are bitter fruits, but at their side grow others that are sweeter: he must make a selection from them, that, by cultivation, he may render them still sweeter and more savoury. Of the grains, some are empty or light; but among the number some are more nourishing than others: some of these he must select, sowing them in a rich soil that will make them more nutritious, and, by cultivation, changing them into wheat. By dint of these cares, man ends by existing, existing tolerably well; and, with God's help, many revolutions taking place on the earth, empires crumbling one after the other, generation succeeding generation, mingling with another from the north and the south, the east and the west, exchanging ideas, communicating inventions, daring navigators passing from cape to cape, from the Mediterranean to the ocean, from the ocean to the Indian seas, from Europe to America, collecting together the productions of the whole world,—the human race attains that point where its misery is changed into wealth, where, instead of the skins of wild beasts, man wears garments of silk and purple, lives on food the most succulent and varied, often the

produce of lands situated half the world from the place where they are consumed; and his dwelling, at first little better than the hut of a beaver, assumes the proportions of the Parthenon, the Vatican, or the Tuileries.

That destitute creature, who had nothing, is now in the midst of abundance. By what means? By labour, indefatigable and intelligent labour.

When he first appears on the earth, he is naked and destitute of all; but he has faculties, faculties unequally distributed among the beings of his kind; he employs them, and, by that employment, succeeds in possessing what was deficient,—he becomes the master of the elements, and almost of nature. Man has therefore his faculties to use, not to sport with, as the bird plays with his wings, his beak, or his voice. A time of leisure will some day arrive; with that voice he will become a melodious singer; those feet and hands will be the feet and hands of a skilful dancer; but he must labour hard and long before he attains this leisure. To this point we are guided by observation of his being, as the observation of the beaver, the sheep, or the lion leads us to say that the first is a constructive animal, the second a graminivorous, and the third a carnivorous animal.

Let us advance still further. Man must labour. He must, without alternative, that his natural wretchedness may be succeeded by the comforts and enjoyments of civilization. But for whom will you have him labour, for himself or for others?

My birth-place is an island in the Indian sea. My food is fish. I perceive that at certain hours of the day the fish frequent certain waters. With the twisted fibres of a plant I form a net, which I throw into the water, and draw out filled with fish. Or else my birth-place may be in Asia Minor, near that spot where the ark of Noah rested, and where the grain called wheat was first noticed by man. I am given to agriculture.

I force an iron instrument into the earth; the earth thus disturbed I expose to the fertilizing air; I scatter the seed over its bosom, and watch while it is growing; I gather it when ripe, grind it, expose it to the fire, and make bread.

The fish that I have caught with so much patience, the bread that I have made with such exertions,—to whom do they belong? To me, who have taken such pains, or to the idler who slept while I was toiling at the net or the spade? The whole human race will reply that they belong to me, for I must live, and on whose labour should I live, if not on my own? If, just as I was raising to my mouth the bread I had made, some idler should rush upon me and take it away, what should I have to do, but rush in turn on some other, and serving him as I had been served? He would do the same to a third, and the world, instead of being a theatre of labour, would become a theatre of pillage. And further, as pillage is a sudden and easy act, when we are strong, while production is a slow and difficult act, requiring the employment of a life, plunder would be preferred to fishing, the chase, or cultivation. Man would remain a lion or a tiger, instead of becoming a citizen of Athens, Florence, Paris, or London.

These examples have all been taken from the primitive state of society. But as human nature does not change as it expands, a man may clothe himself in richer apparel, dwell in more sumptuous mansions, live on daintier food, bedeck himself with purple and gold, live in palaces constructed by a Bramante, dine off the most exquisite viands, and uplift his soul to Plato,—his heart has still the same miseries, and requires the same stimulants to rise above them. If he halted a moment in his struggle against nature, she would again become savage. For a brief space, and through a criminal jealousy between two nations, the marvellous road

across the Simplon had been neglected, and nature, continually rolling down blocks of ice, showers of snow, and even mere threads, as it were, of water, upon this mountain route, had soon rendered it impassable. If man were to suspend his exertions for a moment, he would be vanquished by nature; and if, for a single day, he should cease to be urged on by the charms of possession, his arms would fall listlessly down, and he would slumber beside the instruments of his abandoned labour.

All travellers have been struck by the state of languor, misery, and devouring usury of those countries in which property is not sufficiently guaranteed. Travel into the East, where the despot claims to be the sole proprietor; or, what comes to the same thing, go back to the middle ages, and you will discern the same features everywhere: the soil neglected because it is the prey most exposed to the greed of tyranny, and reserved for the hands of slaves, who have not the choice of occupation; commerce preferred, as escaping more easily from exactions; in commerce, gold, silver, and jewels sought as the property most easily concealed; all capital ready to be converted into this particular property, and when lent, it is at a most exorbitant rate; concentrated in the hands of a proscribed class, who, making a public show of their wretchedness, living in houses ruinous without, but sumptuous within,—opposing an invincible obstinacy to the barbarous master that would extort the secret of their treasures—find a recompense in making him pay more for his money, thus avenging tyranny by usury.

When, on the contrary, either through the course of time or the wisdom of the ruler, property is respected, at that moment confidence revives, capital resumes its relative importance, the earth again becomes fertile; gold and silver, once so sought for, are now an inconvenient property, and lose their value; their owners

have recovered their dignity with security; they no longer conceal their wealth, but show it with confidence, and lend it at a moderate rate of interest. Activity, universal and continuous, prevails; a general ease follows; and society, opening like a flower to the dew and the sun, unfolds itself in every direction to the charmed eyes of the beholders. And should there be some who would ascribe this prosperous state of civilized societies to liberty, whose beneficial virtues God forbid that I should dispute, I would reply, that to the respect accorded to property these great results are owing; for Venice was not free, but as her tyrants respected labour, she became the richest slave on earth.

To resume, then, I say: Man has a primary property in his person and in his faculties; he has a second, less proximate to his nature, but not less sacred, in the produce of his faculties, which embraces all that is called the goods of this world, and which society is most deeply interested to guarantee; for without that guarantee there will be no labour; without labour no civilization, not even the necessaries of life, but wretchedness, robbery, and barbarism.

CHAPTER VI.

ON INEQUALITY OF GOODS.

Showing, that the inequality of man's faculties necessarily leads to an inequality of goods.

It results from the exercise of the human faculties, that, as these faculties are unequal, one man will produce much, another little; one will be rich, another poor; in a word, equality will cease to exist in the

world. It should be clearly understood that I speak not of that equality which consists in living under the same laws, in obeying the same authorities, incurring the same penalties, obtaining the same rewards, undergoing (in fine) the same social conditions, and which is called equality in the eyes of the law; but of that equality which would consist in possessing the same amount of property, whether a man be skilful or unskilful, industrious or idle, fortunate or unfortunate in his labour. The former is necessary, indisputable, and, where it is wanting, society is a mere tyranny. Let us see what we should think of the latter.

But first let us return to the fact from which we originally started. These unequal faculties, consisting in greater muscular strength or in greater intellectual energy, in certain aptitudes of body or mind, and sometimes of both,—as in the skilful mechanic, who with his hands adjusts the various parts of a machine,—as in the sculptor, who carves in the marble the idea existing in his mind,—as in the general, whose prompt and sure eye is united with great courage and rude health,—all these faculties, at once physical and moral, belong to the man to whom God gave them. He holds them of God,—of that God whom I will call by what name soever you please, be it god, fatality, chance,—the author, in fact, of all things, either doing them himself or allowing them to be done, either willing or permitting them. You will acknowledge that he is the chief criminal, the main cause of the evil, if evil there be, in the inequalities of which you would be inclined to complain. Even before the time when long accumulated labour, and transmission from generation to generation, has added to the first inequalities, you will acknowledge that even in the savage state the highly gifted man possesses great advantages. In the chase, if he be more skilful, he has twice as much food as his neighbour. In self-defence, if he be stronger,

he has twice the means of resistance. Inequality appears, therefore, at the very commencement of the social existence; it is manifested on the first day, and the ulterior inequalities of the richest society are but the lengthened shadow of a body already highly elevated.

In a question of right, little or much makes no appreciable difference. Equality of goods is or is not the right of the human race: if it is a right, it was as much violated in the younger days of these societies, when the most skilful or most intelligent savage was richest in the productions of the chase, better provided with the means of defence or of subjugating others, as when, in later days, this savage, now a member of a civilized society, is a man of countless wealth, beside a poor man wanting the necessaries of life.

But having recourse to visible facts in order to elicit the will of God, that is, the laws of creation, I affirm that since men are unequally endowed, God has no doubt intended that they should have different enjoyments; and that when he gave to one a keen sense of hearing, smell, or sight, and to another senses the most obtuse; to this man the means of producing and eating much, and to that man weak arms and a delicate stomach; when he made one the brilliant Alcibiades, possessing every faculty in perfection, and the other the idiot *Crétin*, of the valley of Aosta,—he did this that there should be differences in the mode of being in these men, so differently gifted. When, extending my views still farther, I pass from man to the horse or the dog, from the horse or the dog to the mole, the polype, or the plant,—when in the same forest I see the lowly fern beside the lofty oak, and even among these oaks, some more luxuriant than others, which the soil, the sun, the shower have favoured, which have soared proudly above all around,—and then, one more fortunate still, that has escaped the woodman's axe or the lightning's

stroke, I say to myself: These inequalities were probably the condition of that sublime plan which a great genius has defined as *unity in diversity, and diversity in unity.*

But I may be told that this picturesqueness of nature which seduces me may be an injustice, for Cæsar, in the moral order, may be a very interesting object of observation, but he is none the less a tyrant—a seductive tyrant, full of genius,—but still a tyrant.

I understand the objection.

Although we have certainly good grounds for referring to creation itself the principle of all human inequality, yet it is true that God delivers up his own work, charging us to modify or regulate it, as a master delivers to his apprentice a task that he is to finish. Thus, he permitted the existence of a Cæsar, that is, of one man stronger than another, able to oppress the rest; but he has charged us to restrain this being, to keep him in check by laws.. Well; but let us see if this tendency to labour much, and consequently to possess much, is one of these despotic tendencies necessary to be kept in check. That is the pith of the matter.

Does that man injure any one who labours energetically and accumulates what he earns? He toils earnestly, continuously, by the side of another who barely scratches the earth. He possesses well-stored garners by the side of his neighbour whose barns are empty or but half filled. Has he done any harm to this neighbour? Has he deprived him of his stores? In that case there would be robbery, violence, evil done to his neighbour. But he has laboured—laboured more or better than another. He has not, therefore, injured him, like a usurper or an oppressor. He has a few more grains on the earth—a little more wealth in society; and that is all. What harm has he done around him by enriching himself? None.

What interest could society have in preventing him? None. This prevention, too, would be sheer madness; for without any corresponding profit, it would have diminished the mass of things necessary or useful to man.

There is, therefore, no harm done either to you or to me, or to society; and this man should be permitted to exercise his faculties as he pleases.

It is true, nevertheless, that this wealth is a cause of evil to you—the evil of comparison. It galls you, and excites your envy. I agree that this is certainly an evil, a grievous evil, but it is not without compensation; and all things being soberly examined, society declares the compensation so great that in every time and country it has thought fit to let envy suffer, and the prosperity of individuals increase, in proportion to their skill, and on their application;—and this is the compensation.

It is by means of exchange that men procure most of the things they require. Accordingly they do not make everything. They make certain things, to which they devote themselves exclusively, and thus succeed in making them better than others. They then give a portion of what they have produced to procure that which the labour of others has produced, and the result is this: when there is more corn or more cloth, both are cheaper. There is more of each for everybody. Whosoever then, by yielding to his taste or his skill in labour, is liable, when he grows rich, to excite your envy, has contributed to the common prosperity, and particularly to yours. If, in consequence of his exertions, there is more corn, or iron, or cloth, or money, there is more of each for all. The abundance which he has helped to create is advantageous to all; and society permits him to add to his stores, although the result may be an inequality as regards those who labour less strenuously: it is permitted, because the

general prosperity increases with his private prosperity. It would check the individual that would oppress his fellows; but him who employs his faculties to multiply on the soil the objects useful to man, such as food, clothing, or habitations—who renders these objects more plentiful, wholesome, and better, even should he (for himself or his children) convert his aliments into savoury and exquisite viands, his garments into purple and fine linen, his house into a palace—him, I repeat, society encourages and supports, without troubling itself with the contrast; without compassionating the feelings of the envious; for even the envious man procures his food, his clothes, his lodging at a cheaper rate, and if he should desire to produce in his turn, he will procure money at a lower interest; labour will be an easier task to him.

The principle of equality, properly understood, in no respect weakens the principle of property, however unequal that may become by the superiority of one man's labour over another's; and so far, at least, the chain of our reasoning has been carried on without being weakened.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE TRANSMISSION OF PROPERTY.

Showing that property is not property unless it be transmissible by gift or by inheritance.

NOTHING is more legitimate, say the writers I am arguing against, than that man should enjoy the produce of his labour—that he should eat the fruit gathered from the trees he has planted. They thus grant a per-

sonal property to him who has created it by his labour. In truth, nature, stronger than they, confounds them; compels them to be silent in the presence of that fact, so simple, so manifestly irreproachable, of a man eating the fruit that he has caused to grow. They go still further in their concessions; they admit that a man shall possess more or less, according as he has been during life more or less skilful, more or less industrious, —that one shall have much, another little; and they grant, consequently, that primary inequality of goods which results from the natural inequality of man's faculties. But here their concessions stop. Nothing is more just, they exclaim, than that a man should enjoy the fruits of his labour; but that these fruits should be transmitted to another, that this *other* should enjoy them in idleness, and in the vices that idleness engenders,—this is repugnant to the simplest equity; this runs counter to the result society had in view by consecrating property, namely, that of exciting labour; this adds to the natural inequalities God has established among men by endowing them unequally,—those artificial inequalities which are the cause that an idle and worthless child, because he is the heir of an industrious and worthy father, lives in the midst of every enjoyment, while at his side another individual, deprived of the same advantages, lives in the greatest misery. Property extended so as to become hereditary, thus arrives at consequences which are in contradiction to its principle, and which cannot be admitted.

This is really the point, not a difficult but a complicated one, of the subject under review; for, like a river, which winds the more the farther it flows from its source, so this question extends, is expanded and mixed up with a multitude of other questions. And yet, what the adversaries of property deny, I affirm; what they dispute, I maintain to be indispensable; and these are my assertions as opposed to theirs:—

Property either is or is not;

If it is, it carries with it the right of gift;

If it carries with it the right of gift, it must include the children as well as indifferent persons;

It is in force during the life of the parent, as well as at his death;

Far from favouring idleness by this extension, it becomes, on the contrary, a powerful and unlimited excitement to labour, on condition of the privilege of transmitting it from the sire to the son;

Lastly, the new and the greatest inequalities which follow are absolutely necessary, and compose one of the most beautiful and productive harmonies of human society.

In a word, property produces its best and most productive effects only on condition of being complete, of becoming personal and hereditary.

Such are the propositions which, in the following chapters, I shall endeavour to render so clear as to cut off (I would hope) all opposition.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON GIFT.

Showing that gift is one of the necessary manners of using property.

You grant that I can enjoy what I have produced, that I can apply to my wants or my pleasures the fruits of my personal labour. But would it be a robbery, and dangerous to society, if I gave them to another?

First, suppose that I have produced more than I can consume, which happens to every skilful and industrious

man, what will you have me do with the surplus? My granaries are full of corn, my stores of fruit, and my cellars of wine; the wool of my flocks has furnished me more garments than I can wear, and all because I have cultivated my fields with more intelligence and activity than another; what would you have me do with this abundance? That I should eat and drink more than my hunger and my thirst require, or that I should throw the excess into a lay-stall, appointed for the purpose; or else that I should not create them at all, which is the simplest course? If you will not permit me to use the surplus of my labour as I please, I shall be reduced to one of three alternatives: either I must consume more than I want, or destroy the surplus, or not create it at all. But here is a way of employing the superfluity of my goods, which I submit to your judgment.

I observe at the border of my field a poor wretch expiring of hunger and fatigue. I run up to him, and pour into his mouth a little of my surplus wine; I give him one of those fruits I did not know what to do with; I throw over his tattered clothes one of those many garments I had produced, and I behold his senses returning, the smile of gratitude imprinted on his features, and in my heart I experience a more lively pleasure than that which I had felt in my mouth when tasting the fruits of my field. Do you mean to restrict to this point the employment of my possessions, so that I cannot use them in the manner that is most pleasing to me? After having conceded to me the merely physical enjoyment of my property, would you deny me the moral enjoyment, the noblest, the sweetest, the most useful of all? Odious legislator, you would permit me to eat, to destroy my possessions, and not allow me to give them away! Self, self alone, is the paltry aim you would assign to the painful exertions of a life! you would thus degrade, disenchant, check

my labour! But, however, judge of the fact by its consequences. I have said above, that if a man were to fall upon his neighbour, and take away from him the food destined for his support, and he in turn were to do the same to another, society would ere long be a mere scene of plunder, instead of a field of labour. Suppose, on the contrary, that each man who has too much should give to him who has not enough, the world would become a theatre of beneficence. Do not fear, however, that man can ever go too far in this course, and make his neighbour idle by undertaking to labour for him. All the charity that exists in the heart of man is barely on a level with human misery, and the utmost has been done when the continued appeals of morality and religion succeed in making the remedy equal to the disease, the balm sufficient for the wound.

Gift, then, is the noblest way of employing property. It is, I repeat, a moral enjoyment added to a physical enjoyment. "Enough, enough!" my opponents will say; "you are demonstrating what needs no demonstration." Agreed: but let us pursue the matter, and they will perhaps be obliged to say as much of all the rest.

CHAPTER IX.

ON INHERITANCE.

Showing that from gift the parent derives the right of endowing his children during his life or at his death.

It has been conceded, that gift is one of the necessary and indispensable ways of employing property. Now let us go a step farther. What! I may give to persons who are nothing to me, but whose sufferings have touched me, and I cannot give to my wife or children;

to my wife, who shared all the toils of my life; to my children, my offspring, who are dearer to me than my own person! When they are hungry or cold, if I am not utterly depraved, I feel hunger and cold more for them than for myself. Their wants are mine, and stimulate me more than my own. Will you not then permit me to make a choice among my wants, to satisfy first those which I feel the most acutely, and to appease a hunger more painful for me to endure than that which I feel in my own stomach? You will permit me, then, to feed my children before I feed myself. That is not all, however. For a part of their life, some one must support these children, for during one-fourth of their existence they are too weak to provide for themselves. In the savage state, for instance, trees must be climbed to gather fruit; in a civilized state, bread can only be procured after it is earned. But if any one should support them, who will undertake that care, unless it be myself, their father, the author of their days? The birds of the air set me an example, which, apparently, you will allow me to follow!—"Enough, enough!" my opponents will say again; "you are proving what requires no proof!" Where then must I go in this road to find what needs a demonstration?

Property is not property, if I cannot give it away as well as consume it: this point is conceded. If I can give it to strangers, *a fortiori* I can give it to my children, who imperatively require it during part of their life: this is also conceded. I can therefore give it to another, and in another I can, I ought to prefer my children. Where then does the difficulty begin? At the moment of my decease; that is, I can give it at all periods of my life, except at the point of death. And is that the only difference between the right I claim and that which is disputed! But this difference would be either null, or barbarous, or impossible.

Tell me how you will prevent a parent from giving to his son what he desires to bequeath to him at the moment of his death? If you permit a father to give away during his life-time and not at his death, he will take care to disseise himself during that life-time. A day, an hour before his decease, he will give from hand to hand the moveable (*i. e.* personal) property, easily transmissible on the death-bed, such as money, jewels, or papers having a marketable value. Immovable (or real) property, which is more difficult of transmission, such as land, houses, &c., he will give away one, two, or ten years before his decease, or else he will sell them, and depreciate their value in order to convert them into objects transmissible at pleasure. In a word, he will have evaded your law, by stripping himself during his life. But from the necessity you have imposed upon him of giving away his property during life, two consequences will arise. The good father will be punished for his goodness, the bad father recompensed for his selfishness. The good father, parting with his property before death, may perhaps meet with an ungrateful son, and will be unable to plant a tree, or turn a furrow in that field which he has given his son, and will live a stranger in the midst of the wealth he created, and of which he will be deprived before his time, for fear that his son should not reap the benefit of it. The bad father, on the contrary, who may be unwilling to part with his property, or the cowardly one, who may be fearful to entertain the idea of death, to secure the future of his children, will enjoy his possessions undisputed until his decease. Thus the good father will have robbed himself, the bad father will have held his property until his last hour.

At these odious results, will you not again stop me, and cry out: "Enough, enough!"—Yes, here we must stop, for it is evident that nature, having placed in the heart of man, especially of the good man, an

irresistible longing to transmit his possessions to his son, the father will give to his children, however we may endeavour to prevent him, the greater portion of his goods from hand to hand, will convert them into others more capable of being given away directly; or, if he cannot do that, he will strip himself before his death, to be more assured of making a use of it in conformity with his affections. From that time, the lawgiver, certain of producing absurdities if he obstinately perseveres in opposing nature, and moreover, of being disobeyed while attempting this opposition, will absolve the parent from these hateful precautions, and will grant that at his death his goods shall pass in full right to his children; in a word, he will grant inheritance of property.

And just consider how absurd would be the consequences of an opposite prescription! The parent, I have said, would be unable to give houses or land, or tangible property, but he would give away, in spite of you, his movable, intangible property, such as is easily passed from hand to hand, an hour before his death. Transmission from sire to son would exist for some things, and not for others. But there are more precious things, which all the laws in the world would not prevent him from transmitting. One man is a clever mechanic, and possesses a secret for tempering metals; another is a skilful physician, and has the secret of some valuable remedy: can you prevent either of them, at the hour of death, from whispering into the ears of their children, and securing them a future fortune by a single word? A third was a great statesman, whose success lay in his prudence; a fourth was a great general, whose wealth was his renown; can you prevent the one from transmitting his prudence to his son by the lessons of a life; or the other from bequeathing his glory, merely by bequeathing his name? Another, mixed up in all the affairs of his country, entertains

certain religious and political sentiments; you will not prevent him from inculcating them in his children. And when moral possessions, which ought to be the most precious of all in your eyes, if you are not a legislator devoted solely to the worship of material things, are inevitably transmitted, material things, simply because they are material, are not transmissible! Money, perhaps, and jewels, as the most transmissible after these moral things, might pass from one generation to another; land, alone, when the parent had not taken the precaution of robbing himself, would be stopped in its passage! Have you reflected seriously upon these absurdities? Bold sophist, are you not confounded?

I hold, then, the following propositions as having been most amply demonstrated:—

I. Gift, being recognised as one of the necessary methods of using property, is unavoidable, especially to the advantage of the children.

II. It is unavoidable at every period of the father's existence; and by according the full right of transmitting his wealth to his children at the hour of death, we must obviate his disposing of it during his life.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF INHERITANCE ON LABOUR.

Showing that the facility of transmitting property from parent to child adds zeal to labour, and completes the system of property.

THERE are always two lights under which we must alternately view the subject of which I am treating, and which, owing to the admirable combinations of

nature, are always found in perfect harmony,—they are equity and social utility. Equity, is the question considered with regard to the individual; social utility, is the question considered with regard to society itself. Equity declares that a man who has laboured ought to possess in peace the fruits of his labour; and that we should not require him to dispose of them before his death in order to secure their transmission to his children. Social utility imperatively requires that a man should be sure of preserving the fruits of his labour, in order that he may labour; for without the constant and unwearied exertions of all its members, society would continue miserable. This same social utility requires, as imperatively also, that he have the right of transmitting it to his children, otherwise he would lose half his energy for labour. In a word, property does not exercise all its useful effects unless it be complete, that is, unless it be both personal and hereditary.

To establish this point, I shall not require more investigation than I did to establish those which have preceded.

It is desirable that man should labour, and in order that he should labour, the possession of what he produces is secured to him. This first security, personal and restricted as it is, is not enough. It may be enough to make him labour for a part of his life, but not for the whole,—not enough to secure to him the greatest of all the delights of labour, that of transmitting his wealth to his children.

Man has vices of every kind; he occasionally shows the most atrocious with respect to his fellows; but he rarely displays any towards his children. And the reason is, that far-sighted nature, wishing to secure the continuation of the human race, has deeply implanted paternal love in his heart, and has made this sentiment, not a virtue, but an irresistible instinct. The father

who robs and who murders, often gives to his offspring the goods he has stolen, and exerts for their protection the ferocity he has shown towards his neighbour. Observe now the majority of parents who have attained a certain age: for whom do they still labour,—for whom do they toil unceasingly, even when their strength begins to fail? They labour for their children, and amid their toils they are cheered by the thought that their offspring will reap the fruit.

Look at those skilful traders, who have enriched society by their ingenious discoveries, or by their bold commercial expeditions, to which we are indebted for the cheap rate at which we procure our cotton, our flax, our wool, our sugar;—observe their tastes, the nature of their pleasures, and you will soon discover their spring of action. Most of their time, these plain men of simple tastes, to whom nature has given genius, but whom society has neglected to educate, and who, after amassing a great fortune, after having procured for their children mansions, costly furniture, masterpieces of art, tables sumptuously spread, horses fleet as Arab coursers, parks stored with game,—smile at the delight their children take in these objects, in their enjoyment find their own,—and then they proceed to enjoy themselves in their own fashion, invariably the same, by returning to their manufactures, their warehouses, their shops,—happy in the idea that all the wealth in which they take so little pleasure, will increase still more for the benefit of their children, in whose persons they become sensible to all those delicacies which they cannot appreciate, and which they have never known. Suppose them deprived of the right of transmitting to their descendants all they have amassed, they would be checked in the midst of their career, at the very moment when their faculties were most active. The more able and skilful they were, the sooner would they be checked, for they would

sooner have obtained all their simple tastes required, and for fear that they should have idle children, you would have commenced by ensuring the idleness of the parents.

It would be a lamentable way of preventing idlers in the world, to deprive the parents of the principal reason which excites them to labour. No doubt I shall be told that the industrious men of whom I have spoken, having devoted their lives to toil, would have continued toiling on, even though they had no children, simply from habit or competition. This might be the case with some, who become the rich uncles of the novel or the comedy. But whence did they derive the habit of that earnest labour? In a society where property has excited the ardour of the whole body, and as a horse in a team gallops with the rest, so they run because all the world is running at their side. They would not have contracted this taste, or felt this rivalry of labour, in a society tamed down and chilled by the barbarous refusal of the right to bequeath their property to their descendants. They would have done like the fiery courser, who moves along slowly because his team-fellows do the same. But, finally, suppose that some, urged by the necessity of occupation, laboured solely for labour's sake, the barbarous, cold-blooded, unfeeling legislator, trifling with their sensibility, would have robbed them of one of the greatest sweets of labour. Look at that rich and childless man, whom nature has deprived of this deep satisfaction, sometimes so painful because it is so deep,—observe his loneliness, his disenchantment, his disgust, in proportion as he advances in life. At night, when he has counted his treasures, closed his coffers, he knows not what to do; and if a moment is left for reflection, it is to inquire how he shall employ the wealth he has amassed. But he is fatigued with his day's toil, he falls asleep, and awakes in the morning to recommence his labours, and

again at night to feel the same loneliness, the same aching void as before. Then he applies to his brother or his sister, prays for one of their children, whom he adopts, endeavours to love, and to fancy that it is his own flesh and blood. Or else, if he have no nephews or nieces, he borrows of some poor woman an object of love, that may serve as the aim of all the exertions of his life.

Must this void, then, in the childless man, be the fate of all those who, through habit or the necessity of constant occupation, watered the earth with their sweat, and laboured to enrich society? It is a vain illusion. In your frozen society all ardour would be extinct, all rivalry limited; you would have none of that ambition which kindles at the flame around them. Man, whose only object was self, would stop in the midst of his career as soon as he had acquired a provision for old age; and, as before observed, for fear of producing idleness in the son, you would have begun by enforcing idleness in the father!

But is it true, that by permitting the hereditary transmission of wealth, the son would necessarily be idle, consuming in sloth and debauchery the fortune bequeathed to him by his father? In the first place, what after all does that wealth represent on which the supposed idleness of the son would be supported? A prior labour,—that of the parent; and by preventing the father from labouring that you may compel the son to labour in his own person, all that you will gain is this,—the son will have to do what the father has not done. There will not be an additional amount of labour. In the system of inheritances, on the contrary, to the unlimited labour of the father will be added the unlimited labour of the son; for it is not true that the son will cease from toiling because his father has bequeathed him a greater or less amount of wealth. It is rare that the parent leaves to the child the means of

living without occupation. It is only in cases of extreme wealth that this happens,—as will be noticed presently. But ordinarily, in most professions, it is only a more advanced step in the road that a father procures for his son, by bequeathing to him his inheritance. He has set him farther on, has given him the means of labouring with greater resources, of being a farmer when he himself was a hired servant, of fitting out ten ships when he himself could only fit out one; or else of changing his career, of rising from one to another, of becoming an attorney, physician, or barrister,—of being a Cicero or a Pitt, when he himself was a plain country squire like Cicero's father, or a cornet of dragoons, as was the father of William Pitt. In a word, he has led his son to a more advanced point in the great arena, gives his blessing as he sees him set out, and dies happy at witnessing his offspring moving onwards with a swifter pace. But the motive which has urged him to advance as far as possible, impels the son to do the same. As he thought of his children, and with this idea became indefatigable, the son thinks of his children also, and in his turn becomes unwearied too. Under a system which forbade all inheritance, the father would have stopped short, and so would the son: each generation, limited in its fertility, like a river whose waters are retained by a dike, would have given a part only of what it had in itself, and would have stopped short at the quarter or the half of what it was capable. On the contrary, under a system where property is hereditary, the parent labours as much as he can until the last day of his life; the son, for whom he laboured thus, does the same for his children; ceases not any more than his father did before him; both looking forward to the future, toiling unceasingly for the benefit of their little ones, and not only for their benefit, but for that of the whole human race.

In conclusion,—by the institution of personal pro-

perty, society gave man the only stimulus that could urge him to labour. One thing remained to be done, to render this stimulus unceasing. This society did, by the institution of hereditary property.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE RICH MAN.

Showing that the accumulations resulting from property both personal and hereditary, compose what are called riches, which discharge many indispensable functions in society.

FROM the guarantee of property to an individual and his children there will result accumulations of riches, more or less rapid, for the formation of which one generation sometimes suffices in the case of a man of great natural endowments, but which ordinarily require several generations; and hence arise great fortunes, which attract the attention, like those enormous corn-stacks placed by the road-side on the borders of a fruitful farm. This sight, I am aware, offends the eyes of some, but what can be done?

I shall here repeat what I have already said with regard to the primary inequality of wealth originating, at the very outset of society, in the natural inequality of the human faculties,—that we must put up with them, because these greater shares of the general wealth have been taken from no one; because to prevent them we must have checked mankind and said to them: Do not toil so much; and finally, because each man profits by them, even the envious man, for if there

is more food, clothing, &c., these objects, so necessary to life, are cheaper to every body.

It is therefore a powerful consideration to leave these indefatigable labourers to themselves, as they take nothing from any one, and give something to all. But the offence to the eyes? If this wealth offends some, it stimulates others, encourages, supports, and animates them, and in this encouragement society finds so many advantages for the whole body, that it may well pass by the envy excited in some of its members. But are these the only reasons, good as they appear to me, for permitting these accumulations? are there no others? We may easily decide for ourselves.

Undoubtedly society does not desire that there should be only a single kind of labour,—manual labour. It desires also that there should be men who can put the compass to paper, measure the course of the stars, and teach the sailor how to navigate the trackless ocean; that there should be others who can spend part of the day over the annals of nations to discover the cause of the prosperity or fall of empires, and teach men how to govern them. It is not the man who from morn to night remains bent over the soil or over a machine, who can find leisure for these pursuits. Sometimes, in truth, a peasant may become a Sforza (3), a compositor may be a Franklin, but these exceptions are rare. It is the sons of men devoted to manual labour who, being raised above their condition by an industrious father, will climb the steps of the social scale, and attain to these sublime labours of the understanding.

The sire was a peasant, a cotton-spinner, or a sailor before the mast. The son, if the father has been industrious, will become a farmer, a manufacturer, or the master of a ship. The grandson will become a banker, a lawyer, physician, barrister, or perhaps the ruler of a state. In this manner generations rise one above another, vegetate, as it were, like a tree, which at each

returning spring puts forth new shoots, which, fresh, tender, and green as the young grass, acquires in autumn the colour and consistency of wood, then having become small branches in the succeeding year, send forth in their turn other shoots, and in time become stout limbs, until they overshadow the surrounding soil with their dense foliage.

Thus human vegetation goes on, and by degrees those rich classes of society are formed that are called idle, but which are not so, for the labour of mind is at least on a level with that of the hands, and must follow after it, if society have no wish to remain in a state of barbarism. I acknowledge that among these rich men there are some, unworthy descendants of prudent parents, who pass their time in riotous living, quaffing liquors that intoxicate the brain, and waste away in idleness and debauchery their youth, their fortune, and their health. Unhappily, this is too true; but they will soon be punished. Their youth blighted before its time, their fortune spent before the close of their career, they will depart, sorrowful, poor, and disgraced, from those mansions which their parents had bequeathed them, which their insensate prodigality has transferred to the hands of rich men more prudent than themselves, and in one generation, we see labour rewarded in the father, idleness punished in the son. Envy, implacable envy, now art thou not comforted?

But again, are the children of the wealthy always idle, debauched, and spendthrifts? True, they do not labour like him who tills the ground or wields the hammer of the smith. And is there no other labour than that of the hands? Must there not be men devoted to the study of nature, to the discovery of her laws, that they may be applied to the advantage of the human race,—men who may learn how to employ water, fire, and the elements,—who may learn to constitute and govern societies? True, it is not always

the rich man that makes these sublime discoveries, although he does so occasionally; but it is he who encourages them, and helps to form that instructed public, for which the poor and modest scholar toils,—it is he who possesses extensive libraries,—it is he who reads Homer, Virgil, Dante, Newton, Descartes, Milton, Shakspeare, Bossuet, Moliere, Racine, and Montesquieu. If not himself, it is in his library, in his drawing-room, that they are read and appreciated, and where that enlightened society is collected together,—that society so polished, with tastes so practised and refined,—for which genius writes, sings, and covers the canvas with its magic colours. Sometimes the rich man himself is a good judge, sometimes also he is one of those eminent men who do not confine themselves to the mere enjoyment of the master-pieces of genius, but produce others of equal brilliancy. Sallust, Seneca, Montaigne, Buffon, Lavoisier, were all wealthy men. He is also the eminent statesman who presides over the destinies of his country.

A plain English cotton-spinner, whose name is Peel, accumulates immense riches. Devoting his life to his manufactories, he has little knowledge of public affairs; but he lavishes on his son every kind of learning, and the son rising above his father, combining the most extensive information with the influence of fortune, becomes one of the first statesmen of England; and setting himself between the old and the new race, governs his country with a happy admixture of the old and the new spirit. Is it then a hateful sight, that a parent, after employing his faculties in a lucrative manner, should furnish his son with the means of employing them in a manner not less lucrative, but more noble and elevated? Is it not right, is it not necessary, that one of these employments should come after the other? Permit me to quote other examples which, in their time, provoked many an envious man.

In that republic, the most fertile in riches and masterpieces of art, for it gave to the world Dante, Petrach, Boccacio, Machiavelli, Galileo, Ghiberti, Brunelleschi, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo, —in that republic, which circulated through Europe cloth, silk, velvet, jewellery, and credit, there was a family of illustrious merchants, who have bequeathed their name to one of the three great ages of humanity —the Medici! Do you think they have set a very bad example to the world?

John de Medici, in 1400, laid the foundations of the fortune of his race. Mild, prudent, and industrious, possessing in the highest degree the talent for commercial pursuits, he amassed great wealth, and shrinking, like a wise man, from public affairs, advised his children never to meddle with politics. "Remember," said he, on his death-bed, "that I never went to the *old palace* (the seat of government) until I was summoned (*che chiamato*)."

Fortunately his advice was not followed. His son, Cosmo, surrounded by the most able masters, learned in the sciences, arts, and policy, possessing a bold genius, mingled, notwithstanding his father's counsel, in public affairs; was proscribed; re-called with enthusiasm; did not govern, but influenced the Florentine republic during thirty years; built the beautiful family palace of the *Ricardi;* lived familiarly with Masaccio, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Donatello, and Poggio; founded Greek schools at Florence; still further added to the wealth of his family, and all the while, though politic and learned, remained a merchant. This merchant, however, quitted his country-house at certain festivals for the charming retirement of Cafiagiolo, and there read—guess what he read!—the dialogues of Plato, which Poggio had translated for him, and for which he payed a heavy sum in gold.

His son, Peter, survived him not long, and the glory of the house descended to his grandson—to him whom posterity has never ceased to love and admire, under the name of Lorenzo the Magnificent. He, still more disobedient to the counsel of his ancestor, entirely neglected commerce, and was only the scholar and politician. Educated with Politian and Pico de la Mirandola, a poet and cavalier, excelling in all bodily exercises, ugly as Socrates, winning as Alcibiades, not less wise as a statesman than irresistible as a negociator, he saved his country when threatened by a general coalition; conciliated by the mildness of his administration all the courts of Italy, and procured for them a solid peace of fifteen years' duration, which Italian historians have called the "golden age" of their country; wrote exquisite verses; sought throughout Europe for the most valuable Greek and Latin manuscripts, the finest statues of antiquity, and gave Michael Angelo to the world; charmed and dazzled by his magnificence the Italian princes whom he had attracted to Florence with a view to the general concord; thought of everything except his own fortune, which he lavished and compromised, but so notoriously to the public interest, that grateful Florence declared the treasures of the Medici and of the state to be but one, and dying, carried with him the happiness of his country to his tomb; for the prudence which had rendered her so happy expiring with him, the French and Germans fell upon Italy, ravaged her fair soil for half a century, and made her what she still is—a slave!

Would it have been better if this striking phenomenon of hereditary transmission had never existed? That the fortune of the Medici ceasing with John, Cosmo had been obliged to spend his life in re-commencing it; that ceasing again with Cosmo, Lorenzo

should have been forced to begin again; and that neither of them had found time to cultivate the arts, literature, and the science of government?

These agglomerations of fortune, the necessary consequences of labour excited without limit, procure, therefore, the leisure necessary for the cultivation of the higher sciences. They form that social region where genius does not always have its birth, but where sometimes it comes into being; and where it needs to dwell that it may be appreciated, excited, and encouraged. Thus, in her profound meditations, nature, left to herself, makes one relation of things correspond to a thousand others. The man who labours must have the means of becoming rich, that he may have an object for his exertions; and at the same time, in becoming rich, he creates for his children this leisure of mind. Thus, in the universe, all is connected; all is mutually balanced and supported; all is contrasted, though without opposition, and forms a thousand harmonious tints, like a picture by the hand of a skilful and gifted artist.

Is this the rich man's only part on the stage of the world? The son, enriched by the labours of the father, possesses not only his well-stored library and his costly paintings, but a mansion filled with sumptuous furniture, tables groaning beneath the load of dishes, fleet-footed steeds, and elegant chariots. Tell me, ye philosophers of envy, must we have all these things in society? Are you quakers, hating all glitter, loving only black and white, or perhaps grey as the only permitted variety; or will you admit that in the productions of all society, we must have diversity in abundance, delicacy, elegance—in a word, beauty?

Whatever may be your personal tastes, which I suspect are not those of quakers, permit me to teach you the law of all production. When men do not produce much, they produce badly and dearly; and if

they produce much, they produce more or less well, in consequence of the inequality of the human faculties,—a cause always in action. Generally they begin by producing badly, then tolerably, and end by producing well, very well, and then to perfection ; and while they advance in this manner, they always keep that inevitable distance from the lower to the middling production, and from the middling to the superior. Either there is no progress at all, or we have these three terms. Either we shall have the vale of Tempe, inhabited by shepherds, eating the flesh of their flocks, and wearing their wool,—shepherds whom the poets describe as innocent, but whom I affirm to be rude and brutal, often indulging in ignoble vices, having their Cains if they have their Abels ; and their poor also, a hundred times more hideous than those of London or Paris, for they are the *Crétins*, bearing on their necks the marks of physical misery, and on their idiot features the marks of moral misery ; or we shall have that vale of Tempe, a society in continual movement, and in which are found those inevitable terms, the inferior, the middling, and the superior production. If society desires to progress, it must of necessity proceed from one to the other of these terms. Does it desire to have things cheap ? It is still indispensable that these three terms should be combined, as cheapness results from the reversion of the expenses of the first on the second, of the second on the third. Let us see how this applies to agricultural produce. Wheat, rye, and potatoes, following one another in the soil so as to leave no part unproductive, mutually support each other. The high price of wheat permits the farmer to sell his rye at a lower rate ; the moderate price of rye permits him to sell his potatoes at a rate still lower. In manufacturing produce, there is the same reciprocity of support. Fifty years ago, when cotton-spinning was first introduced into France, the manu-

facturers began by producing badly and dearly, then less badly and less dearly, and at last well and cheaply. They continue spinning more finely the fine, the middling, and the coarse, and producing cheaper every day, owing to the reversion of the expenses from one to the other. The same phenomenon occurs in the case of those elegant tissues of wool, that once were sought in the valleys of Thibet, and which, half a century back, were seen only on the graceful shoulders of the wealthy lady, but which now adorn those of women in easy circumstances, and have permitted the modest wives of the labouring classes to wear the produce of the merino sheep. If the fine tissue of cashmere were not produced, it would be impossible to produce at a low rate the merino shawl. The handsome thoroughbred horses on which the dissipated son of the rich man gallops through his park, compensate the trainer for raising the less comely beasts which mount our cavalry, or the stout horse which drags the plough. But who will pay for these choicer, finer, rarer productions, if there are no accumulations of fortune in the hands of a lucky few, whom past or present labour has enriched? Thus riches, mediocrity, and poverty aid each other, and pay less dearly, because they pay together, the different states of human industry.

No doubt it would be better were there wheaten bread for every mouth; cashmere shawls for every woman; Arab coursers for every horseman. Alas! why does it not depend upon us to feed with the most nutritious aliments; to clothe with the choicest produce of the loom; to lodge in the healthiest dwellings, that people whom we love much more than they who flatter them, whose plain common sense we appreciate when it has not been corrupted? But is that in the power of science, either ancient or modern?

God has willed that man should begin on this earth with the acorn, that he may end, in consequence of his

labour, with wheaten bread; and it seems to me that, since he has desired to make happiness the reward of labour, and life a scene of trial, we ought to bow down humbly before such a plan.

These choice aliments, those beautiful and healthy garments which you envy in the rich, the poor will have some day! yes, they will have them, provided society continues to labour some time longer. An idle promise, say you. Not so idle, if we judge by the past. Three or four centuries ago, kings in their palaces trod on floors strewn with fresh gathered leaves or straw; now, the humble tradesman walks on carpets gay as the flowery fields in spring. To attain this result, society has laboured for ages. Let it still toil on, and what now is the privilege of the rich man only, will be the possession of the poor. But when society has reached this point, the fine-spun web will be finer still, and there always will be required wealth, competence, and mediocrity (it will no longer be *poverty*, I hope), to correspond with the three states of all human industry, to pay for the superior, middling, and inferior produce; for industry in progress is like a marble column, with its capital, its shaft, and its base.

See what takes place in all political and social disturbances. More alarming to the rich than to the poor, they terrify the former, make him averse to all the enjoyments of luxury, and from that moment all prosperity is checked. Men cry out against the rich, oppress them with taxes, attack the high functionaries of state and reduce their salaries, and then the general distress increases in proportion as the consumption of the objects of luxury is the more completely interrupted. Then there is another cry: Industry must be supported; the means of doing so are sought, and in the support given to this or that manufacture, in premiums on exportation, by which the foreigner alone profits, more is expended than has been gained

by taxes badly assessed, or by reductions ill understood. We are then obliged to reconstruct, badly and incompletely, what it would have been sufficient to have left alone, and we resemble those children who, carried away by their instinct for destruction, desire to replant the flowers they have uprooted, or recall to life the harmless animal they have killed.

I have not yet described all the functions of riches in society. It has another part to play, besides that of purchasing those refined objects whose production and consumption are indispensable; wealth alone can furnish capital to inventive genius—to daring, rash genius, often liable to be deceived, and to ruin those who provide the funds. Here, for instance, is an invention which will change the face of the world; the inventor extols it and represents it to be, what it really is, a miracle. But others have said the same of the most ridiculous inventions. A trial must be made, large sums must be risked, and he who risks must be able to lose. Can the poor man, the man of a simple competency, do this? The hope of gain sometimes lures them on, and by this temerity they lose in an hour the modest fruits of their economy. Far from stimulating them, they ought, on the contrary, to be discouraged. But the rich man, who has more than he needs for his living, can afford to lose, and therefore can risk; and while he indulges in the dissipations of elegant society, or in the tumult of politics, or the pleasures of foreign travel, leaving his accumulated capital at his banker's, he confides to him his superfluities, which serve as an encouragement to fresh enterprises. He is little to be pitied if he loses. He becomes all the richer if he gains, and may encourage some genius bolder still.

Thus the inequality of riches, which already corresponds to the wants of human industry, always unequal in its productions, alone also has the means of being

daring as genius. The last part still remains to be played, which completes the character of wealth in this world, and this time gnawing envy will not love it the more, but will at least be condemned to silence. It may be charitable. No doubt the rich man, who is often an idler and a spendthrift,—vices for which he soon atones by wretchedness, and severely atones too, for the poor man has hands at least, while he has none; the poor man feels no shame, and he is devoured by it—no doubt the rich man also has an unfeeling heart, "a heart untouched by others' woe," and he does not remain unpunished; for besides being deprived of the sweetest of all enjoyments upon earth, he is haunted by the justest, the deepest hatred that men can feel, the hatred against an avaricious and hard-hearted Dives. But sometimes he is charitable, and then he quits his palace to visit the cottage of the poor, braving disgusting filth and contagious disease; and when he has discovered this new enjoyment, it becomes a passion with him, and he can never relinquish it. Suppose all fortunes to be equal, suppose all wealth and all misery to be suppressed, no one would have the means of giving, and no one (say you) would require alms; which is untrue. Even granting that it were true, you would have suppressed the sweetest, the most charming and most graceful of human virtues. Unhappy reformer, you would have marred God's work, by desiring to improve it! Leave us the human heart such as God made it. If we had created poor men at will, for the satisfaction of seeing rich men charitable, no doubt you would have had reason to say that it were better there had been no poor, even should there have been no rich able to relieve them. But forget not that the rich man did not create the poor man; that if he had not become rich, that is, if his parents had not added to the general wealth by their labours, the poor man would be poorer still; and that his admirable

charity, in order to have a field for exertion, did not begin by taking from the poor what it now gives to them. In this continued progress towards a better condition, the labour which has succeeded contributes to the support of the labour which has not succeeded; and wealth, which may have every vice, but which may have every virtue also, sustains poverty. They advance leaning upon one another, procuring reciprocal enjoyments, and forming a group a hundred-fold more touching to witness than your poor man alone at the side of another poor man, refusing to help each other, and deprived of those two exquisite sentiments, charity and gratitude.

Yet one more observation on this subject, and I shall leave the rich man. These accumulations of wealth, so apparent to the eyes, are neither so numerous nor so considerable as may be imagined, and were they all divided, they would give but a very small share to each individual. We should have destroyed the charm of labour, taken away the means of paying for the superior productions of art and science; in a word, blotted out the designs of God, without enriching any one. Do you indeed believe that the rich are so very numerous, and that they are really *very rich?* They are neither one nor the other. No one has counted the fortunes in a given society; but in a state like France, where there are supposed to be 12,000,000 of families, reckoning three individuals in each, we know that there exist 2,000,000 of families that have scarcely the necessaries of life, and often are entirely destitute of them; 6,000,000 which possess these necessaries; 3,000,000 possessing a competency; nearly 1,000,000 having something more than a competency; and 300 or 400 at the most that are wealthy. Suppose there were an equal partition, we could take nothing from those who have the simple necessaries of life, nothing perhaps from those who have a bare competency or

something more; but if the fortunes of the 300 or 400 who are really opulent were taken away, we should not pay half the expenses of the state for a twelve-month. We should not have added an appreciable quantity to the fortunes of the mass, and we should have suppressed the stimulus which, by exciting labour, produces an amelioration of their condition. These accumulations which dazzle the eyes, and thus help to arouse a zeal for labour,—which serve to buy the higher productions of a progressive industry, sometimes to spread like a healing balm over labour that is less successful,—these accumulations, distributed among all, would give nothing to each, and would have destroyed all the springs which, by exciting man to labour, have ameliorated the condition of the human race. It is very certain that the people are less indigent now than they were a few ages back: that famines, for instance, no longer carry off whole generations at a time; that the people, better fed, better clothed, better lodged (without being either so well fed, clothed, or lodged as we could desire), are no longer exposed to contagious diseases originating in diet and misery, as in the middle ages, or as in the East to this day. How has that happened? By the zeal employed in every age to get rich. Put an end to riches, and labour ceases with the stimulus that excited it. You will not have added a thousandth part to the actual competency of all, and will have destroyed the principle which in fifty years would have doubled or tripled it. To use a familiar expression, you will have killed the goose that laid the golden eggs.

Permit, then, these accumulations of riches, situated in the upper regions of society, like waters appointed to fertilize the globe, which before spreading through the plains in brooks or rivers, remain for awhile suspended in vast reservoirs on the tops of the highest mountains.

Thus man possesses nothing at his birth, but he has varied and strong faculties, by whose exercise he can procure all he stands in need of. He must employ them; but when he has employed them, it is evidently just that the result of his labour should benefit himself and not another, should become his property, his exclusive property. That is equitable and necessary, for he would not labour, he would indulge in robbery, if he were not sure of reaping the fruits of his labour; his neighbours would do the same, and they would soon find nothing but nature to plunder. The world would remain in a state of barbarism.

All arts, even the most imperfect, require, at least for a time, the certainty of possession. The fish upon which the uncivilized fisherman lives, only appear at certain seasons of the year in the fishing stations. The buffalo or the beaver, the food of the American savage, have also their migratory habits, of which advantage must be taken and their return watched for. The earth itself produces only one harvest, which must be waited for during a year. What follows from these conditions of the nature of things?—that man must accumulate the fruits of his fishery, his hunting, his agriculture, and that no one in the interval can take them away from him, or else he would not take the trouble to produce. He would only do what was necessary for life at the very moment when urged by the pangs of hunger. He would cultivate no art, he would live always on what he could procure quickly, and bury immediately in the inviolable asylum of his stomach, that is, on acorns, or on birds killed by a stone from a sling. But all arts which require time, reflection, and accumulation he would renounce, unless he were certain of reaping the fruits. There is one especially, the chief of all, namely agriculture, which he would abandon for ever, if the possession of the soil were not secured to him. For to this fruitful earth

you must attach yourself for life, if you desire that it should reply by its fertility to your long labour. There you must fix your abode, surround it with barriers, drive away noxious animals, burn the weeds and briars that overrun it, converting them into fertilizing ashes, carry off the stagnant waters from its surface, and convert them into clear life-giving streams, plant trees to keep off the scorching rays of the sun or the blast of blighting winds, and which will not attain their full growth for two or three generations; there the father, and after him the son, and then the grandson, must live and die. Who would take all these pains if the certainty that a usurper would not come and destroy these labours, or if not destroy them, take them for himself, did not excite and support the ardour of the first, second, and third generation? What is this certainty? if it be not property admitted and guaranteed by society.

CHAPTER XII.

ON THE TRUE FOUNDATION OF THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY.

Showing from all that has preceded, that labour is the true foundation of Property.

WHAT is the result of all these deductions, the various links of which seem to me to be nowhere disconnected? In my opinion it is this:—

Man, brought *naked into a naked world (nudus in nudâ humo)*, passes from a state of wretchedness to abundance by the exercise of the powerful faculties which God has given him.

These faculties constitute a first property, insepar-

able from him; from their exercise proceeds a second property, consisting in the goods of this world, less adherent to his existence, but, if possible, more worthy of respect, for the first comes to him by nature, the second by his own labour, and, for the very reason that it is less adherent requiring the formal guarantee of society, in order that a man, certain of possessing the fruits of his exertions, may labour with confidence and zeal.

This acquired property, being guaranteed by society, possesses, as necessary consequences, the right of gift and inheritance; for gift is one of the indispensable methods of using it, and inheritance, deriving in its turn from gift and nature, cannot be prevented by any means, and completes the system of property, by creating for labour an infinite stimulus, instead of one that is insufficient and limited.

From hereditary transmission proceed new acquired inequalities, which, being added to natural inequalities, produce certain accumulations termed riches. These accumulations possess nothing contrary to equity, for they have been taken from nobody; they contribute to the common abundance, serve to pay for the choicest productions of industrial skill, are the means of beneficence, and, being the offspring of labour, melting away and perishing through idleness, present man to us as rewarded or punished by the most infallible of all justice—that of the result.

Such is the exact history of the manner in which things take place in society, in relation to labour and property. What do we behold there? That man must labour, labour without measure and without end; that by labouring, even immoderately, according to the bent of his faculties, he does good to himself and to others; he acquires an abundance which spreads its benefits on all around, and consequently, that the personal property which gives him an aim, but a limited

aim, and property transmissible by inheritance, which creates for him an unlimited aim, are a social necessity.

Property, which at the commencement of this chain of deductions we had looked upon as a general fact, is therefore a fact not only general, but a legitimate and necessary fact.

What more is required to authorize our saying, when speaking of property, that it is a right, a sacred right, like the liberty of coming and going, the liberty of thinking, speaking, and writing?

For instance, I want to take exercise abroad, for without it I cannot live. Although at this moment I might not have the desire, the mere idea that I cannot do so, that I am confined within the walls of a city, or in the vast forests of Paraguay, would be a punishment to me; and society, before it became civilized, recognised as a natural habit, and after it was civilized, as a written law, the liberty of going and coming, and entitled it personal liberty.

I possess a mind which perceives the relations of things,—the relations of states with the world, of citizens with the state itself, which judges soundly of them, which can speak of them in a useful manner, which will do it so much the better in proportion as it can be done more freely, to which silence on this subject would be unbearable, which would brave imprisonment, perhaps death itself, if endeavours were made to prevent it; and, considering the utility for the individual, and for the state, of allowing this inclination to produce itself, society declares, when it is civilized, that the liberty of thinking and of publishing our thoughts, is a right, a sacred right.

The observation of these facts has given rise to the expression: He has a right.

The propriety, as regards equity, of leaving to a man the fruits of his labour; the interest, with regard

to social utility, that this labour should be active, energetic, and unbounded, should evidently lead to the guaranteeing of its productions, and society is as fully authorized to proclaim property a right, as to proclaim as rights the different liberties of which human liberty is composed.

Civilized society having consecrated in writing the right of property, which it had found existing under the shape of a custom in barbarous society,—having consecrated it with the object of securing, encouraging, and stimulating labour,—we may say that labour is the source, the basis, the foundation of the right of property.

But if labour is the foundation of the right of property, it is also its measure and limit. This will be evident from the following example :—

I have cleared a field in which nothing grew but weeds ; I have enclosed it, watered and planted it, covered it with buildings, or, which is the same thing, I have acquired it by giving in exchange other objects proceeding from my labour. Society secures to me—What ? The surface, scene of these toils of clearing, enclosing, planting, watering, and building,—the surface, and nothing more. This is given me, for it cannot do otherwise. How, in fact, could it guarantee to me the fruits of my labour, if it did not secure to me the tranquil possession of this surface over which the waters flow, on which these walls repose, around which twine the roots of these trees ? It must do so, and cannot permit another to sow over my harvests, to plant beside my trees. But my labour does not extend beyond my plough-share, beyond the roots of my trees, beyond the sound with which I seek the water for my well, and hence my property ceases where my labour ceases. Yet below this surface whose possession has been guaranteed to me, there are depths filled with a metal (iron), serviceable in different works ; of another metal (silver), useful for all exchanges ; of a

mineral (coal), which serves to produce force. These depths, as they may become the scene of a new labour, become at the same time the scene of a new property; and, under the surface which belongs to the husbandman, is formed a possession which belongs to the miner. Society lays down rules for the security and convenience of both. But by the side of one she places another, and the earth, far from being a scene of usurpation, thus becomes the scene of a twofold labour,—one at its surface, the other in its interior. So that no part of this earth is lavished on him who does not labour; one has the upper, the other the lower; to each for his labour, because of his labour, in the proportion of his labour.

We may therefore say, dogmatically (for it is lawful to be dogmatic after demonstration), that the indestructible foundation of the right of property is labour.

Granted (it will be said), when this labour is the real origin of property; we have no fault to find with what exists. This foundation is so natural, so legitimate, that no objection can be made to it, and all demonstration is supererogatory.

But is labour always the foundation? Do you not see every day (with regard to movable property), immense capital accumulated in certain hands by fraud, gambling, or the most absurd and criminal speculations? Do you not see (as regards immovable property) most of the large estates in the hands of men who, with ill-gotten gains, bought them of a son, who derived them from his father, a feudal baron, enriched by confiscations? By looking closer, you will see fraud or violence figure at the commencement of property, more frequently than labour; and at the limits of each estate, instead of placing the god Terminus, so venerated by the Romans, ought we not to place the god Mercury, with his caduceus and wings, symbols of fraud and flight?

But, continue the objectors, suppose property to be as deserving of respect as you assert, are there not serious inconveniences attached to its increasing extension? By permitting it to extend to all things,—land, capital, implements, machinery, primary matters, money,—does it not happen that the world is an invaded place, where there is room for no one,—a theatre, as Cicero called it, in which all the places are filled? And if this theatre were a mere place of amusement, we might be resigned to it, perhaps, although pleasure also is the right of all; but this theatre is human life. Even when willing to labour, the workman finds no means of existence; for land, capital, all belong to a small number of implacable forestallers, who provide the instruments of labour only on conditions by which the industrious man cannot live.

Thus the real origin of property, falsifying its theoretical origin;—

The invasion of the earth, and of capital, extending continually to the benefit of a few, and the injury of all;—

Are two objections of the philosophers of our day to which I shall give a reply in the two following chapters. I hope that these clouds will melt away before the truth, like a thin mist before the majestic orb of day.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON PRESCRIPTION.

Showing that if fraud and violence are sometimes the origin of property, its transmission for a certain number of years, under regular laws, gives it the respectable and sacred character of property founded on labour.

At the side of men who acquire their wealth by labour, are some individuals who usurp their wealth by fraud or violence, and this is to be an objection against all,—against those who have laboured, as well as those who have not laboured! Such a conclusion cannot be maintained. What is needed in this case? Better and severer laws, to distinguish between those whose possessions can be traced back to labour, and those whose possessions have their origin in a usurpation. Must we then renounce all idea of consecrating property, of protecting and guaranteeing it, because it is sometimes exposed to violation? The life of man is often menaced, often attacked; must we then permit assassination, because we cannot always prevent it? In the opulence of this man or of that, in his mansions or in his estates, there may perhaps be hidden some fraud of ancient date, known or suspected only, as in the midst of the smiling landscapes of Italy, or Spain, here and there may be found a cross, set up by the inhabitants in expiation of some deed of violence. This is afflicting certainly, and should be sternly repressed: but is it a reason, that amid these beautiful scenes, and in those who cultivate them, I should regard all

men as assassins; and that I should look upon the Guadalquivir or Vulturno as rivers of blood?

You speak of that den of gambling, styled the *Bourse* (the Stock-exchange), where colossal fortunes are so quickly made or lost by other means than labour. Sometimes it is so, but those who only make their appearance there to disappear as suddenly as they came, rarely depart laden with treasures. What they have gained one day by chance, they lose in the same way the next; and as for those who do not make a serious and legitimate commerce in the public funds, who do not make it the labour of their lives, fortune, cruel in her caprices, raises them for a moment to let them fall again, from the elevation to which she had borne them in her arms. The only question is, whether in this ill-famed place there can be a legitimate commerce to which society permits a man to apply his labour and his time? But can there be a serious doubt upon the subject? Must not the government borrow when the limit of taxation is reached? Must it not, by this loan, throw on the future charges that will profit the future, and which the present can no longer support? Must not those vast enterprises, destined to change the face of the country, and which require immense capital, be divided into small portions or *shares*, and placed within the reach of all capitalists? Must not the shares in these loans or enterprises be sold and bought in a public market, like any other merchandise? Is it not indispensable that speculators, watching the infinite fluctuations of these commodities, should hasten to purchase them when they fall, and thus raise their credit? These fluctuations increase in seasons of difficulty, and provoke gambling; as corn, an article to which no objection can be made, becomes, in times of scarcity, the subject of vast speculations. Would you, for this, proscribe all commerce in grain? Will you make no distinction between him who carries on a

serious, useful, steady commerce, and him who makes a temporary gambling transaction? Will you not distinguish the great banker, who aids in establishing the credit of a state, from the vulgar speculator, who seeks from chance the wealth of a few days' duration? Is not this the case with every kind of industry and commerce? What will you say of that mass of movable riches which is acquired by weaving flax, wool, cotton, and silk,—by constructing machines,—by covering the sea with vessels,—by seeking in another hemisphere the produce that is to be sold in ours? Will you prevent this cautious merchant from calculating the fluctuations likely to be produced in European prices, by abundant harvests in India or America, or by a war between two nations, and from gaining or losing considerable sums by these calculations on sugar, cotton, or silk? This is the inevitable condition of commerce; and public opinion, daily watching the man who proceeds thus, gives or withdraws those precious resources, which, in the long run, are the real cause of fortune,—much more than good luck, and what is called, esteem, respect, and credit.

Men speak of the land, and of the usurpations by which it has successively fallen into the hands of its present possessors! It is very true, that at the origin of all society violence played a more prominent part than justice. Mankind have the feelings of right and wrong feebly developed: they rush on the land, seize it, violently dispute its possession, and until the establishment of wise and equitable laws, transmit more or less regularly what they have acquired in a very irregular manner. In time, by the progress of morality and knowledge, legislation is perfected, property becomes purified by a legitimate and well regulated descent. Did it ever occur to the mind of any sophist of ancient Rome to deny, in the times of

the republic, or under the empire, in the midst of the discussions raised on the Agrarian law, that the Roman soil belonged legitimately to its possessors, because originally it had been the reward of the robbery (true or false) of the companions of Romulus? Who can tell of how many crimes any estate, the most legitimately acquired, has been the theatre?

Are we responsible for what was done centuries ago by the holders of property which we have obtained regularly from the possessor, by paying what he demanded? Apparently, there is no objection raised to the right of barter, for those who dispute property, who would suppress money, admit that one object may be exchanged directly for another. I have bred sheep, and you have cultivated the soil; I give you a sheep for a certain measure of corn: nothing, methinks, is more legitimate. I have acquired in commerce a quantity of movable capital, I give it to you for a portion of land: that land is certainly mine after such a transaction. Well then, in fifty years all the land in a given country has thus changed hands. Under a wise legislation, fifty years of barter are sufficient to purify and legitimatize by descent, on equitable conditions, the entire property of a country, even should it have had its origin in the most high-handed robbery.

"Yes," it is added, "but can the possessor thus transmit his property, if he was not the lawful possessor? He had usurped it, he has transmitted the usurpation, and that is all."

The reply to this objection is in the good sense of nations, which have all admitted prescription. They have universally acknowledged, that when an object has remained undisputed for a certain number of years in the hands of an individual, it becomes his own. If there has been a suit, or hostile claims have been set up (which legists call an interruption of prescription), society opens its ears, and decides accordingly. But if for

thirty years nothing of the kind takes place, society has established, by reasons equally conclusive with those which induced it to acknowledge the right of property *per se*, that the object possessed shall be definitely the property of the holder. It has done so, because long possession is a presumption of labour; because nothing would be stable if there were not a term to inquiries into the past; because no transaction could be possible, no exchange could take place, if it were not laid down that, after a certain time, the holder of any object holds it equitably, and can transmit it. Imagine what would be the state of society, what acquisition could be secure, or even practicable, if men could go back to the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, and dispute your right to an estate, by proving that some noble wrested it from his vassal, gave it to a favourite or to one of his men-at-arms, who sold it some member of the guild of merchants, who transmitted it from hand to hand to some line of possessors more or less respectable! There must be a fixed term, or that what is, simply because it is, should be declared lawful and be so held,—or else see what interminable suits would spring up over the whole face of the earth!

In Italy, for instance, the Italians would say to the possessors of land: You are descended from the German barons, almost all Ghibelines, rewarded with the ravished property of the Guelfs. And you, also, would be the reply to these Italian Guelfs, were probably the soldiers of Charlemagne, rewarded with the lands of the Lombards, which they had taken from the Romans, who had divided them among their military colonists, after having reft them from those interesting emigrants, whose touching complaint Virgil has immortalized. Who knows, indeed, but one of those fields which the Croats are now disputing with the Milanese lords, may not have belonged to that poor Melibæus who, leading his wearied flock into exile, envied the

sweet repose and the god-given leisure enjoyed by Tityrus,—*Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.*

And as regards the French, what might not be said respecting the origin of the lands we possess? Torn by the Romans from the Gauls, who were themselves strongly suspected of having seized on the property of others, employed more than once by Cæsar in purchasing support at Rome, taken from the Romans by northern barbarians, exposed under them for many ages to all the iniquities of the feudal *régime*, bequeathed to the eldest sons to the exclusion of the rest, disputed by those feudal barons who took by fraud what had often been acquired by force,—these lands, finally, were on the point of becoming a somewhat respectable possession, under a more regular legislation, introduced by our kings, when suddenly the Revolution broke out, which, once more overthrowing both persons and things, beheading the children of the feudal lords, confiscating their estates because they fled from the scaffold, depriving the clergy of those broad lands, which they had wheedled from men as they lay tortured with remorse on their death-bed, gave all to the first comer, and for what? For a paper so depreciated that what sufficed to buy an estate would not have served for the support of a family for a week. (4.) After such a retrospect as this, can any French landholder lie down and sleep in peace?

What must we say of the Spaniards who cultivate so ill the soil they tore from the Moors, which the Moors took from the Goths, the Goths from the Romans, the Romans from the ancient Iberians? What must we say of the Turks, who wrested from the Greeks, who took from we know not whom, the beautiful shores of the Bosphorus? And even of America, to what judgment must we come? There, if we may trust appearances, labour would certainly be the origin of property, for the colonists having only their arms, a few agri-

cultural implements, and a few months' provisions which they had brought from England, entered upon the virgin forests, inhabited solely by wild animals. Yet even they were usurpers, for the virgin forests they took from the native Indians, without any other title than the humour which seized them, two centuries ago, to leave England on account of religious dissensions. What can we think, if even America is one vast den of violence and usurpation?

But let us be serious even when replying to foolish objections. In order to labour, we must begin by having the materials of labour, that is, the earth, an indispensable material for agricultural toil; and hence occupation must be the first act by which property commences, and labour the second. Every society at its commencement presents this phenomenon of occupation, more or less violent, to which gradually succeeds the phenomenon of regular transmission, by means of the exchange of property for the legitimate produce of some kind of labour. To render this exchange certain and sure, it has been supposed that all property which has remained thirty years undisputed in the same hands, is held legitimately, or has been legitimatized by labour. The lands thus continually transmitted under a fixed legislation represent a lawful property, since they can be in no one's possession without having been received in exchange for an equivalent value. One transmission would be enough to constitute them the most creditable of possessions, and within a century, with a few rare exceptions, they often change masters. The civilized world is not then one vast usurpation, and I will add, in order to quiet the consciences of the French landholders, that notwithstanding the barbarism of the feudal ages, notwithstanding the total unsettlement of the Revolution of '89, landed property in France may, for the most part, be traced back to the purest origin.

The fields which the Romans took from the Gauls were inconsiderable, for the soil was hardly cultivated, and resembled the forests which the Americans are now conceding to the Europeans. The barbarians found it in a somewhat different condition. But it was particularly during the succeeding ages, and under the feudal *régime*, that the clearing began, and has been continued uninterruptedly—as we may learn from the word *roture* (from *ruptura*), given to every property which had this *breaking-up*, this clearing for its origin. Every *roture*, then, every *roturière* estate, was derived, consequently, from the most reputable of all labour, and these were the majority; for many lands, ennobled by time, because of their possessor, belonged originally to these estates *roturières*. Afterwards, under a long line of kings, excellent laws had regularised transmission; and when commerce desired to purchase an estate, it was bought with hard cash from the noble or *roturier* possessor. We may then, if we have any, possess these lands with a quiet conscience, even had we been purchasers of national property; for, in truth, these goods were bought with the money which the State itself gave to everybody, and which everybody was obliged to receive from his debtors; and finally, as some scruples remained at the period of the Restoration, 800 millions of francs were set apart to remove them. We may therefore sleep in peace, and our children after us.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE INVASION OF THINGS BY THE EXTENSION OF PROPERTY.

Showing that the universe, far from being invaded by the increasing extension of property, is, on the contrary, every day more appropriated to the wants of man, more accessible to his labour, and that property civilizes the world instead of usurping it.

All property has therefore labour for its real origin, and if it had not at first this origin, it is not long in acquiring it, after a certain period of regular descent. We grant that, if you like (reply some of the adversaries of property), but it does not the less follow that in time everything is occupied,—land, capital, the instruments of labour,—and that the last comers know not where to place themselves or how to employ their hands. I arrive in this world (says one of the economists of the day), after many thousand years of these successive transmissions, be they more or less legitimate; I find it invaded by the proprietors of land, or by the proprietors of capital. If I desire to cultivate the earth, I meet everywhere with walls and ditches, which keep me out, and tell me that the field I wished to cultivate belongs to another. Should I desire to labour in a different manner, and, for instance, saw wood, spin flax, work in iron,—I find the wood, flax, and iron, capital, in short, in avaricious hands, which deny them to me by refusing all credit, or by requiring such enormous interest, that after paying it there would be nothing left for myself. What shall I do? Is not the whole world, heaven and earth, land and water, invaded by greedy and jealous possessors?

This objection is not much more serious than the former. You arrive in the world rather late, I confess; there are many places taken; and, adopting Cicero's comparison, which likens property to a theatre where all the seats are filled, I shall make the following reply:—The owners of this theatre are certainly ill-bred people not to have reserved a place for you, but would you be happier if the theatre did not exist at all? I know that it exists, and that causes you an evil with which I sympathize,—it is the disgust of knowing that others are amused without you. But the owners, I repeat, might not have chosen to construct this theatre, and you would then be none the forwarder; and if, moreover, they are ready to admit you on condition of a few slight services on your part, can they be charged with being too exacting?

You will see that this reply is strictly applicable to property.

You arrive in a society, already highly civilized, where the earth is covered, it is true, with proprietors, but where it is highly cultivated, and produces a hundred-fold more than it did originally; where machines, multiplied and varied to infinity, have rendered labour a thousand times more rapid, and its productions a thousand times more abundant and less costly; where there are the means of feeding and clothing thirty-six millions of men instead of four or five: confess that the generations which have preceded you have acted very unkindly towards you, for seven or eight centuries ago you would have been shod with a piece of leather fastened by strings, and now you wear shoes which protect your feet from the cold, the damp, and the flint stones. Your clothing would have been a sheep-skin, and now you have cloth. Your dwelling would have been one of those foul, pestiferous hovels, the remains of which are still to be seen in some of our old cities, and now you have healthy and substantial houses.

You would have had rye or barley-bread in times of abundance, nothing in seasons of famine, and you now have wheat and rye in the good years, potatoes in the bad. You would have drunk beer or cider, now you have wine. Confess that these generations have done you great injury.

But (say you) if I wish to cultivate the earth or to spin, I must borrow the land or the spinning-wheel. Was it otherwise a thousand years ago? Would you not have been obliged to borrow that land or that wheel? Was there ever a time when men lent for nothing the objects belonging to them? There is no difference then between the present time and the most remote ages, except that by going back, you retrograde to a period when there was less of everything, and when everything was of an inferior quality. But you still object, and say: You are not solving the question: two or three centuries back is nothing. The invasion was less, perhaps, the ranks less serried, but the usurpation had begun. Go back to those days when the earth belonged to the first occupier, and where he had only to look around to find fruits hanging from the trees, forests filled with game, the rivers with fish, or fertile plains to be cleared, if you desired to occupy yourself with agriculture, as is actually the case in America. The savage (you add) exercises the rights of *hunting*, *fishing*, *gathering*, and *pasturing* on the whole surface of the soil, and now-a-days, if a civilized man catches game, he is punished, treated as a poacher; if he desires to fish, he is fined for encroaching on fiscal rights; if he desires to gather the grapes that border the road-side, to take a sheaf from the stack, or drive his sheep to pasture in a field, he is condemned to different punishments as having committed a rural offence.

I will put a question to those who complain of these various interdictions. There are among us some thou-

sands of unhappy people, who, led away by deplorable doctrines, have shed the blood of their fellow-citizens, some wickedly, others (and these are by far the greater number) ignorantly. It is desirable to create for them a new existence, somewhere, no matter where. I ask without a sneer,—for the distress they have brought upon themselves, as well as the distress they have caused by killing so many worthy heads of families, are no food for laughter,—I ask then, seriously, whether they would not consider it an atrocious barbarity to be sent into the virgin forests of America, or to the islands of the Pacific, without the means of establishing themselves, of lodging, of living; and whether the happy liberty which the savage possesses of laying his hands on all nature would not be to them the most frightful misery? They would be right, and France would be cruel if she acted thus towards them.

But, it will be said, there is nothing extraordinary in that. If the unhappy individuals in question had had the education of the savages of Oceania or of Florida, they could live, like them, by fishing or the chase; but having received a different education, account must be taken of that difference. What is meant by that different education which is to be taken into account? Society has taught them to eat wholesome bread instead of wild roots, cooked meat instead of raw; to wear the produce of the loom instead of the skins of beasts or the feathers of birds; to handle the file or the graver, instead of the bow and the arrow; that is to say, the society of which you complain has made them live in a condition a hundred times preferable to that of the savages, which you so much regret on their behalf, and to place them in which would be a frightful act of cruelty.

No doubt, in this complicated society, where the disturbance of the least spring causes serious perturbations, there are crises when everything fails at once to

certain classes, and we must come to their support; in this we are agreed, for we have not iron hearts because we have sound heads; we must come to their support (I repeat), not on the ground of restitution, but of fraternity,—a charming virtue when it is sincere. But society, by depriving them of the primitive abundance, has deprived them of nothing, for this abundance still exists on three-fourths of the globe, and they would regard it as little less than murder if we had the inhumanity to expose them to it.

This pretended invasion of the world is, therefore, a ridiculous fable. In what would it consist, after all? In the usurpation of movable objects, such as machines, tools, seed, provisions, money,—all, in short, that is termed capital,—that barbarous capital which will not lend itself to labour except at an exorbitant rate of interest? But this capital did not exist; these machines, tools, seed-corn, money—none of these existed before those usurping generations of which you complain, and have existed only through their indefatigable and continuous labour. If they withhold them, and make them dear, they are perhaps wrong in a moral view; but in strict right they have reason in doing what they like with them, for they have created them; and, after all, if you require the loan of them, if on this account you depend on them, they also depend on you, for they have need of your stout arms to give a value to their capital, without which this capital would be worthless in their hands. The dependence is reciprocal. Two wants stand face to face: yours, the desire to labour; theirs, to find an employment for their capital. Which of these two wants shall give laws to the other? That will depend upon the occasion. In quiet times, when capital abounds, it will be yours; when capital hides itself, and is scarce, it will be theirs, and you will have to pay dearer for money. But, in the meanwhile, do you know the evil these usurping gene-

rations have done you, by multiplying their capital? They have made money, which under the Romans was worth 12 to 15 per cent. and sometimes as much as 40—10 to 12 per cent. in the middle ages—6 to 7 in the eighteenth century—worth now only 3 to 4 per cent. in quiet times, and 5 to 6 in periods of difficulty. Now, as interest is the exact and sole expression of the difficulty of procuring capital, it is proved that by advancing daily in this usurpation of the world, the generations that have preceded you, and have created the mass of existing property, have rendered all things more accessible to you. "But even at 5, 6, or 7 per cent. no one will lend to a poor workman without credit." True! I am sorry for it, and do not refuse to make provision against it by well-advised means; but a few centuries ago it was still more difficult.

There is then no usurpation as regards the moveable riches which had no existence prior to the generations of which you complain, and which have existed only through their means. Is the case different as regards the land which they have not created, and on which they settled,—a circumstance which offends you, the last comer, because you find the most fertile fields already occupied? This it will be easy to clear up.

The surface of the earth being the only means of bringing the natural agents,—earth, water, and sunshine,—to combine in producing food, there is (you say) an injurious occupation of this surface to the advantage of a few and the injury of all. To the originators of this objection I reply, first: How would you have them go to work, if the only means of cultivating the earth are by settling it, by covering it with secular labours, by enclosing it, and by forbidding it to every stranger? If there is no other means of inducing husbandmen to settle on the soil, is society very culpable for having made them such a concession? You new comers, who complain that all the places under the sun have been

taken, if you were given lands to clear without the certainty of keeping them, would you have them at that price? Would those thousands who yearly quit Europe for the backwoods of America to cultivate the waste lands,—would they leave their place of birth, if they were not to become the definitive possessors?

What must be done then, if we cannot cultivate the earth without occupying it, occupying it in perpetuity, since its surface is the necessary field of those labours whose slow accumulation forms almost its whole value? Would you have an example? Go to Holland, and look at those green and fertile pastures, covered with flocks and herds: you would commit a strange error if you supposed that nature produced that soil, so fresh and rich. Thrust a stick into the earth, and three or four inches below you will find barren sand. That thick grass, which is converted into milk and then into cheese, and which under this form travels over the globe, has been grown on a soil entirely of artificial creation. By means of a dike formed of willow branches, a space of sea sand has been enclosed; in time, the mud heaped up by the ebb and flow of the tide has consolidated this dike. By cutting off this sand from the sea, it has been made accessible only to the rain from heaven or to the water of the river, and thus it has gradually lost its salt. Grass has shot up, rank indeed at first, and closely resembling rushes. Cows were then turned in, their fertilising manure was allowed to accumulate, and eventually an artificial soil of extreme fertility has been created. What had the State granted? A portion of the bottom of the sea. On this bottom individual industry has created a vegetable bed, and all that luxury of verdure which charms the eye. Ought men to have committed this robbery on the sea and on generations to come, or not have created this fruitful meadow? It is still the example of Cicero's theatre. All the places in that theatre are

filled; to which I reply: Would it have been better that this theatre had never existed?

After all, methinks necessity is a good reason; and if necessity wills that the surface of the earth should be given up to those who cultivate it, that they may have a sufficient motive for its cultivation, must we not yield to the insuperable nature of things?

True, there is the resource which would consist in reserving to the State alone the property in land, and in letting it for a term, or for life, to any one that would cultivate them, that is to say, mortmain—mortmain, the recent revival of our sublime inventors! Must we repeat all that has been said by all the economists of the last century, that mortmain is a barbarous system, that land to be well cultivated must be private property; that then only does man devote to it his cares, his time, his life, if he is not cultivator and proprietor, his capital at least, if he is proprietor; that the lands of the old clergy produce at the present day, in taxes only, more than they formerly produced in rent; that, further, they keep their owner and the farmer; and that they present a spectacle of extraordinary activity, instead of a scene of afflicting negligence and languor? But even granting this vast mortmain, embracing all the property in France, would the lot of that man be better who desires to devote his time and labour to husbandry? It would be a hundred times worse; for being now a free man, he would become a slave. Would he have the land *gratis*,—would he have no rent to pay? What! an estate perfectly in order, covered with the labour of ages, worth incomparably more than untilled land, would be given at the same price, that is, for nothing! And by what preferential right would one man receive the fruitful vineyards on the banks of the Gironde, and another the barren sands of the Landes? because his name was first on the list, for instance, or because he

was the most able, or because he was the bravest soldier? As for the first on the list, it would be sufficient to be the most eager or the swiftest of foot! As for the most able, the decision would rest with the mayor! As for the bravest soldier, is not a pension a reward more easily proportioned to rank, age, and services? And how could there be a class provided *gratis* with all the instruments of labour, while others would be obliged to procure them with money? Do they provide the cotton-spinner, the silk-weaver, and the blacksmith, with the establishments in which they pursue their occupations? The inequality would be unbearable; and if the State were the sole proprietor of the land, it must evidently, unless it would be grossly unjust, let out that land, as it does all its other possessions. What difference then would there be in being a tenant of the State, instead of being the tenant of a private individual? What advantage would their be in having changed one of these dependences for the other? We shall see.

In existing society, organized by nature, and not by ignorant philosophers, the tenant farmer treats with the landholder, and offers a sum based on the price of provisions. The proprietor demands another, according to the price of land, &c. They soon come to terms, so that one can recover the price of his labour, the other the interest of his capital. On the other hand, if the State were the sole landlord, this is what would take place. Not having a standard by which to judge of the produce of the farms, it would fix a rent in the same way as government salaries are settled,—at the will of the dominant faction. At one time, it would say that the rent is too high, at another too low; rents would thus vary like salaries, and as this is a question upon which the lives of all depend, the Republic would be torn in pieces. What was the great cause of dispute at Rome in the time of the Gracchi? Not the general

division of property, but at the most of that of certain lands, more or less, recently conquered from the enemy, and rented by the senators, or knights, at sums that were said to be merely nominal; and there was a cry for the immediate partition of these lands among the citizens who had won them by their arms. Rome was nearly perishing, and did perish eventually, on these questions, for all the ambitious spirits that succeeded the Gracchi made use of them for their perfidious ends. Are there not sufficient motives to induce men to dispute for the possession of power? and would you add the most urgent of all reasons,—that of possessing the totality of the lands of a country at one price, rather than at another? Whether they were let *gratis*, or let for money, men would cut each other's throats in the first case to obtain them, and in the second, to obtain them at a different price, and in neither case would justice be the rule. It would be the mere caprice of factions.

All these inventions, then, are but old errors, long since tried and rejected for ever. A State-proprietary of the land, and letting it out to private individuals, is a known and tried institution, the real merits of which even children learn from the history of Rome, as well as of European monarchies. Time and reason have, in fact, taught all the world that land, as well as other capital, ought to be private property; that in this state it is continually covered with new ameliorations; that as it may be sold, bought, or let at will, like all other things, it is bought, sold, or let, at its real value,—a value as real as the price of corn, iron, and clothing, since it is the result of a free balance of interests between the producers and the consumers; that agriculture is then a free profession, as free as all other professions; that a farm is no longer a place to be obtained by the favour or lost by the enmity of the ruling power; and that the competition for power, already too ardent, is freed from a stimulus violent as

hunger, which would reduce this competition to a mortal combat.

Hence the surface of the earth must be granted, with full powers of possession, to the man that has cleared it; that after having appropriated it, he may sell or let it, and that it may experience the fate of all the instruments of human labour, *i. e.*, be bought, sold, or let, at the pleasure of those who possess or desire to possess it. But having been thus granted in perpetuity, it is practically separated, invaded (as they say); and the last comers will one day find the whole earth occupied. The danger, indeed, is great and pressing, as is well known, for in every quarter the earth is covered with colonists, impatient to possess it. The two Americas, from pole to pole; India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin; China, from the great wall to the Straits of Formosa; Africa, from the Atlas to the Table Mountains; Madagascar, Australia, New Zealand, Borneo, New Guinea, the Moluccas, the Philippines,—all the islands of the seas, will, ere long, he covered with labourers, fallen on the globe like a swarm of locusts, and our grandsons will be compelled to gaze idly on the invaded world!

We submit the following considerations to those who may be alarmed by this serious danger.

Coal, for instance, the source of nearly all our present motive power, causes another serious anxiety! Some geologists have calculated that the earth contains a sufficient store for many thousand years, while others think all will be consumed in another hundred years. (5) Must we, then, refrain from using it, for fear there should be none left for our descendants? What would you say of the humanity that should stop before these treasures of heat and motive power, for fear there would be none ere long? Almost all the wood of our forests has been consumed, and you see that men have found the means of warming themselves. Society,

which would not permit the existence of landed property, for fear that some day all the surface of the earth would be invaded, would be quite as mad. Let us take courage: of the nations of Europe, some have not yet cultivated a fourth, others a tenth of their territory, and there is not a thousandth part of the globe occupied. The great nations of antiquity rose and fell without having cleared more than a very small portion of their soil. They had gone through their youth, their maturity, their decline,—they had had time to lose their character, their genius, their institutions, before they had, not completed, but made little progress in the cultivation of their territory. The earth was for them a fruit they had barely raised to their lips, and which they almost as soon let fall from their hands. I am inclined to think that the human race will act in the same way. I think that all beings, great or small, will come to an end, planets like the rest, for I believe in the oneness of the divine laws. Individuals are born and die; nations are born and die. All are placed under that immutable law, from the animalcule, which we can barely distinguish by microscopic aid, to those whose form appears colossal in comparison with our own stature. Only God has measured out to all duration, as well as space; and they will endure in proportion to their greatness. Those heavenly bodies, after having endured a thousand times longer than men and than nations, will come to an end in their turn, whether by losing their caloric they become little more than a large block of ice, in which all life becomes impossible, or that some comet, the Attila or Tamerlane of the skies, dashes against them and shivers them to pieces. And since we have travelled into the region of "*chimœras dire*" in the train of our contemporary Utopians, let me tell you,—you who may be uneasy about the day, more or less near, when the invaded world will no longer afford

room for a new husbandman,—let me tell you that the human race proceeding on this planet, as the Greeks in the Archipelago, and the Romans in the Mediterranean, the human race will come to an end,—either "in regions of thick-ribbed ice," or annihilated by the shock of some comet, without having done more than cultivate the smaller portion of the globe. It also will abandon the fruit after having barely touched it.

But here is another, and my last reason for consolation; space is nothing. Often, in the widest extent of country, men find it difficult to live, and, on the contrary, they often live in abundance on the most limited portion of land. An acre of land, in England or France, supports a hundred-fold more inhabitants than an acre in the sands of Poland or of Russia. Man carries fertility with him: wherever he appears, the grass shoots up, the seed germinates. It is because he has his own person and his cattle, and because he spreads, wherever he settles, the fertilizing mould. Go into the sands of the Landes or of Prussia, and as soon as you perceive glades in a forest of pines, and in these glades fields of corn, you are sure, before long, to discern smoke and the roofs of a village. If this village be of considerable size, the surrounding land is better cultivated, more fertile, and produces better crops. Compel men to shut themselves up within a certain space, which they do spontaneously, from the desire of not removing from the spot where they dwell, and they find the means of living on the same extent of land, however numerous they become, because, by fertilizing it still more by their presence, they succeed in raising a more abundant produce.

If, therefore, we can imagine a day when all parts of the globe will be inhabited, man will obtain, from the same surface, 10 times, 100 times, 1000 times more than he raises now. What reason have we to despair, when we see a vegetable mould created in the

sands of Holland? If he were compelled by want of room, the sands of the Great Desert of Arabia, of Cobi, would be covered by the fertility that everywhere attends him. He would form terraces on the slopes of the Atlas, the Cordilleras, and the Himalayas, and you would see agriculture carried to the steepest summits of the globe, and stop only at those lofty heights where all vegetation ceases. And if no spot then remained uncultivated, he would live on the same extent of surface by continually increasing its fertility.

Let us banish these puerile anxieties, and return seriously to the subject which occupies us. The surface of this so-called invaded globe will never fail to future generations, and in the meanwhile, it is not wanting to the present; for in every quarter land is offered to mankind,—by Russia, on the banks of the Borysthenes, the Don, and the Volga; by America, on the banks of the Missisippi, the Orinoco, and the Amazon; by France, on the shores of Africa, in former times the granary of the Roman empire. France is ready, in fact, to give lands for nothing to those misguided children who have shed her blood. Even on these terms they refuse it, and the emigrants who accept it on this condition, will go there only to perish, if nothing is added to this gift. Why so? Because it is not the surface that is wanting, but the surface covered with buildings, plantations, enclosures, and the works of appropriation. But these exist only where previous generations have taken the pains to precede these later husbandmen, and to arrange everything so that their labour may be immediately productive. Is it then other than the strictest, plainest justice, to pay some compensation to those earlier generations of which you complain, or to their children, their representatives?

Thus these idle objections disappear at the first

glance of reason, at the first explanation of sound common sense.

There might, perhaps, be some show of foundation, a show at least, in these complaints against the pretended occupation of things by the extension of property, if, for example, the share of the husbandman that tills the land became every day less, in proportion to the share of their proprietor or holder. We might, in this way, imagine a day when the husbandman would not have the means of living—and as this class everywhere forms the majority of the population, and that their art is the first, the chief of all—there might be grounds for maintaining that, if the successive occupation of the soil should give no cause to fear that in future ages the whole globe would be thus filled, nevertheless every passing generation deteriorates the position of the simple, patient, and vigorous man who tills the soil for those who possess it.

Happily the very reverse is true, and while, from the successive decrease in the rate of interest, a result of the increasing abundance of things, movable capital becomes every day more accessible to labour (not, however, so much so as to be given *gratis*), an exactly similar phenomenon as regards land is taking place. The share reserved for the husbandman increases every day, while that which is reserved for the proprietor diminishes, and that, too, for a very natural reason; it is because the surface of the earth brings much less than the capital accumulated on it, the cause of its value; rent diminishes in proportion as capital itself bears a lower interest. (6)

It would seem that the richer, the more fertile, the better cultivated the land in any society is, the higher should be the rent it bears. Such is not the case, however. In the neighbourhood of Paris, for example, or in the fertile provinces of Normandy, Picardy, and

Flanders, land produces barely $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. In England it returns still less, like all the various capital that has contributed to augment her natural fertility. By the side of this phenomenon will be found another,—wages are higher.

If you turn, however, to the less fertile provinces of France, such as those of the centre or the south, you will find land producing a greater return, as much as $3\frac{1}{2}$ and sometimes 4 per cent. In these provinces, where rent is highest the labourer's wages are lowest. When, in the former case, he is paid 25 sous (a shilling), in the latter he receives only fifteen (seven-pence half-penny).

It is undeniable, that between the richest and the poorest soils of France there is a difference of at least one per cent. in the rent of land, which we may take as $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the former, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ in the latter; that, as regards day-labour, the progression is quite the reverse, and that if we take it as 25 sous in the provinces, where the rent is represented by $2\frac{1}{2}$, we must reckon it at 15 sous, in those where the rent is represented by $3\frac{1}{2}$. These data may be subject to variations, but the proportion between them will remain the same.

Now let us revert to the past, and compare the standard of rent as it is now with what it was sixty years ago, that is, before 1789, and you will find between these two epochs the same difference as between the two provinces, the fertile and the barren. An estate which, in 1789, was worth 200,000 francs, is worth 500 or 600 now. I am speaking of the neighbourhood of great towns, where the phenomenon of augmentation in value is produced more energetically. That very estate which yielded perhaps seven or eight thousand francs to the owner, returns him now twelve or fifteen, according to the ameliorations the soil has received. It returned consequently $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 per cent.,

and now returns only $2\frac{1}{2}$ at most. In consequence of this change, another has taken place; the daily wages of a labourer, in a district where once they were only 20 sous, are now 30 or 35. These are positive facts in the neighbourhood of Paris. In other quarters we meet with the same proportion, with different values.

If we go back one or two centuries, we shall observe the same phenomenon; and were it desirable to push the comparison farther, we should find, in the works of Cato the Censor, that wise and economic patrician, who said: *Patrem-familias vendacem, non emacem, esse oportet*, who has treated of agriculture in one of the most attractive works of antiquity,—we should find, I repeat, an indisputable proof, that in the territories of Casinum and Venafrum, the *metayer*, or the tenant, received only one-eighth of the produce of a good soil, one-seventh of an ordinary soil, and one-sixth of an inferior soil. (7) At the present day, on the contrary, the *metayer*, who provides no capital, receives half, and the tenant, who furnishes everything, two-thirds. It will be understood that we take the mean. Thus as money, descending from the Romans to us, has sunk from 12 or 15 per cent. to 4 or 5, so the share of the landowner has passed from five-sixths to three-sixths or one-half. Fixed capital has consequently undergone the same fate as moveable capital, and the condition of the man whose sole riches are in his strong arms is bettered, not made worse. In proportion as wealth, whether natural or acquired, increases, it is not the rich man that is richer, but the poor man that is less poor. The great fortunes of our times are in fact as nothing compared with those observed among the ancient Romans; they are even already greatly diminished in proportion to what they were in the 17th and 18th centuries; and if we desire to be more firmly convinced of this striking phenomenon, that the relative increase of the general wealth is particularly

advantageous to the poor man, I will adduce another fact. The agricultural labourer, in our central provinces (as Corrèze or Creuse) earns 15 or 20 sous a-day, while the labourer in the wine districts of Bordeaux receives from 25 to 40. The landowner in the Creuse will get 4 per cent., while his brother of Médoc, would be glad to derive from his land 3 per cent. (in the long run, be it understood); and why is this? Because capitalists have contended for the purchase of the vineyards of Médoc, on account of their fertility, and have reduced them to a return of 3 per cent.; just as capitalists contending for funded stock at 5 per cent., and purchasing it at 125, soon bring it down to a revenue of 4 per cent. The husbandman, on the contrary, whose arms do not multiply like capital, whose skill is so much the more necessary as the land on which he lives has acquired a higher value, succeeds in getting better wages, and the fruitfulness of the fields he inhabits remains to him as a gift from heaven, by which he profits; whilst, to the owner, it has disappeared before the eagerness with which men dispute for the possession of the soil. This is a blessed law of Providence, who did not design that man, while remaining on earth and fertilizing it with the sweat of his brow, should become more wretched in proportion as he toiled harder.

This *invasion* of the world is thus reduced to its more complete appropriation to the wants of man; it has made it more habitable, more productive, more accessible to the new-comers; for, if it be a question of movable property, such as the instruments of labour, the rate of interest has descended from 12 or 15 to 4 or 5 per cent., and the rent of land, which once represented five-sixths of the produce, now represents less than half. Thus in proportion as property of every kind extends, the means of living are increased for all. But (you will add) he that has nothing depends upon

him that has all,—he who offers his willing arms depends upon him who pays for their use, for the latter may refuse them: the latter has the means of procuring food, lodging, and clothing, while the former has not these resources. The assertion is true for a day, for a moment, under certain circumstances. But, as I said before, and now repeat,—capital without arms, and arms without capital, could not live. Each has need of the other. At certain periods, when capital is scarce, and arms abound, the advantage is on the side of capital: but when capital abounds, and arms are occupied, the advantage rests with the workman. What are the periods when the latter case occurs? They are seasons of calm, security, and order. The disturbers of this state of things turn the balance in favour of capital. Let the workmen whom it is sought to mislead reflect on this: their day's labour is worth less now than it was a year ago, and money, which could be had at 4 per cent., can now with difficulty be procured at 5 or 6 per cent.

Now as regards this pretended sequestration or occupation of the earth, I shall conclude with one reflection.

If it was impossible to grant the whole earth legitimately to individuals to settle on, work it, and produce what they could from it, was it possible to concede it to nations rather than to individuals? The complaint set forth by these self-styled disinherited in France and England, might not the rest of the human race turn against France and England themselves? Would they not have the right to say to these mighty nations, that the human race are the tenants, the usufructuaries, not the proprietors of the globe; that they may stay on the soil, but not fix themselves there? Nations would then be in a state of flagrant usurpation, when they possess all that lies between one river and another, as well as the individuals who possess from one hedge to

another. Reflect well upon this. If I am not the owner of my field, neither is France the owner of what she occupies between the Rhine and the Pyrenees, nor England of what she holds between the Channel and the Hebrides. It may be said that I am putting an extreme case, and pushing the question too far. Do not the levellers to whom I am replying push matters to extremities, when they say that the field I received from my father, or bought with the savings of thirty years' labour, represents a thing usurped, stolen from the rest of the human race?

No, nations have not usurped their soil, any more than the peasant has usurped the field which he has received or purchased, and which he cultivates; and by occupying the earth they have paid to God and man a glorious price: that price is civilization. Moveable property, had it existed alone, would have left the world in complete barbarism. The nomad, who lives in his tent, who clothes himself with the wool of his flocks, and nourishes his frame with their flesh, is familiar with movable property; and yet he remains a barbarian for ever. Look at the Arabs, those nomads so full of passion and of grace, wandering from scriptural times, moving from pasture to pasture mounted on fleet-footed horses, leading in their train their wives and children on the backs of camels, driving before them countless flocks and herds, travelling for these four thousand years past the same path from the banks of the Euphrates to the Red Sea, always brave, jealous, hospitable, and robbers. They have not changed since the time of Moses. Yet, in the 7th century, a great man agitated them with the sublime idea of the unity of God, and impelled them to conquest under the pretext of overthrowing idols. Once aroused by Mahomet, they passed from the conquest of two petty cities, Mecca and Medina, to the acquisition of part of the Roman empire; they conquered Syria, Egypt, Africa,

and Spain, and in three centuries became the most civilized people upon earth. Issuing from the desert, they burnt the library of Alexandria; but when settled in the plain of Cairo, in the *vega* of Grenada, in the *huerta*, the garden of Valencia, they acquired a taste for land, settled down, divided it, watered it with marvellous care, cultivated the orange, the mulberry, and the flax-plant, spun silk, worked mines, extracted the precious metals, took up the books which they had burnt in their former barbarism, studied them, invented a new method of calculation, practised navigation, traversed the seas, bringing back the produce of India to Europe, and from agriculturists becoming merchants, mingled the barter of the East and the West, and always brave, daring, greedy, but learned, covered Spain with master-pieces of architecture. When nomads, they lived under tents; when agriculturists, they settled on the soil, invented algebra, and raised the Alhambra.

Other nomads, the Mongols, after wandering for centuries in the vast desert of Cobi, invaded China, divided the soil into a myriad lots, which, being by turns inundated or drained by art, became covered with rice; they cultivated the mulberry also, surpassed all nations in the art of weaving silk, discovered an earth which, instead of reddening in the fire like our clay, came forth white and transparent, made porcelain, carved wood with unapproachable skill, learnt the secret of covering it with an unchanging varnish, constructed palaces of lacquer, erected towers of porcelain, and are still the most skilful workmen in the world. Other wandering tribes, having taken a different road, became known as Goths, Germans, Franks, Saxons; and are now Italians, Spaniards, Germans, French, and English, with whose wonders you are familiar. What cause has so entirely changed them? One only,—a fixed settlement on the land. When they ceased wandering

over the sands of the deserts, and had built fixed habitations, they desired to cultivate the soil around these dwellings, then to ornament them, then to adopt other clothing. Thus they contracted all the tastes of society,—then all the arts, the means of satisfying these tastes,—and have become civilized peoples. Compare them with the wretched American savages, and admire the difference of destinies! America did not present, like the Old World, those vast sandy tracts, the deserts of Sahara, of Arabia, and of Cobi, in which spring eternal pastures. America, covered with rivers and forests, was like an immense park set apart for the chase. Her children, divided into petty tribes for hunting, while the nomads crowd together and multiply like their flocks, neither founded nor were able to conquer great empires. Three centuries ago, they were still wandering in their savannahs, knowing little of property beside their bows and arrows, while in the Old World, a pontiff, too familiar with it, was distributing in the halls of the Vatican these very savannahs among the greedy Europeans who crossed the seas in pursuit of wealth, assigning to them no other limits than the meridians which served to measure the globe. Thus it was given to those who knew property, to rule over and civilize those who were ignorant of it. I conclude therefore by saying: *Without property there would have been no society; without fixed property there would have been no civilization.*

END OF BOOK I.

ON COMMUNISM.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNISM.

Showing that the discussion of Communism is, with regard to property, what mathematicians call the reductio ad absurdum.

MATHEMATICIANS demonstrate geometrical truths in two ways—1st, by direct proof, which consists in showing, analytically, that a certain proposition is true.—2nd, by indirect proof, which consists in showing that the contrary proposition would be impossible and untenable; this last is called by mathematicians the *reductio ad absurdum.*

I will now endeavour to apply this to the subject before me. I have given the proof direct, and have shown social order to be based on the simple, productive, necessary principle of individual property. I will proceed to give the proof indirect, and exhibit social order (were it possible for one moment thus to imagine it), based on the opposite principle, on the negation of property, on community of goods, and make use of the *reductio ad absurdum* of the geometricians. I shall thus have proved property by itself, and then by its negative,

supplying the two proofs, one alone of which is sufficient in geometry, although both are occasionally given, in order to show the different aspects of things. This course, which may be superfluous in mathematical science, wherein the exactitude of the demonstrations dispenses with the necessity of a double proof, is useful in moral science, wherein one can never prove too much. In this book I will therefore treat of *Communism.*

In our times many different communisms have been imagined, such as agricultural communism, industrial communism, &c. Into these details I will not enter, for I cannot follow the delirium of the age in its infinite vagaries. I shall fix my attention on the principle of the delirium—on communism in its essential nature, which constitutes the foundation of all communisms, and which springs up instantly, inevitably, as a whole, by the sole fact of the negation of property. It is this type which I shall now delineate, dispensing with all excursions of curiosity and pleasure, amid the ideal republics invented by the genius of the present day, where I might, perhaps, willingly travel, had I Plato for my guide; but as I have not, I shall presume to judge them on the general plan, common to them all, which is sufficient to enable us to appreciate the wisdom that has presided over their several constitutions.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE CONDITIONS INEVITABLE TO COMMUNISM.

Showing that Communism inevitably, and, in every point of view, leads to living in common.

MAN must either work for himself, having the power of accumulating the produce of his labour, and transmitting it to his children,—existing, therefore, at his own risk and peril, succeeding a little, a great deal, at times not at all, often, after success, meeting with unexpected reverses, falling into want, and dragging his children with him—all these accidents (as they are called) must exist, or absolutely the reverse, that is to say, neither rich nor poor, a society seeing to the welfare of its members, not allowing an individual to work for himself, but compelling him to work for society, which, in return, engages to feed him, clothe him, lodge him, bring him up, and be his only family. In a word, there must be property with its consequences, or communism to its extreme limits. Between these extremes there can be no possible medium. Few words will suffice to demonstrate to what extent all these consequences are indissolubly connected with each other.

As the state of man working for himself, and individually enjoying the fruits of his labour, that is to say, the proprietor, is objectionable; the contrary state is man not working for himself, but for society, which bespeaks his work, which receives the produce of it, and which repays him either by wages or by keeping him and his children.

This society will therefore bespeak his labour, and he will work for it. Society will be transformed into

an extensive workshop for agriculture, carpentering, weaving, spinning, &c., &c., belonging to the State, which will collect the proceeds, will warehouse them, and then distribute them among those who have contributed to its creation.

In this great workshop will wages be equal or unequal? One workman is strong, laborious, intelligent—another weak, idle, stupid; will you not pay them differently? But if you pay them differently, riches and poverty commence; that detestable property instantly reappears. Therefore, if we would not be deceived by the result, all wages must be equal; but if a workman only receives an equal amount of salary, he will have little interest in exerting himself. He that is strong and intelligent will not be over zealous to work as much as his strength would allow; and nothing will prevent him, after performing a certain amount of labour, from folding his arms and lying down. To prevent this there will be only one means, if you would not subject yourself to the necessity of a strict and insupportable surveillance, and that will be, to cause the members of your new society to work in the presence of one another; in fact, to compel them to work in common; and thus labour in common is a primary obligatory consequence of the principle laid down.

After labour comes enjoyment. When a man has worked, he must eat, he must rest, must join the wife he has chosen, and with her gratify his heart and his senses. In the old society which we desire to destroy, he receives his pay in money, which he lays out in food, in raiment, in enjoyments of every kind for himself and his family, and which enjoyments he partakes of in the privacy of his home.

Will society, after having employed him in the national workshop, where he will have worked in common, allow him to enjoy his wages individually, in the privacy of his home, or will it exact that enjoyment

shall be in common as well as labour? You will presently see that one necessarily leads to the other.

If, after requiring that labour should be in common, you allow individual enjoyment, by means of wages (it little matters whether it be in money or in kind), at that moment you are met by the consequences of the unequal salary, which you have been obliged to give up. For man has a propensity which was much respected by the old society, which it endeavoured to promote instead of repressing; this dangerous propensity is Economy. It adopted every means—literature and finance, the fable of the ant and the savings-banks—with a view to encourage it. The laborious and steady workman, economising for his wife and children, endeavouring to make provision for a wet day, was an example held up to every one's imitation. In the present case, all *meum* and *tuum* being destroyed, property in common being the object, individual property would, in truth, be a robbery which it is important to prevent. Economy would be a fault, a misdemeanour, a crime even, according to its nature; consequently, there must be no economy. Every one should be encouraged to eat and drink his fill, and even beyond it, if the standard wages were more than his wants required. Moreover, it should be ascertained whether the injunctions forbidding savings were infringed, and the pockets and the house be searched, in order to prevent the offence of property reappearing, as is practised in the Mexican diamond mines, and in the mints of Europe, where the workpeople are carefully searched on leaving the workplaces, and where, sometimes, principally in Mexico, this examination of the person is carried to a great length. A formidable impulse would likewise have to be guarded against: paternal love, which induces men to economise, otherwise you would be exposed to the chance that, in some secret spot, the father and mother would lay by a little treasure for their children.

This forbiddal of economy, necessary in order to prevent the recurrence of property, would require, it must be confessed, precaution of a most minute and a most annoying kind. Candidly speaking, notwithstanding the moderation with which I wish to be guided, while treating of this matter, these precautions would be intolerable; and, as regards myself, being strongly attached to obedience to the law, seeing what would take place here, I can easily imagine that the communist police agents would be thrown out of the window. In order to prevent these annoyances, enjoyment in common, being the sequel to labour in common, must, as a matter of course, be adopted, in order to meet all the difficulties I have just pointed out.

Thus people should labour in common, under the eyes of one another, which would prevent absolute laziness; enjoyments would be in common, men would eat and drink in common at common tables according to their wants, neither more nor less, and would wear a uniform dress, taken from the general store-house, which would prevent all private hoarding,—a real theft upon the community. In order to be consistent, it is indispensable to go thus far.

Communism is either the most ruinous of speculations, or labour must be performed under one another's eyes;—communism is either the most unbearable of inquisitions, or there must likewise be enjoyment under the eyes of one another; and with this two-fold precaution, it is still, I affirm, the most absurd, the most ridiculous, the most extravagant of human inventions. But, such as it is, at least it is consistent.

Let us proceed.—Unexceptionable experience teaches us that in order to do things well, one thing only should be done. Universal geniuses are rare, and they are only universal to a certain degree. You may meet with skilful workmen, who will execute several things equally well;—men of talent, who will at the same

time succeed in several styles of literature,—Voltaire, for example. But Voltaire would have made a bad mathematician, although knowing something of mathematics—and a worse soldier, a worse mechanic; for ordinarily, if the cerebral system be developed, it is rare that the muscular system is developed to the same degree. Napoleon, so great a general, administrator and legislator, would have made a bad poet, although he was a superior writer; a detestable grenadier, although he was brave; and a very unskilful workman, although in moving about his cannon, he invented a thousand expedients, each more ingenious than the other. Such is the condition of the most sublime human beings—what are we to say of the middling orders?

From this truth it follows that, according to their several dispositions, some must be labourers, others weavers; these carpenters, those blacksmiths; others mechanicians, watchmakers, carvers, scholars, authors, legislators, and administrators. Thus they perform better what they have to do. Thus what would take a month to do, and that only tolerably, is done in a day and to perfection. This is what economists style *division of labour*, and which, according to them, has brought about the incredible perfection of modern industry. A watch, the springs of which are manufactured wholesale by Swiss peasants, during their winter leisure hours, is put together in Paris at a watchmaker's; and a workman may purchase this watch for 50 francs, which two centuries back would have cost 1000 francs, that is to say, as much, if not more, than his daughter's dowry. Some years ago a locomotive cost 70,000 francs, at present it costs 45,000 francs, the boilers being made by one party, the springs by another, and so on. In twenty or thirty years, perhaps, it may be had for 10,000 francs.

A diversity of professions is therefore the law of every society, wishing to supply good articles, rapidly,

in quantity, and at low prices. We can imagine a few shepherds rearing flocks, knowing sufficient of agriculture to raise a little corn, giving their sheeps' wool to their wives, and afterwards weaving it themselves, thus practising several trades, and at the most calling foreign industry to their aid, to supply them with an earthenware jug, or a knife, in exchange for their cheese. Although a diversity of professions already exists among these shepherds, as they are obliged to procure from others, iron, or pottery, it may be said that they manufacture all themselves. But it must be remarked, that they are the most uncouth of men, living near the regions of perpetual snow, at the highest level of the globe, far from all civilization, at the extreme frontier of intellect, namely, where *Cretinism* begins. Every society, on the contrary, wishing to advance, to progress, is obliged to adopt a diversity of professions, from whence arises their speciality, or to use a technical term, the *division of labour.*

Communism itself will therefore be compelled to divide the common workshops. There will be labourers of the soil, workers in wood, iron, flax—those who construct machines, those employed in scientific researches, in law-making, government, literature, and probably also—when once imbued with the tastes acquired by civilization—painters and sculptors.

Will you give those men the same kind of existence? Will you give the same nourishment, the same clothing, to the man who tills the soil in the sweat of his brow, whose callous hand guides the plough, or strikes the hammer on the anvil, and to the workman who, with his dextrous and skilful hand weaves silk, or uses the graving tool? And he who studies the heavenly bodies, handles the pencil or pen, or who lives amid sublime imaginings, will you make him sit at the same table with the common labourer? I have made laws, had a hand in the government of the State, worked

with the pen, and I at once declare to you, that I prefer the plain good sense of the labourer to the wearisome verbiage of such a sophist; but after talking to me of wheat, fodder, manure, objects in themselves of the deepest importance, but of which I know nothing,—when I shall have spoken to him of Plato, Cæsar, Machiavelli, Descartes, Colbert, matters equally worthy of interest, but of which he is ignorant, I shall weary him—aye, weary him much more than he will tire me; for I shall be able to learn something of him, which he will not be able do from me.

Food, clothing, company, must therefore be diversified according to trades, or we must return to the barbarous state of the shepherds aforementioned, among whom all may be alike without inconvenience. Moreover, if you would have a society in perfection, if you would have clothes fine as those of Florence, vases elegant as those of Greece, delicate fruits as those from Montreuil and Fontainebleau,—it is impossible that none but these should be obtainable; for as I have elsewhere said, there can be no superior produce, without inferior and common; this being an absolute necessity of the progressive developement of all industry. If, therefore, you would have these refined products, there will be two reasons instead of one, for treating the professions differently; the first on account of the difference in the manners of those practising them, and the second by reason of the inequality itself of the productions for which consumers must be found.

Consequently, there will be a table devoted to labourers, blacksmiths, and all those accustomed to laborious work; one whose company shall consist of weavers, mechanicians, and those following less violent occupations, who have to put forth less bodily strength and more intellect; and also a table for those solely engaged in intellectual pursuits; and although I but

enumerate a few in this place, the classification will have to be varied to infinity.

The consequence of Communism is, therefore, besides life in common, both as regards work and enjoyment, to classify professions, and those exercising them, to make a difference in their manner of living, by the decisions of the public authority.

Inevitably, there will be tables of poor people and tables of rich people, both, it will be said, wisely regulated, so that at the first there will be what is necessary, and at the second no superfluities; well regulated, I grant, but regulated by public authority, which will itself designate the rich and poor, or at all events those to be treated as such.

This, however, is not all. In that state of society in which man is left to take care of himself, he selects his own profession. If he have aspired too high, he fails, and falls. One who from being a workman wished to become a master, falls back to the condition of workman, or even to that of a workman's labourer. In the system where man is taken care of by society, it will classify individuals;—after an inspection of their limbs and cranium, it will say to them: You shall be a labourer; you, a weaver; you, a mechanician; you, a mathematician; you, a scholar; you, a painter, a poet; —you, Archimedes, Newton, Descartes, Racine, or Bossuet. The plough, the hammer, the file, the shuttle, the pen, the telescope, the pencil, the sword, will be conferred like a clerk's desk, or a place in the Excise, or the Customs!

Hence, there will be no variety of professions, no distinguishing rank, and therefore no arts; but the condition of our shepherds: to this we must return. Or, if you would have a variety of professions and arts, there must be distinctions, riches, genius in fact, ordained by the authorities constituted by law. In all

this there is inevitably an indissoluble chain of connection which holds them together.

There is a further consequence of Communism, less inevitable, but which must be carried out, that the system may be in perfect harmony; and which, if it form no part of it, sufficiently proves that but little reliance is placed on the system itself. It is the suppression of the family.

Certainly, we may imagine among those common tables of which I have spoken, the table allotted to children, as well as those for fathers and mothers, *meum* and *tuum*, although abolished as regards material objects, may be retained for moral ones. As well as a wife, one may have children to love and cherish, and follow in their progressive steps in life. At Sparta, there was a common table and the family; but it was the table common to warriors. Property was in the dwelling, in which were the wife and children. The wife took care of the children, and looked after the helots who tilled the soil like slaves. And towards the end of this society, which was, moreover, only half-opposed to nature, the women possessed all the property and their morals were atrocious. The men had not ceased from indulging in infamous practices: they were brave, and that was all.

I grant, therefore, that children may belong to the father and mother, who will visit them at the common table. But, heavens! can you not imagine the torture, the torture of Tantalus, to which your inconsistency will expose these unhappy parents? What greater stimulus is there to the desire of possessing, than the love for one's offspring? Above all, it is to enrich them, or at least to better their mode of living, that most fathers and mothers work. You allow them children whom they may love, and you will not permit them to gratify their inclination, by working for them!

What! are they to see them, to press them to their hearts, and do nought for their welfare! In a society of thirty million souls, it will be necessary to work that they may better the condition of thirty million persons, that a thirty-one-millionth should be extended to their children! Will this not be dreadful torture? Then be consistent. You desire to confound all existences in one, then confound all hearts in one also. Let there be no further tie between father, mother, and children! Let the children belong to all; let the father and the mother no longer recognise them; they will then love them all without exception. At certain hours they will go to see the children of the community, as with a certain degree of pleasure we go to the kennel, to the fowl-house, or to the stable, to see the produce of the domain. Here and there they may recognise some one, which will cause them a momentary illusion, possibly also a regrettable temptation of preference; but they will be accustomed to look upon them all with the same feeling, and then the inconsistency of giving beings to love to those who can do nothing for them will cease. Then you will be consistent in many ways; for if property be irksome, the family is equally so, and for similar reasons. A positive law condemns you to witness the fair field of your neighbour full of fruit, which you are not allowed to touch, even should your lips be parched with thirst. The same thing exists as regards the relation between the sexes. An error in your family has united you to an intolerable wife. But near you is a woman, she may be pretty or not, but she pleases you, and she entertains a reciprocal feeling towards you, yet you may not rush to her arms which she burns to open to you. Here again is another intolerable property! Well, then, do away with the last remnants of *meum* and *tuum*—then, man admitted to labour in common, to enjoy in common, to satisfy unreservedly

his desires of eating and drinking at the common table, will be enabled to gratify his passion with the woman that pleases him, without a thought about the consequences. Society entrusted with the care of bringing up the children of every one, at the expense of all, will see to it; and man, exempted from poverty, able to satisfy all his wants, will obtain that amount of happiness which nature destined for him, and which a tyrannical society has withheld from him.

It must in fairness be acknowledged, that the antagonists of property do not all admit this last degree of communism; but I do not admire them any the more for it, and their inconsistency I despise.

As will be seen, I have endeavoured to treat this grave system seriously. I conclude this sketch,—to a man of sense a very painful one,—and I maintain that the following conclusions have been irrefragably demonstrated:—

Either, man must labour for himself, and then he will become a proprietor; or, he must labour for the community, which will take care of him, and will spare him the hazards consequent on free labour.

And then community, to its highest degree, inevitably follows.

There must be labour in common, in order to prevent idleness; enjoyment in common, to prevent economy.

Again, there must be either a barbarous equality; or, if civilization be admitted, a variety of professions: consequently, declarations as to fitness by the community itself, and unequal wages in order to consume unequal produce:—in a word, there must be, either equality in a barbarous state, or inequality in a civilized one; but still inequality by decision of the public authority.

And, in fine, to be perfectly consistent with the powerlessness of doing aught for one's children—a

consequence of the abolition of all property—there must be a cessation of the torture of loving them, and then the parents must not be in a condition to recognise them; next, all ties of marriage should be done away with, which would put an end to the tyranny of ill-assorted matches.

These consequences are all intimately connected, and one of these institutions leads to the other. Either all must be private and individual, or nothing; then let there be nothing—neither food, nor wife, nor children; let all be common—labour as well as enjoyment. Man will then live like the wild beasts of the forests, or like the dogs which throng the streets of Constantinople.

To this future condition of humanity I make three objections:—it destroys labour, liberty, the family.

Let us briefly examine it under these three aspects.

CHAPTER III.

ON COMMUNISM WITH REGARD TO LABOUR.

Showing that Communism destroys all energy for labour.

It is very clear that if we wish to prevent property—that is, to prevent one from having a little and another much—there must be no inequality in salaries. Be it understood, that when I speak of the equality and inequality of salary, I allude to equality and inequality in the same profession; for if Communism classifies professions and treats them differently,—which it must do, if it would have arts,—there will exist an unequal payment between the several professions, which is not

that here alludcd to. I speak of salaries in the same professions.

One labourer may be strong and intelligent, another the contrary, &c. To pay these unequally would be exposing them to possess unequally. They must consequently be paid alike; and, to avoid idleness and economy, be rewarded by giving them life in common, by way of salary. However that may be, the good and the bad workman, the idle and the laborious, will be treated alike; his reward shall be, either general prosperity, or honour. I will not here waste the reader's time; and I affirm, without bringing forward proofs, which abound in the mind of every one, that these workpeople—moved by the impulse of general prosperity, or by honour—will not work. Can you imagine a mechanic addressed in language such as this: "My friend, work two or three hours more a day, and in twenty or thirty years French society will be richer." I do not pretend to say that he will be insensible to such a result, but I question if he will work these two hours extra. If, on the other hand, his master says to him: "This bit of machinery, that took you ten days to make, and for which I paid you five francs a-day, thus bringing you in fifty francs; I give you to make as task-work. You will execute it in whatever time suits you; I will pay you fifty francs all the same." Should his master tell him that, he will make it in six, seven, or eight days, in order to earn eight, seven, or six francs. Oh! then he will work hard, night and day, and will endeavour to earn more, either for himself or his children. Had it been otherwise, task work, or piece-work, would not have been invented.

You deny, it will be said, the most noble impulses. I reply, it is you who employ them badly. For my part, I believe that if you say to a workman: "Work hard, and although you will be paid no more nor less, France, in twenty or thirty years, will be in a greater

state of prosperity;" he will shrug his shoulders, for it is a matter of money on which you speak to him, and your argument must be appropriate to the subject. But if you say to him: "Die, to save your country,"—he will perhaps listen to your appeal, and if by the medium of noble military institutions, you have instilled in him the sentiment of glory, he will die at Austerlitz, at Eylau, or under the walls of Paris; and the reason is, not that the man is a coward, but that he is indolent, and that for every kind of effort there must be a different stimulus. In order to excite him to labour, you must set before him the bait of comfort and well-being: to excite him to patriotism, you must show him glory. What! honour for two or three extra planks planed during the day,—for a piece of iron better worked! You abuse the word! Honour for men like d'Assas, Chevert, and Latour-d'Auvergne (8); wages, that is, the comfort of good living for himself and his children, for him who has laboured well and earnestly;—and in addition, esteem, if he is steady and honest; for the upright workman needs moral satisfactions likewise. To argue otherwise is to be ignorant of human nature, to confound all things under pretence of reforming them.

That exalted patriotism which leads man to face death, is derived from a momentary enthusiasm, skilfully aroused. But that continued application to an obscure task, which is called labour, is alone obtainable by the prospect of well-being. Doubtless, this irksome task may on some occasions lead to glory, if it be applied to the researches of Newton, for instance, and it is an additional stimulus; but the mass of labour, by which society lives, is alone obtained by affording to the labouring man the certainty of a material salary. When man devotes himself to the soil, in order to derive from it articles of food or clothing, he labours for these very objects, and they must be granted to him; his

labour must be remunerated conformably to the object he had in view, and in order to incite him to labour as much as possible, give him as much as he may have produced—no more, nor less. Moreover, you must bring the end home to him, and for that purpose lead him to expect, not the well-being of all, nor even that of a few, but his own and that of his children. Besides the justice there will be in acting thus, he will be excited to the highest degree possible. He that labours much will have much; he that does little will have but little; he that does nothing will possess nothing. This is justice, prudence, reason. This is not crushing noble impulses; it is reserving them for the noble ends for which they are adapted. For labour there will be wages—for exalted patriotism, or for genius, the recompense is glory. A man labours all his lifetime in order to support himself and his family; pay him, pay him well. On some occasions he braves the cannon's mouth,—award to him the glory of a soldier. He makes a discovery,—bestow on him the fame due to an inventor; but to every one according to his works.

Thus, without a personal salary proportionate to labour, to its quantity and quality, there will be no zeal for this labour. Your community, with its general and uniform wages, would soon die of hunger. That society which admits of property, where labour profits him that devotes himself to it, for himself individually and for his children, can scarcely secure bread for all, and that often of the worst description. How would it be if no one worked on his own account, and if all worked alone for the generality? Even should the division be different, the result would still be the same; for, as I have already stated, it is known by a very simple calculation, that the reversion of the riches of the most affluent, on the poorest, would produce no appreciable increase to the latter. It would

not add a farthing to the daily salary of any one, and it would have diminished by half, perhaps by three-quarters, the mass of general production. All would die of hunger: this is the sole good that would be done for them.

CHAPTER IV.

ON COMMUNISM WITH REGARD TO HUMAN LIBERTY.

That Communism is the absolute negation of human liberty.

COMMUNISM destroys labour, for in making the end more distant, it destroys the desire to attain it; it does more, it suppresses liberty.

What, then, is this chimerical society in which, for fear that man should be deceived, should go astray, should be unsuccessful, or too successful, should remain poor, or should become rich, he is obliged to work for the community in which he is fed, clothed, and kept; in which the avocation he is fit for is assigned to him; in which he is, by authority, declared to be a labourer, a blacksmith, a weaver, an author, a mathematician, a poet, a warrior; in which he is, by authority, at one time to partake of refined enjoyments, at another of vulgar ones, unless, in order to anticipate the difficulty arising from these classifications, he be retained in the brutish equality of the shepherd? What is this society? I will tell you; it is a bee-hive or an ant-hill.

There are in nature animals that live in common, and resemble, in their ways, human society. Look at the bees, for instance; they labour with continued activity, alighting on the surrounding plants, never at fault in

their selections, and returning with their little store of sweets obtained from the chalice of flowers. On re-entering the hive, they go to work like clever architects, never committing an error in the dimensions of their cells; with the wax they construct a wall; in this wall they deposit the honey, bring up the new family, which they ultimately start in the air, or, as we should say, in the world, to go and people a new colony, that is to say, a new hive.

Among these industrious bees there exist neither diligent nor idle, rich nor poor, virtuous nor criminal; all is proper, all as it should be. Can you tell me why? Because all is governed by an infallible guide—instinct. Are you aware what your community would be? A bee-hive. Man, such as you would make him, do you know what he would be? An animal, debased to the condition of the animal, the slave of instinct.

In a word, liberty would be wanting; and liberty consists in being liable to err, in being able to suffer. Error and truth, suffering and enjoyment, such is the human soul!

The bee does not err; it goes from shrub to shrub, flutters in the air and the light of day, enjoys, no doubt, but without the lively emotions common to our nature; and, returned to its hive, turning round and round on itself, using its little feet as compasses, this infallible machine is as true as that of Vaucauson, because its Vaucauson is God himself.

Quite different is man; his hive is Athens, Rome, Florence, Venice, London, Paris. The manner in which he is obliged to proceed is very different. He has not to run from shrub to shrub, almost without chance of erring. He must judge of the most vast and complicated relations; by means of the most refined art he must create the necessaries which serve to feed him; he must draw from all parts of the world every description of produce, have a knowledge of

their value, cause them to arrive at the proper time, and on advantageous terms. In order to fetch them, he must have learned to study the course of the stars, of the winds, of the seasons; on the journey he must defend them with the genius of a Ruyter, a Jean Bart, a Nelson. In all these operations he may be right or wrong in his calculations. If he were not liable to err, if he judged right, necessarily, inevitably, by a single effort of the mind, he would not be free. He would be either that bee, which, limited to the performance of little acts, which it executes without fault, is a living machine guided by those infallible springs of animated nature which are called instincts; he would be this busy bee, or God, God himself, such as we strive to conceive him, who, in the presence of eternal truth, sees it by the aid of no medium, and sees it uninterruptedly, for He is truth. The being, therefore, that would be infallible, must be either a machine, or God. Thus man may have a perception of what is true, or he may not; this it is that constitutes his liberty; he attains it by unremitting attention—by labour, in fact.

This is his mind, but it is not his entire soul. He must have more than this perception of objects, which consists in the power of discerning good from evil, promptly or slowly, correctly or incorrectly: he must have impulses. If, at the sight of things, he remained indifferent, he might, perhaps, be curious but inactive. That he may act, he must have motives for acting. For him to approach things or to leave them, they must affect him sensibly; they must cause him much delight or much aversion; this to him is his attraction. The moon attracted round the earth, the earth round the sun, have their motives, without any feeling. Man, attracted towards a certain object, induced to do a certain thing, has his attraction: it is pleasure or pain. Were he not actuated by these, he would be like the moon or

the earth, which, although infinitely greater than himself, have not the moral dignity that pertains to him as a sentient and thinking being. Thus to be moved, he must be either attracted or repelled, must either enjoy or suffer according as he may have succeeded or failed in his actions. He may err, he may suffer: such is the twofold liberty of his soul. Always to judge right, always to be possessed of the same feeling, even were it a pleasurable one, would be not to discriminate, not to feel, it would be descending very low in the scale, becoming a bee, a polype, a vegetable, a stone, and descending still lower, becoming nought; or else, ascending that scale of beings, ascending to infinity, becoming God, such as we endeavour to comprehend him. Thus, a liability to error and suffering, and also a liability to the reverse, is liberty; it is this which places man above the animal guided by instinct, but beneath that Being which we endeavour to conceive, as exempt from the imperfections of our limited nature, and which we call God.

Oh! sublime soul of man, blind or clear-sighted soul, acutely sensible to pain or pleasure, the lamp that God has placed within us, to incite and guide us, free soul, must you be extinguished like some deceptive light which fatigues and destroys us! What! you would quench it, since you wish to deprive us of liberty, and lower us to the condition of the bee or the ant! What! for fear that I should err, that I should not be what you term rich or poor, that I should not suffer from cold, hunger or misery, you would shut me up in a hive, tracing out my task, feed me, clothe me according to your taste, measure my strength, my appetite, my genius, place me here or there, assign to me such and such a study! and when you fear that I may err, and that in order to avoid such a danger, you pretend to settle everything for

me, have you no fear, infatuated legislators, of erring yourselves, in thus fixing for me the part I am to take, in determining my wants, in taking upon yourselves to satisfy them? You are grossly deceived; from amidst the immensity of creation, you took me for that which I was not, you took me for the beaver which builds, for the horse which is harnessed. Fearing I might fall, you lowered me; fearing I might go astray, you enslaved me; fearing I might suffer, you deprived me of life, for by suppressing the accidents of life, you suppressed life itself.

The old, eternal society, which nature made, treats man in a different manner. "Labour," she tells him, "labour as much as you will, as much as you are able, as you best know how, skilfully or badly, with or without intellect, with the means given you at your birth. Your earnings shall become your own. You are old, labour still, for what you earn shall be for your children." Besides telling man to labour, to labour incessantly, society leaves to him the choice of the profession at which he will employ himself. He follows his instinct. If he be mistaken, he will be oblige to change, and to descend. But, by trying his powers, he will end by finding his way, and that once found, he will follow it as the eagle sails through the air. For instance, here is an unskilful doctor, who, without knowing it, was a great architect, he changes his profession, and constructs the colonnade of the Louvre. Here is but a poor architect, who perceives that he was born for the career of arms; he returns to his vocation, and gains the battle of Heliopolis. (9) Every one thus labours, labours diligently, freely, according to his particular bent. The father who has become rich, makes his children rich, and places them in a position superior to his own. These children lend the capital accumulated by their father, to others who have need to work, derive a revenue from it, with their

revenue pay for the most exquisite products of industry, and, raised by labour, pay labour in their turn. If they be worthy of their sire, they will remain in the position he placed them in; they ascend even higher; otherwise, they fall back again, once more become poor, and are seen to solicit alms at the gate of the palace, where they were nurtured in childhood. So the labour of their father was rewarded in them. So their own idleness is punished in them and in their descendants. Hence arise thousands of moral contrasts,—hence arise that succession of accidents, called the theatre of life. We see reclining on a silken couch, the poor workman born on a bed of straw; the rich man, who came into the world in a tapestried chamber, lying in a stable. We see him, who, as a domestic, once served in the mansion of a rich child, now the protector of that child, formerly so disdainful, and now humbled, but relieved by him who was once beneath his notice. We see a penniless adventurer returning from India, dispensing gifts around him, and immediately after, his heirs dispersed and deprived of the common necessaries of life. We see, not alone the accidents of riches, but also those of power, for fickle fortune plays with all things,—with treasures as with crowns. We witness the soldier become a sovereign,—John Sforza, Duke of Milan, and his grandsons, poisoned by a tyrant; an officer of artillery, at one time master of the world, subsequently confined to a petty island in the distant seas, the members of his family dispersed, sometimes condemned to indigence; princes, the heirs of a long line of kings, proscribed, schoolmasters, then kings, then again proscribed, and having in their exile, scarcely wherewith to supply their wants. (10) We see these confused changes; and thousands of virtues contrasting with thousands of vices, sometimes rich men with hearts of stone, sometimes also with hearts overflowing with kindness, spreading around them the

gifts of fortune, and him who is successful thus making up for the inferiority of him who is unsuccessful; every where a counterpoise,—dexterity opposed to awkwardness, activity to idleness, goodness to misfortune, and always, in fact, active human faculties developed to the highest degree! These chances, these striking contrasts, these excited human faculties, these vices, these virtues, these blessings, these evils,—this is liberty; it is not the animal, it is MAN.

CHAPTER V.

ON COMMUNISM WITH REGARD TO THE FAMILY.

Shewing that property and the family are indissolubly united; that by destroying the one, Communism destroys the other, and effaces the noblest sentiments of the human soul.

COMMUNISM destroys labour, suppresses liberty, and if it is consistent, must abolish the family. Man, such as he is made by nature, and not as sophists would make him, requires to have his field, in his field his dwelling, and in his dwelling his family. When he has passed on from infancy to youth, his growth is completed; he weds the woman of his choice, or whom his parents have chosen for him. Children are the fruit of this union. He labours for her and for them. He feels a delight in adorning his partner, the object of his love; he studies to bring up in a proper manner the children she has borne him, to direct them to a profession, to prepare for them riches and honours, either in the career he has himself pursued, or in a more exalted

one. Having attained this end, become old, when life has no further enjoyment, when love is in him an extinct feeling, when success appears to him solely as an earthly deception, he lives again in his children. Those tastes which he no longer has for himself, he has for them. He feels happy when they love, when they are prosperous. Young and strong he protected them in childhood; old and infirm he is protected by them in his decrepitude. At last he dies, after passing through the stages of infancy, youth, manhood, and old age, having received from his sons the services he had rendered to them, always loving, always beloved, and accompanied to the grave by the beings to whom he gave life. And thus do human generations succeed one another, as it were, holding each other by the hand, from the first man whom the scriptures call Adam, to those last descendants who will perish, we cannot tell how, with the planet which bears us through the fields of infinity.

This, it may be said, is the ideal of the family. For that man chose that woman under the influence of a momentary impulse. He no longer loves her, or has ceased to be loved by her. He has proved faithless to her, and has himself been deceived by her. This conjugal society has become unbearable. These children he has neglected, or else, as a good father, after heaping kindnesses on them, he has met in return with naught but ingratitude and neglect.

I am fully aware of all these sneering arguments, but they are poor reasoners, whom these accidental failures in things turn against the things themselves. Bye-and-bye I will discuss these failings. Let us prove that this ideal state which I have sketched, remains the true one, amidst all the vicissitudes common to the human race.

Among animals, the sire never knows the beings that have issued from him. The dam, when she has

finished suckling her young, or, among those species not mammiferous, when she has taught them to be dependent on themselves alone, forsakes them; she does not even desire to see them, and drives them away from her as intruders. Their education has consisted in leading them on to that age at which they are able to feed and defend themselves. It is a month, two months, perhaps a year for those which live the longest lives. After this they are devoted to Communism. The father, the mother, the issue live without knowing one another, without distinction, in a promiscuous state, for which nature shows no repugnance in them. Such is the family among animals. It is true, they have no troubles, no restraint, no obligation to take care of each other, when they have ceased to love, no adultery to reproach themselves with, no parental neglect, no filial ingratitude to deplore; they are neither bad husbands, bad fathers, nor bad sons. Is this the state of innocence, of liberty, of happiness, that you desire for the human species? This innocence, this liberty, this happiness, belong to the brute creation. The purpose which brought the father and mother together once effected, which for the father is but of a moment, and for the mother of some months, they separate, and the family is dissolved. It lasted the time necessary for the education of the species.

But the education of man lasts his whole life. This powerful being, destined to last longer than the majority of other animals, destined to become a Newton, a Racine, a Voltaire, or a Napoleon, when he has ceased to suckle, can scarcely walk, and, if left to himself, might be knocked down by a dog, or crushed by a horse; and when he is able to eat, to walk, to avoid dangerous obstacles, he could not live in the midst of that society where you must purchase everything, where we cannot pick up our food in the streets as animals do theirs in the pasture. The father and

mother must sustain him. Moreover, he is a thinking being ; his intellect must be developed, must be cultivated, elevated ; must be placed upon a level with his profession, his country, and the age. Ascend still higher, and if he is the son of one of those great families which are an honour to their country ; if he is the descendant of the Scipio at Rome, of the Barcas in jealous Carthage ; if he is one day to uphold the lustre of his name, the glory of his country, then the hereditary virtues, the noble sentiments of his race must be inculcated in him ; a whole life of good and heroic examples is not then too much. If he is the son of a Jean Bart, he must be sent to sea by the side of his father, and should he, on the day of battle, feel frightened, he must be lashed to the mast of the vessel commanded by the heroic sailor. For such an object do you think that the family can last too long ?

The family of an animal is the mother's protection during the period of physical infirmity ; with man it is the watchfulness of father and mother over his soul through life, the continued inculcation of wise lessons and great examples ! Is it in a Republic that such things are required to be told ?

The human family, assuredly, is not at all times and everywhere the same ; no more than other social institutions does it attain perfection in the dawn of societies. In his nomad condition man has several wives, because, living free under the canopy of Heaven, amid the vast pasturing grounds of the desert, surrounded by pastoral abundance, it is easy for him to live, and he is able to support a great many wives and a great many children. As a despot, not having yet learnt to respect his partner's feebleness, he gratifies his taste, which is to have several wives ; binds on them that fidelity which he does not himself observe ; has children by them all, who live among themselves as best they can ; and if one of these wives is more thought of

than the rest, he leaves Agar to go into the desert, and there to die of thirst with her little Ishmael. At last, if this barbarous nomad chief one day becomes master of Constantinople, he will have hundreds of concubines, condemned to live in a harem, the creatures of his whim, bearing him children, to stir up against each other the bloody struggles of the Seraglio.

Even at Rome, in that sanctuary of great and noble, but untutored sentiments, more particularly before Christianity had elevated and softened the heart, the conjugal tie was far from being as firm as it has since become. Marriage had its degrees: from concubinage to definitive unions, there were intermediate stages admitted and recognised by the law. Divorce was easy of attainment. It frequently occurred that a Roman lady passed from one house into another. The father constituted the family, much more than the mother. A noble pride of race, far more than tenderness, was the principle, the soul of the family. This noble pride was carried to such an extent, that the Scipios having a son unworthy of them, went and begged of Paulus Emilius a child, who was given to Polybius to bring up, and who became Scipio Emilianus. Rome's grandeur having its foundations on the greatness of its families, held the world under its sway. But the mother was often wanting, and tenderness was unknown. The mother of the Gracchi is an exception, confirming rather than denying this truth.

Christianity, which has done so much for human society, by restraining man, by obliging him to sacrifice his inclinations, to respect the feebleness of woman as that of the slave, instituted the family as it now exists. For a single father and a single mother, there is a single line of children; such is the perfection of this holy institution. Doubtless, with their changeable tastes, the husband and the wife may not be sufficiently restrained. It rarely happens that they love

with the same ardour from youth to age; but with time, conjugal affection succeeds to love. The being who throughout life has shared your interests, who feels the same pride, the same ambition, and shares the same fortune, can never be indifferent to you; and should the near contact of existence have occasioned any misunderstandings, the void which you feel on the day that being is taken from you, sufficiently attests the place she occupied in your soul. Besides, do not the children remain, those for whom the family has been instituted? The husband, the wife, whose feelings have become altered, again seek each other, again agree, when it concerns the welfare of those cherished beings, who are the sole object of life, when life has none other left. In them they suffer, cruelly suffer, and suffer more acutely when they are childless. Who would desire to tear from the human soul, that feeling common to a mother, so bitter, yet so soothing—so pleasurable, yet so full of anxiety,—now watching over the young maid, protecting her virtue, leading her to the nuptial chamber, loving her when she becomes a mother, loving her children as much as herself; now, preserving the young man on his wild career, after having watched over him from childhood to youth, accompanying him with fear and trembling on his entrance into life, suffering deeply from his reverses, delighted to extacy at his success! Perhaps this fond mother may have consented to see this son follow the career of arms. She has shuddered on learning he is on the eve of battle; oh! what rapture should he survive, should he have distinguished himself in it! oh! without doubt she will be sorely afflicted if he is brought back to her a corpse, were he even shrouded in flags captured from the enemy; she will be heart-broken, and wish to die, and perhaps will die! I admit that the brute creation, the best among them, the dog you are fond of, have none of these sorrows.

Will you, then, become a beast? renounce your soul, cease to be a free creature, thinking right and wrong, enjoying and suffering, suffering deeply! Then tear out from yourself that soul, fall down on your hands and knees, turn your arms into feet, bow down to the earth that brow destined to look up to the heavens, *erectos ad sidera tollere vultus*, and become brute, that you may not suffer.

Children are a source of pain to you, the tie is burdensome, even as the limits of the adjoining field are an eyesore to him who would pluck its fruit! I agree, with you, therefore, nothing is more consistent than to do away with the limits of the family as well as those of the neighbouring field. There shall be no other domain, no other dwelling, no other wife, no other children, than those of the community. All will be loved, all looked after in the mass, and many difficulties will be surmounted. Man will unite himself temporarily to the woman who pleases him, with her he will remain for a time, and then, his passion satisfied or his taste gone, he will forsake her, leaving her with the pains of child-bearing, for which the provident community will have provided; will now and then visit, in the common nursery, the children of every father, of every mother, endeavouring not to recognise any of them, for fear of committing the sin of loving any individually, and as a family joy, will have the gratification of seeing them all take shelter under the wing of the community.

I am well aware that many adversaries of property will disclaim this picture, and say that this promiscuous state is revolting to their feelings. Their taste may be better, but their logic is worse.

As I have stated, man must have everything to himself individually; his field, in his field his dwelling; in his dwelling his wife and children—or nothing at all, no field, no dwelling, no wife, no children; for in

the intermediate system, besides that there is a fallacious principle, contrary to nature, there is the most dangerous inconsistency for the system and the cruellest for the individual. Endeavour, if you can, to tear man from himself, to annihilate that inclination of his heart which leads him to appropriate all he touches, materially and morally; accustom him to expand himself in immensity, to labour for thirty-six millions of fellow-citizens, to love eighteen million women, to cherish five or six million children, habituate him to this outpouring of his being; but if you allow that inclination which incessantly brings him within himself, to gratify itself in any way, at once this inclination will become stronger and more irresistible. In fact, leave him his wife and children, and at the same moment he will wish to give them that which pertains to the whole community. Fools, that you are! do you not understand that God, having divided the universe, that is, time and space among created things; having shared among them this domain of infinity; having created distinct beings, which possess not either the whole space or the whole time for themselves alone; having created a moon, an earth, a sun, and in the boundless firmament thousands of other moons, earths, and suns, which each of them have a portion of space, a portion of time, for they had a beginning and will have an end; having placed on these great beings so insensible, although animated with motive powers, other beings equally distinct, some of them sentient ones, thinking ones, such as animals, and among animals, man; do you not understand that it is the very principle of creation that these sentient and thinking beings, also distinct from one another, should have their share of space and time; that in the same way as the celestial globes on which they exist, have a portion of the universal extent, they also must have a portion of these globes,—that the animal

should have its burrow, man his dwelling; that, as a moral being, possessing the faculty to love, he loves not the mass, which is too much for him, but a part of it, that which is within his reach, first, his father, his mother, his wife, his children, in a word, his family; then his country; perhaps, after his country, the race of man to which he belongs, the Christian race, for instance, to the exclusion of the Mahometans! But do you not perceive that, if you proceed farther, absurdity will follow, for the reason that you will have placed yourselves in opposition to nature? Do you not hear the cavillers deriding common benevolence, and saying, that to love everybody is to love no one? Perhaps you will reply, that your system is that of universal benevolence, whereas the old social system is that of selfishness. This old system is no more selfishness than gravitation is a planetary selfishness. Every one has his orbit, and in that orbit its radius of attraction. Man is a limited being, his heart equally so with his body. He must be by degrees raised from himself to his family, from his family to his country, from his country to the human race. Resting on these steps in the scale, he is able to raise himself, and indeed he does raise himself to the highest affections. First, he loves himself, then, by improving on himself, loves his wife, his children, more than himself. Thus improving, he perceives that the prosperity of his country is connected with that of his family, and he loves the one nearly as much as he does the other. Indeed, you may lead him to the love of the whole human race, but by the steps of that divine ladder which makes him ascend from himself to his family, to his country, to the human race, to God. To expect that he will love the whole before the part, the human race before his country, his country before his family, is to be grossly mistaken as to his nature, as to the radius of the physical and moral powers which move him. Tell him to prefer Europe to France,

France to his family, to labour for those furthest from his heart, rather than for those nearest allied to it, and, propagator of absurdities! you will obtain but a sneering disobedience. It will be as if you had made the moon revolve in a direct course round the sun, instead of making it turn round the earth first, and then round the sun, the common but indirect centre of its planetary existence. In a word, man, a limited being, must elevate himself by degrees to that whole in which you desire to confound him. By proceeding thus, he ascends, whereas by following the opposite course, he descends from the whole to himself. Blind ordainer of things! you should have made him ascend, and, on the contrary, you have made descend.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE CLOISTER, OR LIFE IN COMMON AMONG CHRISTIANS.

Shewing that Communism is an erroneous imitation of the monastic life, implying contradictions which render it impossible.

THE world has, however, witnessed an example of life in common, upon which I cannot forbear saying a few words, in order the more clearly to point out the mistake committed by these poor imitators of this one single example. I allude to the conventual life among Christians.

The only being in creation who makes an attempt on his own existence, who commits suicide, is man. It is the extreme limit to that freedom which God implanted in him at the same time that he endowed him

with thought. There are times indeed in which that thought, stimulated by grief, taking an erroneous view of the world, seeing nothing but suffering where God has placed enjoyment also, deeming a passing trouble to be permanent, whereas in this movable scene, every thing passes away, pleasure as well as pain,—thought rebels, and overcoming the powerful instinct of self-preservation, urges man to plunge the steel into his heart. Cato, believing Cæsar's star for ever in the ascendant, tore open his bowels, and could not reserve himself for the day when Brutus and Cassius once more raised the standard of Roman liberty. These are the sad errors of a moment! And well might another Cæsar, on whom, also, fortune did not always smile, ashamed of having for one moment dreamt of suicide, address from the summit of St. Helena's rock, the following sublime lesson to Cato:—"Had you been able," said he, "to read in the book of fate, had you been able there to see Cæsar struck by three-and-twenty daggers, at the foot of Pompey's statue, Cicero at the time occupying the speaker's tribune, and thundering his philippics against Anthony, would you have pierced your heart?"

But, notwithstanding its sublimity, this lesson will not prevent some other fallen hero, or some vulgar gamester, from again plunging a dagger into his bosom. Christianity, with its profound knowledge of the human heart, for this criminal suicide has substituted an innocent one, which does not destroy the creature, but which separates him from society, in order to consecrate him to acts of benevolence and to prayer: this suicide is the cloister.

The monastic life is, in truth, no more than Christian suicide substituted for the Pagan suicide of Cato, Brutus, and Cassius.

Christianity seizes on his way the desperate being who is about to make an attempt on his life, stays his

arm, takes him apart, leads him into solitude, tears him from that agitated life of cities, from those various sensations—now so delightful, now so full of pain—which continually harass him, shuts him up in those silent and lonely cloisters, where, within a narrow space, he will rise, pray, labour, take his meals and retire to rest at the same hour daily, will hear nought save the convent bell, will witness no other events than the rising and setting of the sun, and will feel his ardour melt away in the sublime and tranquillizing uniformity of prayer, a powerful and the only remedy for moral agitation—a remedy able to calm the passionate and tender soul of Héloïse and of La Vallière. By privation and by a sober life, Christianity deadens the physical passions of this desperate being; his moral ones, by seclusion from the world. And as there still exists in the human heart an indestructible remnant of the human passions,—a fondness for society,—to destroy which would be impossible, Christianity, ever profound in its views, gives to man the society of man, to woman the society of woman; is careful not to intermix these beings so prone to love again, separates them with care, and at the same time that it only leaves for their bodies a sober and moderate allowance of food, barely sufficient to support life, and for their souls it leaves only a cold and calm friendship, which can no longer elevate, agitate, or trouble it. Thus, between prayer, contemplation, and acts of benevolence, they are led on to their last hour, and a sudden and criminal death is converted into one that is slow, peaceful, and innocent, mingled with acts useful to humanity. Christianity, however, has been consistent. It has substituted one kind of death for another; it has built a sepulchre, in which to place the man who was about to destroy himself, and thus help him to spend the remainder of his days in peace. What are fortune and family to these religious men and women detached from

the world? They must no longer think of them, if the vow which made them bury themselves in a convent remains firm in the heart; and if, on the contrary, this vow is broken, they must, under pain of the most frightful sufferings, of the most lamentable scandal, depart; they must at once leave the tomb in which they had shut themselves up alive.

In order to exist, in order to banish the misery with which human society is menaced the moment it stands still, it is requisite it should be incessantly at work; for it will perish in the ensuing year if, when the sun, rain, or the cold pass over the earth, it is not prepared to cast in the seed at the favourable time. But these little exceptional societies, located by Christianity in tranquil and melancholy spots, have no occasion to labour with such exactness. To live a little time, they need but little. Besides, the great society which submits to these exceptions, because they are not numerous, and which takes pains to provide for moral as well as physical diseases, has endowed them with landed property, often even with rich revenues. What matters it, then, if they labour but moderately, if the mass of society compensate for their inactivity by the ardour of its own labour? Further, the family is not a source of trouble to these little communities, which are death and not life, whose mission is not to multiply, nor love,—which are a temporary resting-place, situated at the entrance to eternity, in which even, to guard against the violent awakening of the passions, an indispensable moral rule ordains that they be all absolutely, irrevocably extinguished! On entering them the beautiful hair of woman is cut off, man is made to wear a thick beard; the mild beauties of the one, the manly vigour of the other, are concealed under a heavy dress, without shape or colour, which hides, effaces, and makes you forget the charms which God gave to these beings for the purpose of pleasing,

attracting, charming one another. Christianity is consistent! There is little labour, little food, and no family, in this Christian death, substituted for the Pagan one. All is in harmony, all is suitable. And yet, notwithstanding these precautions, that desperate man who had thought grief in this world to be everlasting, and who would have thrust a dagger into his bosom, or shut himself up in a cloister; that man, mistaken as to the durability of human sensations, suddenly awakens, awakens once more full of life; and, indeed, formerly, these religious houses condemned to the severest austerity, were frequently seen to deviate from their rules. It was attempted to destroy the passion they had to possess, and they appropriated to themselves immense riches! The joys of the family were attempted to be denied them, and they gave themselves up to deplorable scenes of disorder! It is, because the momentary vow to escape from the laws of nature, left them at the same time as their despair, or the momentary disgust which had occasioned it, and the impossibility of slavery and abstinence for those beings to whom all the warmth of life had returned, broke out in lamentable scandals. Even if the vow to sacrifice oneself by degrees were but half belied, if these monks and nuns remained chaste, there still dwelt within them a portion of the human heart which rarely adhered to the vow which had been taken; this was ambition, the passion of hearts void of any other. These convents were the scene of continual bickerings among men and women wishing to rule in the narrow and monotonous empire of the cloister. The rivalries between the monks and their abbot, between the nuns and their superior, filled the hearts in which it had been attempted to quench all other passions. Accordingly Christianity itself, by the voice of pontiffs, combining philosophy with faith, has acknowledged that such places were alone admissible, in which a hard and

sober life destroys the passions of man, insensibly leading him to death, such as the convents of the Carthusian monks, or the hospitals devoted to acts of benevolence, which create for these beings cut off from all contact with human society, a celibacy so fully occupied at the bedside of the dying and at the foot of the altar, that they escape the seductions of the world: but even these are not always without exception!

Life in common, the slavery of the cloister, for beings renouncing the world, for whom the activity of labour, and the gratifications of the heart, or the affections of the family, are of little moment, and for whom even all this must cease to exist, have formerly been, and are still, by exception, possible means of being, exposed, however, to very great mistakes. Their want of energy in labour agrees with the vow of poverty, slavish submission to regulation with the need of uniformity, the absence of the family with the annihilation of worldly affections, more particularly with the care devolved upon others of perpetuating the human race, for, in olden time, when the daughter of a noble house entered a convent, she bequeathed to an elder brother, with her share of wealth, the mission of of continuing the family. But to condemn to inaction, to the slavery of the cloister, beings full of passions, full of the desire to enjoy, to love, to survive in their children, is a ridiculous error which Christianity in its great wisdom, did not commit. Instead of placing death in a tomb, as Christianity did, this is burying life there.

ON SOCIALISM.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

ON SOCIALISM.

Showing that the adversaries of property, not daring to deny it positively, have invented, in order to correct its effects, the different systems known as ASSOCIATION, RECIPROCITY, AND THE RIGHT TO LABOUR.

THE adversaries of property in these times have not all attacked it directly. Many of them, not daring to deny it in an absolute manner, have confined themselves to seeking and proposing means of correcting what they style its prejudicial effects; as if a holy and sacred institution, which is nothing more than the free and unlimited development of the human faculties, producing what they have the power to produce, sometimes riches, sometimes mediocrity, sometimes indigence; exactly similar in this respect to the vegetation of a forest, in which, by the side of a young or feeble tree, grows another of majestic size and strength; as if such an institution, which is but nature herself obeyed and respected, had need of excuse and correctives. Accordingly, these correctors of Providence have arrived

at discoveries worthy of the aim they have proposed to themselves.

The first and most sensible thing they did was to attack each other violently, to scatter contempt on one another's systems, to fall under the disguised title of socialists, upon the communists themselves, the more logical adversaries of property, and not more unreasonable, in my opinion, than those who assume the name of socialists. For, after all, property being the contested point, they draw the necessary consequences, and place man in the condition in which he ought to be, when *meum* and *tuum* are denied—in the complete community of all enjoyments, both physical and moral. But, however that may be, the socialists, treating the communists very cavalierly, and, I repeat, in a manner not likely to inspire much respect for their own logic, have, each on his own part, imagined means for correcting the effects of property, more ridiculous, perhaps, from their desire that they should be less revolting. These means are *Association*, *Reciprocity*, the *Right to Labour*. Assuredly, communism is a great and serious madness, for it consists in treating man like an animal, in supporting and keeping him, as the sportsman keeps his dogs in a kennel, which he loves, and would not have uncomfortable, but which he feeds, exercises, and controls to the sound of a whistle—a whistle with a whip at the other end. But when once man's distinctive existence has been denied, by contesting the personal fruits of his labour, what remains to be done, except to sink everything into one—into the community? To leave him a *home*, that he may accumulate and commit the crime of economy—to leave him a family, that he may endure the punishment of living without the power of doing anything for them, would be the greatest of inconsistencies. I know that the system is absurd, but it is at least specious, for it is consistent. A monster has been created; but the

limbs of this monster are fitted to each other. What must be said, on the other hand, of those who, rejecting the monstrosities of Communism, while they allow the old society to exist, endeavour to change this part or that, to substitute others that will not work with the old ones, and thus compose the most incoherent assemblage that can be imagined?

We shall see, by a plain account of these systems, whether this judgment is too severe.

The socialists admit of property, they say, but, according to them, capital is a tyrant: he will not lend himself to the working man, or else does so on very harsh conditions, and on such that the working man cannot live. There is, moreover, a frightful struggle among men. Society is a foul den, in which men seek to destroy each other by their rivalry. A new machine, destined to facilitate labour, to render it more productive, less costly, becomes an arm to destroy their manufacturing rivals. Thus they create a struggle — a competition of cheapness which renders the condition of the workman insupportable. According to certain Socialists, the workmen should combine among themselves; thus combined or associated, they would have the means of obtaining the capital which is refused to them, to make head against it, and to prevent their being oppressed by its exigencies. Moreover, they will concert together, and put an end to that cruel war of rivalry, by producing only in accordance with the settled prices and quantities. Two things will then come simultaneously to an end—the tyranny of capital, and the fratricidal war of trade-rivalry. Such is the system of *Association.*

No, says another; the abolition of mercantile rivalry is a chimera, for this rivalry is life itself. Men cannot labour without becoming rivals, for it is impossible they should not strive each to do his best, thus, even unconsciously, they enter into rivalry with

one another. Capital would not lend itself any more to associated, than to individual, workmen. The evil lies elsewhere, and the remedy also. All capital may be summed up in money, in gold. It is gold that is refused to the man who needs it, that he may live and labour. Gold therefore is the criminal. Punish it by suppressing it. Create a direct means of exchange, with the help of a bank, whose notes, granted to every man who desires to produce, will not fail him like gold, and forthwith there will arise a prodigious phenomenon of production and consumption; for it is certain that every man desires to consume, to consume without measure. From that period, there will arise in the human appetite, the certainty of infinite consumption, and also of an infinite outlet for labour. We shall have given men's faculties an unlimited field, by putting the faculties of production and consumption, in direct proportion, and by suppressing the only obstacle (gold) that interferes between them. If, moreover, all salaries, and all revenues from capital are reduced, we shall still further augment the facility of living by the diminution of all kinds of value. Happiness, if it belong to this world, will then be found, if it consists in labouring much, in consuming much! It will, without contradiction, be found. This is the system of *Reciprocity*.

Another chimera! exclaims a third. Association, suppression of rivalry, abolition of money—they are all of a piece. We can no more suppress trade-rivalry than we can money, the necessary medium of exchange. There is but one means of putting an end to all social suffering, and that is direct and certain, not ruinous, not attacking property, in the common sense of the word,—this means is the Right to Labour. Is it not true that, in the actual state of society, where capital belongs to capitalists who lend or refuse it at pleasure, where the earth belongs to the landowners, who let it or not, at their will, there arises from this concentra-

tion of all things in certain hands, that many persons remain unemployed? Does not this point to the remedy, namely, that society should guarantee labour to those who need it, and undertake to provide them with it? By this means, whether property be a legitimate institution or not, its most disastrous effects will be corrected; since, should the case occur, when the possessors of capital, movable or immovable, refuse money to these, or land to those, there would be a capitalist or a landlord at hand, namely the State, which would insure employment to all who needed it. It is certain, indeed, that were there an universal capitalist, who always had money, work, farms at command, the question would be solved. Social happiness would be once more secured. This third system is that of the *Right to Labour*.

Such are the three systems which, next to Communism, offer themselves to the hopes of humanity. They compose as a whole, that science more moderate in its appearance which, under the name of *Socialism*, affects to spare property. In the following chapters, I shall examine these three systems, and prove, I hope, that *Association*, *Reciprocity*, and the *Right to Labour*, are on a level with *Communism*, as regards its *principles*, but are inferior to it in consistency.

CHAPTER II.

ON SOCIAL SUFFERINGS.

Showing what are the real social sufferings it would be desirable to provide against.

I DO not deny that evil exists in the present state of society; I know it and my heart is wrung when it appears before me, in the shape of those unhappy workmen or their wives, stretching out their hands for a subsistence, which serious troubles have snatched from them. I am deeply affected, and I am not the less moved, because I do not make a show of ambitious sensibility. But what is this evil? We must form an exact estimate of it, that we may judge how far the means proposed for its relief are chimerical.

Let us cast our eyes over the fields and villages, over the industrious classes, labouring with their hands,—over the middle classes, toiling with body and mind—over the higher classes, working with the mind alone, for the evil may exist in all.

In the country, the peasant who does not complain, and who perhaps is the most to be pitied, labours unceasingly summer and winter, always bent over the earth, eats black bread, sometimes varied with potatoes or chesnuts, vegetables with a little fat bacon, and rarely meat. His feet are encased in wooden shoes, his clothes are of coarse woollen fabric, and it is very seldom that his lot is affected by the prosperity of commerce and industry. His life is one of constant hardship; but in return, he is not exposed, like the town workmen, to occasional stagnations, arising from

excess of production. The little that he has, he has always. His condition is, however, growing better, though slowly. This condition, indeed, within the last two centuries, and especially within the last fifty years, has infinitely changed. The peasant is better lodged, better clothed, and better fed. In the reign of Louis XIV., at the close of the War of the Succession, whole districts, ruined by taxation, were abandoned; whole populations fled from one province to another only to die of hunger. Such an instance we have not once witnessed, not even after the long wars of the Empire. If we go further back in our history, we shall read of entire generations carried off by famine, the means of providing against bad harvests by the variety of crops not having been imagined; we see contagious diseases carrying off at a blow a fifth or a fourth part of the whole population, as is the case still in the East. Filth and misery were then the active agents of pestilence. Much evil still remains, and a great deal too much, but there is less than there was. We are witnesses of the notable change that has taken place in the aspect of the country within the last thirty or forty years; fallow grounds are rarely seen; and in the villages the mud wall is replaced by one of stone, and the straw roof for slates or tiles. Finally, wages, the personification of all these changes, have augmented by a quarter or one third in the agricultural districts, where the progress has been most decided, and by a certain quantity in all. In a word, the condition of the peasant is hard, but it is gradually improving; and it is not exposed to those frightful crises which so frequently occur among the manufacturing classes.

The town workman is in a different position, at once better and worse. The progress in manufactures has been prodigious within the last fifty years. Mechanical inventions have everywhere supplied the place of

human hands; and all the new machines are set in motion by the new and indefatigable power of steam. This discovery, applied to locomotion, has permitted us to cross the seas, despite the winds and currents, and to travel on land with tenfold rapidity. The result of these improvements has been to cause simultaneously a rise in the price of hand-labour, and a great deficiency in its productions. The workmen in a manufactory fill a greater part than they ever filled. The function of force remains with the machines, while that of intelligence has been reserved for man. Thus all kinds of wages bave been increased since 1814,—some one-fourth, some one-third, some one-half. Wherever task-work has been introduced, they have more than doubled. At the same time the low price of the produce has rendered the workman's life easier. On certain days he dresses in a style which renders him scarcely distinguishable from his master, and at a less price than when he wore coarse clothing. Food, indeed, is a little dearer; firstly, because it is better, and secondly, because the price of meat is a little increased. The expense of lodging has sensibly increased, but it is much more healthy. In short, the condition of the workman in town is far better than it was in 1789, and even in 1814. Unfortunately, his wants have increased more rapidly than his resources. The towns in which he lives have placed at his disposal and under his eyes, enjoyments in which he had never shared before; and if his means have increased, so have his desires. God forbid that I should dispute his right to these new enjoyments! I am delighted to see him share in them; but I fear that his living in town produces a general excitement in all his senses, and has introduced desires which are more rapidly developed than the means of satisfying them. Yet, notwithstanding this everlasting tendency of man to enjoy more than he works, to desire more

than he can procure, matters do not go on badly when there is no crisis. But that great ardour of production sometimes leads to deplorable results. Manufacturers produce with such zeal, that there is often a glut; sales are then stopped, and labour too; and as the imagination of man, mingling with all he experiences, exaggerates his feelings of good or evil, the exaggeration of despair succeeds that of confidence, the exaggeration of idleness that of enterprise. Capital is withdrawn and locked up, bankruptcies are numerous, the mills close, labour ceases, and the artizans, lately having more work than they could execute, are unemployed, and spread a gloom over great cities by their inactivity and their sufferings. If they have been so wise and prudent as to place some of their wages in the savings' banks, they withdraw their deposits; and by so doing add their own wants to the wants of every kind that oppress the finances of the State. If they have been imprudent, they beg for alms, and thus obtain scarcely the necessaries of life; sometimes they break out into riots, and to an evil purely physical, they add one that is political,—an evil more serious, more lasting, more difficult to cure.

Thus the workman in the town has his days of great prosperity, when he earns four or five times as much as the peasant toiling from sunrise to sunset, and at a task infinitely more severe; but he is exposed to cruel reverses. There are times when, to him, life appears suddenly suspended, with all the movements of a complicated society; and when he has to meet overstimulated wants, with resources either diminished or entirely cut off.

Lastly, should we raise our eyes above those classes which labour with their hands, we shall find men in every pursuit, who have succeeded in none, unskilful or dishonest speculators in business,—in law, barristers without clients,—in medicine, doctors without patients,

—in literature, authors without talent,—all firmly persuaded that those who have succeeded at the bar, in medicine, or literature, have usurped reputations; that those who govern are either knaves or fools, and that they themselves are the only men of genius, deserving everything, and yet deprived of all—the victims, in short, of a barbarous society which oppresses them in the name of birth, favour, or property; and what is more afflicting still, we often observe among them young men full of real talent, but without knowledge, impatient to rise, not knowing or not willing to believe that society is open to all; that a little sooner or later, merit makes its way; that between merit supported by favour and merit repulsed, there is but one or two years difference in the date of success, for the wise, modest, and rustic Vauban, a man ill-calculated for success, did however succeed as well as the vain and giddy La Feuillade, the pet of the court, and even pleased Louis XIV. more than any other man of the age. This they will not believe, and through want of patience, reason, or genius, convert their talents into an incendiary torch. The labourers of this latter class, the lawyers without clients, the doctors without patients, the authors without publishers, governors without states to govern, interest me much less than the mechanic or the peasant, but they are also workmen without work, for the labour of the arms is not the only one which must be considered in this world, and the exercise of the mind is a labour, also, and deserving of some attention. Do not think they form no part of our social evil; they form the most interesting, but the bitterest portion. Turning towards those who suffer, they excite them; and complaining louder than they, thus render the common evil more sensible and unendurable.

The evil, however, exists; it is great, manifold, indisputable, and sometimes heart-rending. Peasants, whose lot is habitually hard, without alternation of bet-

ter or worse, and without the consolation of a rapid amelioration; workmen in the towns, passing from a high rate of wages, which stimulates their desires, to a sudden and incalculable wretchedness; in the classes above them, men shipwrecked in every career, some incapable, and unable to estimate their own value; others capable, but unable to wait; and both alike adding gall to the feeling of the common suffering, by the injustice, the bitterness, and the violence of their complaints:—such is the evil. What are the remedies for this great and positive evil? There are remedies, no doubt; but they are slow, unpleasant, and rarely to the taste of the sufferer; and in every case very different from those invented by the philosophical *Socialists.* We shall see this in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III.

ON ASSOCIATION, AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO THE VARIOUS CLASSES OF WORKMEN.

Showing that Association is applicable only to a few assembled populations, and that it has been invented for them alone, and under their influence.

LET us examine the first of the three systems,—that styled *Association.*

With the fact before them of those peasant-labourers, whose life is toilsome but unvaried,—of those town-labourers whose life, without being so toilsome is cruelly varied and conflicting, they offer,—what?—association between the workmen. They will form into companies or societies, and then they will effect no rivalry,

and will be able to procure the capital that they need. They will associate! Which of them first, and for how long? Can the peasantry associate? Looking at the divided state of our soil, can you imagine the peasantry associating to do justice to the earth? How would they set about it? It is a hard matter, on four-fifths of our territory, that a single family can live on a farm, and often the peasant that cultivates it is also the owner. Here then association would be objectless, or impossible. On the larger properties, where a farmer keeps five, six, or eight labourers for the various duties of the farm, will there be association among these individuals? We may understand an association between several hundred workmen; we may conceive that numbers being then the multiplier of the advantages derivable from the system (if there are any to be looked for), certain results may be attained. But an association between some half-dozen or half-a-score farm-labourers! —what would that produce? And as we are speaking of a farm that gives employment to six or eight labourers, considerable capital will be required; we must have ploughs, horses, flocks and herds, manure, waggons, &c. &c., in this occupation, as well as in any other; and it is not uncommon to see a farm which lets for 10,000 or 12,000 francs, requiring a working capital of 60,000 or 80,000 francs. Who will furnish the capital for all these agricultural enterprises? Will the state undertake to provide it for every one? Among the vineyards of Champagne, Burgundy, or of the Garonne, where a field is sometimes worth one or two millions of francs, where three, four, or five crops may be raised in a year, and where men speculate as much or more than they cultivate,—could associated day-labourers do as much? Even supposing they had the necessary knowledge, would they obtain from the State a loan of three or four hundred thousand francs, or from a banker the credit indispensable for furnishing such advances?

Besides, the solvency of a farmer is one of his principal qualities, or rather the principal quality. Shall we coerce the confidence of the landowner in favour of an association of workmen which will offer no responsibility? Must the State, after providing capital, provide caution-money, or guarantee, as well.

I shall presently say a few words on the part assigned to the State in these various combinations; but in the meanwhile I beg you to remark that this is always the *Deus in machinâ*, the inexhaustible capitalist, providing funds, supporting losses, warding off accidents, supplying every deficiency,—in a word, called upon to solve every difficulty. In proper time, we will add up its expenses and profits, and see whether the commerce laid out for it is of a nature to last.

I have not alluded to a host of difficulties, all equally difficult of solution. For instance, I have not spoken of the forests, where there are neither farmers, as in Brie, nor day-labourers, working on account of the landowner (or tenant), as in Bordeaux, and where every year there is a twentieth or a thirtieth of the trees to fell without other labour than that of keeping the forest, and felling and transporting the timber. Can you imagine any kind of association for the forests? Yet they form a considerable portion of the soil, and, with the wine districts, a quarter at least of the whole surface of France.

Association, therefore, is not difficult, but positively inadmissible in agriculture; for in general the land is divided in such a manner as to render useless the combined exertions of any society of working men, or else it is the property of the husbandman himself. Finally, in that portion of our territory, where the combination of a certain number of hands might be possible, in farms of inconsiderable extent, a working capital must be found, sometimes amounting to perhaps many thou-

sands of francs, the confidence of the landowner must be coerced, or the State treasury must become responsible for a speculation in wine. Such combinations are extravagant, and their mere idea, in a sound state of the public mind, would have raised a universal laugh against the originators.

I grant, however, that on a new soil, which has just been snatched from the ocean by the capital of the State, or of a rich company, as is the case of the Haarleem Meer in Holland,—I grant that the care of working a part may be trusted to associations of agriculturers. Yet were it required that they should live in common, so as to render association possible, we must renounce collecting many together, or otherwise the land they worked would be so extensive that they would pass half their time on the roads, in order to return each night to the centre of the colony. And then how many Haarleem Meers remain to be drained in Europe? How many marshes to be rendered healthy in France? We may form an idea of agricultural colonies, destined for the reception of workmen out of employ, and founded on the principle of association (a ruinous principle, as will be seen presently); but if we conceive a few charitable establishments founded on this principle, the State supporting the whole expense, this system is not conceivable when applied to a vast country, in which the lands were formerly distributed, enclosed, and built upon, on the principle of isolated families, aided at most by one or two labourers.

Thus, association is inapplicable to agriculture, that is, to the twenty-four millions of labourers in France. What! at the very outset, you must exclude from your system the greatest, the most interesting part of the population, and that which is the most continually suffering! Is the system, therefore, constructed for some, and exclusively for them? Pursue this inquiry, and you will be still more convinced of this.

In most of the other professions it is still the same, for, in the greater number of them, the work is so divided, detailed, and casual, that it neither adapts itself to a common labour, nor to exact appreciation, nor to regular statements, such as are required in an association that desires to see clearly the state of its affairs. Thus, the workman who has been commissioned by an upholsterer to make a table, chairs, or, which is the more frequent case, who has been commissioned to repair these objects,—the carpenter, the mason who executes a certain isolated job in a house,—the water-carrier, the porter, the hired domestics, who perform for you either casual or constant, but individual services,—how can all these unite in common exertions which the work that they have to perform does not protest against? All hired servants, employed not only in the house of the rich man, but in the tradesman's shop, assisting in some way or another, evidently cannot be associated, for there are only one, two, or three, at most, collected in the same family, and the cases in which they are more numerous are very rare.

Granted that there are many domestics in a rich family, many shopmen at a tradesman's counter, what will they put in common? Their wages, so as to divide them afterwards among each other? It would have been far better not to have made this confusion and ulterior reparation, since the result must be so completely similar, unless the wages were equalized, in which case we cannot understand why the better paid should enter into association with those who are worse paid.

Thus we see all professions, one after another, unfitted for or opposed to association. This system is conceivable only in great manufacturing establishments, such as spinning mills, foundries, and mines, where many hundred workmen are assembled together and work in common. As regards establishments of this

kind, association is not less ruinous to the members, and unjust towards the State, burdened with the support of the losses ; but, finally, it may be tried, and has been, to the great injury of those who invented the plan.

Although impossible to be tried in thirty-four millions of men out of thirty-six, it may be attempted in favour of one or two millions of workmen at most. Yes, in some great spinning-mills ; in certain vast factories, where steam-engines are constructed ; in coal-mines, or railways, where many thousand persons are collected together for the same service ; in some printing offices ; perhaps also in some dockyards ; the workmen, persuaded that their employers are sharing great profits, will set themselves in the place of their masters, will take or receive great establishments from the State, that will have paid for them with a depreciated paper, and will share the profits, always doubtful, but certainly *nil*, when these establishments shall be governed collectively ; and that is called a reform, which has changed the fate of these laborious classes of society. It is simply the more or less violent occupation of a certain number of properties, for the benefit of a few thousand workmen assembled at certain points, particularly in the great cities, having, in their very agglomeration, a means of revolting or tyrannising over their employers or the State itself, when the latter is too feeble to make itself respected. It is nothing else, and we should violate truth and deceive the people, were we to tell them that this would be a reform to their advantage !

Our governors have yielded to the passions of a class of workmen, abusing their physical force to dictate their will, or rather the will of their leaders, who use them as their tools, working for these leaders more than for themselves, and representing not even the thirtieth part of the whole population of the country. Nothing more has been done for the people by yielding to this

blind force, than when, two or three centuries ago, the government was managed by the influence of a few hundreds of privileged persons composing the court. Yet these privileged persons were far more enlightened in their selfishness; for, after all, the Luxembourg Commission has done nothing, so far as we are aware, that is worth the reign of Louis XIV., or even of Louis XV. in their worst periods.

Twenty-four millions of agriculturists, in France, lead a laborious and hard life; 3 or 4 millions of manufacturing artisans are sometimes (in consequence of stagnation) deprived of work—this is the evil; and by way of remedy, it is proposed to surrender to a few mechanics, cotton-spinners, or miners, the establishments in which they were employed, and to change for them all the conditions of industry (in a manner, I repeat, ruinous to themselves); and it is affirmed that a means of changing the condition of the people has been discovered; they are deceived, and the time and place in which this system was produced, clearly prove it. It was at a time when these crowded workmen had just aided in bringing about a revolution in the midst of the great capital over which they lorded it. Certain individuals wished to flatter and make use of them, and have done them much harm, from which they themselves have not escaped. It is an exclusive enterprise with exclusive views in which all attempts of this kind have ended or must end. It is then no longer a question concerning the whole people, but a very small part of the people, which enjoyed the unhappy advantage of being gathered together, and thus of being able to make their strength felt, and of placing it at the order of those who desired to employ it for their own ends.

This system of association being brought back to its real aim, it remains to be seen, whether it has any alue for the working classes to which it is appliable.

CHAPTER IV.

OF CAPITAL IN THE SYSTEM OF ASSOCIATION.

Showing that the capital of the Association, if it is furnished by the State, is unjustly taken from the mass of tax-payers; and, if it is stopped from the wages of the workmen, is an imprudent employment of their savings.

Now let us forget all the exclusiveness and the little real popularity of this system of association among workmen, and let us examine it on its own merits, however restricted its application may be.

If we judge by appearances, the idea of the system is the most humane, honourable, and even affecting. Look at these poor workmen, toiling from morn to night to earn a fixed and invariable payment, whatever may be the advantages resulting from their exertions, and procuring large profits, either to the contractor or to shareholders, who labour little or not at all, far away from the scene of these severe exertions, which, perhaps, they may never have visited. Why should the one have so little while doing so much, the others so much while doing so little? It is because the contractor has credit, the shareholders capital. If the workmen had either one or the other, they could speculate on their own account, and reap for themselves the benefits they now procure for another. Is it not very simple, then, to carry to them credit and capital, and to free them from that dependence, or, to adopt the language of the Socialist philosophers, from the *tyranny of capital?* What means exist, if we do not design to take capital by force, as Communism frankly proposes,—what means,

except by demanding it from its possessors, that is, from the State, and thus to furnish every association of workmen with the means of forming themselves into a company for the execution of great undertakings? Nothing, I repeat, is more humane in appearance, more honourable, and, in reality, more iniquitous, more unjust, more absurd.

In the first place, methinks, these manufacturers and shareholders are not very pitiless monopolists. If the former devote their lives, their money, their credit, to direct and maintain a vast enterprise, imagined by them, undertaken and carried on at their own risk and peril; if the latter, after having amassed their savings, risk them in a hazardous operation, such as a canal or a railway—an operation which could not be carried on without their contributions, and which swallows up, if it does not succeed, the funds set apart for it, it seems to me that neither these manufacturers nor shareholders are the bloodsuckers of these workmen, paid by mutual contract, often at rates three or four times higher than those received by the peasantry, and sure of being paid whether the speculation has been fortunate or the reverse. There is no very crying injustice here. But some would have these workmen also reap the profits of the manufacturers or shareholders. If that can be done justly, practically, nothing can be better, nothing more conformable with the wishes of all good men.

But let us see where we are. Every commercial or manufacturing operation supposes two things: capital and management,—capital, which serves to undertake it; and management which, after having planned it, governs, limits, or extends it; sometimes abandons it after the first losses, sometimes carries it to an extraordinary development after the first gains. We must have at the same time both capital and a management. Shall we find this in an association of workmen? This is a matter to be inquired into.

Capital, in every undertaking, is doomed to perish if it does not succeed. Whether it be a coal mine, canal, or railway; if the coal be not of good quality, if it is not worked at a low rate, if there be no outlet near at hand,—if the canal or railway present too great difficulties in the construction, if they run through a district where they are not much used,—neither mine, nor canal, nor railway will return the expected profit, often they will not pay the debt contracted for the execution of insufficient estimates; the enterprise will slip from the hands of those who had projected it, leaving them nothing but losses and regret. Is this a very rare case? Quite the contrary, it is a very common case. If, from these great enterprises, we descend to smaller ones, such as cotton-mills and foundries, how many are there among those who first established them that have made fortunes? Very few. These thirty years past, I have carefully watched the progress of manufactures in France, from duty as a public man, from taste as an observer; I know its condition very well, and I affirm, that failure is more common than success; that if a great number of moderate fortunes have been made, there have been very few large ones, very few, indeed, that can, with certainty, bear up against a severe crisis. Capital is, therefore, devoted to frequent ruin in the little enterprises which an individual can direct, such as a cotton-mill or a foundry; and to a ruin very probable, in the vast enterprises which require numerous and rich companies, such as mines, canals, or railways. Those which eventually prosper, only do so after having successively ruined two or three companies. Were I to name the principal establishments in France, I should, on that point, soon silence all contradiction.

If, therefore, capital is doomed to perish in case of failure, a very probable case, let me add, it must have looked forward to chances of profit, and these must be

in proportion to the chances of loss, or else manufactures would be, what they too frequently are, a mere gamble. When it is a contractor, with his capital or his credit, or a body of shareholders who, with their superfluities, if they are rich, or their savings, if they are poor, that furnish the capital, nothing can be more simple. The scheme is bad, the capital is lost,—so much the worse for both. If the scheme be good, they gain, and it is so much the better for them; they have taken nothing from any one, they have reaped what they have sown. But you would put the workmen in their place; be it so: who will provide the capital? The workmen? They have none. It must then be loan banks, organized for the purpose. But all those banks which have made loans to manufacturing undertakings, instead of limiting their operations to discounting bills, which constitutes a loan restricted to a short term, frequently renewed, and the risks of which are neutralised by being divided,—all these banks have failed, because manufacturing speculations present too many risks, because the number of those which succeed is too inconsiderable in proportion to those which fail, and lastly, because, at most, the profits of those which succeed barely compensate for the losses of those which fail, and because, by lending to them, the bank shares in all their losses, without sharing in their profits also. This explains why every bank which confines itself to discounting succeeds, whilst every other which makes loans to industrial enterprises, fails at the first serious crisis or panic. And yet the banks that have acted thus, have made loans representing a very small portion of the capital of the speculation they were willing to support. Can we imagine what would become of a bank that should furnish the entire capital of a greater or less number of these manufacturing undertakings? It would soon fail, unless it found money for very good speculations only, and received

the whole of the profits; for being exposed to suffer the whole loss, being, by the loan of the whole capital, the contractor himself, the management of the enterprise alone excepted, it ought to have all the chances of gain, or it would accept a ruinous part. It might be otherwise, if we supposed that the industrial profits were such as to furnish the means of remunerating two capitals instead of one; but this is absurd, for if there were profits for more than one capital, rivalry and opposition would soon bring them down. Wherever there is an extraordinary profit to be gained, by forging iron, spinning cotton, or extracting sugar from beetroot, capitalists catch at it eagerly, and found numerous establishments; thus lowering prices, and often falling themselves beneath these falling prices; but they never abandon the game until there are no means left of covering the expenses. Even when there is a monopoly, as in railways, it is never so complete as not to have the opposition of a canal, or a river, or public carriers, and it almost always descends to the extreme limit of indispensable profit, unless it be some industrial invention altogether new, or some exceedingly fortunate speculation; and even in these cases, the advantage is reaped only by the first comers.

There are no means, therefore, of paying two capitals, of which we may easily be convinced, if we consider the whole mass of spinning, weaving, mining, and metallurgic operations. We shall see, that if any individual producer has had his fortunate times, he has also had to contend with bad seasons, that one soon compensates for the other, and that great fortunes have been realized only by very prudent adventurers, by means of assiduous labour, and in the course of a long life. If we examine great enterprises, such as mines, and if we reckon the good with the bad speculations, we shall see that the average profits are far below the most moderate investments. If I selected as an example the mines of

Aveyron, Alais, Saint Etienne, Creuzot, and Anzin, the most celebrated of all, and, taking into account the capital sunk during the last fifty years, endeavoured to fix the average profits, I should not find a return of 4 per cent. for the capital employed. And these are the greatest, the soundest of all the establishments of this kind. Those who are ignorant of the facts, who construct theories, and do not commence by observing the nature of things, will cry out, perhaps, at this assertion; but it will astonish none but the ignorant and the Utopians.

Thus, I hold it to be certain, considering industrial occupations in the mass, not in this or that lucky accident, that there is not a profit sufficient for two capitals. We cannot, then, form any idea of a lending bank which would provide the entire capital for industrial associations, and which would not be substituted for these enterprises, as regards profit and management. Either it must have the management, since it has provided the capital, and receive all the profits, as these are never too great; or else it would be ruined by the double fact of intrusting its capital to others, who would speculate with its money, and receive only a part of the profits which would come to it of right. It is even certain that it would be ruined; for the simple fact of providing the requisite funds is reasonable only exceptionally, on the part of a very rich capitalist, who does not fear to lose, in favour of an individual of great capacity well known to the lender; and as this double case is very rare, this kind of sleeping partnership as often turns out ill as well. But should this sleeping partnership, this *commandite*, be admissible exceptionally, we cannot understand it as a general fact of industrial occupations, that is, a bank which should provide the capital for every enterprise, which ran the whole risk, and which neither had the control of the speculation nor the entire profits derivable from it. If the banks which

have made only partial loans to industrial enterprises have failed, can we form any idea of a bank that would furnish capital to the majority of these speculations?

This bank would be a madhouse, directed by madmen; and I challenge any man to propose one founded on this principle.

To whom could such a speculation be proposed? To the State, to the State alone, on which the duty is imposed of providing for everything. And on what ground is this duty imposed? On the ground that it is a universal capitalist, bound to lose for everybody, as it is supposed to be as rich as everybody.

Now I will ask this simple question. Should the State furnish the creative capital for all speculations, or for a part only? If for all, it would be less unjust by becoming more absurd—if, on the other hand, it provided capital for a part only, it would be a flagrant injustice, and, though still absurd, it would be so in a less degree.

Can we imagine the State furnishing capital for every speculation, and not speculating itself? As regards risk, if it provided capital for all the operations of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, the merchant would complain of the manufacturer, the manufacturer of the farmer, on account of the danger to which each exposed the others, since the system would be one vast reciprocity; and, indeed, those who follow a profession so little hazardous as agriculture, would have room to complain of being associated with those who freight ships for India, or who speculate in the Stock Exchange. In a word, the risk being generalized, we might find a sort of compensation, and hence of justice, in its extreme generalization. But, I would ask, if from that moment we should not have consummated the most supreme of follies, that of making everybody speculate with another's capital, and of suppressing that guarantee of personal interest in the employment of capital,—a

guarantee which, however great it may be, is hardly sufficient, since we every day observe men fail, when using their own capital, carried away, as they are, by their imagination. What would it be if they speculated with the capital of others? Thus, to arrive at a kind of justice, we should have fallen into absurdity, but an absurdity far exceeding any hitherto recorded, since it is nothing less than suppressing the watchfulness of personal interest in the entirety of human labours, and of allowing all adventurers to speculate with a capital which, as belonging to all, is the property of none.

If, on the contrary (and this is the case in fact), it were proposed to grant this favour to a small portion of the working-classes, to a few occupations which have the peculiar character of collecting several hundred artisans in the same factory, then I would ask, by virtue of what privilege are certain bodies of workmen allowed to speculate, not at their own risk and peril, but at the risk and peril of all the other working-classes,—of the bricklayers, carpenters, domestic servants, and peasantry, in particular, who do not speculate, for their wages are very limited and invariable, however much others may earn in other places by forging iron or building steam-engines? The Socialist philosophers always regard the State, not as a mass of tax-payers, but as a few rich men who, all together, could not provide a budget by the entire sacrifice of their wealth; and then our Utopians speculate at their ease. They affirm that it is not an evil to procure at their expense the means by which the poor workmen may realize a little profit. But that is a baseless supposition. The truth is, that the mass of tax-payers, that is, thirty-six millions of individuals, will provide one million with the means of speculating in iron, cotton, or coal, at their expense. Reduced within these limits, the thing is still absurd, as we shall presently see, for this million of workmen will try what they are

unable to effect, by desiring to have the direction of enterprises; but it is above all a revolting injustice in relation to the mass of labourers, for every one in this world ought to speculate at his own risk and peril, and not at the risk and peril of another. And, in this circumstance, I would not hesitate to appeal to the consciences of the workmen themselves, and to ask them if they would think it right, for instance, to buy lottery tickets, or chances in a Derby sweep, with the money of other people? The question is as simple and plain as that which I have just proposed.

Now suppose that there were a drawback, some deduction made on the workman's wages, in order to provide for the creation of capital, then on them will fall the injustice and the fraud, as we shall soon perceive very clearly.

In general, when industry is prosperous, the workman finds in his wages sufficient means for the support of himself and family, and of setting aside a small portion for periods of stagnation, for sickness or old age. The portion of wages destined for these savings, might strictly be employed in furnishing capital for enterprises founded on the principle of association. But a single glance will serve to show the thorough insufficiency of this resource. The sums deposited in the savings' banks in France represent nearly 400 millions of francs. More than half of the depositors are aged domestics or clerks, and scarcely a half of workmen employed in factories. It is true that all workmen do not deposit in the savings' banks, and that perhaps not more than a fourth or a third do so. But taking this circumstance into account, and tripling or quadrupling the sums deposited by them, can any one imagine that six or eight millions of francs could provide the capital employed in the cotton and cloth manufactories, in the mines, railways, canals, &c., leaving out agri-

culture altogether. Many thousands of millions would not be sufficient.

The idea of a deduction from wages to form the capital of these associations would be pure nonsense. But I will grant it, if you like. This deduction would be an unworthy employment of the workman's savings. Nothing is more hazardous, as I have said, and as every one knows, than capital employed in industrial enterprises. It is only rich capitalists, guaranteed by their wealth against the consequences of false speculations, or adventurers, secured by their own vigilance, who ought to speculate. All other speculators are imprudent, and victims. We tremble as we behold poor people carrying their money to companies that undertake extensive works, or to governments who raise loans, and we experience a terror wholly human in seeing them confide the savings of a lifetime to mere adventurers, or to unskilful administrators of the public fortunes. Complaints have often been made that certain foreign loans were admitted into the French market, that is, quoted at the *Bourse*, and this was just. With what feeling were these protests made? With feelings of humanity, because it was considered a cruel thing to commit the fortunes of the poor to hands that were not trustworthy. And to speculators of every kind, whom we have seen for these fifty years, convulsing, overthrowing, often dishonouring all industry, you would confide the savings of the working classes. No doubt, during the last half-century, these speculators have been more rash than usual, because the discovery of steam has set the whole industrial world in a ferment. They have agitated and pushed forward commerce and manufactures, for this is the mission of adventurous minds. But while urging them forward they should have done so at their own expense, and not at the expense of the unfortunate workmen they

employed. I said, in a preceding chapter, that the accumulated capital of the rich was destined for hazardous enterprises. Two allies, wealth and genius, are appointed to accelerate the progress of industry. But poverty and association are not calculated for temerity. The first has nothing to lose, the second never invented anything. What! the hundreds of spinning mills, iron works, and manufactories of every kind undertaken during these last thirty years, shut up and abandoned after trials of greater or less duration, followed by the ruin or injury of the capitalists who had provided the funds, should have been tried at the expense of the workmen! It would have been a crime and a misfortune to have suffered it. Is it not reasonably required that the workmen should be paid in preference to all others, in case of failure in these industrial speculations?

You will say, perhaps, that nothing is better understood in general than laying out money on one's-self, and placing your money where you place your labour. That is true when it is really expended on yourself. The husbandman who employs his money on his land rather than in hazardous investments,—the merchant who employs his profits in extending his commercial transactions, and not in buying shares, alike act wisely. But this is not what are preparing for the associated workmen. You propose that they should entrust their savings in enterprises, of which they will not have the management, and which will be reduced to the alternative, either of being directed by nobody, or else by directors capriciously elected,—in a word, to confide their savings to anarchy. Every one dreads anarchy in politics, and is very careful not to lend his money to it. I will show you that industrial anarchy is no better, and that to place in its hands the workmen's money, would be a serious cruelty. This will

be the subject of my next chapter; and I will bring this one to a close by putting the question thus:—

Either the State will provide the capital for industrial operations, founded on the principle of association—and it will be unjust to permit one favoured class of workmen to speculate with the money of all the other workmen, both of town and country;

Or, you must endeavour to raise this capital by a deduction from wages, and then the savings of the workmen will be employed in the most imprudent and inhuman manner.

The former method will be an intolerable injustice, the second a barbarous imprudence,—for by such terms I would characterize the means employed to procure capital in this so-called philanthropic system of Association.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF ENTERPRISES IN THE SYSTEM OF ASSOCIATION.

Showing that the administration of enterprises, in the system of Association, is impossible, and tends to substitute for the principle of personal interest, which alone is fitted for private industry, the principle of general interest, which is applicable only to the administration of States.

ANARCHY in the body politic is a great evil. Men fear and abhor it, and they are right. With anarchy there is no longer any order, or security, or justice, or good administration, or public strength, or greatness. By

it States are broken up, dishonoured, and ruined. From Cæsar to Augustulus, such is their course. To myself, in particular, who passionately love two things, —justice at home and greatness abroad,—anarchy is an object of insurmountable aversion.

But how hateful soever it may be in the body politic, it is a disease natural to that body; it has been fore seen; there are remedies for it, as for certain fevers contracted in unhealthy localities. They may cause our death, but they may also be cured. Unhappily it is as much at home in the State, as the plague at Constantinople. But can you understand anarchy in manufacturing or mercantile pursuits? We may be grieved but not astonished at the sight of factions contending for power, rending the vitals of the commonwealth, staining it with blood, dragging it to the very verge of the abyss, over which it may be plunged or where it may be arrested. This is the evil attendant upon a good; for that power may pass into the hands of the good, it must sometimes run the risk of falling into the hands of the bad. But can you figure to yourself the power claimed, disputed, and transmitted from one to another in a factory? Can you imagine the head of the works elected by the workmen, by turns deposed by the idle or placed by them over the management of the works? Can you imagine this president of an industrial republic, supported by such influences, equitably assigning the tasks to each man, regulating wages according to their assiduity or skill, inspiring capitalists with confidence, obtaining credit, and, above all, effecting economies? Can you imagine this chimerical being replacing the unity, the perseverance, the intelligence of personal interest in the management of an industrial enterprise? In a State we can imagine all persons mingling in public affairs, for they are the affairs of all. But in a manufactory can you imagine some hundreds of workmen deliberating on

the contracts to be made, on the bills to be drawn, accepted, or refused, or the credits to be opened, or the extension to be given to production, or on the probable chances of national or European commerce?

No doubt we sometimes see shareholders deliberating, but it is only once a year, on the general progress of their affairs, grounding their pleasure or displeasure on the greater or less amount of the dividends, casting a rapid glance at the management generally, and then abdicating their authority in favour of some director, whom they judge by the result, that is, by the proceeds obtained, and not meeting until the following year. Such a system of administration is only practicable in great operations, where the interference of the shareholders is very discreet and rare, and is terminated by their abdication in favour of the manager or director they may have appointed. But can you picture to yourself a director of the works, elected by the workmen to whom he will have to give orders? When we observe the greater part of our industrial establishments, we are struck with one thing, —those which have succeeded, and they are very few in number, are indebted for their success to the superiority of the director, not only to his intellectual superiority, (for that intellect often makes daring speculators only, men doomed to ruin themselves and others), but to a happy combination of intelligence and character, to a rare union of talent, prudence, and application. If this manager does not to his inventive faculties add moderation and consistency in his ideas, he fails, even with all his eminent qualities, and is obliged to lend his inventive genius to another, endowed with less daring but with more wisdom and love of labour. When these managers possess every desirable quality, it is still necessary that they should have had long experience, be acquainted with foreign markets, have an extensive connection, respect, esteem, and credit;

in a word, they must combine the advantages they have received from nature with those which are only to be acquired by time. I have seen some of these managers who, workmen in their youth, and rising afterwards by their natural genius, thus uniting general views with a practical knowledge of their business, have travelled and compared the various processes employed in Europe,—who enjoy extensive credit, are absolute masters in their works, obeyed as man only is obeyed when he is not dependent on his workmen, whom he may take on or turn out at will;—I have seen managers, men of modest genius, out of place in the Academy, but in my mind far superior to many talented men, and who, with all these qualities succeeded in attaining wealth when life was half spent; then on a sudden, because fortune betrayed them after having long smiled upon them; or because they were wanting in a very humble quality, that of moderation in their desires; or because the vanity of taking part in public affairs having seized upon them too early, diverted them from their own private affairs; or, lastly, because it had pleased the nation to which they belonged to overthrow a government,—I have seen them lose their fortunes and fall into the depths of misery. I have seen managers of great enterprises, men endowed with true genius, come to an end in this way; and yet there are men who would persuade me that a mass of five or six hundred individuals will be able to direct and attain a success, where unity of will most complete, united with incontestible ability and vast experience succeed so rarely! No, I will not believe it, whatever certain men of letters may say, who have never seen a factory at full work, or a government in full action. They may affirm it over and over again, and order me to believe it, as the martyrs in Rome were ordered to sacrifice to the gods or to die, I should still refuse to admit its possibility.

Further, how will these associated workmen organize their administration? Would they deliberate in person on the affairs of the society, on the wages, regulations, production, purchases, sales, and contracts to be taken? It would be very hard to deprive them of such a prerogative, and it would not be worth their while to place all their savings in an undertaking, to raise loans at their own risk and peril, to receive from the State a present of some few millions of francs in advance, and then to abandon to one of their number the solution of all those questions which interest them to so high a degree. And on the other hand, it would be very dangerous, very foolish, to leave to them the task of solving these questions. What! they would be associates, that is to say, masters;—they will have sunk their own money or that which has been lent to them, in a factory, in iron-works, in a mine, in order to give one individual the right of classifying them into common labourers, workmen, foremen, overseers, &c.; into workmen paid, some two, some three, and others five or ten francs a-day! they would entrust to one of their number the care of punishing or discharging them (discharging associates!) of fixing the hours of labour, of making bargains, regulating the price of sales and purchases, deciding whether they must work for this house or for that, according or requiring credit; they would delegate—they, part-masters—would delegate such powers to one of their body! or else reserve these powers for themselves! And then can you imagine these 500 or 600 workmen classifying themselves into good and bad hands, constituting an Areopagus to judge themselves, deciding whether the bills of Mr. —— are good or bad, whether merchandise must be sold or kept back, whether production should be developed or restricted. It will be very difficult to grant either of these suppositions, for one is a melancholy abdication, the other a visionary extravagance.

I know moreover, that men assembled together, and always ready to revolt, are quite as ready to abdicate, when their taste for revolt has passed away. These workmen would appoint chiefs from among their own number, and one of these chiefs would be the director: this I am inclined to believe. But what was then the use of wanting to do away with a master! Either this director would have authority to punish the workman, degrade them from one class to another, and even discharge them; or if he had not, he would obtain neither the quantity nor the quality of the work, without which all success is impossible in an industrial establishment. And again, if he had this authority, they would have given themselves a master quite as absolute as the proprietor of the establishment would have been; the quality of associate would have been lost, for it is impossible for one associate to be dismissed by another. But do you not see, I may be asked, that if, for the success of an association, its members submitted to an authority equally absolute with that of the proprietor, there would still remain the advantage of being interested in the enterprise, and of sharing the profits, which, in the ordinary state, belong to the proprietor only?

I have already shown that we have no right to the profits when we are not the proprietors of the whole or of a part of the capital, and that we run the risk of winning as well as losing. But setting aside this consideration, I will suppose the workmen to be proprietors of the capital by a drawback on the wages, or having received a loan from the State, and I ask whether that can be a reasonable combination in which industry, or a particular enterprise conducted by personal interest, with the ardour excited by the chance of ruin or of wealth, according as affairs are carried on well or ill, should have a species of administration, a kind of public function, in such a manner that the adventurer, instead of being paid by success,

or by a reverse of fortune, shall receive his salary, whether he did well or ill, with the exception of a small portion of the profits, according to failure or success.

We should, in this case, have substituted, in industrial enterprises, administrators for proprietors,—that is to say, a feeble impulse for one that is most energetic. The necessity of the *master's eye* is an old adage, which will be eternally true. In private affairs, vigilance and earnest individual interest are required, and not the milk-and-water zeal of collective interest. Now, when personal interest succeeds just sufficiently to enable industry to live, you will in vain strive to persuade me that collective interest would have that consistency, energy, boldness, and indeed love, which lead to success. Can you imagine the cotton and linen manufacturers, the woollen-manufacturers of Mulhausen, Saint Quentin, Lille, Rouen, and Amiens,—the silk manufacturers of Nismes, Lyons, and Saint Etienne,—the iron-masters of Franche-Comté, Champagne, Burgundy, and Berri,—the machine-makers of Arras, Havre, and Paris,—all industrials with whose troubles, labours, and misfortunes you are familiar, who, after a long career, putting the good years with the bad, would be happy to have earned the salary of a superintendent,—can you imagine these proprietors turned into managers, and gaining, as managers, what they could not realize as masters?

Do you know what advice I should give to the workmen? It would be, that they should take their own money, or that which the State has lent them, and place it, not in a factory in which they would be partners, but in that belonging to a sole and absolute master, with whose merit and probity they might be familiar.

Thus there must be,—either no superintendence, no authority, but the government of five or six hundred individuals deciding upon matters of which they are

ignorant,—or a superintendent, in whose hands they would have placed all their power; and then the very uncertain zeal of a functionary is substituted for the omnipotence, the boundless activity, and the unceasing vigilance of personal interest. Such would be the strange revolution produced in industry.

There must be some delegated authority in all great enterprises (such as a railway), which cannot be the concern of one man. Then, in fact, there must be some interested person selected, who superintends for all. But every one knows that this is a serious cause of inferiority in enterprises of this kind; that they fail most frequently through their management, when it is not through the very nature of the operation; and one cannot understand, when the amount of capital engaged does not compel a renunciation of the supremacy of individual interest, why its advantages should be set aside. Lastly, experience, which in this kind is the surest judge, has never, since the existence of commercial nations, pointed out any other *mobile* of industry than personal interest, labouring for itself. We may conceive a delegated authority in public matters, which are not the concern of one but of all, and which have less need of the ardour and soul-stirring activity of private interest, than of the impartiality, disinterestedness, justice, and courage of the man who is moved by views of general interest; and yet in governments there has been a kind of personal interest invented for the management of States, a kind of *master's eye*,—this is the responsibility of him who governs, a responsibility which pledges his life and his ambition, his honour and his renown. But it would be overturning everything and confounding all ideas, were we to transport the government of States into private affairs; and we should perhaps be exposed, in return, to the chance of finding the government of private affairs in the administration of States.

We should have given the manufacturers, to lead them on to fortune, the coldness of the public functionary; and to the State, for its government, the selfishness of private interest. It too frequently happens, indeed, that the principle is applied where it ought not to be, and is not applied where it ought to be.

We have supposed the best, the least probable of charges, namely, the entire and absolute delegation of the proprietor's authority to a superintendent, which can never be effectually done. These masters, whatever may be said, will never give themselves a master, who could discharge them, and, above all, classify them as regards salary.

How could they, indeed, be discharged by a man whom they would themselves have the power of discharging? How would this superintendent set about regulating with them the question of salary? Would this master, appointed by them, fix upon one rate of wages or many? Would he pay the same amount to the coal-heaver, to the porter, and to the skilful engine-driver? We must have taken leave of our senses, to imagine that the association would keep a single skilful workman, by paying all alike, and holding out to them the prospect of a share in the future profits. If, to conform with the common rule, they were not paid alike, I again ask, how this master, the delegate of the workmen, would begin, so as to arrange them all equitably in the classes, at two francs, three francs, five francs, and ten francs? Can you picture to yourself those works, which ought to go on with the silence, precision, and continuity of the machines they employ, and which approximate to the fertility of nature, only in proportion as they partake of her two essential qualities, regularity and order,—can you imagine them divided into factions, entertaining opposite opinions, not on politics (a matter of little consequence), but on the affairs of the concern, requiring that they should work

so many hours and no more, that they should receive so much salary and no less, and coming to a vote every year, month, and day to carry their opinions? Their ruin would be rapid and inevitable. With the absolute authority of the proprietor, and the stimulus of personal interest, we can hardly support our industrial works; and it is rare, taking the good years with the bad, that a manufacturer gains more than 7 or 8 per cent. on his capital embarked in the concern, either as interest for his money, or remuneration for his personal labour, and on this calculation, there barely remains 4 or 5 per cent. for the capital, and 2 or 3 for the master. Now then, apply to these manufactures the government of Athens, or Rome, or Florence, or Amsterdam, or even Paris, and I predict ruin both to capital and speculator; and I repeat the advice I have already given to the associated workmen, to get employment in the manufactures of the association, particularly if they are idle, quarrelsome, and fonder of cabal and agitation than of labour; but to invest their money, if they have saved any, or else that which they may have borrowed, in undertakings very different from such as will be carried on after this fashion.

I am not describing any Utopia, in opposition to the views of some other dreamer. What I predict has existed three months in Paris. The owner of a great engine-factory, lent, for a time, his works to his workmen, so that there was no capital to be sunk in the formation of an establishment, and he agreed to buy, at a stated price, the machines or parts of machines they might construct. This price has been augmented 17 per cent. on the average. The associated workmen were to govern themselves, to pay themselves, and share the profits among them. The master had nothing to do with them. He paid for the machines, or portions of machines, and naturally he was not to pay until the work was done.

The associated workmen remained divided, as they were before, in different departments, (a great facility of organization, since they had only to continue the habits they had acquired); they placed at the head of each department or workshop, a president, and a general president over the whole. They preserved the former classification of wages (another facility arising from acquired habits), except that they gave three francs instead of two-and-a-half francs to the lower class, that of common labourers, and they discontinued paying the skilful workmen (the *marchandeurs*, or middle-men) the high wages resulting from piece-work. These did not, like the rest, work all day; yet as they must be satisfied in a certain degree, they were accorded supplementary wages of ten, fifteen, and sometimes twenty sous, which, added to the four francs of average wages, gave five francs, at the most, to those workmen who had previously earned six, seven, or eight francs a-day. These supplementary wages were given by the presidents of the workshops. After having thus raised the wages of the mere labourer, and lowered those of the clever workman, the following was the result of the three months' trial.

There was a daily tumult in the workshop. 'Tis true, the tumult was pretty general then, and was not less at the Luxembourg, or the Hotel de Ville, than in the manufactories. The men took holidays whenever it pleased them to form part of this or that demonstration, which, however, only injured the workmen themselves, for the proprietor paid only for the work when done. But they did not work much when they were present, and the presidents charged with the maintenance of order, and the supervision of the labour, were changed two or three times a fortnight. The general president, having no local supervision in the workshops, was subject to fewer variations of favour, being changed once only during the period of the association. Had they worked as before, they would have received a sum

of 367,000 francs in these three months; but their returns were only 197,000 francs, although their prices were raised 17 per cent. The principal cause of this smaller production was not owing solely to the fewer number of days and hours they attended the workshops than before, but because, when present, they did not work with such activity. The piece-hands, who only received, at the utmost, a trifling supplement of a franc, were not very zealous in labouring for the association. The men whom they generally took with them, when they were paid by the piece, to whom they gave a small additional sum, and whom they superintended in person, were left to the almost negative supervision of the presidents of the workshops, and a thousand workmen out of fifteen hundred manifested that ardour with which men are animated when they do not work for themselves. In a word, 100 labourers received half-a-franc a-day more; 300 or 400 workmen received their ordinary 300 or 400 francs, but during fewer days, for they took more holidays; and the 1000 clever mechanics, who formerly worked by the piece, were deprived of the excess due to their exertions, and which raised their daily wages to seven, eight and ten francs. Accordingly, the good hands were all determined to leave the establishment, and when the three months assigned to the association had expired, it came to an end without a single protest. It was a kind of insolvency, for it owed many hours which had not been made up, and had swallowed up the little capital of a benefit-fund, instituted by the owner of the establishment previously to this philanthropic administration.

Ten sous more a day, to a hundred labourers out of 1500; the wages of 300 or 400 more kept at the same point; those of 1000 clever hands diminished; the whole body much poorer in consequence of absences, representing 32 per cent. of time lost; 197,000 francs of work, instead of 367,000 in the same period; all

the good workmen disheartened; and finally, the association itself insolvent after three months' existence, although there was an establishment already prepared by the owner,—this was the result. The causes of this result were disorder, the equalization of wages by the suppression of piece-work; in a word, association substituted for the absolute government of a manager, working for his own account, and paying his men liberally. Of these various causes there is one which it is important to develope further; this is the abolition of piece-work, commonly known among artizans by the name of *marchandage*.

We shall see, that under the pretence of making the men share in the profits of capital, they have been deprived of their only means of becoming masters —masters without capital. This brief dissertation will complete what I have to say about associations, as regards their mode of government.

CHAPTER VI.

ON PIECE-WORK.

Showing that by the abolition of piece-work, the workman's only means of sharing in the profits of capital have been taken away.

I MAY be told that I have no desire to see a workman rise above the condition of a paid servant, the slave of a master, the *proletaire*, excluded from the profits of capital. Such, indeed, is the language of the Socialists, when the emptiness of their systems has been demonstrated. I beg their pardon; but nature, more skilful than they, and not less humane, had taught men a way.

by which workmen of talent had so far climbed the first steps in the ladder of fortune. But they have had the wit to destroy this way, and to break the ladder, or at least permit it to be broken by the bad workmen, who had never been able to pass the first round. The fact is certain, and I will produce the proofs.

Yes, it is my earnest desire that the workman, whose only wealth is bodily strength, may also share in the profits of his master, in his turn become a capitalist, and rise to fortune. I do not think he can do so by setting himself in his master's place, by joining his comrades, and forming with them a collective enterprise, which will be without capital or directing hands, and without everything that leads to success. But here is a sure means by which the meritorious artizan may attain the proposed result, may become a master without capital, and without the inconveniences attached to a collective enterprise; this means is piece-work, or *marchandage*, which the new friends of the workmen have abolished.

There are certain intelligent and industrious mechanics who work longer and better than others, who can, in a day, do two or three times more work than some of their comrades, and, as regards workmanship, better than any of them. These certainly deserve to be distinguished and encouraged. We cannot, however, confer on them the cross of the Legion of Honour, which must be reserved for the day when they march to the banks of the Adige or the Rhine; it would not suffice indeed, for hundreds of decorations would be required in a factory of 1000 workmen, while in the army only three or four are given to a regiment of 2000 men. We must, therefore, confer some distinction on these laborious and intelligent artisans. This is necessary on their own account, and for the development of production; since, being paid by the day, they would have no motive to work better

or more than their comrades, and, even if raised to a higher class, they would have no motive for conducting themselves differently from the workmen of that class; while, on the contrary, by proportioning their wages exactly to what they are capable of doing, each one is led to produce as much as he can. It is, therefore, necessary to find a system of remuneration proportionate to the labour of these adepts. But this is not all. There is yet a class of workmen for whom it is important to devise a method of employment different from time-work or day-work. To this class belong all the young workmen.

The industrious youth, who gives promise of skill, also deserves to be encouraged, and, above all, to be overlooked and taught. A master with a thousand men in his employ, who is condemned to cares of every kind, who has the raw material to purchase, produce to dispose of, contracts to make, and extensive connections to keep up, cannot go and put right the youth who holds the file or the chisel badly. He can neither watch over him, direct, nor train him. In this inability, the youth would be left without instruction, without advance, in an inferior class, from which he would be removed more frequently on account of his age, without a sufficient appreciation of his services. If there should be then some method of employing this young man according to his means, and of training him, it would be something worthy of our approval.

Here then, are two classes—the skilful workman, and the apprentice—tried merit, and youthful hope—for which some system of labour must be found, combining them both, and enabling them to produce all they can. This system has been in existence since the deluge; and our innovators have destroyed it, under the name of *marchandage.*

For example, a master, perceiving that an experienced workman takes ten days to finish a piece of

machinery, gives it him to produce by the piece. He paid him, at five francs a day, the sum of fifty francs; he gives him the job at the same price, leaving him the choice of time. The workman does it in seven days instead of ten, and earns upwards of seven francs. He even consents to do it for forty-five francs, for at that price he still earns about six-and-a-half francs. But this is only the beginning of the system. Take the case of a workman still more expert; one who can construct the most complicated parts of a machine. His master will, perhaps, give him the cylinder of a steam-engine, worth 2000 or 3000 francs, or the carpenter's work in a large house, worth 5000 or 6000 francs. The practised eye of the workman soon judges what time and labour it will require; he agrees with his master for a fixed price, which assures him a profit, and then takes with him several workmen to his taste, or some youths who, under his hands, will be worth more than they were under the master's, because he is with them, in the same workshop, tracing out the plans, while they are labouring with the plane or the file, and performs with their aid the work for which he had contracted. He thus earns seven, eight, or ten francs a day, and finds means of granting additional pay to his fellow-workmen, so as to encourage them to labour. In an engine-factory, the founding works are often confided to the enterprise of a principal workman, who, having under him a hundred assistants, can sometimes earn from 300 to 500 francs a month, that is, from twelve to twenty francs a day, reckoning twenty-five working days per month. This has frequently happened at the great foundries in Paris.

The master finds the establishment, the models, the moulding sand, the fount, the coke, that is, all the capital. In the joinery, the master provides, in like manner, the workshop, a part of the tools, and the wood, that is, the capital. Moreover, in all these cases,

the master makes an advance every week to pay the daily wages.

What, then, is the real part played by the piece-workman in this system? It is that of a little contractor, who, possessing merely his hands and his skill, but no capital, that is, neither foundry, sheds, nor moulding sand, nor coke, nor fount, nor wood, nor planes, nor workshop, nor money for the daily wages, receives all from his master, whose confidence he has gained by working under his eye; he earns thus two, three, or four times more than he would have earned under the system of day-labour, and thus reaps the benefits of a speculation, without risking either the capital of the State or his own savings. You desire to see the workman rise by his own merit, and speculate like his employers: here, then, is a very simple means, expensive neither to the State nor to himself, compromising neither the public treasury nor his own savings. You wish him to become a master in his turn: here is a sure and well-graduated means, for he ends by having ten, twenty, and even a hundred workmen under his direction. You wish him to share in the profits of capital: here is a certain means, for the workman who earns six, eight, or twelve francs a-day, and sometimes twenty, without any risk, whatever may be the fate of his master's commerce, is certainly a partaker in the profits of capital, without being exposed to share its losses. Lastly, you wish for the organization of labour: here it is at your hands, and a very simple organization too, combining together the young, the middling, and the skilful workman; and it is at once a system of education, of supervision, and of remuneration, in exact proportion to the work produced. It existed, and you have destroyed it. Oh, ye benefactors of the working classes, well may you applaud your creative genius!

This system has been destroyed, and why? Because

it was (say they) *l' exploitation de l' homme par l' homme.* a kind of speculation in man. As if there were any means of making man compete with man, and one not gain by the other,—the banker by the contractor, the contractor by the overseer, the overseer by the workman, the workman by the labourer, all by all, but all according to their individual merit, unless an absolute equality of wages be desired, which supposes an equality of faculties, wants, and especially of production, which would soon bring the whole body of workmen to work just as the idle and the clumsy do, instead of inducing all to labour as the most industrious and the most skilful. This, far from being an amelioration, would be an aggravation of the general condition, for the less food and clothing that is produced, there is less for all, and particularly for the poorest.

Would you know in favour of what class of workmen this piece-work has been abolished, under the name of *exploitation de l' homme par l' homme?* In favour of the time-hands, who never obtained these piece-orders, because in general they were not thought worthy of them. Jealous mediocrity has been listened to, to the prejudice of the clever workman: I ought to say, idle mediocrity, for laborious mediocrity often found employment with the *marchandeur*, and additional pay, when it inspired confidence in this best of all judges, since he made it work under his eyes. Here, as always, under the pretence of humanity, the good workmen have been sacrificed to the bad.

Most inconsistent of men! you would have the workman become a contractor: he can do so, without speculating either at the expense of the State or of his own savings; and no sooner has he become one, than you detest him, call him a *marchandeur,* an unworthy tyrant, speculating in man! You extol labour as the holiest of virtues! you desire that man should labour and prosper, and when he has obeyed you, when he

has succeeded, when he has speculated fortunately within the limits befitting him, you call him a usurper, a tyrant of the poor! Yes, to please you, he should have failed.

And look at the result of this work of yours. As soon as piece-work was abolished, all good workmen were disheartened—the bad earned no more, and the young were without employment. In carpenters' shops, particularly, where might have been found the most complete realization of the combination which places beginners under the patronage of the *marchandeurs*, the young came and begged for work, which the master could no longer give them. They were obliged, however, to return to what the nature of things required, and *marchandage* or piece-work has been established nearly everywhere. Only recourse has been had to falsehood, and the *marchandeur's* journeymen are styled his partners; and thus has been annulled the decree emanating from the Luxembourg in the days of vanity and unreason.

Now would you know the cause, not the sole, but the principal cause of the certain failure of every association, tried or yet to be tried? It is the discouragement, the want of zeal in men brought from piece to time-work, and indemnified solely by a petty addition of wages, and that too by no means well regulated, and the uncertainty of the returns. In every association the workman's only stimulus is the success of a vast enterprise, which may or may not succeed, dividing the profits only at the end of the year, if there are any to be divided, depending, consequently, upon the thousand accidents of commerce; while in piece-work the artisan has a sure return, depending solely on his skill, and not very remote, since, at the end of the fortnight or of the month, when his task is accomplished, he is certain to receive payment for what he has done. Here Socialism encounters all the inconveniences of

Communisn, since the end, by being too remote, ceases to attract the eyes and amuse the heart. Thus association is wanting in capital, direction, and activity; and when industrial enterprise, with the funds provided by itself, with the authority of an owner, with the ardour of piece-work, barely earns the means of remunerating capital, and rewarding the adventurer, sometimes ruining both, the Socialist would have to pay for his capital, and then to reserve one portion for childhood, another for old age, and another for times of depression. May the poor man never be reduced to live upon such profits!

True, the system is not complete, and I have been wrong in refusing its complement,—the suppression of competition. If industry does not prosper, it is because a frightful competition undermines it, and compels it to prey upon its own vitals. The proposed association, on the contrary, is to take place, not only between workmen, but between other associations and manufactures, probably also between nation and nation, and continent and continent, between Europe and America, and America and India. Should this striking phenomenon be realized only between nation and nation, it would be a most marvellous thing; and I admit that, on these conditions, the enterprise the most unprovided with capital, the most ill-directed, and the most lazily served, might live, and that too very well. It would be enough to have fixed the price of productions according to the decisions of the universal association.

I should not have thoroughly examined the system of association, if I had not enquired into this chance of success,—a last but certain chance, if it could be realized. I fear, however, that before I enter upon this enquiry, men of sense will have no more confidence in this extreme chance than I have myself. Yet let us examine, with imperturbable patience, even the strangest of inventions. In our times no error must be despised.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE SUPPRESSION OF COMPETITION.

Showing that Competition is the source of every amelioration in the condition of the poorer classes; and that, were Competition withdrawn, there would only remain a monopoly for the benefit of associated workmen, to the detriment of those not associated.

COMPETITION, it is said, is an abominable principle, by which nothing can prosper, association no more than any other system of labour; it turns industry into a struggle of life and death, and makes the discovery of a new machine a means of destruction; for, no sooner invented, the owner, by producing a better commodity, and producing more rapidly, uses it to destroy whole populations of workmen and employers. Look, indeed, at the ravages committed by the genius of discoveries during the last fifty years! The inventor of the machine for spinning cotton has ruined India, which affects us but slightly, but it has likewise starved thousands of Europeans. The machine for spinning flax, a boon for which Napoleon had promised to give a million francs, is at length conceived, taken over to the Continent, and has reduced to famine a portion of the Belgian people; it has done the same in Flanders and in Brittany. Railroads, that wonderful medium of communication, ruin the boatmen of the canals and rivers, and already affect the seamen employed in the coasting trade. Lighting by gas, that wonderful means of replacing the light of day in our streets at night, has ruined one of the principal agricultural products. Steam, that great boon of Providence, has hurried on to death, through distress, an incalculable mass of workmen. Indeed, not a single

blessing is introduced into the world without committing frightful ravages, because man seizes upon the blessing in order to convert it into a weapon of defence, owing to that abominable Competition which has driven every kind of industry, as it were, into an enclosure, where the weak must perish. For this, fraternity must be substituted, that is to say, Association.

Here, as before, to the same sophism I shall oppose the same answer. Respecting Cicero's theatre, I had said, "Would you prefer that the theatre did not exist?" I will say: "Would you prefer that the discovery had not been made, for without competition no one would have thought of making it?" You will perceive that this reply still holds good, and that if repeated, it is because the sophism is also repeated. Indeed it is again the same,—the stifling man's faculties in order not to suffer through them.

For my part, I cannot understand how two men, side by side, can work at the same article, without competition at once showing itself, that is to say, without one of them doing more, or not so well as the other, and consequently earning more or not so much. Will you stop the one that works, the best or the quickest, and say to him: "Friend, contain yourself, for fear of surpassing your neighbour?" Such a speech as that would be ridiculous enough, but you would have to make it, and it must also be attended to, otherwise the laborious competitor will go on, and commit the crime of successful rivalry. The principle, therefore, would be, to confine men's energy to a certain limit; and, moreover, to find out this limit, and to make it compulsory. But there being a fear of producing too much, it would have to be fixed, not according to the faculties of the strongest, but according to that of the weakest; suppress every extra amount of labour which the industrious or skilful artisan undertakes, and mankind would be addressed as follows:

"Brethren, do not surpass one another, restrain your rash and fatal ardour. And so, produce not too much wheat, too much wine, too much wearing apparel, and too many houses, &c." By this means the coal mines of the north would be prevented from becoming prejudicial to the coal mines of St. Etienne; those of St. Etienne from injuring those of Alais; the cloth manufacturers of Elbeuf and Louviers would be prevented from hurting those of Lodève, the Rouen cotton spinners from affecting these of Mulhausen; the Rouen railroad would be prevented from distressing the Seine, the Northern railway being a source of annoyance to the St. Quentin canal. Every one would be allowed to live in peace. Miltiades would not disturb the sleep of Themistocles; the genius of Herodotus would no longer excite that of Thucydides; Alexander would cease carrying in a cedar casket the narrative of the exploits of Achilles; and Cæsar would refrain from weeping as he gazed on the statue of Alexander! Very well; but in curing this restlessness of mankind, would you not fear to throw it into the sleep of death?

Does man progress otherwise than by emulation? What else is the love of glory, save the desire of surpassing one's rivals? It is not requisite to kill them, nor even to depreciate them; but a wish to excel them is allowable. Bacchió Bandinelli, fired with base jealousy on viewing the cartoon of the War of Pisa, held to be the sublimest of the works of Michael Angelo, gained admittance to the palace where it was exhibited, and mutilated it. Andrea del Castagno, in in order to deprive Antonello di Messina of the merit of painting in oil, murders him. Such a mode of rivalry is not lawful. Neither must you secretly break your rival's machine; nor place a stone under the engine on the Rouen railroad to stop its progress; you must not fire the warehouses belonging to that line,

destroy its bridges, as was done not long since by several enemies to competition; but a wish to convey at a greater speed, at a cheaper rate, is excusable; and do you know why? Because the ton of goods, (suffer me to descend from Alexander and Michael Angelo to this vulgar detail,) the ton of goods which formerly cost twenty francs for carriage on the Rouen road, now only costs ten francs, and because all materials, whether raw or manufactured, being no longer charged with the same expenses, will become cheaper. It is owing to competition that the horse, drawing a cart on wheels, has been substituted for the horse bearing the load on its own back; that for the waggon rolling over the ground, and whose speed is retarded by friction, has been substituted the boat gliding on the liquid surface of a canal; and for the boat gliding on the water, a succession of waggons running along two bars of iron, which they scarcely touch, and drawn by an unlimited power—that of steam. Had not men possessed the desire of excelling one another, they would not have thus reduced to 10 times, even 100 times less, the former charge for carriage, by which coal can now be burnt at some hundreds of leagues distance from the mine whence it was excavated; by which the metal, and the combustible which burns it into iron, are now brought to the same spot; conveying the iron to the very door of the building where it is made use of, so reduced in expenses, that from 60 francs it has been brought down to 20 francs the ton. For instance, were manufactures of cotton required whilst the Indians spun and wove it so delicately, that it might have been attributed to the hands of fairies? Were manufactures of wool needed whilst the shepherds of Cashmere reared flocks whose fleece was equal to the fineness of silk, and when the women of these beautiful valleys wove shawls which the luxury of the East disposed of to that of the West

from the time of the Crusades? Well, machinists, with a desire to make a profit on the manufacturing price, have contrived to supersede the hand of man. They have reduced the cotton to atoms, then profiting by the fact of these atoms attracting one another, they have spread them round a cylinder, forming thereby a film of cotton as thin and light as the sheet of water precipitated from a cascade, have gathered together this film, have made it into a fibre of cotton, have twisted this fibre, and formed it into a thread, slender as the finest hair. This thread goes back to astonished India, and although subjected to the expenses of a double voyage, after making the fortune of the machinist, of the weaver, of the English merchant, by its low price, throws the Indian cotton itself out of the market; and, at the present time, those pretty coloured prints, formerly known by the name of *Indiennes*, are manufactured in Europe and sold in India. Unfortunate Indians, the victims of competition, you are doubtless much to be pitied, but three-fourths of the world may now clothe themselves with cotton stuffs at the most trifling cost! The population of our towns, who could alone have worn them through the generosity of the rich giving to the poor, now wear them daily.

Woollen manufacturers—one in particular, by name Ternaux, and who died in want, scarcely known, after having rendered important services, whilst others, having done nothing at all, have remained the idol of the misguided people,—desirous of competing with Thibet, send out a scientific man to purchase goats; they have them brought to France, spin the hair, and manufacture shawls, which the prejudices of our ladies, well founded or not (I will not enter into so serious a question), still place beneath the Cashmere shawl; but, meanwhile, improving the merino shawl to that degree that the artisan's wife may

now wear it on holidays. Some injury has undoubtedly been done in India, even to Europe, by the competition; but, for all that, the people's wearing apparel has become of a much better quality, and less expensive.

Your unreasoning is, indeed, very great, ye profound inventors of association! What! you recollect that the people produces, and that by competition it condemns itself to labour at too low a price. You speak truly; but have you forgotten that it also consumes, and is as much consumer as producer, for it never produces a thing which it does not in the end consume. Suppose, then, that they were paid less (which, however, is not the case in regard to the workman's wages, as you will shortly see), would there not be some compensation when he has to pay for everything at a cheaper rate? Open your eyes; do you not see that it is the people that sell to the people, and that there is therefore compensation? And if the principle of competition has been the cause why every one, stimulated with the desire of excelling his competitor, has laboured to improve all things, have not the people gained by it in having a better quality and greater quantity of corn, clothing, lodging, and of everything, in fact? People exclaim against the disciples of Malthus, who stay man as he is about to marry, saying: "Take care—there might be one creature the more to feed in the world!" People exclaim against these abstinence-preaching philosophers; they are called pitiless beings; they are denounced to the people, and rightly so. To check the fecundity of mankind is a crime against nature. Yes; but are there not other followers of Malthus still more reprehensible; and would they not be those who would check man, fond of labour, and occupied in feeding, clothing, and sheltering the child which Malthus forbids to be born? He who would lessen produce, who would prevent the growth of that necessary to feed the child to be born, is he not

alone responsible for the prohibition set up by Malthus; for Malthus would have withdrawn his interdiction had he seen on the earth a sufficiency for the sustenance of all the new comers?

It is therefore a grievous mistake to impute the blame to competition, and not perceive that if the people are the producers, they are likewise the consumers; and that, receiving less in one way and paying less in another, there remains for the benefit of all, the difference between a system which checks human activity, and a system which launches it into the world, enjoining it never to stop.

But, however, I may be wrong in expressing myself as I have done, and by admitting, for instance, that, through competition, the workman pays less and receives less. Matters are still better than I have stated, thanks to nature, which is always more bountiful than is imagined. Between whom does competition arise? Is it between workman and workman? Not at all; it is between manufacturer and manufacturer. If it were between artisan and artisan, the consequence would, indeed, be a serious one for them, for the result would be, that they could not exist in consequence of the continued decrease of their wages. This may be the case during certain periods of stagnation, when, work being scarce, they are compelled to take anything they can get; but such is not the usual course of things. During the last thirty-three years, that is, since the peace, it is worth while to notice this course; not that it has been regulated by other than the eternal laws of the universe, but these laws, aided by circumstances, have operated with greater effect. The circumstances which have so singularly increased their action are the following:—peace, succeeding to the longest and most disastrous wars of which history makes mention; the want of repose after these wars, and of providing for one's welfare; and the incessantly

varied applications of machinery to industrial works. Influenced by these causes, three phenomena have become manifest: an increasing low price in produce, to the profit of the consumer; an increase in the workman's wages: and, for the manufacturer, a diminution of profit. These three events have been accomplished in different proportions, but accomplished in a constant and invariable manner. I would not wish to overload with details a book, the purpose of which is to lay down principles; yet I will mention two or three examples, founded on calculations.

Three great branches of industry have, during the last half-century, become the object of human activity: cotton, as the matter most used for wearing-apparel; iron, the principal matter in the construction of machinery, in building, in navigation; and coal, as the principle of motive power. The quantities produced in these three trades have quadrupled, and quintupled in thirty years, and the price has been reduced a-half or three-fourths. I will cite, more particularly, the production of cotton, as the most characteristic of all.

In 1814, France consumed 12 million kilogrammes of raw cotton, which it made into thread, tissues, linen, stockings, and wearing-apparel for men, women, and children. She paid seven francs, the kilogramme, for the raw material, and thirty-three francs for working it up. In 1845, she consumed 65 million kilogrammes of raw cotton, that is, five times more, which supposes a still greater proportion of manufactured produce, because the improvements in spinning and weaving have procured a greater amount of produce with the same quantity of material. She paid two francs instead of seven francs for the raw produce, and eight instead of thirty-three for working it. For 12 million kilogrammes of cotton, manufactured into every shape, she spent, in 1814, 480 millions, and for 65 millions in 1845, she spent 650 millions, that is to say, that with a quarter more of expense, she has obtained five times the quantity

of merchandize. As will be apparent, the improvement has, therefore, been very great. It has been nearly the same with regard to iron and coal.

Is it the workman who has borne the consequences of this remarkable reduction in the expenses of production? Happily not. He has benefitted by the decrease which has taken place in the buying price of every article, and has not borne the corresponding reduction in their manufacturing price. This has been provided for by the aid of machinery, and by the skill and sacrifices of the manufacturer.

The daily wages of spinners and weavers have increased from two to three francs for the former, from one and a-half to two francs for the latter—(we take the average, be it understood). The same rise has taken place in the day's pay of women and children. For those employed in the working of iron, the wages have increased: for a blacksmith, from three to five francs, even to six or eight francs at piece-work; for men in iron works, from three and a-half to four and a-half francs, up to five and six francs, by the piece; for fitters, from three to five and six francs, even to eight francs at piece-work; and for casters, the most favoured by circumstances, from three to four francs to eight, nine, ten, and even twelve francs a-day on piece-work. It must be acknowledged that the improvement in machinery has very much contributed to this remarkable increase. With regard to miners, their daily wages have advanced from one and a-half to two and a-half and three francs.

In these same thirty years, what has been the course of prices, as compared with articles of consumption? Respecting wearing-apparel, for which cotton supplies the material, there has been, generally speaking, a reduction of three-fourths; with respect to woollen manufactures, the reduction has been about one-half. In bread there has been no sensible variation. Meat has increased a little; nevertheless the workmen in

towns have been able to partake of it as often as twice a-week, instead of once a-month. House-rent has, on an average, increased one-fourth; but the dwellings, without being such as it is desirable they should be, are much more comfortable. To sum up, salaries have augmented, and most articles of consumption have diminished in price. The country labourer has less participated in this amelioration of the general condition, but, in the environs of Paris, the day's pay has been increased from thirty to forty and sometimes forty-five sous. How have all these changes been brought about? By the active competitions which masters, armed with new processes, have made and carried on with each other. Whereas five times the quantity of cotton articles have been manufactured, five times the number of workmen have not been employed. The increase of hands has been almost insensible; machinery has executed the inferior kind of work, has, indeed, acted the part of the workman's assistant, and the workman has in general been employed on a better sort of work. Thus it is that the same number of hands has produced a greater quantity of labour. Therefore, a number of workmen but slightly increased, have shared among themselves a much greater amount of salary; whilst, by reason of this very improvement, they were able to procure at a cheaper rate the produce which they had created with greater facility and perfection.

And under these same circumstaces, what became of the manufacturer? Obliged to attract the purchaser by means of cheapness and quality combined, he endeavoured to improve his produce—to produce more; he succeeded, and found his profit, not by gaining much on a little produce, but by gaining little on much. Competition still continuing, he has been obliged to content himself with infinitely smaller profits; and even of late years, there are certain trades,—the cotton trade, for instance,—which have scarcely made any

profit. And whilst the master agreed to lower his profits, he could not reduce the wages of his work-people, who did not increase in proportion to the amount of labour, and whom it became at times difficult to obtain. The master, placed between the consumer, whom he was obliged to supply at a reduced price, and the workmen, who, by reason of the great demand for produce, was enabled to raise his claims, has given way to both of them; and at the same time that the consumer had everything of a better quality, and in greater quantity, the workmen obtained an increase of wages. The master, at once the author and the victim of competition, compelled to satisfy two exigencies of an opposite nature, was alone the sufferer; and it is no mystery to those acquainted with the real course of trade, that the manufacturers, if we embrace the whole period of thirty-three years of peace, have gained far less during the latter years than during the preceding ones. The cotton-spinner, for instance, during the last ten years, has lost more than he has gained. The iron manufacturer has felt a momentary improvement, on account of the extraordinary impulse given to the construction of railroads; the same may be said of the engine-makers. The mining interest has suffered unceasingly; there was a slight degree of improvement, but it is again in distress. The whole of these facts reveal a very beautiful law of nature, which has been overlooked, and which is everlasting: it is this,—that on the master alone falls all the risks of competition, between the public who must be satisfied, and the workmen, whose assistance must be procured. An intelligent and courageous being, it is for him, placed between a twofold necessity, to contrive to satisfy both; and whether he overcome the difficulty, or whether he fail, the result is always to the benefit of the mass.

A crisis, it is true, follows, during which trade is at a stand-still, and the workmen are idle and in great

distress, unless they have laid by something for "a wet day," (a precaution which it behoves us to teach them, and which will be of greater service to them than all the false systems which the present times have conceived.) But this crisis over, trade revives, the workman finds the price of articles of consumption very much reduced, his wages gradually restored, indeed, even increased.

Competition, therefore, is far from injuring him, although it may occasion momentary changes from which he suffers, and which are to the manufacturing trade what hail, floods, drought, and bad harvests, are to the agricultural interest. But have men, at last, discovered a means of getting through the world without liability to its accidents and changes? Suppress the taste for improvement, suppress the desire to surpass one's neighbours, and none of these shortening processes, which have procured that abundance by which the poor man lives, by which alone he can live, —for well-being only reaches him when it is in excess, —none of these shortening processes would have been invented without this stimulus, spinning and weaving would still be performed by hand, horses would be used for turning wheels, we should have the machine at Marly instead of the steam-engine, industry would consist of monopolies only, quietly going on by the side of one another. What! you have exclaimed for thirty years against monopolies; you have, under all monarchies, censured them most bitterly; you have sustained that competition alone could protect us against them; you asked for it as for liberty itself; and under the Republic you come and propose to us monopolies! You do not surprise me, who am an old witness of several revolutions; but have a care of opening the eyes of the world by your contradictions! And so, industrial associations, endowed by the State, would come to an agreement not to produce too much,

or to produce at one price instead of another; they would thus secure to themselves the means of realising a sufficient profit, not ruin the capitalists who would have lent their money, and give wages to the people, working leisurely under their own benevolent superintendent, working only ten hours, nine hours, even less, and compensated for the equality of wages by dividends! Here, I see some proof of practical genius, and I grant at once, that under this convenient system, the capital of associations would not be compromised, their internal disorderly condition, their idleness, would be compensated for; that there would be a sure remuneration for capital, an infallible dividend for the workmen, whether they worked well or not; this I grant without hesitation. Take ten manufactories, one hundred, it matters not what number, let them come to an understanding as to the amount of produce, in so much that they may not increase it at will. Then, indeed, they may name their own prices, for prices are only lowered by a glut in the market; they may be as unskilful, as idle as they please; they may go into the country, leave a clerk in their counting-houses, and for all that they will realize great fortunes; for profit depends upon prices, and prices on the quantity produced. If such be the discovery, I humbly bow to the genius of its authors. This, in effect, is the first among all those of the day which presents us with an imaginable result. Yes, on these conditions, the associations for workmen will succeed, and I should no longer feel any anxiety as to the fate of their capital, or the form of their government! But is this what they want?

It will be said that I exaggerate, in order to make the philosophers, my contemporaries, appear ridiculous. This I deny, for such a manner of arguing would be unworthy the seriousness of the circumstances. But I ask what would be done in order to act otherwise than I have just been describing? What, indeed, is com-

plained of? That every one, left to himself, by a vast competition, causes a reduction in prices. Is this the case;—yes or no? How then to remedy it? Will every one be allowed to produce as much as he pleases, as formerly? But then the evil would be exactly the same. It will not have been remedied in the least. Perhaps it may be said, that from the profits of the association there would be a portion reserved for bad times and low prices. To this I reply, that in the system of low prices, resulting from the freedom allowed every one to produce without limit, there would not be the means of making such a reserve; as, at the present moment, trade, governed by the absolute authority of the proprietor, scarcely finds the means of living, and that it is not reasonable to suppose that a disorderly and idle association could succeed in earning that which an absolute authority fails to earn by the aid of unceasing activity. Moreover, in this case it would be a mere palliative, and there must not be the idle boast of having put a stop to the mortal struggle between tradesmen. On the contrary, if it is wished that the evil should be arrested, it would become necessary that the associations combined together, had an understanding, by means of a general government, for the object of limiting produce. A result would then in reality have been attained. But what are the grounds for saying, "We have enough calico, cloth, and iron?" There is but one, and that is price; for it is impossible, in a society of twenty, thirty, forty, or eighty millions of souls, to know whether there be or be not a sufficiency of food, clothing, or dwellings. There is but one manner of judging this, it is by what is called the rise or the fall of prices. The only medium for deciding as to the limitation of produce would evidently be the price. You would consequently, of your own opinion, have settled that insignificant question, that question of so little importance, called the price of things! Yes,

such is the certain, such the infallible consequence of the system of association: either you would have done nothing whatever, absolutely nothing, but projected a reserve which the manufacturers are themselves unable to procure on their profits, or you would have engaged to fix the price of all kinds of produce; and in fact, what is it that, in a free society, fixes prices? Competition. If you suppress this, you must necessarily fix the price yourselves.

Such then is the society which you would wish to establish, an immense monopoly in a republic, after the fall of several monarchies, which were upset for the crime of monopoly;—monopoly in elections, monopoly in publicity, monopoly in taxation! Such would be the upshot of the new fraternity!

But the unfortunate peasantry, which would be unable to enter the system of association, the workmen of all kinds who labour either individually or three or four together, and who would not enjoy the benefit of monopoly, what would become of them? They would supply bread, meat, furniture, dwellings, at competition prices, retained for them alone; and a few of the workmen in towns, taking advantage of the power of agglomeration, which had opened to them the gates of the Luxembourg for a few days, would make the former pay for all manufactured articles—cottons, cloth, ploughshares—at a price fixed by themselves; and you would call that justice, the love of the people!

The inventors of association cannot escape from the alternative in which I have here placed them: either the capital which the associated workmen would have received, and which they could only receive from the State, would be compromised, lost by the principle inherent to collective undertakings; or, they might limit the quantity, fix the price, and thus save the capital and secure the profits, by condemning nine-tenths of the population to pay all manufactured pro-

duce at an arbitrary price. Either an absurd speculation, the capital of which (for what reason is not known) would be supplied by the mass of contributors; or a safe speculation, the exaggerated profits of which would be paid by the mass of tax-payers; and every kind of industrial improvement sacrificed to monopoly;—such is the true system of association!

Thus, in the presence of the peasantry, whose life is ever a hard one; of a great portion of the population of towns, living on wages fixed by competition,—the well-being of the people (you say) would be provided for, by constituting the monopoly of a few large establishments, where the workmen have the advantage of being collected 1,000 or 2,000 together? a new aristocracy, having for its principal title the agglomeration of hands. And be it understood that what I here advance is no chimera, for if you glance over the list, so painful to consider, of those unfortunate beings condemned to transportation, there will be seen, that besides many foreigners, there are workmen belonging to establishments where men earn from three to ten francs a day. What will our peasantry say, should the truth reach them? What will our peasantry say, who earn their thirty sous a day, on learning that there has been a rebellion in Paris, because the workmen there earn from three to ten francs a day?

I deny then to the inventors of association the title of Friends of the People. Far from being their true friends, they are the flatterers of a few classes of workmen, whom they made use of to intimidate the government, and to oppress the Republic if they succeeded. Such is the exact truth. Declaim as much you like, it will remain such as I have exhibited it.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON RECIPROCITY.

Showing that cheapness could not be produced by law, and that money could only safely be replaced by paper, as difficult to obtain as money itself.

HERE is a new reformer, blessed with more sense than his rivals, and who gives proof of it by judging them all with so rigid a severity, that we might imagine him to be prompted by Providence to contradict and confound them, and who shows so much common sense in his opinions of them, that we might well nigh be tempted to doubt his sincerity when he himself invents systems. The Communists inspire him with disgust; the authors of the system of Association make him smile; in fact, they all make him feel what a sensible man must feel on witnessing so many puerilities;—and then, in his turn, wishing to re-construct the old society, he conceives the following plan:—

For his part, he does not believe everything is too cheap, and that it is necessary for industry to be submitted to the system of monopoly, in order to enhance the price of things. Far from that, he believes every thing is too dear, much too dear; and in this I agree with him, in opposition to the advocates of association, so very anxious to put a check to competition. Although during the last 33 years of peace, under the influence of an extraordinary industrial activity, and of a profound calm, prices have diminished, it is no less true that a great many legitimate enjoyments are still withheld from the lower classes of the population. An increase of cheapness, therefore, would be very desir-

able. But, however, we were just now with the enemies of cheapness; now we are with its most devoted adherents. I should myself have been of opinion that by allowing the world's axis to revolve some little time longer, by permitting industry to continue to develope itself, under the rule of continually improved laws, further progress would have been made in that course of cheapness which is ever extending itself. Not at all; that cheapness which you were formerly anxious to stay in its too rapid course, must, on the contrary, be stimulated, and produced violently with our own hands! Be it so; let us hear and judge for ourselves.

It is, therefore, quite true, says the author of the system of Reciprocity, that everything is still too dear, and that real equality would be nearly attained if the price of things were lowered. Then, he adds, there is a second evil, a sad complication of the first. Those various objects for our enjoyment which dearness places beyond our reach, we should be tempted to procure by means of labour; but then, for labour itself instruments must be procured; you must have land, if you are an agriculturist; a workshop, if you would be a mechanic, and materials,—in fact, gold, which represents them all; gold, that detestable and odious king, more a king than those dethroned in 1830 and in 1848, whose nature it is to fly from those who seek it, insomuch that it is not obtainable when wanted. Such are the two real evils of society; dearness, on the one hand, the difficulty of obtaining money, on the other. Here, again, I coincide with this reformer. All the material inconveniences which are felt in this world might be summed up in these two expressions: "This is too dear;" or, "I have no money." With the exception of two or three bankers in Europe, there is not one of us to whom this has not occurred, and perhaps they may have said the same when speaking of loans.

How do you propose to cure this double evil, so well characterized? By at first decreeing cheapness, and afterwards by abolishing money. It is quite evident that if a decree can at all influence the value of things, it is worth while having recourse to it; and that if money can be abolished without the necessity of supplying its place by anything else, its habit of fleeing from those who seek it will be destroyed with it.

A determined spirit soon finds means. By decision of the legislative power, all revenues will be reduced, such, for instance, as the rent of houses and lands, the interest on capital, the salaries of all professions; this being accomplished, a compensation will be established. By another decision the value of things will be diminished in a proportionate quantity, by decreeing that no one shall in any transaction ask more than the most recent prices, with a reduction of 25 per cent. should the salaries have been reduced by that amount. Every debtor thus becoming an auxiliary of the system, and every creditor also, for both have an interest in not paying more than the law obliges them to pay, there will be a certainty of obedience. There will be a sort of reciprocity,—for salaries will have been reduced, the prices of articles of consumption likewise, and cheapness will be attained without detriment to any one. I omit many details, in order to allow the principal idea to stand forth in all its clearness.

Next follows the process conceived with respect to money. Its inclination to become scarce will be corrected by suppressing it, which is a sure way of putting a stop to it, and its place will be supplied by means of a bank paper, which will neither be the note of the Bank of France, which sometimes has the fault of denying itself, nor paper money,—according to the author, a real bankruptcy,—nor stock indentures, another of the most foolish inventions, according to our author, conceived by the upholders of the funded interest.

This new paper would be established on the following plan. A large bank of exchange would be created, having as a security the entire produce of the country, and which with such a security will undoubtedly be safe enough. Every workman may then apply to it, and receive the amount of paper which he may stand in need of, in an equal proportion to the discount that would have been allowed him at any ordinary bank. (This point is not quite clear in the project.) This paper then being current as the old money, will answer the workman's purpose, who by the aid of it will procure every means of working and every means of enjoyment, will become quite active and perfectly happy, will be in his own person an unceasing source of produce, and an outlet impossible to stop up. Gold, which, by denying itself, was an obstacle placed to the labour of man and his desire to consume, gold being suppressed, humanity will labour and consume without end,—will become, in fact, as happy as it can be. In order to arrive at this end it will have been sufficient to suppress that slight obstacle called gold. This double phenomena of cheapness and the suppression of money accomplished, the ends which Communism and Socialism had proposed to themselves will be attained, and no one will have to utter either of those two fatal expressions: "This is too dear;" or, "I have no money."

It may perhaps be supposed that I am endeavouring, either by exaggerating or by falsifying these several systems, to render them unintelligible or ridiculous; that here and there I have omitted some part which rendered them conceivable and practicable, and the omission of which makes them incomplete and inadmissible. I sincerely declare that such is not the case; that with a view to understand, to analyze them, I make the most conscientious efforts; that I would wish to render the systems I oppose comprehensible,

in order the better to refute them. Indeed, a refutation is only convincing when the system to be refuted has been clearly set forth. I repeat, therefore, that I do my best to understand my adversaries, and to cause them to be understood.

I maintain that, as regards cheapness, no other means are indicated than the reduction, by decree, of all revenues, rents, and interest on capital, followed by the proportionate reduction of every kind of merchandise; that for the suppression of money there is no other means indicated than that of a bank paper, founded on the entire produce of the country, and delivered by the so-called bank of exchange to every producer in proportion to his wants.

I add, in the last place, that after these two inventions, the author treats with indignation and contempt the inventors of the *maximum*, and the creators of paper-money, both ancient and modern.

What are the grounds for his indignation? I may be asked. I know not; whatever they may be, he does not mince his words. Thus he paints the miracles of his system. By this means usury, banking commissions, *agio*—all will be suppressed: gold and silver, now become useless, will be applied to domestic uses, procuring new resources of luxury, and rendering them less costly; the national debt will be abolished, for it will be paid off with the new paper, prudently, however,—in seven or eight years, for instance; all the expences of raising the revenue will be done away with, for taxes will be replaced by the produce of the exchange bank, which will offer the simplest and most equitable basis for taxation; further, the customs and excise, foreign embassies and even armies will all be suppressed, for the nations, obliged to take this paper to procure our productions and to make us accept theirs, will be indissolubly bound to us. Perpetual peace, and at the same time universal abundance, will

have been decreed. Every representative of the people who does not understand and admit these principles, will be declared *incapable* or *suspected.*

None of these consequences are of my invention: they are all set forth and affirmed by the inventor of *reciprocity.*

What reply would you have me make to the system of this reformer, the wittiest man of the day? I really do not know, and never was more embarrassed in my life. Yet I must behave as if all men were serious, and offer a few very simple and incontestible remarks.

In the first place, I do not believe that the price of things can be fixed arbitrarily. In this respect I am as full of prejudices as France was on the day after the *maximum.* You may intrude inquisitorially and almost miraculously into the infinite details of social life,—you may come at every transaction, all bargains, great and small, all salaries, even to the most insignificant stipend,—you may seize every object of worth, from a box of matches up to objects of the greatest value,—you may penetrate into all society, as irresistible nature penetrates every being, to reduce them to her laws;—and should you succeed, after working this miracle, you would have done nothing, for if the prodigy of reciprocity were realized, all would have lost as much as they have gained. When, for instance, competition lowers prices, we maintain that the workman has gained, because he procures his articles of consumption cheaper, while his wages, instead of being diminished, are sensibly increased. If, on the contrary, his pay had experienced a diminution, exactly proportionate to that of all articles of consumption, we should not say that he had gained; we should say that he had suffered neither good nor evil. Great trouble would have been taken without any result. But this prodigy is announced only, not carried into operation. Society is harassed to no purpose; certain valuables are seized, others are not. It

is even the smaller number that are affected; for this pretence of taking the market-price as a standard, a point of departure, is in verity too simple. Every one knows that the sale of corn is accompanied by lists on which the prices are marked; that the price of bread is fixed by police regulation; but, with the exception of these articles, all the rest are sold without leaving any trace of the price, without any rule but the momentary and ever-changing phantasy of thousands of purchasers. If you should desire to know what is passing at every moment of the day in the minds of 36,000,000 of men, unveil all their thoughts, listen to their every word, be informed of all their acts, you would not have conceived a more extravagant wish, than that of knowing the conditions of every purchase and of every sale. You know, apparently, that the registration offices have not yet succeeded in registering at what price any estate is sold;—an estate, which is something so tangible and manifest. An estate is publicly and legally sold in Paris for a million francs, or a house for 500, and yet the proper authorities cannot gain precise information of the stipulated sum; and yet you pretend to know, that you may reduce it to a fixed amount, the price for which all the tape and calico, all the shoes and hats are sold in France. You are ignorant, besides, how values will change, so soon as you try to fix them arbitrarily. They are falsified. You declare that such and such an object shall be reduced 25 per cent., and immediately it is estimated at 133, that it may still find itself at the level of 100. When the Convention pretended that 100f. in assignats were equal in value to 100f. cash, while in fact they were only worth 10f.,—an article that would have cost 10f. was not sold for less than 100f. And when, to remedy this, the price of an article was fixed, with a threat of the scaffold, the article disappeared, and commerce ceased, or became clandestine. All that is

as absurd now as it was 50 years ago. We can no more regulate value, than we can regulate the thoughts, tastes, and insatiable desires of men; for value is only their exact representation or expression. But here and there you would be able to carry out your plan; you would succeed, I know, against certain individuals. By reducing all incomes 25 or 33 per cent., you reach the fund-holder and the landlord, whose incomes have been fixed by a regular contract for a number of years. Him, no doubt, you will reach, and him alone; for the physician, the barrister, the merchant, the manufacturer, will not charge him less. It is not property that will be the robber, but your pretended reciprocity.

In brief, if you succeeded you would do nothing; but you will not succeed; you fire at random on the mass, you strike a man here and another there, you do not lower prices, you rob a few individuals.

I have already said too much on this first means of securing the general happiness; as for the second, its singularity deserves a short notice.

Gold disappears, becomes scarce and dear, and I will tell you the secret cause: it possesses a real value, and for this reason we have adopted it as the medium of exchange! When I speak of gold, it is as if I spoke of silver, only the latter is less guilty, because it is less valuable. Exchange is the necessary result of the division of labour; for while some produce wheat, and others corn or calico, the farmer must exchange his corn for calico and iron, if he requires them. But having, for example, only corn to offer to all those to whom he applies, and who, at that moment, may have need of something else, an object of acknowledged value has been fixed upon by general consent, with which a man may present himself everywhere with the certainty of procuring anything he wants. Silver and gold, which possess an intrinsic value, have been chosen, and which in bars are worth almost as much as

when coined. From this value it results that they are given willingly for any other real value,—a value as real as their own. They are withheld whenever a real equivalent is not offered. This is a peculiarity of all real value. Now, as regards your paper, I ask you one question, to decide the matter. Will it or will it not be refused? If it is refused to none, I will have none of it, for it is a proof that it is good for nothing. Whatever is given to every one that asks it, is worthless, be it man or be it thing.

How shall we procure this paper? Will it be sufficient to go to the bank of exchange, and say, "I am a labourer, or I wish to be so," in order to obtain a quantity of paper? or must we give proofs of credit, of good conduct, in order to justify the confidence we require? Will everybody, from the beggar to the capitalist, be permitted to demand it?

These questions, none of which have been solved, must be answered, or else the project has no foundation.

If everybody, without distinction, is permitted to ask for this paper, then I agree that the problem of making money give up its aptitude to deny itself is solved, and I understand why paper has been preferred to metal, for with paper there is no need of looking so close. There may be some for everybody: it will be sufficient to increase the issues. In this case, it will be worse than the assignats; for in 1793, it was only required to satisfy the wants of the government, and here the wants of all men must be satisfied. In the one case, it was necessary to guard against the easy disposition of the government, in the other, we must guard against the general yieldingness. Whosoever desires any of this new money, to consume or to produce, will obtain it. This, I shall be told, is a calumny which I have invented against the system. Be it so; I desire nothing better than to be assured of it. But then will you follow the man who has received your

paper, to see how he will employ it? If you do not take this precaution, I have reason to be alarmed. If, on the contrary, you watch the man that has received your paper, to see the use he will put it to, you impose a strange sort of police on your bank. "No, no, will be the reply, you are pleased to conjure up an idle supposition. This paper will be given only to deserving persons,—men who have deserved the confidence they demand." The appreciation of solvency will therefore precede the handing over of the paper. Be it so; for it is better thus. But then it will be granted or it will not, and here is a refusal. Your paper will be coquettish in its turn,—will yield to the embrace of this man, and turn away from that! It will ape the sovereign, —that sovereign whom you call gold, and whom (as you say) men forgot to dethrone on the 24th February, when they dethroned the younger branch of the Bourbons. There is then no medium. Either a prior appreciation and the possibility of refusal, or a subsequent *surveillance;* and this is a strange police, put in the track of the bank-customers, with a possibility of refusal still; for if the conduct of these customers is not satisfactory, no more paper will be granted them; and if, at least, as I am inclined to fear, there should be neither one nor the other, there would then be paper for everybody; there would be an infinite issue, compared with which the issue of assignats would appear a paltry parsimony. In this system, I avow that we shall have secured an unlimited consumption, and given to all the productions of human labour an opening impossible to be filled. There is only one thing which you would have forgotten to secure, that is, labour; for if men would have paper-money, without offering in advance some realized production in exchange, I fear that consumption would always precede production, or in other words, there would soon be nothing left to consume.

The old banks, being modelled on the eternal nature of things, proceeded otherwise, and it must be acknowledged that they have done good service, by attending to that disposition to refusal inherent in gold. They did not begin by saying to men that they had only to present themselves to have credit opened in their names, which a banker may do with persons whom he knows, and which a collective establishment cannot permit with security; but they consented to discount the bills which merchants or manufacturers drew or accepted in favour of others to facilitate their transactions,—bills which are to be paid in real value and at an appointed time. They take these bills, submit them to the examination of discount-committees, familiar with the merchants and manufacturers of the country, and advance their value for a trifling interest, when the acceptor or drawer is known to be solvent, and not to have been too lavish with his signature. Their advances are made in a paper which inspires confidence. Do you know why? Because it can at any time be changed into gold, that is, into a money which bears its value on its face. Were it otherwise, bank notes would be worth nothing.

Thus experience teaches that we may, by discounting, anticipate the moment when certain produce will be realised; but with a certainty that this produce is not a chimera; with infinite precautions to make sure of this fact, and with refusals, frequent refusals, as a consequence. Experience teaches us, moreover, that the advances made by banks, representing produce not yet realized, cannot be made in paper, except on condition that this paper may be converted into gold at any moment; or, in other words, that it has all the good and bad qualities of the metal.

Thus the bank of exchange in question is either an open office, in which fresh paper will be given to every comer, which is an extravagant idea; or, it is a bank

which, instead of discounting, opens credits like a banker, which constitutes a trade very inferior to that which has been adopted through experience; bankers alone opening general credits, and the banks discounting only bills, and thus lending their money only on completed transactions. Even in this case, the pretended evil which has aroused such complaints has not been remedied, for, as the credits must be limited, refusal is certain when the credit is gone. Such a new bank of exchange would be either a folly, or nothing new, except in being a trade inferior to that already in existence.

There is, however, one hypothesis, of which our author says nothing; for the project is put forward without indicating any means of execution, always a convenient method of proceeding, and this hypothesis would consist in obliging every labourer, before obtaining credit at the bank of exchange, to deposit merchandise, *i. e.* realised produce. But then it would be a mere pawnbroking establishment. Such, indeed, have been imagined for periods of distress, but in a temporary manner, or else an establishment of this kind must become a general merchant, buying and selling, and centralizing in its hands the entire commerce, which cannot be carried on well except by individuals. In this there would be nothing new, nothing which is not already known, and disputed, and admitted at the most only for temporary crises. In this case, too, the new paper would not be given except in exchange for realized produce. But for this gold is never refused, except in times of general depreciation, and then it is given at the reduced price indicated by circumstances. It is no great favour to give money for work done. In ordinary banks it is given beforehand, by discounting. If, on the contrary, the paper in question were to be obtained before the produce, the question would still remain: What precautions

must be taken to be sure of the producer's promise? I repeat, then, either the new paper would be good for nothing, or be as difficult of obtainment as gold.

Here, then, is another of the means imagined by the new reformers, reduced, methinks, to its real value. Cheapness, which would be without effect if it were general, for everybody would receive less and give less also, and which, if it were not general, would be robbery; in addition, a new paper-money, either withheld like the old, or granted to every one,—an idea as foolish as that of giving sovereigns to any and all that might ask for them. Such is, in truth, the system of reciprocity.

I suspect, however, one thing,—that they would not grant this paper to every comer,—not to the peasant or the beggar, necessarily little known to the bank of exchange; that they would have the precaution to limit the issues, that the extravagance might be less enormous; that they would grant the money in towns to a few of those workmen for whom the association was invented, to a few men of parts whose genius has not yet burst through the cloud, or to some bankrupt unlucky in his speculations. But here, too, I ask, as in the case of association, when will they think of the poor peasant, who, in Corrèze or Cêvennes, lives on potatoes or chesnuts? Will the Socialists never think of him?

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE RIGHT TO LABOUR.

Showing that the obligation imposed on Society to find work for those who ask it, cannot constitute a right.

A LAST invention remains to be examined. This is less singular and more practical; but here also they do not conceal their claims to draw upon the national treasury in behalf of certain favourites (they are always the same), whom they make use of when they wish to overawe the government. This invention is the right to labour,—a right empowering every individual out of work to demand employment of the State.

What! they exclaim, you would refuse to the man who asks it that he may live,—to the man who, instead of taking violently from society the bread which it has, but he has not, confines himself to the desire of securing it as the price of the subsistence which he implores? You would have him steal, or die of hunger! Is there any reply to a claim so well founded and so worthily expressed? None, assuredly, if all help was refused him; but many, many peremptory replies, if we give him all the support at the disposal of society. But, it will be urged, this is alms,—alms to him who will not receive them, who is too proud to hold out his hand for them, and who begs for the means of earning whatever he may receive. To this I reply, that charity was never an offence to those whom she takes care of; that this feeling of dignity is most praiseworthy, that society should encourage it, and furnish those who desire it with the opportunity of earning the support administered to them; but that society cannot regard

as a right this claim which is raised against her; for, in the first place, it is not a right; and secondly, if it were recognised as a right, society would bind itself to provide what was beyond its powers. I shall briefly demonstrate these three propositions, and show that under this cry of humanity there is nothing but the cry of factions, imitating the voice of misfortune,—that it is the national workshops over again.

What is the object men propose when they unite into societies? To labour beside each other, under mutual protection, defending each other when attacked, providing support when one of their members dies of disease or old age, teaching one another to improve by example; but I do not know that their mission is to find work for each other. Protection, mutual support, and improvement, are the motives, the advantages of society, which men would not find in isolation, and which they obtain by drawing near to their fellows. Alone, he would fall a prey to some stronger animal, or would perish for want of succour, in case of sickness or decrepitude. Alone he would never learn anything, and the knowledge of one would be lost to the other. But every able man has the mission to labour, to seek employment, and I do not know that society is bound to provide him with it. It protects him in the exercise of the employment he has found; it may teach him to be a better workman; but to seek work for him, to create it artificially, seems to me beyond its obligations and its ability. It would be better and more humane, I may be told, to go thus far, and to secure at all times, and for all men, the means of working. Do you mean that society should act like register-offices for servants out of place, or houses-of-call for men out of employ? I understand you. But these associations promise their good will only. Why do they not promise more? Because they can do no more. Just so is it with society.

A few reflections will convince us of this. When does labour fail? In certain accidental cases,—in periods of dulness. Generally a man succeeds in finding employment when he sincerely desires to work. In rural occupations, the alternations of extreme activity and complete inactivity never occur. You will never see one or two-hundred thousand suddenly turned off the soil. Yet, at the very gates of our cities, the market gardener, who toils to procure refined enjoyments for the rich, suffers as well as the rest from a commercial crisis. But in agriculture there are no crises originating in excessive production, and it is very rare for a strong man, who has the use of his limbs, not to find a farm where he may employ them. With manufactures it is otherwise. There, for a time, hands will be wanting, there will be a struggle for them, and they will be paid high prices; then excessive production having glutted the market, the works will be suddenly stopped, production will cease, and if the workman has not been saving, he will be deprived of necessaries and reduced to the cruellest extremities. These are the cases when labour really fails, and the only ones which we have to consider. It must be so, for were stagnation the ordinary condition of society, it would soon perish. If there were habitually a number of men out of employ, it must be dissolved. This would be the case of that invasion of the society of which I have spoken above, and which is a mere fable; for ordinarily there is non-appropriated land for whoever desires it, appropriated land cheaper than it was formerly, and excellent instruments of labour at a lower price than at any previous period. In a word, with certain exceptions, there is work prepared for everybody that asks it; I do not, however, mean to say that all who ask for places will obtain them. I am not thinking of them, although they are very strong partisans of the right to labour. But I assert, as an undeniable fact,

that labour never fails, except accidentally,—only in cases of stagnation, and these stagnations occur, not in the country but in towns, not in agriculture but in manufactures.

What is the meaning of the accidental fact occurring in manufactures, termed a stagnation? It means that, at that particular moment, society has no need of iron, machines, calico, cloth, silk, cashmere shawls, &c. because there has been over-production. Well then, would you have the State become, for that brief space, a cotton-spinner, or an iron-master? Yes, or no? For in that lies the whole question.

I can understand Communism, where the State carries on all trades at once. But, setting aside Communism, can you imagine the State making shoes and hats, nails and bonnets? Should it do so habitually or accidentally? If habitually, it would be against nature; for, besides doing what is unsuited to its vocation, and what it cannot know how to do, it would create the most formidable competition to private industry, and would either ruin or be ruined by it. Accidentally, the case would be still worse. Can you picture the State suddenly erecting factories of every kind, and endeavouring, for a year or two, to carry on all trades at once, only to abandon them afterwards.

Besides acquitting itself extremely ill, through the unyieldingness of its nature and the insufficiency of its knowledge, it would create a competition against industry more dangerous than that opposed to it by manufacturing constantly and permanently. It would, in truth, counteract the only good arising from these periods of stagnation, which is, by suspending production, the clearing the markets of the glut by which they were encumbered. The stagnation was a sign that production ought to cease, because it had been excessive, and yet it would continue by the hands of the State, unskilfully, dearly, and unseasonably. The

remedy, therefore, would be not only bad, but misplaced to the highest degree.

I may be told that I am contending against an exaggeration of the idea, not against the idea itself, in all its correctness and justice. We do not wish the State to become an ironmonger, a silk weaver, or an upholsterer; but when it has in its agricultural colonies in Britanny or in Algeria, and levellings or embankments to be made in different parts of the territory, it will have fulfilled its obligations. To that I shall reply, either you are not speaking seriously, or you speak without having consulted the national workshops. What! after recognising the right, you are to be satisfied in this manner! Earthworks,—they have never been refused, and, with a little foresight, the State would never be without them. But would you give a pick-axe to a man accustomed to handle the shuttle or the graver? This they will tell you is cruelty; and so indeed it is. Those who are honest, if they endeavour to handle the pick or the spade, soon have their hands blistered and blood-stained, their backs are broken, they feel ill, and are spent; and if the labour is given by the piece, as they tried to do in the latter days of the existence of the national workshops, they hardly earned a morsel of bread, while at their side an excavator by trade could earn his eight or ten francs per day. Then what happens? A feeling of humanity seizes the overseers, they pay these workmen for doing nothing, and those alms, which they so proudly rejected under their lawful name, they procure by a lie. Instead of alms, it is a fraud. Is it less dishonourable, then, to receive alms from the State, than to commit a breach of faith—that is, to receive pay for work they have not performed? This is not all. I am speaking of earthworks at Paris; but offer them in Britanny or in the Landes, and you will see whether they will be accepted. The workmen will take up arms rather than leave Paris; and this is no

idle supposition of mine. The melancholy affair of June took place close upon the news of the forced departure of the labourers in the national workshops.

Rights either exist or they do not: if they do, they carry with them all their consequences. If the workman has a right to demand work of the State, that work should be conformable to his habits, his mode of life, and his talents—a work which does not wear him away and unfit him for his trade—a work which does not compel him to go into exile, and separate him from his family, which does not make his wife a widow and his children orphans. When he applies to the State, he must find a factory, a forge, a loom, a shop, &c., ready to receive him. Either the right is not, or it carries with it all its consequences; for, I repeat, to put a pick-axe into the hands of a silk-weaver, is not the accomplishment of a right, but an act of cruelty. If he takes it, he lays it aside, makes no use of it, and cheats the State. You put yourself in the unhappy alternative either of being cruel or of making the workman a dishonest man. I do not understand a right with such results.

Further, if there is a right, it exists at every moment, yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, in summer and in winter, not when it shall please you to declare it in vigour, but when it pleases the workman to appeal to it. Well, then, how would you act if a party of workmen should choose to leave their employer, because he does not pay them to their liking, or because he requires certain conditions not to their taste, and they come and ask you for work? You would then be the unavoidable accomplices in every kind of grievance, and of every violence employed against their masters to force them to raise their wages. If the right is a real right, not a mere flattery embodied in a law, to be thought no more of afterwards, but a right seriously recognised and effectually accorded, you would furnish

all workmen with the means of ruining industry by the factitious increase of wages. Is this, too, an idle supposition? Let the national workshops once more furnish a reply. Many manufacturers in Paris had orders which they could not execute, because their workmen would not work for them. The minister of war had urgent need of certain portions of equipments, and he could not complete them until very late, because of the national workshops, which provided paid holidays for the idle and discontented workmen. But, say you, we shall be able to distinguish whether the right invoked is serious or not. What! is that the character of a real right? When the liberty of the person or of the press is at stake, does it depend upon the Government to say—I grant it you to-day, I refuse it to-morrow? It may be so under military law, but under such a law rights are unknown. In ordinary times, do men allow the law to depend upon the decision of the Government, which would be authorized in saying—you may exercise the right to-day but not to-morrow, or else, to-morrow and not to-day?

And whence arises this unhappy contradiction between the principle you lay down and its application? In your abuse of a word, to give things a false and forced character; in your calling that a right which is no right, or in your presuming to convert into a positive obligation what is and must remain a simple act of good will on the part of Government. I have no wish to jest in so serious a matter; but as there is no line drawn between workmen, and as we cannot pretend that the right exists for one class and not for another—for if these were class-rights, we should immediately have a strange kind of aristocracy—I will tell you that a right to labour exists for doctors without patients, barristers without briefs, lawyers without clients, and authors without readers, just as it does for the workman; I will tell you that the right exists or it does

not, and you must find employment for all or for none. Prepare, then, places for workers in thought (as they style themselves); and if the right to labour is a real right, resign your places, or share them with these people; for, I repeat, the right of individual liberty, the right of the liberty of the press, is positive, and for the use of all. Why should the right to labour be an exceptional privilege for a single class of workmen.

To this you can make but one reasonable reply, and I hasten to accept it as a good one—"You cannot do what is required of you; you cannot give places to all who ask them; you cannot bring into the Government an ironmonger, a linen-draper, an upholsterer, a house-painter, any more than you can have a collection of employments always ready for whoever may require them: to imagine this would be mere folly; in a word, no one, not even the State, is bound to do impossibilities; and, consequently, there is no positive obligation, but only an agreement, a necessity to do the best you can." Where will that lead us? To say that there is reason, not to proclaim a right, but seriously to invoke the benevolence of the State, and impose on it the duty of assisting workmen out of employ:—by speaking thus, all becomes true and simple, all dangers cease, all the abuses which factions might make from an inconsiderate declaration vanish away. The State does not bind itself to attempt what is impossible; but its duty being to console the afflicted, it has a right to distinguish between real and assumed distress, between misfortunes deserving the support of the country and a factitious woe. It is no longer in the presence of a right, but of suffering humanity, to whom it owes all, except impossibilities—all, except a violation of the principles upon which society is founded. It is not alms that we offer, but benevolence, which is never an insult when offered by one who is almost as far above us as Providence himself—that is, by the State.

This being established, the State can devise means for relieving these cruel stagnations. It cannot do all that may be required of it, but, with foresight, it can do much; for the State has defensive walls to erect, engines and ships to build, cordage, guns, sabres, cannon, carriages, harness, shoes, cloth, sails, to make, palaces and churches to construct; and a skilful government, which should reserve its public works until these times of distress; which, for certain fabrics, such as engines, arms, carriages, cloths, &c., should have establishments, capable of being extended or restricted at will; which should have its plans prepared for the palaces or fortresses to be erected, and keep them ready for those seasons when private industry was checked; which should thus collect in the general market all unoccupied hands, as certain speculators buy depreciated stock;—which with this administrative foresight should combine financial foresight, and keep its floating debt free and unentangled, so as to find money when others had none,—a government, which should undertake all these difficult but not impossible cares, would succeed in greatly diminishing the evil, though it might fail in removing it altogether. For if the State should weave cloth for the army, or sails for the navy, if it should even turn its thoughts to the decoration of the ceilings of the picture gallery of the Louvre, it would not, however, have to order jeweller's work and cashmere shawls; it could not provide for all, and as regards a certain class of workmen, there would always remain beneficence, nobly offered and worthily accepted. It could never accomplish that positive duty of giving, at the call of every one who should present himself, a task conformable to the profession of the suitor, from a lock, a watch, or a yard of lace, to a place on the bench or in the treasury. This pretended right, carrying impossibility on its face, is only a pretext invented by

factions to have the means of raising for their own advantage armies paid by the public money.

Let it be pretended no longer that we would have the man out of work die of hunger; for I reply, we would feed the man out of employ, without, however, giving him wages equal to those of his prosperous days,—not wages to be received without labour, or which will permit him to excite the labouring classes to revolt. No State could support a burden of this kind, and should not think of attempting it; for by according it, it would commit suicide, and be guilty of treason against society. That cry of humanity, which some affect to raise when they speak of the right to labour, is a feigned cry, imitating the accents of distress, but in reality betraying the voice of faction.

Such is the soundness of the third and last system invented by the Socialists. We see that it is on a par with *Association* and *Reciprocity*. But there is a conclusion to be drawn from all this, which shall be the subject of the last chapter of this book.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIALISTS.

Showing that the Socialists in reality attack property as much as the Communists, and only concern themselves about that small section of the people which is collected in towns.

LET us resume what has preceded.

The Socialists, wishing to distinguish themselves from the Communists, considering even the title of Communist an insult, have invented three things:—

Association,
Reciprocity,
The Right to Labour.

Association, which consists in gathering together certain classes of workmen to speculate with a capital furnished by the State, or formed by their savings, in order to preserve the profits of the master, and of keeping up the prices which competition tends continually to lower;

Reciprocity, which, pursuing a contrary aim, decides for cheapness, commands it by an arbitrary deduction from all value, substitutes for coined money paper to be issued by a bank of exchange,—the advantage of which consists in its being always accessible, and of never requiring usurious interest like gold and silver;

Lastly, *the Right to Labour*, which assumes to put an end to all distress, by securing immediate employment for every man out of work.

I have proved that the first of these systems provided a few privileged workmen with the means of speculating at the expense of all the rest, if the State was compelled to furnish the capital; and exposed them to ruin, if the capital was formed of their own savings; that it suppressed in industry the only true principle of action, that is, private interest; that it introduced anarchy, and that it could escape ruin only by creating a monopoly for the benefit of certain industries by the suppression of competition; and, finally, supposing it practicable, that it had in view only certain classes of workmen, viz., those collected in great factories, &c.

I have proved that the second of these systems, contradictory to the first, aiming at dearness instead of cheapness, was equally chimerical; for if it succeeded nothing would have been done, everybody having lost as much as he had gained;—but it could not succeed, because values are by their very nature intangible,

that some could be got and not others; and that thus the small number on whom it had been practised would have been robbed; that the new paper, substituted for coined money, would either be given to every one who asked for it, and then would be worthless; or, if it was given with secure precaution, it would be as inaccessible as money itself; and, finally, that if this system were put into operation it would not aid any more than the present the great body of workmen, particularly the peasantry, necessarily unknown to this paper-giving bank.

As for the third system, I have proved that the State could not recognise a right which it would be unable to satisfy, whose exercise would be open at some time and not at another, invocable by this class and not by that; that to proclaim a formal right was to create in certain great cities indissoluble national workshops, constitutionally authorized to revolt, whenever it was desirable to dissolve them; that the State could give abundant support, but could not do more; and finally, that this invention, like the other two, had in view only some agglomerations of workmen, and them only.

The first characteristic of these three systems is their mutual contradictions; for one associates the workmen to contend against cheapness, the other would produce this cheapness by law; the last, excluding the others, and going straight to the mark, desires that the State should pay so much a day to the man who has not worked, or does not find work to his taste. The second characteristic of these systems is their being chimerical, unnatural, and impracticable; for it will be agreed, that to associate together weavers, smiths, mechanics, miners, &c., to associate these associations with one another, and then nations themselves; that to fix by law the value of things, and to create a paper money capital alike to all; or lastly, that to keep constantly open, on account of the State, workshops for the

manufacture of silk goods, shawls, jewellery, needles, &c., is quite on a par with Communism. The third characteristic of these systems is their violation of property (in this resembling Communism); for to take foundries, iron-works, and mines, and give them to the associations, which could only be done by paying for them with stock depreciated by the enormous issue, to reduce at pleasure all values, to take off a part of the rents and the interests of capital, to maintain, at the expense of the tax-payers, national workshops competing with private ones, on the one hand arbitrarily to raise prices, on the other to lower them,—is attacking property in a thousand ways, all equally cruel, and destroying it, instead of frankly abolishing Communism. The fourth characteristic, is that they do nothing for the people at large, that they have in view a few workmen collected in towns; and the fifth and last characteristic, is their constantly having recourse to one common being, charged with the task of providing for every expense, every invention, every whim,—to the treasury of the State, that is, to everybody's treasury, the poor man's more than the rich man's; for the rich, however severely they may be taxed, produce little, because they are not numerous,—so little that their entire ruin would not enrich the budget.

The welfare of all with the means of all is evidently not to be found in either of these systems.

From all that has preceded, it follows that the *Socialists*, with all their pretence of separation from the Communists, no less violate the principle of property, are only more inconsistent and less sincere, and have in view not the most suffering, but the most restless, the most excitable part of the people; and that among them, the only persons who do anything serious for the party they are looking to, are the men who propose to pay them so much a day, as Robespierre had imagined, in order to have them at their disposal. The

Communists are pure Utopians; the Socialists claim a more practical character, and they would not justify this claim, in my opinion, by confessing their factious designs; for in no other way can I define their plan of paying so much a day for doing nothing to a hundred thousand workmen at Paris, five or six thousand at Rouen, and a proportionate number at Lille, Lyons, and Marseilles.

Whether they are Utopians or factious, this is my way of defining those philosophers who, to avoid being called *Communists*, have invented the name of *Socialists*. I beg their pardon for this definition, and I hope they will believe, that in my judgment of their systems, there is not the least rancour against their persons, but an invincible dislike for a proud, barren, and agitating unreason.

END OF BOOK III.

ON TAXATION.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE MANNER OF REACHING PROPERTY BY TAXATION.

Showing that it is untrue that the main object of Governments, in every age, was to relieve one class at the expense of another, and that their chief end was to take money where it could be found easiest.

I SHOULD not treat of my subject fully if I did not examine that part of the public charges which property ought to support; for the most adroit enemies of property look to taxation for the success of their views. For the present, say they, we shall respect the actual distribution of property, seeing that the existing generation is not sufficiently enlightened to be able to give a complete solution of social questions; but in the meanwhile the rich shall pay. We may, therefore, incur popular expense, and abolish unpopular taxes; the rich shall pay. Be it so, I reply, if it is just. But setting justice aside, I will add—Be it so, if the rich can pay.

There is no subject on which the scientific economy of the day is more short-sighted, more mistaken, than

in matters of taxation. Men think, for instance, that hitherto governments have only thought of crushing the poor, relieving the rich, and imposing on the one the charges withdrawn from the other. This is the common belief with regard to all governments, ancient or modern. It is a false one, however, even as regards those previous to 1789, the period when the noble principle of a strict equality in the eyes of the law was introduced for the first time into our social system. Although there had been enormous abuses, which the revolution of '89 had the honour of abolishing, an honour which that of 1848 had not, solely because it came afterwards, although there were classes emancipated or burdened with certain taxes; although there were unjustifiable exceptions, all to the advantage of a few privileged persons; nevertheless, except those prejudices of the time, now displaced by prejudices of another kind, and not less dangerous, it is untrue that Sully, Colbert, Turgot, and many other less famous ministers, thought only of crushing the poor man. This supposition is quite erroneous. Some from humanity, others from prudence, thought of one thing only, to spare the greatest number, and to relieve their sufferings, for all distress avoided leaves a resource for fresh taxes. Besides the nobility and the clergy, who were protected by their privileges, there were rich men whom no privilege shielded, and whom they would have been very happy to get at. These great ministers had only one object in view; to discover the imposts the least burdensome, the least injurious to production, and to deal tenderly with the country, if it was only to derive more from it. We must not despise their knowledge, and think that in taxation everything has to be done over again, and that thus you would recompense the poor for their poverty, and punish the rich for their wealth. Not so; but we shall disturb social order, and make the poor man poorer; for he is always

the most ill-treated in revolutions. Of this the last eight months are a proof.

I shall proceed to inquire briefly in what just and well-adopted taxation exists; and luckily we shall find here, as elsewhere, that justice and ability are identical, and that to violate property, either indirectly by taxation, or directly by all kinds of Communism, is not more productive. Disturbance, failure of credit, and distress, are the sure results of enterprises of this nature.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF TAXATION.

Showing that Taxation should reach every kind of revenue, whether arising from property or labour.

We must first establish the true principles of justice with regard to taxation, and then inquire what the finance of all ages teaches us in relation to the taxes the lightest to be borne, the easiest to be raised, and the least injurious to production.

Justice in taxation originates in a well-defined impost. In society there does not exist one single kind of labour, such as cultivating the earth, weaving calico, building houses, or, in a word, in feeding, clothing, or lodging man. There is another no less indispensable, which consists in protecting the joiner, the husbandman, the manufacturer, and the builder. The soldier who bears arms, the magistrate who judges, the minister who presides over the organization of all these sciences, labour as usefully as he

who raises corn, improves cotton-yarn, or builds houses. As the husbandman provides corn for the weaver, and *vice versâ*, both of them ought to plough and to weave for him who mounts guard, applies the laws, or administers them. They owe him a portion of their labour in exchange for the work he has done for them. The money paid in taxes, which are their means of procuring for themselves, food, clothing, and lodging, is that equivalent due to those who are devoted to a different pursuit, but one quite as necessary and productive.

Now in what proportion should the husbandman, the weaver, the bricklayer, or the banker, pay the tax intended to remunerate the labour of those who bear arms, judge, administer, and govern for them? At first glance we might say, why should one pay more than the other? One labours and produces corn; the other is an engineer, and produces machines; one earns two francs a-day, the other six; so much the better for the latter. If he is more skilful and earns more, it is not a reason why he should pay more taxes. But then the merchant, whose daily returns may sometimes be reckoned by hundreds, and the banker's by thousands, may say, So much the better for me if I gain more; it is the advantage of my natural genius to know how to carry on a lucrative business. Listen to the true and positive answer to these reasoners.

While the soldier in the field, and the judge on the bench, protect in the same day the labour of all,—the labour represented in one case by two francs, in another by six, in a third by a hundred, in a fourth by a thousand,—they have shielded the first from a loss of two francs, the second of six, the third of one hundred, and the fourth of one thousand, by preventing the injury that an invasion, a tumult, a fraud might have caused them. Remuneration must be proportionate to the services received. Besides its justice, it is a necessity;

for if each one payed alike, you must take a share of his profits from him who earns but two francs, so that the poor wretch would be reduced to nothing. There is then as much consistency as justice in acting thus, and both are blended in one sole consideration, which is reason itself.

Taxation must, therefore, be proportionate to each one's means; and by *means*, we must understand not only what each man earns, but what he possesses. Thus the individual, protected in his labour by him who mounts guard, or judges, or governs, is protected not only in his personal labour, but in the accumulated labour of his parents, converted into land, houses, or furniture. All that represents, say an income of ten, twenty, or a hundred francs a-day. This is preserved for him, and he must pay some remuneration for the protection of wealth previously acquired, as well as for that acquired every day. Taxation, then, must be according to the income from his wealth, whether bequeathed or acquired. This is what is meant by the proportionality of taxation.

But in like manner, as you owe one part of the tax for the property you possess, and the social protection guaranteed to you, so you owe another for your labour, in proportion to the profits of that labour. Any plan for exempting labour would be as unreasonable as exempting property. All that is placed under the social protection owes a proportionate return. If you save me daily ten francs of my income, or ten francs of my wages, I owe you a remuneration in proportion to those ten francs. The principle, as in an insurance company, is, to pay the risk in proportion to the value guaranteed, whatever may be the nature of that value. The argument which some might endeavour to oppose to this truth, would be, that property is wealth, and labour poverty; and in that case there would be an apparent reason, founded on the interest which poverty inspires,

and the little favour inspired by wealth. But the allegation is utterly false, and, therefore, the interest unseasonably inspired, perishes with the allegation.

If there is a rich property, there is also a poor property; and if there is a poor labour, there is also a rich labour. For instance: here is a wretched peasant who, by toiling all his life, has acquired an acre of land, which, by dint of labour, returns him two or three hundred francs, and on it he lives to the close of his days. This is poor property, and perhaps the most general. Here is an old servant, or an aged clerk, modestly ending their lives with an income formed by their savings. That also is poor property, as general as the former. I will next adduce the case of a merchant, a barrister, a physician, or a banker, earning their twenty, thirty, or a hundred thousand francs a-year, and sometimes a million. That is rich labour, and labour by no means rare, except the last, which is seldom met with. And you would tax him, whom the protection of society secures in the enjoyment of the three or four hundred francs composing the maintenance of his old age, that you may exempt him who is indebted to the same protection for the means of earning ten, twenty, thirty, or a hundred thousand francs a-year! In taxing property and labour, we look not more to wealth than poverty. We look to both, because there is a poor property as well as a rich labour. The observation of facts thus accords with justice, in establishing, that every man is indebted to society, whatever it may be that is guaranteed,—be it wealth acquired formerly, or wealth acquired recently, be it old labour or new; that the tax should fall on every kind of income without exception, for all are indebted to society for the means of production, whatever may be their nature and their origin.

Every exemption from taxation is therefore an injustice. The exemption formerly accorded to the

nobility and clergy, although not unjust at the beginning, became so in time. As the object of the first contributions was to maintain soldiers, it was natural that the barons who served in person should not pay the tax. They paid it in kind. But when nobility became a mere title, this exemption had degenerated into a privilege without a motive, and, consequently, without justice. As for the clergy, the land was their wages, and hence might naturally be considered exempt from public charges. In time, this form of wages, having exceeded all moderation, having become an obstacle to all proper cultivation, the land and the exemption from taxation disappeared in 1789. From that year, the principle that every one without exception shall pay taxes according to what he earns or possesses, has been acknowledged as the true principle which the revolution of '89 inaugurated. We can add nothing but a new iniquity, as great as that abolished in '89;—this would be exempting labour to attack property, or to attack it by exorbitant proportions. This will be the subject of the following chapters.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE ASSESSMENT OF TAXATION.

Showing that Taxation should be proportional, not progressive.

I HAVE shown that every man ought to contribute to the public expenses, not equally, but proportionally—in proportion to what he earns or possesses, by a very natural reason, that we must contribute to the charges of social protection according to the quantity

of goods protected. Thus, for instance, if we suppose France gives 12 *milliards* (billions) of gross produce, and that 1,200 millions are required for the public expenses, it would follow that every one would owe the state one-tenth of his revenues of every kind. The man with 1,000 francs of income, whether from labour, or from land, or from the funds, would owe 100 francs; the man with 10,000 francs, no matter from what source they arise, will owe one-tenth also, or 1,000 francs. So, the man with an income of 100,000 francs, will owe 10,000. One would pay a hundred times, and the other ten times more, because the social protection had guaranteed to the one, a hundred times, and to the other, ten times more. Reverting to the comparison between society and an insurance office (the truest and most complete that can be employed) I say, that we ought to pay the risk in proportion to the amount of property insured. If we insure a house with a 100,000 francs, at a premium of 1 per cent., we shall owe the company 1,000 francs; if the house is insured at a million, we shall owe 10,000 francs. These things are so plain, that they require no discussion.

But the limit of justice being attained, certain financiers of the day cannot stop here. They would go further, and they declare that taxation ought to be progressive; that is, instead of the proportion being 1-10th for all, it should be, for instance, 1-5th for one, 1-3rd for another. Thus, the man with 1,000, francs a year would pay his tenth, or 100,—another, with 10,000 francs, would pay 1-5th, or 2,000 instead of 1,000,—another with 100,000 would pay 33,000 francs, instead of 10,000—which would double the proportion of one, and more than triple that of the other. This is what is meant by progressive taxation, where instead of proportioning the impost to the extent of the revenue, and following a constant

ratio, it is doubled and tripled, and so on, according to the increase of the said revenue; just as a tradesman might say, as some wealthy foreigner enters his shop, this gentleman is rich, he shall pay more. In petty matters such as these, we may smile at the intention of exacting a higher price for the same articles, as these wealthy foreigners buy or not as pleases them, and as the evil is voluntary, it cannot spread very widely. What would you say if these purchasers were forced to buy, and were not free to decline?

Suppose that you bought 100lbs of sugar of a grocer, it is clear you would pay for 100lbs, and that if you bought 1,000lbs you would pay for a 1,000. Would you think it natural, if you had to pay dearer per pound if you took a 1,000 than if you took 100? In general it is the reverse, for the grocer takes into account the increase of profits you procure him. But here it is very different; the more you buy, the dearer you pay. If you apply to a railway-carrier and desire him to forward you 1,000 or 100,000 tons of merchandize, you would pay for 1,000 or 100,000, and generally somewhat less per ton, the more that is carried, because the expenses diminish rather than increase with the quantity. If you were a shareholder in a company, and an extraordinary call were made for ten francs per share, you would pay ten francs on each, whether you had ten or 1,000. What would you say if your were required to pay twenty francs a share, instead of ten, simply because you held 1,000? You would think it an absurd claim, and would not listen for a moment to the proposer of the scheme. Now what is society but a great company, in which every one holds more or fewer shares, and in which it is fair that each man should pay in proportion to the number he possesses. It would be as unjust to pay a greater advance when you have few shares, as to pay less when you have many. There

must be the same rule, neither more nor less, for all; otherwise, society would fall into confusion.

What is the consideration on which this scale of making one man pay 1-10th, another 1-5th, another 1-3rd of his income, has been founded? It is this: The first has not enough to live upon, the second has enough, and the third has too much. I understand your meaning. This man has an income of 10,000 or even 100,000 francs, instead of 1,000, and he shall pay ten times more because he is one hundred times richer. But why then say, If he is ten times richer he shall pay, not ten times, but twenty times more; and if he is 100 times richer, instead of paying 100 times more, he shall pay 300 or 400 times more. Why say this? Here is the reason:—

When you adopt the proportion of 1-10th for all, the possessor of 1,000 francs income, having paid 100, will have 900 left. The man with 10,000, after paying 1,000, will have 9,000 left; and he with 100,000, having paid 10,000, will still receive 90,000. Now, you say of the second: 9,000 francs are quite enough to live upon, particularly when you look at the man with only 900. You say of the third: 90,000 francs income! it is exorbitant, compared with 9,000, and still more so when compared with 900. We can, therefore, take more from the second, and still more from the third. In consequence, we will require 1-5th from the one, and he will have 8,000 francs to live upon, which is quite enough; and from the other, 1-3rd, and there will remain, for his living, 66,000 francs, which is not only enough, but too much. What! 66,000 francs, when the first has only 900, and yet he complains!

I challenge you to find any other reasoning than that, and it shows, that your only rule of assessment is the judgment you are pleased to form on wealth;

that you are establishing a real Agrarian law, partitioning fortunes, taking from one to give to another; in a word, you have laid violent hands upon property.

Carry out your scheme, your new rule, which is simply this:—This sum is not enough to keep body and soul together, this is just sufficient, this is too much. Carry it out, and see where it will lead you; very far off indeed. You have adopted the limit of 1-10th for one, 1-5th for another, 1-3rd for another; and the one will then have 900 francs out of 1,000; the second, 8,000 out of 10,000; and the third, 66,000 out of 100,000 francs. But why this limit? By the side of a man with only 900, there is one with 8,000, and a third with 66,000! But 8,000 is too much if we look at the man with 900, and 66,000 is beyond all reason. Why should there not be another proportion; why not 1-3rd for the second, and $\frac{1}{2}$ for the third? Thus one man having always his 900 francs, the other would preserve 6,000 out of 10,000, and the third 50,000 out of 100,000. Who would dare to say that they were to be pitied, the one with his 6,000, the other with his 50,000? But looking at these things in the light of true humanity, you would not have done enough. To be thoroughly human you must have another progression, and we should proceed from 2-3rds for the second, which would leave him 3,300 francs; to $\frac{3}{4}$ for the third, which would leave him 25,000: and even then we should be very indulgent towards wealth, for after all, there would still be one man with 25,000 to live upon, by the side of another with only 3,300, and of a third who had only 900.

I beg you to remark, that if you would be consistent, and raise the progression constantly—and it would be but fair,—it would be useless to be rich; for by continuing in this way, advancing from $\frac{3}{4}$ to 4-5ths, to 5-6ths, to 6-7ths, to 7-8ths, to 8-9ths, to 9-10ths, it would be almost useless to have 150,000 francs instead

of 100,000 francs of income; for the proportion of 4-5ths would leave only 30,000, instead of 25,000. It would be useless to have 200,000 instead of 150,000; for the proportion of 5-6ths would leave only 33,000, instead of 30,000. It would be useless to have 250,000 instead of 200,000; for the proportion of 6-7ths would leave only 35,700, instead of 33,000. At last it would be dangerous to be rich; for by such a progression the owner of an income of a million would have only a net amount of 10,000 francs to live upon. And it can be shown, that by applying a continual increasing ratio, the rich man would have less than his poorer neighbour, and the last term would be—*nothing!*

But I may be charged with exaggeration. The proposition may be carried out to a certain extent, but not so far as I have done; and, in fact, in no system of progressive taxation, has the proportion of 50 per cent., or one-half, been exceeded. But why stop there, I would ask? Because you are moderate. And what rule do you follow in your moderation? The rule of not taking too much;—that it is too much to reduce to 3,300 francs, a man who possesses an income of 10,000; to 25,000, another that has 100,000; and that you would be content to take from one 2,000 and leave him 8,000, and from another 33,000 and leave him 66,000. You calculate thus the proportion that riches ought to preserve in your society! You have your reasons, personal and private for being moderate, and you have my thanks. But there is great diversity of mind; some are prone to opposition. Do you remember the discussion about the ministers' salaries. One man proposed 60,000 francs a year. "No, it's too much," said another; "48,000 is enough." "And that is too much," objected a third; "30,000 is ample." Here a kind of shame visited the economisers, and they stopped. The same will be done in fixing the progression of taxation; and the National Assembly

will decide what portion you shall keep of the fortune bequeathed you by your father, after toiling all his life. But beware. There is a clamour. The people are suffering—they are rising—they hasten to the doors of the Assembly. A general has misunderstood his orders—the chamber is invaded—the social republic triumphs. A *milliard* is wanted forthwith. A more rapid progression must be discovered; the people must not be deceived again. What shall check the conquerors? Nothing, for the rule exists no longer, you destroyed it when you began that series of considerations about this not being enough and that being too much. There remains but one arbitrator, dependent on the taste and habits of those who have won the battle,—a battle in which men fight by sheathing their swords and unfixing their bayonets. Hence it follows that I have no other guarantee for moderation than your word or your character. But remember, that the moderation of those who govern has never been accepted as a guarantee by any one. You are moderate, others may not be so. To your guarantee, which we cannot accept, we prefer a rule, stable and fixed, and which leaves us dependent upon no man's moderation or virtues.

If I have made myself understood,—if my first arguments have not been forgotten,—if my readers recollect that I said that property was the accumulated fruit of labour, and that if equity requires that it should be respected, the interest of society requires it still more strongly, for without security there will be no labour, and without labour there will be no public prosperity; —if they have these truths present to their minds, they will feel that property is as sacred as liberty, and that certain rules or principles are as requisite for the one as for the other. Proportionality is a principle, but progression is a hateful despotism. The expenses of social protection may be represented by one-tenth of the total

income; be it so—the tenth for all. I understand this principle, for then men will pay in proportion to what they have cost society, in the ratio of the services they have received, as in a company whose capital is divided into shares, whenever a call is made, the same amount is paid on each share, whether I have one or one hundred. To exact a tenth from one, a fifth from another, a third from another,—is pure despotism,—it is a robbery. You will take more or less, according to your humour; but I am dependent upon you, as if you were an Eastern Pacha, or a bandit of Catalonia or Calabria. The robber chiefs are not always devoid of pity; yet I never heard that the highways by night in certain countries were a true representation of the social state; and I hope that we shall never arrive, by successive revolutions, to this degree of intelligence in the principles of justice and liberty.

Thus, proportional taxation, that is, taxation proportioned to the share of the expenses which society is said to have incurred for you, and to the services you have received; just as in an insurance, the premium is proportionate to the sum insured—here is a principle. But to make one pay more towards these expenses than another, merely because he is thought too rich, is no principle, but a revolting act of despotism. I know what beneficence means; I can understand that society will exact nothing from an indigent man, whom we may find begging in the streets, or starving in his garret. But beyond this, there must be a rule for all those whom society has not declared exempt from taxation on account of their misery. I ask for kindness towards the poor, and justice towards the rich. It is a virtue to love the poor; it is no virtue to hate the rich. After having seen society oppressed up to 1789, by the dominion of the upper classes, I have no wish to see it oppressed now, in 1848, by the government of the lower classes.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF TAXATION.

Showing that taxation, in course of time, becomes infinitely diversified.

It follows from the preceding that taxation should be proportionate to one's earnings, or to one's possessions, according to a ratio invariable for all, without respect to rich or poor. This is just, true, and certain. Beyond it, there is nothing but injustice, despotism, and disorder.

If, for instance, we could learn with certainty what every man derives from his trade or his capital, whether personal or real, we might, by calling for the fifth, the tenth, the twentieth of that sum, according to the necessities of the State, arrive at the most equitable of all taxes. Yet this impost is a mere chimera, for we cannot know precisely what each man derives from his capital or his labour. Land is difficult to value. Would you have a *cadastre*, or register description, of the lands and houses; it would be long and costly to prepare; it ceases at every moment to be true; for these lands are continually changing owners and condition. If we dispense with a *cadastre*, the value of estates remains utterly unknown. As for personal property, that is for the most part intangible. We may get at sums, such as the funds, and mortgages; but setting aside the injustice of affecting some and letting others escape, we shall not attain our end, for it is the owner of the income we desire to tax, and he finds the means, by requiring a higher interest, to avoid the tax, and make the borrower pay it. The only effect of this course has been to raise the rate

of interest, both to the State and to individuals. As for the productions of individual labour, they are still more intangible, for who can tell what is earned by a tradesman, a barrister, a physician, or a banker?

This tax, based on the known incomes of each man, is therefore an ideal that can never be realized. The English have attempted it, but they are so convinced of being deceived, that they endeavour to correct its inevitable errors by fixing it very low (it is 3 per cent., a thirty-third part of the income) and only make use of it under the name of *income*-tax, as a kind of supplement in seasons of embarrassment, having taken care to exempt all the smaller incomes (below £150), so that it may become a sort of subscription of the better classes to support the exchequer in its distress.

Suppose, however, that this chimerical impost, based on the real revenue of each individual, were possible, there would still be the serious inconvenience of going to these individuals, and asking them on certain days of the year, every month, every quarter, every half-year, for the amount of these contributions, and of taking them unawares, which happens particularly with the lower classes, who are generally wanting in foresight, and of thus adding to the natural inconvenience of the tax, whatever it might be, that of an exigency reappearing all at once on an appointed day. This is the inconvenience attached to every *direct* tax, for by such name is that known which goes *directly* to the individual to ask for a part of the revenue from their property, or a share of the profits of their trade. Now governments being far more attentive than they are thought to be, to humour the sensibility of the tax-payer, have taken this great inconvenience into account, and for this reason have set aside *direct* taxation, so far as it depends upon them; and the richer the country they have had to deal with, the more they have had recourse to *indirect* taxation.

We may imagine another kind of tax, which, laying hold of all articles of consumption on their passage, such as food, clothing, articles of luxury, and raw material. is thus confounded with and added to the price of the articles. This tax, called *indirect*, to distinguish it from the other, has a very great advantage over it,—it is that of taking its proper place, by adding itself to the price of produce, of which the tax should evidently form a part; for as the expense of insurance against shipwreck should be included in the price of sea-borne merchandise, so the cost of its social protection ought to become an integral part of the price of these productions. Hence it follows, that the tax being confounded with the price of the goods in the market, is paid successively, insensibly, by slow degrees; so that the tax-payer, who generally has little foresight, is not obliged to think of the tax-gatherer, as he thinks of his landlord, and it happens that while paying his daily expenses, he pays at the same time his share of the public charges. Moreover, the tax is voluntary on his part, for he can retrench his expenditure if he thinks he cannot meet it, and then he pays only what taxes he pleases, and in proportion to the enjoyment in which he indulges. This tax is the most equitable also, for the rich man, who consumes more of the social productions, pays a greater share of their cost of protection; and he who, from prudence, economy, or poverty, abstains from them, is relieved from paying a part of the public expense, in proportion to his abstinence. This *indirect* tax is therefore insensible, infinitely divided, prudent for the payer, who is not so, and in general more just.

It has, however, three inconveniences: it is difficult to collect, it is sometimes injurious to production, and it disappears altogether when unduly increased.

It is difficult to collect, because as it is imposed on all articles of consumption, it is obliged to be as diver-

sified as they are, to follow them in their movements and transmission, to wait for them at the city gates or at the frontiers, to go to the merchant's warehouses and certify their existence there (this is what is known by the odious name of *excise)*, sometimes to assume the form of a monopoly, and to sell things after making them, to be more certain of finding its place in their price. It becomes costly, vexatious, and contrary to freedom of commerce.

It is injurious also to production, when, being laid on certain raw materials it raises the price of the national produce, which it is important to manufacture as cheap as possible, in order to find a foreign market. We are then obliged to have recourse to a very difficult proceeding,—to return, on the exportation of the manufactured goods, the duties previously paid on them, in other words, to allow a drawback, the source of a thousand frauds.

Finally, combined with the advantage of its being voluntary, since this indirect tax is paid only by purchasing certain articles, is the inconvenience of failing altogether under a heavy charge; for, from the increase of price consequent upon the increase of duty, the consumption diminishes, and the duty increased by the tariff, instead of producing more, produces less, by the diminution of consumption. Hence it would happen, that a government having to meet great and urgent expences, could not do so by means of *indirect* taxation.

Such, with their advantages and disadvantages, are the two great modes of taxation,—the *direct*, which calls upon persons by name for a certain portion of their property or labour; and the *indirect*, which being levied on all articles necessary to man, becomes confounded with their price: the first is harsh, forced, but certain; the second unnoticed, voluntary, paid without being felt, when the purchaser has the taste and the means for consumption; but on this account,

it is difficult to raise, sometimes prejudicial to commerce, and uncertain in its produce.

Do you know how governments manage to obviate the inconveniences of both? They vary their dues infinitely, having recourse to taxes which combine both methods, contrive a thousand ways of catching the moment when money is more attainable, employ a thousand ingenious precautions to be less onerous to the tax-payers, yielding in this respect to a prudence excellent in itself, which is worth whole waggon-loads of sensibility, and which is of all times, because in all times the governors have aimed at sparing the people, as much from interest as humanity.

Thus it is that the two principal categories of taxation, *direct* and *indirect* are infinitely diversified. The first idea of all governments is to have recourse to direct taxation. So much for each family and flock, in the nomad state, so much for each field and family, in the agricultural state, was the first mode of proceeding; and accordingly we find it in the more backward societies. Indirect taxing follows soon after; it arises in the form of tolls. Merchants have to pass with their goods through a harbour, a gate, a defile, or over a bridge; they are forced to pay a contribution which is, at first, a mere black-mail, a ransom extorted by robbers. They go to sell their goods in a certain market: the sovereign of the place makes them pay for admission to the market. In time these imposts become in a manner civilised; they are mitigated in form, and in reality become lighter by subdivision.

Thus, instead of claiming a pretty large share of the annual produce of a property, advantage is taken of the instant when it is about to change hands, to exact a duty on the transfer. It is thought that the moment when the purchaser will be obliged to have money prepared for the seller, would be the best selected for demanding of both a part of its value (1 or 2 per cent.,

for instance, or 1 or 2,000 francs on 100,000). Of the two contracting parties, he who has the strongest necessity (be it to buy or sell) will have to meet this charge. But it will be none the less real, although the opportunity is well selected, for an estate, whose purchase-money is raised, no longer represents the same product.

In like manner, if a father or an uncle bequeaths by will an estate or manor to his son, or to his nephew, the opportunity again is favourable to raise a tax upon the transmission; for he who becomes rich, or at least better off, ought not to look very close at paying a sum which, after all, if the impost be moderate, is a trifling deduction from the increase he will receive. If the succession is not direct, if it is not from father to son, but from uncle to nephew, or even between remote relations, it is conceivable that the duty increases; for, as the succession is less natural, the more it is the work of the social contracts which protect property, the more it owes to society, that is, to the treasury by which it is represented. Nevertheless, if by its quota the impost were a hypocritical manner of confiscating property, it would be a monstrous trickery on the part of the government, which would be punished by the frauds of the contributor. If any collateral should see the fourth or third of his succession exposed to confiscation after his death, he would change the nature of his property, make it personal instead of real, and, to escape the exactions of the treasury, would make it over during life, and the State would be punished, as it always is, for every exaggeration of the tariff.

This kind of taxation, known as *legacy*, *transfer*, or *conveyance duties*, partakes of direct taxation by the property on which it is founded, and yet it is as variable as the *indirect*, depending upon the rise or fall of the general prosperity, like the duties on articles of consumption. It is a real indirect tax on property.

The *stamp-duties* are another kind of tax upon most of our commercial and legal transactions.

Sometimes taxation is levied on the person, as a capitation or poll-tax, without regard to their circumstances; but, in France, we endeavour to reach everybody by the tax called *personnel et mobilier*. Each individual pays the amount of three day's wages. Three francs, four-and-a-half francs, according to the province, and an addition in proportion to his rent, ordinarily the surest sign of a man's resources and means, so that a peasant will pay three francs, and the inhabitant of a house in Paris 500, 1000, or 1500 francs.

To be more certain still of taxing persons in proportion to their means, all trades and professions are classified, and have to pay for a licence or patent, ranging from 30 francs to 2000, and even more.

We have another tax, graduated on fortunes—the duty on doors and windows, which being imposed on houses according to the number of their openings, is proportionate to the luxury of the house.

After these taxes, at one time direct, and at another indirect, we have those which are altogether *indirect*—taxes on consumable articles, the customs and excise of England. Thus, whilst governments rarely dare tax aliments of first necessity, such as bread, they do not hesitate to tax liquors, which may be honestly consumed as food, but which may also be consumed in taverns and alehouses.

Is there, for instance, a production of little value, such as salt, which is of universal necessity, and which the consumers are obliged to seek in one particular spot, the government, struck with the universality of its use, and the facility of arresting it in its passage, lay a tax upon it. This has been done in all times and in all countries. It is a species of capitation-tax, for all the inhabitants of a country pay it alike, but a

capitation rendered almost insensible, because it is hidden in the consumption.

Lastly, the principle of indirect taxation being to affect those articles of consumption which are either most general, or more accessible, or the least necessary, as soon as the leaf of the tobacco plant was introduced into Europe, it became an object of taxation. Useful to mariners against the scurvy, and to soldiers against the hardships of the bivouac, it is, among the peaceful inhabitants of our cities, an uncleanly vice, deserving little favour, but worthy of encouragement in a financial view. Governments, being under no restraint with regard to the consumption of an article which is a vice, have looked for the surest means of raising the tax, and found this in keeping the manufacture in their own hands. This is the tobacco monopoly. The returns, nearly 120 millions, have been the greatest excuse and defence of this monopoly.

These are some of the infinite diversities of taxation in modern times. They vary according to the place and the form that wealth assumes in each nation.

Like the waters, which, by following certain directions underground, unite at certain parts of the soil, whence they gush forth abundantly, so taxes assume the forms appropriate to each country, and reveal themselves to the governments which know how to observe nature. In England, for instance, an insular country, with vast commerce, almost all its wealth enters by its ports. In that same England, a country of immense consumption, and where certain liquors are brewed or distilled in breweries and distilleries, which are not very numerous, the *excise* and the *customs* produce the greater part of the revenue. In Holland, a country of maritime agencies, undertaking for all nations the transport of goods, tolls on the tonnage of vessels, as they pass along certain canals, or enter certain

ports, furnishes the principal source of its revenue. In Lombardy, an agricultural country, every moveable production of the earth, even the wagon that took the produce to market, was taxed. (I here speak of what existed prior to 1789, before the French Revolution had destroyed the characteristics of each country.) Lastly, in France, a country both agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial, we see a combination of these several imposts, and one of them the most equitable in existence.

Thus, Taxation has the characteristics of countries and places; they are generally established where riches show themselves. We can and we ought successively to render them firm, milder, and more equitable; but there is danger in abolishing those consecrated by use, and become a habit, and substituting new ones, which the nature of the country has not suggested. It is like seeking water in a dry well. It has further been remarked, with great justice, that in proportion as they are more diversified, they are less burdensome. A man may bear a weight, distributed over his body, which would crush him, were it collected into one mass. And this is equally true of Taxation.

It is motives of this kind which have guided the course of statesmen. Some believe that they have thought only of oppressing the people, and exempting the rich to crush the poor. This is utter ignorance of history. They have sought to obtain more money, with the least possible suffering; as, in all countries, man, seeking to economise the strength of his domestic animals, inquires how he may employ them in the most effectual and yet least injurious way. Thus, he yokes the bullock by the head, the horse is harnessed by the chest and shoulders. My comparison is not, indeed, very flattering either to governments or nations; but I only seek to set the truth before them. Governments, in a word, have been as little oppressive as

possible. They have sought to levy much by little suffering, because each suffering spared was a resource economised for new taxes. It was not that the exchequer was in the wrong, but it was their policy, by turns foolishly warlike or foolishly extravagant, and always imprudent. They did as they could, the least evil they could, without reckoning that they were directed by the ministers, full of wisdom, like Sully—of genius, like Colbert—of humanity, like Turgot, who endeavoured to make all mankind happy by making the governments wise and foreseeing.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE DIFFUSION OF TAXATION.

Showing that it is infinitely divided, and tends to become confounded with the price of things, so that each man supports his share, not in the ratio of what he pays the State, but of what he consumes.

As it was not my object to write a treatise on finance, I have given a sketch of the principal forms of Taxation, merely to show the spirit in which the different governments have acted, and keeping this object in view, I shall now inquire which of these forms is more or less advantageous to the people, that is to say, more burdensome to the rich, easier to the poor. I do not hesitate to declare that we must sincerely prefer the latter, as much from aptitude capacity, as from a kindness, to be found in all upright hearts. Unluckily there is no impost which really presents this character. In like manner, as to our senses, deceived by appearances, it is the sun which turns and not the earth, so a par-

ticular tax appears to fall upon one class, another upon another, when such is not really the case. The tax really the best, even for the poor man, is that best suited to the general fortune of the State,—a fortune which is the poor man's much more than the rich man's, a fact of which we are never sufficiently convinced. As for the manner in which the impost is divided among the different classes, the truest thing we can say is this, that it is divided in proportion to what each man consumes, for the reason, very little known (I acknowledge), and very little understood, that the impost is reflected, as it were, to infinity, and from reflection to reflection, becomes eventually an integral part of the price of the articles taxed. Hence the greatest purchaser is the greatest tax-payer. This is what I would call *diffusion* of taxation, to borrow a term from the physical sciences, which call *diffusion* of light, those numberless reflections, in consequence of which the light that has penetrated into a dark place by the slightest opening, spreads itself around in every direction, and so as to reach all the objects, which it renders visible. I have no liking for singularity of opinion. I am fond only of common opinions, as of all senses, I love common sense. If the preceding opinion were merely singular, it would not be to my taste, but it is rigorously true, and I shall proceed to explain it, and endeavour to put an end to many errors, very injurious to the poor, whom I so much desire to serve.

A tax, at first sight, appears to be paid, while it is in reality only advanced by him who is called on to pay it; and it is in reality supported by all in a proportion which I shall endeavour to point out.

A manufacturer who produces any article, is obliged to proceed in the following manner, or become ruined. He pays the land tax on his factory, the customs duty upon the wool, the cotton, and the iron, according as he manufactures either of these raw materials, the duty

upon the machines he uses, or the coal which he burns, and the wages of the workmen whom he employs, which will be 3 francs in Paris, and 2 francs beyond the *octroi* line, because he must reimburse, in shape of pay, those taxes which the workmen has had to support, on all the articles he consumes. The same manufacturer pays for his licence, in proportion to the importance of his industry, his *personal* and *mobilier*, in proportion to the extent of the buildings he occupies? and finally, he pays all the taxes imposed on the articles he consumes. To these different disbursements, he adds the cost of production, and from them all fixes the cost price,—the price at which he is compelled to sell the manufactured article of which he is the maker. It is possible that he does not take into account all these elements which combine to form the cost-price, and every day, in fact, we see in industrial inquiries, that he does not keep an exact account. But, knowingly or not, he none the less yields to the necessity of recovering, in the price of his productions, all his disbursements, with the addition of a certain profit. Suppose that he had the art of attracting purchasers, and that the very decided taste of the purchasers for his productions, procures him a profit higher than is obtained in other industries; what will happen? At that moment competitors will start up to bring down his profits. Thus, a father wishes to establish his children: he knows that in the manufacture of cotton, or sugar, or iron, great profits have been realized lately; he forms an establishment of this kind for his children; he augments the amount of that produce which returned profits superior to those in other industries, and soon reduces those profits. Where once was gain, there is now loss. The lucky manufacturer, who but recently gained too much, sees his prosperity interrupted. Nevertheless, he resists for a time; he consents to produce at a loss, in order not to abandon his industry,

and he temporarily submits to the impossibility of reimbursing all his expenses, taxes, and raw material. The loss ceases, he perseveres; if it continues, he retires, that he may not be ruined. In a word, he perseveres in his industry only so long as he continues to make a profit, however small that may be, yet a profit still, comprising all the disbursements I have enumerated, with a slight surplus.

The taxes paid by him will, therefore, always be found in the price of the merchandise he has produced, and the purchaser pays these taxes with the merchandise itself. If the tax combines in increasing the price beyond the purchaser's taste, he buys a little less; but if his taste is superior to the dearness, he perseveres, and by paying he causes the production of a quantity proportionate to his desires of the merchandise that has pleased him. After all, the tax is an integral part of the price of things, and it is the desire of the purchaser for these things which influences him to pay for a greater or less quantity.

And is this the case with manufactured produce only? By no means. The farmer who sows corn and breeds sheep must also recover, in the price of his corn or his sheep, not only the rent, the cost of seed, the labourers' wages, affected by the taxes which these labourers themselves pay, but his land and personal tax, or else he would abandon his occupation as a farmer; hence bread, wine, meat, &c., reach the consumer laden with expenses of every kind, of which the land-tax forms a considerable part. The farmer has only done the same as the others—advanced the tax, which he will shortly recover, unless he is determined to persevere in an occupation which would be ruinous.

The workman, who is more dependent on the co-operation employed in the production of merchandise, is in a position precisely similar. He must find in his wages, the amount of taxes he has paid, otherwise he

would change his situation, or die in distress; and if he did not, his successors would abandon a trade by which they could no longer earn a living. And the proof of this is in the fact that a workman in Paris receives higher wages than one employed out of the city, for the sole reason that the first will have to pay the town dues or tolls *(octroi)* from which the other is free. And so again the Paris workman is paid more than one of the same trade and rank in that trade than another who works at Rouen or at Nevers.

The cotton-spinner in Rouen will receive 2 francs, while his fellow in the country, who spins in his little cottage, is content with 30 sous, and finds himself better off. But is it from kindness that the manufacturer pays one 40 and the other only 30 sous? No; but he requires a workman in the city, and pays his taxes for him by giving him higher wages. It is a cabinet-maker's interest to make his goods in Paris, because the reputation acquired by the manufactures of that great capital secures a much higher price for the production. At the same time everything is dear in Paris on account of the taxes. Therefore, the tradesman in question, in order to attract workmen thither, pays them four francs instead of two.

Thus taxation, reflected at every turn, takes its place in the price of every object, a price determined both by the sums with which it has been augmented, and by the consumers' wants, if they are necessary objects, or by taste only, if they are articles of luxury merely. But if taxation has made them too dear, the want limits itself, the taste becomes restrained, consumption is diminished, and the tax with it. And, after all, the desire to procure any object fixes its real price, and consequently the participation by each of us in the tax. It is the duty of the Exchequer not to overload certain productions, so as not to frighten the purchaser, if there is an advantage to be gained in the increased sale.

These reflections are far more numerous than we can undertake to describe; for bread is charged with the tax laid upon the land, with portions of the tax on the labourer's clothing and on his ploughshare; the iron of which this share is made, is charged with the tax on the forge, with the dues upon the coal and the machines, with all the impositions on bread and clothing. Clothing, in its turn, will be affected by all the expenses which fall upon it directly and indirectly, and by the thousand reflections which I have just sketched. The more complicated the produce, the more it becomes an article of luxury; the more numerous the hands through which it has passed, the dearer it will be, and the more of those successive augmentations of price which result from the thousand reflections of the impost. Thus, a high-priced carriage, to build which we require wood, iron, leather, glass, silk, paint, varnish, &c., which has employed workmen of every kind, will be charged with these successive expenses, originating in all the various contributions which represent social protection. If we could, in a word, submit all the objects with which a man supports, clothes, adorns himself, and gratifies his body and mind, to a moral analysis as perfect as chemical analysis, we should find, in their selling price, portions, more or less considerable, of all taxes, and we should find them in infinitely divided particles. In short, the value of a thing being a compound of every kind of labour which has concurred in its production, the labour of social protection, represented by the tax, ought to be one of the essential elements which have entered into its composition. Hence, he that consumes most pays the greatest portion of the taxes; and by one of the wisest and most consoling laws in this world, whatever course the Governments may pursue, the rich man, after all, is the most burdened with taxes.

From this theory, true in all its particulars, must we

conclude that all systems of taxation are indifferent? God forbid I should maintain such a heresy! First, there is an equality of taxation which cannot be infringed without producing, with crying injustice, the most lamentable effects. Go back, for instance, to the times when all land did not pay taxes; on such, the corn was evidently grown cheaper, but this did not prevent its being sold quite as dear as the corn raised on taxed land, which was the most unjust of favours.

Imagine a workman who possessed a secret for producing at a cheaper rate, he would make an additional profit,—a legitimate one if he owed it to genius,—illegitimate if he owed it to favour. Such was the case with the noble landowner. Imagine a locality less heavily taxed than another; that would, in like manner, enjoy the unjust favour of producing cheaper, when the other produced dearer, without being prevented from selling at the general price. Lastly, imagine some manufacturer fraudulently evading the duties on raw material, there would still be an exception for him, which consisted in producing cheaper without selling cheaper than those who did not enjoy the same exemption. Equality of taxation, as equality of the conditions of production for all, is therefore the first of all laws.

There are other considerations to be borne in mind, and which makes taxation to be far from indifferent. If it is true that the tax laid upon the prices of articles is only advanced by him who has paid it, that advance is no less a burden deserving great attention; for the return may not be sufficiently quick, it often greatly disturbs value, and presses directly upon him who supports it, while waiting for the prices to be graduated according to the tariff. Taxes, from the fact that they are reflected on all productions, make particular ones dearer; and again, in this case, these imports may have more or less serious effect on the production

of those articles which it has raised in price. Finally, a tax may cause more or less annoyance according to the manner in which it is collected, and, for all these reasons, it deserves great attention.

An attentive observation of facts gives the following result: a tax, the moment it is paid, whether as assessed taxes, or customs dues, or excise, temporarily falls upon the payer; but being repaid by the purchaser, along with the price of the article he buys, it eventually falls on him only in proportion to his purchases. I cannot better compare what takes place here than with that magnificent phenomenon of light, which, falling directly on all objects, is called *radiating light;* then, being reflected from one to another, fills the atmosphere like a fluid, rendering objects visible which are not exposed to its direct radiation, and in all these infinite reflections, in which every object receives its share, is called *diffused light.* For this reason I have called this economical phenomenon, the *diffusion of taxation.*

Now for the consequences. Some say: You must increase the taxes on property which will fall upon the rich, and diminish those on consumption, which affect the poor, or, in other words, increase the *direct,* and diminish the *indirect* taxes. Passing by the consideration that landed property in France is in the hands of the poor, because each peasant has his parcel, and supposing it to be more concentrated than it really is, I will put the question thus:—Is it true or not, that a tax upon land will act more or less upon the price of corn or meat, according as it is more or less increased, for the very reason that the farmer who grows corn or breeds cattle, will be obliged to cover his expenses, and the tax will be a part of these expenses? Well then, by your land-tax you will increase the price of corn and meat to the people. Is that better than increasing the price of the wine drunk in the taverns?

You tax a certain article of luxury, and thus you diminish its production; the workmen who produce it will be thrown into other trades, and then you bring down wages. Is this the way to make yourself useful to the poorer classes? The methods of acting upon the taxes which are now in vogue suppose very short-sighted views, and they may be very lamentable in their effects. This I will show in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE GOOD AND EVIL DERIVABLE FROM TAXATION.

Showing that the most desirable modifications in the system of taxation for the interest of the working classes, are not those the most generally proposed.

We have seen that good and evil are not so easily to be done or avoided as it is supposed; and that, in resolving to reduce indirect and increase direct taxation, no advance has been made towards ameliorating the condition of the poor, or aggravating that of the rich.

I know of no tax, since the French Revolution has established equality among all citizens, equalized as far as possible taxation over all parts of the country, suppressed certain forms of collecting the taxes, and abolished exemptions,—I know of no tax which there is not a reason for, and whose suppression would not entail the laying on of other taxes most onerous to the mass of tax-payers.

People complain of indirect taxes, of those which fall upon the population of towns, for this population is always preferred to the other; they would suppress or reduce these taxes; and certainly, if they can be

reduced, I have no objection. But already, these 18 years, we have found that the reduction of the excise duty has solely benefited a few tavern-keepers, rather than the real people.

However that may be, if such is the general desire, I will admit of a new trial. But what branch of taxation is to bear the difference? That which is paid by the rich man, it will be said. To this I agree; the rich man will cheerfully accede, if this sacrifice on his part restore to him the good will of the working classes, falsely excited against him. But what will you do for a substitute? The reduction of the State expenditure is scarcely to be depended upon, while, for the department of Public Instruction alone, there is a yearly increasing demand of 70 or 80 millions,—when there exists a desire to increase the number of charitable institutions, to sustain abroad the causes of certain nationalities, &c. Recourse must then be had to other resources to replace those that will be suppressed. Will you impose a tax upon articles of luxury,—a tax on horses, for instance. For my part, I am willing to accede to this; but the wealthy class in France have so little wealth, that taxes on articles of luxury, which yield 30 millions in England, will not produce 10 millions in France. But with the obligation that exists among us to make up for that which wealth cannot do, from its lack of riches, and by reason of the encouragement given to horse-breeders costing us between 3 and 4 millions a-year, would it not be singular in one way to spend 3 millions towards encouraging the breeding of horses, and in another, to frustrate this, by levying 2 or 3 on these same horses? Be it so; I do not cavil at it; but 5 or 6 millions are not a compensation for a reduction of 100 or 200 millions in our system of taxation. A tax will be laid upon income; granted again. But if you tax the rich man, from him with an income of 10,000 or 12,000 francs to him

having 100,000 and more, it would not produce 15 millions. In order to obtain a result worthy of attention, you must descend from the great man to those in humble circumstances, to the small trader, to the workman even. Well then, the distress of the cess-payer, who at present groans under the burden of his taxes, and for whom we have been obliged to remit a portion of the additional charge of 45 per cent.—does not his distress teach you that every one is embarrassed, that the limit of every one's means is attained, and that it is only by refraining from burdening the tax-payer more than he is, that life can be made endurable to him? The distress of the people at the present day is greater than we ever knew it to be. Is it caused by an evil feeling on the part of the upper classes, who would refuse it the common necessaries? Assuredly not; it is because the rich, being panic-struck, deprived of their incomes, do not employ the merchant, the shopkeeper, and that these do not employ the people. To attack the upper classes, therefore, is at the same time to attack the lower. Do you believe, that by striking a man on the heart you hurt him less than if you struck him on the arms and legs?

Then will you replace the abolished taxes by increasing the land-tax? But in France landed property is infinitely divided. On eleven millions quotations of landed estates, there are 5 millions under 5 fr.; 1751 thousands of from 5 to 10 fr.; 1500 thousands of from 10 to 20 fr.; and 13,000 only above 1000 fr. The land in France is, therefore, more in the hands of the poor than in those of the rich. Still this consideration is not the most important one, for, after all, the tax is in time repaid to him who pays it. But a produce whose burdens have augmented, remains far behind that whose burdens have not augmented; and when you increase the burdens on agriculture, you will have prevented its improvement: you will have injured

the cultivation of corn, and the improvement of cattle; you will have caused bread to become dearer, and meat especially so. You will then have attained the essential objects.

The inferiority of French agriculture, compared with that of other countries, and especially of England, is often a matter of exaggerated surprise, and people will not see the reason of it. In England there is no land-tax. It was redeemed by Mr. Pitt for about 20 millions. French agriculture is burdened with a tax of 280 millions, while the agriculture of England is not, exclusive of the difference in favour of the benefit of the latter by protective laws, recently abolished in England, and perhaps too completely abolished. The blame is laid on the ignorance of our agricultural peasant, who is too much disparaged. Is it thought that he does not know, that on land which has one year given wheat, a new crop may be raised the following year, provided it be of another kind, and that a great quantity of manure be used? He has sufficient knowledge to be aware, that by varying the cultivation, by increasing the manure, it is possible in every year to obtain a crop from any plot of land, without permitting any to lie fallow. He knows this; but burdened with charges, he cannot so easily procure his manure, that is to say, cattle, that is to say, money. The difference in the produce of one soil and another, consists far less in the natural fertility of the land than in the want of capital. You may see, in Africa and in the East, magnificent countries, which are altogether unproductive, and, between Rotterdam and Antwerp, on sterile sands, you will observe the finest cultivation in the world, because in Holland there exists capital, and in the East and in Africa none. Go among the sandy tracts of the Landes, or of Prussia, if there is anywhere a large village, a town, everywhere around you find fecundity replacing sterility. To burden the

soil too heavily is to injure not so much the agriculturist as agriculture itself, by increasing the charges of the latter, although the agriculturist also feels the effect of the decrease of his industry.

Now, would you draw from other sources the taxes which it is wished to abolish? Where are these sources to be found? It would not be by increasing the duty on foreign produce, which is liable to customs' duties, calculated on the interests of industry and commerce. Shall I point out to you an urgent reform, which it would be far better to think about than of that which would tend to render the public-house more accessible? Your great shipping is perishing for want of freight—that is to say, of merchandise to carry. During a period of thirty years you have, perhaps, lost one-fourth of the vessels of from 400 to 500 tons, trading to the Antilles, to America, beyond the two Capes. Why is this? Because, among other articles, sugar, supplied in part by the mother-country, is no longer supplied by the countries beyond sea, and that this bulky matter is wanting to our shipping. Others might be procured, such as cotton, or coal, very bulky goods; but here we should have to contend against the Americans and the English, which would be commencing a serious tariff war with the Americans, who carry cotton,—with the English, who carry coal. By reducing the duty on sugar, which would not inconvenience our commercial relations, but, on the contrary, extend them, the consumption of this article would be increased, freight would be found for 200 or 300 vessels; and as it is 300 or 400 that would be required, in order to return to the condition so much to be desired and so regretted, it would be necessary, for the revival of our marine, to make up our minds to abandon 15 or 20 millions of the duty on sugar; for, whatever may be advanced to the contrary, it is by no means certain that the increase of consumption would soon compensate for what would have been lost by the alteration of tariffs.

Such is the true light in which taxes must be considered. It is not true that the poor man pays some of them in preference to others, for, as I have shown, the tax will soon be confounded with the price of things; and, after all, it is the purchaser on whom the public charges fall, in proportion to his consumption. But the truth of the matter is, by affecting the price of things, one produce is by preference favoured more than others; and it remains to be seen whether, as regards the interest of the State, which, I repeat, is that of the people more than of any other portion of the nation, the favoured produce is really that which most deserves it. Well then, I will ask, whether, in order to lower the excise, it is expedient to raise the price of bread and meat, whether it is expedient to burden articles of luxury, the least occurrence of which brings on distress to such an extent that it becomes immediately necessary to grant bounties on silk, cabinet work, &c., whether it would be expedient, in fact, to give up a project which, by giving new life to our marine, would re-establish that naval greatness, without which we can obtain no sure market for our produce. For my part, I doubt it very much; but, however, it is easy to perceive that there are many and very complicated interests to be considered, and that the advantage is not precisely where it at first sight appears to be.

Moreover, one consideration strikes me, and that is, that here, as before, the agglomerated populations of large towns are exclusively thought of; that there is an evident desire to flatter them; that, even while flattering them, they are deceived; for, by a reduction of indirect taxation, they would not reap all the advantage which is held out to them, and that for them is sacrificed that totality of interests which composes the general interest, such as I have just described. For my part, when circumstances permit, I should prefer

lowering the duty on salt, which principally falls on the most interesting, the most numerous, the most suffering class—the peasantry. And although a reduced taxation is not at all times a relief to those who apparently benefit by the diminution, although two francs a-head saved by the country people might not prove of real advantage, an advantage compared to the harm done the State by it, and which would recoil on them, I should feel certain of securing to them, reckoning three persons in a family, a gift of six francs a-year. I am not sure that they would retain the benefit of these six francs; but, as in agricultural matters, everything proceeds slowly, very slowly, and that prices are not very rapidly brought to a level, this diminution in their expenses would possibly assist them for a certain time. And yet, a year's public prosperity would be far better for them than such a suppression of taxation. What, indeed, are six francs a year, even to the poorest family of country people, which, by the labour of father, mother, and child, cannot earn less than from 400 to 500 francs, and even 600 or 700 in the neighbourhood of Paris—what are six francs compared to the advantages arising from a year of public prosperity? Let us suppose that goods do not sell, that the proprietors, anxious, or impoverished by circumstances, do not employ labour, and although periods of stagnation are not the bane of agriculture, that family of country people will lose twenty, thirty, forty day's labour during the year—that is to say, thirty, forty-five, or sixty francs on the 400 or 500 composing their income. This summer, I have seen the depression in labour spread itself from Paris to the surrounding country, for several leagues distance, and the field labourers, on account of circumstances, themselves condemned to a sort of depression. And what are the sufferings of the latter, compared with those of the workmen in manufactories, whose labour is suddenly cut off, whenever a

commercial crisis commences? Two months or three months of forced idleness reduce them to the greatest distress, to which the option of getting wine from the tavern one or two centimes cheaper is a mere trifle. Destroy the equilibrium in the finances of the State, suppress one of their indispensable resources, and although, by some means of credit, you may for a moment ward off the deficit you have caused, that deficit would soon make itself felt, and then a financial crisis, entailing with it, as has always been the case, a commercial crisis; the working man, who will have earned a few francs by this transitory complaisance, were he but to lose a month's labour, will receive a hundred times more injury than he will have received benefit from a suppression of taxes. Is not the consequence of the artificial increase of wages he was led to expect, apparent at the present day? He was promised 10 hours labour instead of 11, 4f. wages instead of 3f., and we are now considering as a blessing his being employed two days out of four, for whatever he can obtain. I am not here pleading the rich man's cause, but that of the poor man. It is not the poor man whom I ask out of good-will to pay the rich man's taxes, under pretence that things will be all the better for it; it is from the entire nation, and while consulting its highest interests, I wish to obtain the means of defraying the public expenses. If the rich man is able to pay, let him do so. But if the tax on articles of luxury produces nothing, and affects certain commodities on which the poor man lives,—if the land-tax causes a rise in the price of bread, and burdens agriculture,—if an increase on licences ruins the small tradesman, whose assistance is indispensable to the working man,—if a tax on sugar, for instance, oppresses our marine, already so enfeebled, and insufficient for procuring markets for us,—if all this is in such an equilibrium, that it cannot be touched without the greatest precaution,—if things are so dis-

posed that a single class, the rich one, when sacrificed to the hunger of the mass, would not feed them for a month,—that consequently taxation can only be levied on the greater number,—that it can only be so levied by extreme care, to spare the different kinds of produce, as, after all, it is certain produce that is affected by taxation, rather than a certain class of tax-payers,—if all these propositions are incontestible, is it not demonstrated, that there is no choice between the rich and the poor? that it does not remain with governments to remove at will the public charges from one to the other? and that, in this situation, considerations of general interest should prevail over all others? for the general interest, it must be incessantly repeated, is the interest of the poor, many thousand times more than that of the rich. Indeed, is it not evident that the rich man, although much embarrassed, sometimes ruined, by the extraordinary circumstances of the moment, still finds something to eat, and that the poor man, under those circumstances, only eats the bread which is given to him?

To diminish the indirect taxes, in order to increase the direct taxes, is not, therefore, as it is supposed, a sure means of bettering the condition of the poor at the expense of the rich. Such a result can only be obtained by a wise equilibrium, firmly maintained. Even were the real effects of taxation known, it would be apparent that if, definitively, direct as well as indirect taxes resolve themselves into an increase in the price of things, the first is the most inconvenient of all, because it seeks the tax-payer, to exact from him, on a certain day, at a certain hour, a sum which the latter has not been prudent enough to put by; whereas the second, confounded with the price of what is bought, is paid insensibly, according to the consumption, and that the tax-payer never eats and drinks, nor ever wears a garment, without paying a portion of his taxes, without

willing it, and even without knowing it. And this is the reason why the people, solely following their own impulse, never hesitate to prefer one of these modes of taxation to the other. Indeed, in nearly all great towns they wish to convert the poll-tax (*personnel* and *mobilière*) into tolls (*octroi*). In Paris, especially, three millions of francs in the lowest assessment of the *mobilière* are declared to be lost to the revenue, and they are taken from the *octroi;* intolerable as a direct tax, this burden is scarcely felt as an indirect tax. The largest towns in France follow this example. And this is not an event of yesterday's date. In the time of the old *régime*, under the reign of Louis XIV., the *banlieue* of Rouen was quoted among financiers as an example of prosperity well worthy of general imitation. The poll-tax (*taille*) had been converted into taxes on articles of consumption; and Vauban, the wisest of reformers, proposed it to Louis XIV. as a model, by reason of the state of prosperity which it exhibited, and which contrasted with the surrounding parts, ruined by the direct tax.

Indirect taxation is, moreover, the taxation of the most civilized countries; whilst direct taxation is that of barbarous governments. The first thing a government is able to do is to demand from every man, from every piece of ground, a certain sum. The Turks, stick in hand, are well able to levy the *Miri.* But clever governments, in prosperous countries, by levying a sum from wealth, are enabled to produce abundant resources; and whilst Turkey lives by the *miri*, England lives by the excise and customs, after having abolished the land-tax. The *miri* is a kind of exaction which must be paid whether you will or not; the excise and customs are a part of the price of goods, which is paid when these are purchased; which is paid, it is true—for no art has yet been found by which to meet the expenditure of a great nation with nothing—but

which is paid when you are able, and when you like, in proportion to your means, by consuming more or less.

There is but one objection to indirect taxation, which is, that being in some measure voluntary, it gives way under the burden imposed on it, and that a government which would augment it unawares, for urgent necessities, would find it suddenly decrease. It would withdraw itself as a free-born man to whom you would offer violence. Whereas direct taxation is a slave, from whom you can take all he has. In fact, you may exact from the soil, and from individuals, all you require, saving the chance of finding it impossible to levy anything, and the obligation of selling either the land or the chattels. But indirect taxation, the taxation of free and wealthy countries, finds in credit an excellent auxiliary. In powerful countries, where it is ordinarily the most in use, the future is called upon to assist the present, and a loan dispenses with the necessity of burdening consumption, and of thus distressing it by the burden. Thus, money is taken from those who have any, in consideration of an interest for the benefit of those who advance it for others. In one word, a poor country, an enslaved country, and direct taxation, with double, treble taxation as an extraordinary resource, are facts which always go together. A rich country, a free country, and indirect taxation, with credit as an extraordinary and unlimited resource, again are facts which are as constantly united as the former.

The Revolution, in its state of innocence, shared this opinion, that indirect taxes were odious ones, that they must be got rid of,—that this could be easily effected, that, by means of the land-tax assessed more equitably than it then was, with the *personnel* and *mobilière* graduated according to the station of the house, with the window-tax, the register duty, the stamps, the cus-

toms, the post-office, the revenue from the woods and forests,—it was of opinion that with these it could support itself. It believed this, for it believed quickly, and acted quicker still. And thus it abolished the excise duty, the duty on salt, burnt the toll-houses, and soon, passing from innocence to fury, and revenging itself of old grievances on the agents of the old financial system, sent to the scaffold the farmers-general, among whom was the illustrious Lavoisier.

But, however, the whole of the retained taxes, even by the addition of blood, failed in procuring the money that was needed. In the midst of the general disorder, their returns were almost *nil.* Happily there existed a means by which to make up for all,—this was paper-money, a paper having a wide basis, for it was secured on several hundred millions of fine national estates. The issues of this paper were multiplied by decree, and some hundreds of millions became available. No trouble was taken about making out budgets. Why should they make calculations, as there was no occasion for them, thanks to the Assignats-table! However, it soon became necessary to give 400 francs of paper in exchange for a pound of bread, and the paper became worth what it cost to create, namely, nothing.

Order being re-established by the restorer of French society, re-established in the finances as well as in every other branch of the government, money having succeeded paper, the distress was still very great. The taxes that were still maintained,—comprising the direct taxes, the register duty, the customs, the post-office, the woods and forests, and which, while disorder lasted had yielded nothing, and disorder at an end, had produced nearly 500 millions,—were insufficient to meet the expenditure, which in 1802 amounted to 600 millions, and was going on towards 700 millions. General Buonaparte was puzzled how to proceed. Paper money was as much discredited as its fellow-

companion, the scaffold. Although the general had very much improved credit, for he had raised the 5 per cents. to between 60 and 70, the rate at which this stock is at present, with this difference, that he had taken it at 12, and that we found it at 120,—he would have been unable to contract a loan. It was the period of the organization of the new financial administration and the creation of a number of financial burdens. He demanded securities, and expended 25 or 30 millions worth a-year. As, whilst he lasted, the acquisitions of national property were considered a safe investment, he was enabled to sell, and also spent 25 or 30 millions, the amount of their produce.

But on the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, General Buonaparte found himself without resources. Do you know how he contrived? He sold Louisiana to the Americans for eighty millions. Louisiana swallowed up, his embarrassment was the same. He, so exact, so punctual, fell back upon the arrears, as a resource, and threw himself into the hands of jobbers. With one notorious company he lost 140 millions, which he had great difficulty in recovering, and even on the day of Austerlitz, he had in Paris a deplorable financial crisis, with suspension of Bank payments.

By means of Austerlitz, and a large war-contribution levied on Austria, he provided for his first necessities. The deficiency, however, still remained. He felt somewhat ashamed to remain in such a position, while having it in his power to relieve himself. All the departments consulted, had pronounced direct taxation intolerable. The registration duty, weighing as much on property as the land-tax did, could not be increased. A decree could not cause an augmentation in the revenues derived from the customs, the forests, the post-office. A loan, and paper money, were out of the question. Consequently, Napoleon determined to re-establish an excise duty, small in amount, not vex-

atious in form, and in a short time his finances were again in a flourishing condition. There yet remained, however, a branch of the service which, notwithstanding all his efforts, was still much neglected: it was that of the highways. The budget being insufficient for the purpose, it had been left out, and a city-toll made up for it. But this duty only yielded 14 millions, whereas 28 were wanted, and being, besides, a new one, it was intolerable; for, in regard to taxation, as well as many things not likely to please, that which is of old-standing is less objectionable. There was a duty which every one considered might easily be restored, a very natural one, provided it were not made so burdensome as before as to the amount, nor so vexatious in its mode of collection: it was the salt duty. For agriculture, it was generally considered preferable to the city tolls dues. Napoleon made no hesitation. He certainly was no great admirer of liberty, from having no faith in it,—for France at least. But he loved the people, and delighted in being loved by it. He, therefore, re-established the duty on salt; as a sequel to the excise duty, the highways were once more put in the best condition, and an equilibrium was finally established in his finances.

Such is the history of the suppression of the indirect taxes in France; first, bankruptcy,—and, subsequently, the necessity of re-establishing them.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

ON THE EVIL IN THE WORLD.

Showing that there is in society a portion of evil, which Governments should endeavour to remove, and that there is another portion inherent to human nature, from which no imaginable degree of perfection in Governments could extricate mankind.

I ACKNOWLEDGE that everywhere there are sincere men, and if among the Socialist philosophers there are some who have alone sought to make themselves popular, and to place in their hands that dangerous instrument, the multitude,—there are others whom the sight of the evils spread through society have very much affected, and who have wished to remedy it. But have they hit upon a remedy?

There are a few rich people, but very few—a few more in easy circumstances, but still not many—a great number who have but the common necessaries of life, and many who have not even these. The agricultural profession, as I have before observed, live upon barley, potatoes, a few green vegetables, a little pork, rarely taste meat, and work the whole year round, during hail, rain, or sunshine. The town population, less constantly embarrassed, have times when their wages are double, when they live in some sort abundantly; they have even a share of the enjoyments of the rich

—a black coat, clean linen, the theatres, and almost always meat. But no sooner is imprudent industry, which quarrelled to obtain their labour by paying dear for it,—no sooner is it aware of the excess of produce, than it makes a stop, ceases to employ them, and the few comfortable days they have spent are expiated for by a wretched and deplorable state of misery, by starvation, in fact, which the peasant is exempt from. The manufacturing, mercantile class, placed above the working class, also makes a stop, and sees all its profits disappearing. The rich man can no longer get interest for his capital, and suffers like all the rest; without reckoning, that even in prosperous times a thousand catastrophes occur, sometimes to the one, sometimes to the other; that the tradesman, the merchant, the manufacturer, giving way to imprudent ambition, have made deplorable failures, that they have dragged in their fall, themselves, their families, many servants attached to their destinies, clerks, workmen, agents of all kinds; that the rich man who had lent them his capital, is dragged down in the fall; that in fact this rich man himself, without commercial catastrophes, left to his own impulse, swayed by his vices, or deceived by false friends, falls from the summit of his greatness, and sometimes ends his days in exile, in a prison, by committing suicide, or in misery. Such is the world, with property, the family, and liberty.

Would you effect changes in this state of things, changes which will improve it according to the evident laws of human nature? thrice welcome are you! Bring us your intelligence, your inventions, and we will discuss them. We who incessantly ponder over these several matters, we have perhaps become tired of, or accustomed to, our own sufferings and those of others. Come to us, you who, less resigned to the necessities of this world, appreciating them less, may perhaps

have found some remedy; come, and let us discuss in all sincerity of purpose. But would you alter the essential condition of things in this world, would you, in order that man may be neither poor nor rich, suppress the stimulus which makes him work; that he might not suffer, suppress liberty; that he should not know family troubles, suppress the family. If you are sincere, we will tell you that you know not human nature; if you are factious people, seeking for soldiers in those who suffer impatiently, we will tell you that you are criminal.

A primary observation must be obvious to all minds, namely, that this small number of rich people,—that this less limited, but still insufficient number of people in easy circumstances, compared with the immense number of those who have but mere necessaries, or less than that,—does away with all idea of being able to better the condition of those who have but little, by sharing the property of those who have a great deal. No one would have been rendered comfortable, and all would have lost that ardent desire to produce, which has led on society from the state in which it was during the middle ages to the state in which it is now. It cannot, indeed, be denied, that the condition of mankind has been much ameliorated during the last two or three centuries, even during the last fifty years, thirty years, or twenty years. Some centuries back, agricultural means, commercial means, supplying the place of the former when the seasons were against them, were insufficient to such a degree, that thousands of men were carried off by famine. Countless numbers of wretched beings died of hunger on the highways, or in the public streets. We have recently gone through a famine; there has been suffering, inevitable suffering, but the peasantry have nowhere been without bread, and the poor of our cities, by the combined means of the government and the commercial classes, and the

beneficence of the wealthy, have had the necessaries of life. This year, the working man has not been able to obtain a new suit, he has taken but little pleasure; and he whose feeble health could only have been maintained by easy circumstances, has died sooner and more inevitably than in a prosperous year. But is this famine at all to be compared with that which has carried off whole generations?

A livelihood is, therefore, more certain; and as regards lodging, only look at some of the old quarters of our cities, observe those mud-built houses, roofed with shingles,—huddled together like ant-hills, damp, dark, and ill ventilated,—reminding us of those cities of the middle ages, which are often represented in old pictures, above whose wretchedness and confusion soared the tall spire of the gothic church, for at that time man in his misery seemed to have thought only of God; call to mind those houses, whole districts of which have been cleared away at Rouen, and compare them with the houses which have risen up in their place. They are small, indeed, but healthy, built of brick, and roofed with tiles. Has not a sensible amelioration taken place?

Visit our rural villages; everywhere the roof of tiles or slates has replaced the thatch; the mud-wall has made way for one of brick or stone. Look at the working man's clothing, and you will see that milled cloth has replaced the cloth of frieze; he wears leather instead of wooden shoes, and his wife's shoulders are covered with a little woollen shawl instead of a cotton 'kerchief. This change has taken place, because, as I said before, the farm-labourer's wages are now forty sous a day, instead of twenty-five, as they were forty years ago; the mechanic's are now five francs instead of two; and the shawl, once worth fifty francs, now sells for five or six. Lastly, read Vauban, consult the authors of the reign of Louis XIV., and note their

description of deserted fields and fugitive peasants, and tell me if anything like it happens now-a-days, even after the most horrible wars.

Do not imagine that I would assert that evil has entirely disappeared, that it exists no longer, for I shall prove there is an inevitable and constant portion, and that it is the hardest to bear; do not imagine that I use exaggerated language, to induce our governments to halt in their career, to slumber, and fancy they have done enough. No, God forbid! I would only calm despair, which is even laudable. I would then show you that there is an indisputable amelioration, owing to the progress of time, owing to the zeal with which every man labours, and contributes by his labour to the general prosperity, as well as to his industrial welfare. Thus, since sixty years, money is worth four instead of six per cent; clothing is as cheap by half, and daily wages are increased by one-half. Why is this? because men have laboured much, because there is more corn, more clothing, more building materials. Discourage labour, and all will stop. That wealth, to be found here and there among the higher classes of society, to form an attraction to labour, and to excite its zeal,—the wealth thus collected into a few sensible masses, animates labour, and causes it to produce all the good that it has produced. On the contrary, if this wealth were divided among all, it would not put a single loaf more into the poor man's cupboard. No longer having this recompense, this stimulus, man would be disheartened and inactive; and that activity which has brought us from the horrible misery of the middle ages to the milder misery of the present time, could exist no longer. You are therefore mistaken on the means. It is not by a wretched distribution among all, of that which serves to excite human activity, that you will succeed; it is rather by increasing that activity so as to increase its productive-

ness. Let us give better laws to agriculture and commerce,—let us apportion differently, if possible, all social burdens,—let us organize public and excite private beneficence, let us, each, do our share to bring about this change, and we shall obey the laws of our being, which are to aim unceasingly at perfection. A stationary condition is death; society should be like the Wandering Jew, advancing, ever advancing towards some unknown goal. Yes, let us advance, but in so doing let us avoid the precipice; let us not turn our backs upon the object in view; and, finally, let us not deprive society of the courage to persevere in its career by driving it to despair.

Even in the present state of things, is there not much evil still, enough to rend the hearts of all good men? There is; but is there one of these newly invented systems that can cure the evil, and convert it into good? Is it *Communism*, which, independently of its practical impossibility, for we should not find the human race very willing to permit themselves to be plundered, and join a *phalanstere* (11),—is it Communism, which would diminish by one-half or three-fourths the sum of human labour, by suppressing the motive which urges man to labour? Is it the *Association* of the Luxembourg, invented for a million of individuals out of the thirty-six millions; which would consist in furnishing this million with the means of speculating with the money of the thirty-six; which, like Communism, would thus damp all human activity, introduce anarchy into industry, and, if it succeeded, would give a monopoly to certain classes of workmen, and double the price of all articles of consumption? Is it that singular *Reciprocity*, whose aim would be to create cheapness by lowering prices by law, and because gold and silver are only given in exchange for real value, would pretend to substitute for it a paper, that would probably be granted to every

one that asked for it, and would be worth what is given for it,—that is, nothing? Is it *the Right to Labour*, which would lead, either to make the State a weaver, a joiner, a carpenter, a draper; or to pay forty sous a day—at the expense of the tax-payers—those who make, unmake, and remake revolutions? Lastly, is it by abolishing all taxes, by ruining the finances, by raising the price of bread to lower that of wine and brandy, that we can put an end to popular distress? Have not the last eight months of wretchedness replied to these idle theories? Do we not perceive, amidst the natural impossibility of these projects, a secret,—a secret common to them all,—of flattering a far from numerous class at the expense of the whole people? There are twenty-four millions of agriculturists, whose life is passed in privations; five or six millions of artisans, whose easier life, varied now and then with periods of abundance, is exposed to afflicting cessations of labour; then there are men of all ranks, whom fortune abandons; many children of the middle classes, who, sometimes wanting in great talents, sometimes also wanting them altogether, crowd the entrance to every liberal pursuit; and, as a remedy, our philosophers propose to satisfy a million manufacturing workmen; at one time by providing them with capital, at another by creating a monopoly in their favour, or else by paying them so much a day. And if we quit for a moment this privileged class, if we extend a little this benevolent solicitude, it is to tell all householders, farmers, and debtors not to pay what they owe. And that is called favouring the people—bettering the condition of the masses—accomplishing a social revolution!

Amid this display of new inventions, who has discovered the means by which a peasant shall eat rye instead of chestnuts, wheat instead of rye, meat instead of bacon? by which the workmen in our towns shall

be exposed to no stagnations of trade? by which the young men of the middle classes shall find employment suited to their talents? Who has discovered the means of doubling wages? No one; for this secret is in the hands of God; and hitherto God has dispensed the happiness sought for by such proceedings only to those countries which are wise and well-governed, and which respect the laws of nature and reason.

We have seen the evils of society decrease with time, good succeed to evil, and this change effected more rapidly of late years, because peace has added its blessings to those of civil equality proclaimed by the French Revolution. We have seen labour, freed from many obstructions, and enlightened by science, become more active and more fruitful; we have seen the interest of capital fall from 6 to 4 per cent., all articles of consumption decrease in price, the mechanic's wages increase, and a taste for economy spring up within him. Is not the course of good clearly traced out? And what is that course? An increase of activity in labour, both agricultural, commercial, and industrial, which leads to general prosperity, and which can only result from wisdom in the government, order in the state, and peace between all classes of society. Is there no good undiscovered, or hitherto neglected, which can increase the ameliorations already realized? No doubt there is. Can no remedy be applied to those unhappy stagnations, the real sore of industry? I think there can. We may do so, without making the government a milliner or a carpenter, by reserving for periods of industrial distress all the great public works, and thus finding an employment for idle hands. Finally, it is possible to provide for the old age of the infirm and sick workman. Yes, let us attempt these changes, and society will be honoured by attempting them, even if complete success should not crown its labours. But this involves no disturbance of the eternal laws of

society, and it is not the invention of the Socialists. Lastly, must we do nothing for the peasant, so neglected because he is not the instrument of factions? Yes; but how? by diminishing the land-tax, instead of the duty upon liquors.

Let the new philosophers enter upon this task with us, and we shall all agree. Even after we have done our best, after we have succeeded, there will always remain something to be done; and as, after all the realized good of the first Revolution, after forty years of indisputable amelioration, we are assailed with maledictions, we are told that the human race is suffering and expiring with distress, and that it will rise against us unless we relieve it immediately; so, if in fifty years we had doubled wages by legitimate means, diminished by three-fourths the price of the necessaries of life, given bread and meat to the tillers of the soil, neutralized stagnation in our cities, as we have almost neutralized famine in agriculture, there would still be found evils enough to furnish agitators with sufficient pretences to say all that is now said; for although the labouring classes are twice as well off as they were in 1789, society is inveighed against a hundred-fold more than at that epoch. And the reason is, that in the social condition there is always an irremediable source of evil, which we must take into account, and which we must not exaggerate unless we would drive man to despair, and society to suicide.

Would you know what is the principal misfortune of our day? It is this: the people have been deceived as to the nature of the evil they experience. All that they feel, and all that the rich feel as well, and often more severely,—disease, fatigue, privations, disappointed hopes, old age, death,—all these sufferings they are told might be avoided; that the present social state is their cause, a state made for the rich and by the rich; that all the happiness of which they are deprived,

and which they could enjoy, is wickedly denied them, in order that the wealthy might keep a greater portion for themselves. The anger combines with suffering; the people rise, slay, and are slain; and their woes are increased ten-fold. Those rich men who desired to inflict no injury on the working man, run away or conceal themselves, hide their treasures, refuse wages, and he dies of rage and hunger at the gates of those gloomy and deserted palaces, in which he thinks happiness dwells, but where, on the contrary, is sadness, alarm, and despair also; for in presence of the poor man who thinks himself oppressed, they, not feeling themselves oppressors in their turn, think of defending themselves,—and they are not less brave than the poor, for education increases courage instead of diminishing it. —he is ready to inflict death on the man who meditates inflicting it on him. Horrible confusion! as when the battalions of the same army, deceived by the darkness of night and the stratagems of a perfidious enemy, rush upon each other's bayonets. The darkness of night is your sophisms; you are the perfidious enemy; it is you who attack social order without understanding it.

Evil, great evil, certainly exists; we must diminish the amount; we must change the black bread of the peasant into white; those vegetables, seasoned with a little bacon, into meat; those rags into good clothing; that brutal ignorance into a mild intelligence of things; that stupid envy, into a sincere fraternity; but we must take time for these changes, we must proceed by tried methods, not, however, to the exclusion of new ones. We must not, however, let the people remain in ignorance of the fact, that, after having effected all these changes, their hearts will remain full of suffering, often of intolerable suffering. Are they not a thousand times better off than in the middle ages, in the times of leprosy, plague, and universal famines,—a hundred times better off than under Louis XIV., Louis XVI.,

and Napoleon? Listen to their cries of distress, and relieve them; there will still remain a long and continuous groan. But what is this groan? 'tis that of the human heart. Retrace the course of history; go from the feudal times to the Roman empire; under that empire see the happiness of the Antonines or the long repose of Augustus,—visit Greece, its opulent cities, the brilliant Athens, and the wealthy Corinth;—return to modern times, and from the indolent Hindoo, or the laborious Chinese, supporting life on a little rice, cross the ocean and wander over America, from pole to pole; follow the savage in the chase, who, in his savannahs, runs no other risk than that of killing or missing the buffalo, whose flesh is his food, and who, placing his country in the bones of his ancestors, which he carries with him wrapped up in skins, has so greatly reduced the hazards of life; return by those American or English ships, admire the opulence on the banks of the Thames or the Zuiderzee: lastly, visit the pastures of the Oberland,—survey the entire human race, listen to their hearts, and reply: Is there not a common sorrow at the bottom of every heart?

Among such numerous tribes, what man has all he desires? Which of them has not something to regret—something to fear? Which of them has not, in the course of his life, lost father, mother, wife, or child? Which of them has not before him either the troubles of a commencing life, which is full of labour, which has not yet brought success, or the troubles of a life declining towards death, as the sun towards the horizon, and to desires just fading away, adds the vague apprehensions of his approaching end—bitter to the uneducated, mournful to the educated mind, but, in the latter, mingled with sorrows that the other knows not of? Would you convince yourself, let the poor man, suffering from hunger, cold, and thirst, go to the rich man, who feels neither hunger nor cold, who reclines on

silken couches, and treads on carpets brilliant with a thousand colours. True, he is not cold, he is not hungry. He has eaten his fill. Granted; but look at his anxious brow. Do you know what he is doing? He desires, desires ardently, more ardently, than he who has not eaten. He desires with pain. What does he desire? you may ask. Not bread, not costly viands, not smiling, fertile fields—he has more of these than he knows what to do with; these viands he scarcely tastes, these fields he neglects; but he desires new treasures,—power, that is denied him, and perhaps honour, which an insult has torn from him; or else, all that he had he is on the point of losing. A storm has wrecked his fortune on the ocean; an unlucky speculation has ruined it at the Bourse; popularity has forsaken him; sorrows of little moment, you may say, but sorrows still. But there are others more deserving of your interest. He has lost his darling child, or the wife of his bosom. Do you think he loves them less because he is rich? Observation of human nature proves that he suffers more deeply, for his mind being less directed to outward objects by physical suffering, is turned more inwards, and is racked and tortured more. The less we suffer in body, the more we suffer in mind.

In that man, apparently so happy, you take no interest, because he regrets the loss of money or of power. Granted; but see him at the head of an army, exercising the noble profession of arms. He dies like Epaminondas at Mantinea, after having conquered at Leuctra; he dies like Gustavus Adolphus at Lutzen, after having conquered at Leipzic; or he dies like Gaston de Foix, at the very entrance of his career,—he dies at Ravenna, in the midst of a glorious victory. Happy warrior! you die, you die young, you are happy in your death, for you breathe your last on a bed of colours. But tell me why Charles V., the conqueror at Pavia, abdicated, and expired in sorrow? Hannibal, for twenty

years a conqueror, was vanquished at Zama;—by whom? by a youth; and that youth, that Scipio, who, at the opening of his career, had the immortal honour of defeating Hannibal, passed the rest of his life the victim of envy. He had to deplore the misconduct of his son, and to remain afar from Rome, cursing his native city. And those fortunate men, Louis XIV., and Napoleon, who filled the world with envy—the one for fifty, the other for twenty years. The one, when old, passing from the tenderness of La Vallière to the gloomy sway of Mme. de Maintenon, from Rocroy to Malplaquet, from Turenne and Condé to Villeroy, one day said to the latter—*Marshal, at our age we are no longer happy.*—The other from Rivoli, Marengo, Austerlitz, and Friedland, passes to Leipsic and Waterloo; from the Tuileries, the Escurial, Schönbrunn, Potsdam, and the Kremlin, to Elba and Saint Helena. He dies alone, far from his wife, far from his son,—chained, like Prometheus, to his rock. And you who have witnessed the fall of Charles X., and of Louis Philippe, branch after branch, throne after throne,—do you believe there are no sorrows in high places, as well as low, and more even in the high places than in the low? You will call this an idle excursion through the fields of universal sorrow! You are speaking of the sorrows of the "cloth of frieze," and I reply by those of the "cloth of gold." You must be very short-sighted not to perceive that this "cloth of frieze," and this "cloth of gold," are but an unmeaning veil cast over the human soul; and that, under the dazzling brilliancy of the one, or the plainness of the other, there is a terrible equality of suffering. God has placed in all the same spring of the human heart, which, pressed down by the world, resists, yields, rises again, again yields, ceases not its groans under these various movements, but still acts, and advances humanity through a visible trial to an invisible goal. Granted, you reply; the author of

all that is a tyrant, and this rule imposed on all is the equality of tyranny.

A tyrant, if you will; but the tyranny is equal in every case; and if he is a tyrant, far from becoming disunited under his tyranny, let us unite, on the contrary, to surmount it. That tyranny, if tyranny it is (I beg pardon for such blasphemy), is manifested by external nature, which we must combat, overcome, bring under subjection to our wants, and adapt to our well-being. Let us unite then to conquer, instead of murdering one another on its bosom. Instead of laying waste those harvests in our disputes for their possession, let us unite to defend them, and secure their possession to the man that has caused them to grow. Ask him for the portion of the poor man, but do not snatch it from him.

But for aught we know, you may not have comprehended this pretended tyrant, the universal creator of all things. That sorrow imposed by him is perhaps a trial, an inevitable, a necessary trial, sufficiently recompensed elsewhere. Let us stop an instant before him, and it may happen that we shall deal more justly towards him, as we did with social order, after having examined and comprehended it.

There must be three sides to a triangle; this is inevitable, just as space must inevitably be extended. It seems to me that God would neither be powerless nor wicked, because he had either appointed or permitted these conditions in the nature of things. If, through him, two and two make four, is he on that account less mighty, less good? Well then, may not sorrow in the human heart be a condition of the same nature? What is feeling? Is it to experience an indifferent sensation, like that of one colour succeeding another, causing in the spectator no emotion of pain or pleasure? But then I should not move, I should be inactive. I only begin truly to feel when I am affected, agreeably or

otherwise; then if there is pain, there is pleasure also; there is movement to attain the pleasure, to avoid the pain; there is activity and life. Tell me, were it better not to be, or to be in a less degree?—to descend, for instance, from man, who feels much, to the bee, which feels only in proportion to the impulses necessary for life,—from the bee to the polype, to the plant, to the stem, to nonentity. I admit it, but that is suicide. Or else will you tell me that instead of descending, we should mount higher, rise to an elevation where evil is no longer felt, where we repose in the bosom of God. I admit this also. Nevertheless, I will tell you,—it is too soon. Religion, going farther than philosophy,—Religion, deducing a sublime conjecture for the wants of the human soul,—a conjecture, which is a desire in him who does not wholly believe, and a certainty to him who is full of faith,—Religion says, "Suffer, suffer with humility, patience, and hope, ever looking up to that God who awaits you, and will reward you." Thus it makes sorrow one of the crosses of a long voyage, which will lead us to happiness at last. Then sorrow becomes merely one of the troubles of this inevitable voyage, and if it causes pain, is also followed by an immediate consolation,—by hope. Thus that potent religion, termed Christianity, exercises a continued dominion over the world, and for this it is indebted, among other motives, to an advantage which it alone, of all religions, possesses. Do you know what this advantage is? It is that of having given a meaning to sorrow. The human mind has had many a dispute with it about its doctrines, but never about its morals, that is, about its manner of understanding the human heart. Paganism could not resist the first glance of Socrates or of Cicero, for that religion consisting of fabulous legends—graceful poetry rather than religion—the history of the passions, loves, pleasures, griefs of

the gods, was a mere history of kings, translated to the sky. As history it was a lying chronicle; as morality, a scandal. But he who came and said: There is but one God,—He has suffered himself, He has suffered for you; he who showed Him on a cross, subjugated mankind by replying to their reason by the idea of God's unity, by touching their hearts by the deification of sorrow. And, wonderful to tell, that suffering God, presented to us on a cross in the agony of death, has been a thousand times more adored by men, than the calm, serene, majestic Jupiter, carved by the chisel of Phidias. The arts have rendered him sublime, in a far different manner from the Jupiter of the ancients. And there lies the secret of the difference between ancient and modern art: the first superior in form, the last in feeling; the one gifted with a body, the other with a soul.

Thus, while Paganism could not resist a single glance of the human mind, Christianity endures after Descartes has laid the foundation of human knowledge, after Galileo has discovered the motion of the earth, after Newton has discovered attraction, and Voltaire and Rousseau have overturned thrones. And all wise politicians, without deciding upon dogmas, which have only one judge, and that is Faith, desire that it may endure.

Speak, then, to the people, as Religion speaks, without weakening in them the just sentiment of their rights; without flattering the indolence or the want of will in the governors. Tell them, however, that there exists for all an inevitable amount of sorrow, which is in the very essence of the human soul; which the rich man has not caused him, but which God has placed in him as the spring to urge him from inaction, and precipitate him into action, that is, into life. Tell him this, if you would not double his sorrow, and change

it into an impious fury, which will turn against him, as a sword in the hand of a madman, which destroys both those it strikes and him who wields it. I do not call for indifference to the sufferings of the people, but for a just appreciation of those sufferings, and a discernment and application of the true remedies.

THE END.

NOTES.

(1) p. 3.—Jean François le Fevre, Chevalier de la Barre, a youth barely nineteen years old, was charged with mutilating a wooden crucifix, erected on the bridge of Abbeville. By a decree of the Parliament of Paris, he was decapitated, and his body burnt (1st July, 1766). Jean Calas, a Protestant, of Toulouse, accused of murdering his son Anthony, was condemned by the Parliament of that city to be broken on the wheel, which sentence was carried into effect on the 9th of March, 1762. His youngest son was banished. Voltaire took up the matter (as he did the case of La Barre), and on the 9th of March, 1765, Calas and his family were declared innocent.

(2) p. 4.—On the night of the 4th of August, 1789, the Duke de Noailles proposed that the burden of taxes should fall equally on all, that all the feudal rights should be declared liable to redemption, and personal servitude simply abolished. The Duke du Châtelet proposed that the redemption of tithes should be allowed, and that they should be commuted into a payment for money;—the Bishop of Chartres, the suppression of the exclusive right of the chase. The more important rights of feudal jurisdiction in matters of crime—of the disposal of offices for gain—of pecuniary immunities—of inequality of taxes—of plurality of benefices—of casual emolument to the clergy—of annats to the court of Rome, were successively abandoned; finally, the incorporations and separate states (Britanny, Burgundy, Languedoc, &c.) sacrificed their privileges.

(3) p. 46.—A labourer of Cotignola, named Attendolo, enlisting as a soldier, at the beginning of the 15th century, passed rapidly through all the degrees of military rank, and became the most dis-

tinguished captain of the age. With 7,000 volunteers, who followed his banner, he delivered John II. of Naples from the hands of Alphonso of Aragon, for which he was made Constable of the kingdom, and Gonfalonier of the Roman Church. A premature death by drowning terminated his honourable career. He had changed his name to *Sforza,* which he transmitted to his natural son, Francis, inheritor of his talents and courage, who afterwards became Duke of Milan. The greatest princes sought his alliance; his daughter, Hippolyta, married Alphonso of Naples, and Louis XI. of France ceded to him the city of Genoa.—WHITE, *Elements of Universal History*, p. 413.

(4) p. 71.—The quantity of assignats in circulation at the fall of Robespierre, amounted to about 300 millions sterling, and such was the total confusion of property produced by this extraordinary issue of paper money, that Pichegru, commanding the army of the north, with a nominal pay of 4,000 francs, was only in the actual receipt on the Rhine of 200 francs (£8) per month in gold or silver; and Hoche, at the head of 100,000 men in La Vendée, petitioned the government to send him a horse, which he was too poor to buy. In the same year (1795), bread was sold at 22 francs a pound; 28,000 francs in paper were exchanged for one *louis d'or*, and a dinner for 5 or 6 persons cost 60,000 francs.

(5) p. 85.—The coal bed of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, is more than equal to all England in area. The Pittsburgh seam, 10 feet thick, spreads over a space 225 miles in length and 100 miles in breadth.

(6) p. 88. M. Thiers is no admirer of the olden time, when the half-savage Gaul or Saxon shared with their swine the beech-mast, and acorns of the forest. All history shows, that as population and wealth have increased, the labourer has received a constantly increasing share of the produce of his labour; and nowhere is his proportion so great, as where the population has most rapidly increased. The return to the husbandman has been estimated as more than twenty times greater in England than it was in the 14th century, while the population is only about 6½ times as great.

(7) p. 90.—In agro Casinate et Venafro in loco bono parte octava corbi dividat, satis bono septima, tertio loco sexta; si granum modio dividet parte quinta.—CATO, *De Re Rustica*, cxxxvi.

(8) p. 111.—Chevert, François de, entered the army as a common soldier, and eventually rose to the rank of lieutenant-general. The Chevalier d'Assas distinguished himself by a striking act of

courage. When the army was lying near Closterkamp (Oct. 15, 1760), he commanded an advanced post, and about midnight went out to visit the sentries. On a sudden he fell into the midst of a hostile body, on their march to surprise the French army. Twenty bayonets were presented to his breast, and he was ordered to keep silent; but the youth, undismayed, shouted out, "*A moi, d'Auvergne, l'ennemi est là!*" and fell, pierced with a score of wounds. La Tour d'Auvergne, who had seen thirty years' service in France and Spain, eagerly embraced the cause of the Revolution, and commanded the company of Grenadiers forming the advanced guard of the army of the Eastern Pyrenees, and known as the *Infernal Column*. He would never accept promotion, and when elected member of the Legislative body, refused to take his seat. In 1800 he was nominated *First Grenadier of the French Army*. He fell in the same year. His heart, after being embalmed, was preserved by his company; and, at roll-call, the oldest sergeant replied at his name, "*Died in the field of honour!*" His bravery has become proverbial in France.

(9) p. 117.—Several designs for the principal *façade* of the Louvre were submitted to the king, who adopted that of Claude Perrault. Colbert, in whose office Claude's father was clerk, could not understand how "a man that was not an architect by profession could imagine anything so beautiful."—See DULAURE, *Hist. Paris* (1824), p. 428.

On the 19th of March, 1800, Kléber (originally an architect), at the head of 10,000 men, defeated 50,000 Turks, commanded by the Grand Vizier. The battle was fought on the plain of Koubbe, in front of the ruins of Heliopolis, on the banks of the Nile, below Cairo.

(10) p. 118.—It is hardly necessary to remind the reader, that Napoleon Bonaparte and Louis Philippe are two of the three examples selected to show the instability of power and wealth, even when apparently most secure.

(11) p. 275.—M. Fourier, one of the least unreasonable of the Socialist philosophers, proposes that in the newly organized society there should be no small houses built, but that large ones should be erected, sufficient for the accommodation of four hundred families of different tastes, rank, character, and fortune, and suitable to the various branches of industry required by the society. This building he calls a *Phalanstere*, or mansion of a *phalanx*, the term by which he designates the whole industrious community.

XI-17-92 (proof of concentration
to excite letters)