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**THE LABOUR QUESTION.**  
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## PIUS IX.

A MEMOIR OF

HIS HOLINESS THE POPE.

BY FELIX CLAVE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

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## ORGANIZATION OF LABOUR.

BY M. LOUIS BLANC,

*Member of the Provisional Government.*

“So long as this immense problem shall not be solved in the interest of all, there never will be repose for society, nor security for the rich man; he is as much interested as the operative, that its solution be prompt, and, above all, equitable.”—LAMARTINE.

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## POLITY OF REASON,

OR THE

RATIONALE OF GOVERNMENT.

BY M. DE LAMARTINE.

THE  
LABOUR QUESTION.

1. AMELIORATION OF THE CONDITION OF THE  
LABOURING CLASSES.

2. WAGES. 3. ORGANIZATION OF LABOUR.

BY

M. MICHEL CHEVALIER,

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY AT THE COLLEGE  
OF FRANCE.

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Translated from the French.

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1848.



## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

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THIS work appeared for the first time in the *Révue des Deux Mondes* of the 15th March, 1848. The attention it obtained determined the author to have it reprinted, after having recorrected it, and added several new developments.



## THE LABOUR QUESTION.

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A THUNDER-BOLT fell upon France on the 24th of February, to astound us all. Powers apparently firmly seated, whose stability all Europe admired, and who themselves complacently regarded their position, have been annihilated. A few handfuls of ashes are all that remain of them in public places. All France, with its thirty-five millions of industrious and intelligent men, with its powerful organization, its wealth and glory, has proved to the first comer a hut abandoned in the midst of a forest. A party, a small minority, which scarcely took part in those barren parliamentary jousts, in which the talent of a host of distinguished men was consumed for the greater glory of a few leaders, have suddenly received the bold inspiration to push themselves forward. And, lo ! we are thus transformed into a Republic. It is a fact recognised by all the world ; not the least protestation is made against it by any fraction of that Chamber, so prodigal of words, which yes-

terday flattered itself with being the nation, to traverse the new proclamation of the French Republic. The Republic incontestably exists. It becomes, therefore, a necessity and duty for every one to conform to the present state of things, and to give in frankly their adherence, for the greater welfare of the country.

Let us render double justice to these men who have seized upon France, and whose boldness, in the midst of the universal cowardice, has sufficed to draw this majestic planet, like an obedient satellite, within the orbit of their opinions. From the very first moment, they have done all in their power to make the new order of things really an order, and they have assigned to the Republic they proclaimed an aim worthy of the sympathy of all generous hearts—the amelioration of the lot of the great mass of mankind. The problem they have proposed, and the solution of which they demand of the energies of all, is, to make the thirty-five millions of Frenchmen participators in the moral and material benefits of civilisation—in fine, to make of all France a single united family. Before such a programme dissentient voices are dumb. Each is bound to repress the personal emotion caused in him by so violent an overthrow, and to give the loyal and active aid of all his faculties to this so difficult undertaking. Each



ought to bring a stone for the edifice, to whose construction we should spontaneously have devoted, long ago, resources of all kinds, frittered away in all kinds of enterprises.

I have the right to call Heaven and men to witness that the amelioration of the labourers'\* lot was ever the idea which animated me in my modest but unceasing labours. How often has not my perseverance, in recommending this subject as the great question of the age, caused me to be treated as Utopian and visionary, both by the ministry in power and their opponents! Those who did me the honour to notice my writings know how constant was my devotion to this sacred cause. The amelioration of the condition of the labouring classes is now imposed on all in a fashion so imperious, that, despite the stormy nature of events, I am resolved to raise my voice, happy if my warnings serve to guard against some of the false measures, to which, with the best intentions in the world, one is ex-

\* I say labourers in lieu of workmen, in order to speak the language of the day. In my eyes, however, a master manufacturer is as much a labourer as the manual workman. The scholar and artist are also labourers. The magistrate in his cabinet or on his bench is as much a labourer as the mechanic.

posed with materials so unpractised and tumultuous.

The popular amelioration took, on the very morrow of the Revolution the name of Organization of Labour. The Provisional Government promised organization of labour in principle, by decreeing the right to labour. On the part of the Parisian workmen, the organization of labour was demanded, with this proviso—that wages should be immediately raised, and the hours of work diminished; and, again, that middle-men should be abolished—that is to say, that the trade of the sub-contractors, or *tacherons*, should be interdicted. They demanded also the abolition, and, lastly, the removal of all the English workmen. At this moment the organization of labour is prepared in the very Chamber of Peers by a Congress over which a member of the Provisional Government presides, the author of a work which has made much noise under this very title of Organization of Labour. As for middle-men, a decree of the Government has forbidden it, as being a *traffic in labourers*.

The duration of labour has been the object of a special decree, which has fixed it at ten hours for Paris, and eleven for the departments. However, at Paris, in the great factories, they only work

nine hours. In many at least of these factories, labour by the piece remains prohibited, although authorized by the decree of the Provisional Government. As to the increase of salaries, many masters have subscribed to it.

Let us see what an impartial observer, placed beyond all this turmoil of excited passions, can reasonably think of all this movement, and let us speak it out with sincerity. The reign of unlimited liberty, it seems, leaves to citizens the right of expressing their opinions in moderate terms.

In order to appreciate the means by which popular progress may be pursued, it is useful to throw a glance backwards, and see how the labourers in town and country have arrived at their present position, which, if leaving an infinitude to desire yet, is not the less an hundred times preferable to that they held in the olden time. It is a study which has the disadvantage of being abstract and cold, compared to the palpitating demands and glowing events of the day ; but it is also the only way to place reason, the sole discoverer of truth, in the place of the passions which obscure it.

At the commencement of civilisation, with most nations, the man who assists the patriarch in his labours is a slave, without any thing of his own, not even his person, and who lives in a state of

destitution of which even the poor, nowadays, have no idea. The great majority of mankind are then overwhelmed with toil without any species of relaxation. Labour is ungrateful, because man has not yet at his disposal the inventions which make the fertility of modern industry, improved instruments and machines by which processes are advanced and set to work. The powers of nature, wind, water, the elastic force of steam, are not yet prepared to render their aid. The brute creation afford but a feeble succour. Men know not how to employ them with advantage. Thus the horse is used as a mere beast of burden ; there are nothing but detestable roads, whose acclivities no wheeled vehicle can mount, and in whose ruts it would sink in such a way that all the carman's invocations of Hercules would fail to deliver it. Industry is split into fractions, yet without what the moderns call division of labour being understood : an additional cause of expensive and painful production. The labourer himself is clumsy and devoid of dexterity in his business. Labour produces infinitely little for the slave, because it produces little for the master. The slave lives in an abject state of misery—the threefold misery of body, of intellect, and of feeling. He is a thing corporeally, mentally he is a brute.

What does this show ? That, of old, masters were

tyrants, who, from choice or selfishness, trampled under foot all the rights of humanity? Possibly; yet this is only true of some. What is certain on the other hand is, that society then wanted capital; and, lo! the great secret of the evil. Tools, machinery, apparatus of every description, which serve to carry on perfected processes, are all capital. The powers of nature once appropriated, rendered captive in the engines and submitted to the will of man—the wind in the sails of the mill, the water in the water-wheel, the steam in the cylinder of the steam-engine—are all capital. The

\* Capital may be defined, in a few words, as that which facilitates the production of the means of enjoyment. Knowledge is the primary source of all capital. The knowledge of the properties and application of material alone confers on it value. Corn itself would be valueless did not men know how to convert it into food. The earth at this moment abounds in incalculable wealth, which only requires men to discover a use for it—or to understand how to apply it. Two illustrations will serve to exemplify this point—guano and gutta percha. A little time ago they were practically valueless. The common sewers of London, as has been clearly demonstrated, would be a source of immense wealth if they could be rendered available as manure. The value of land, again, is in precise proportion to the knowledge of its cultivator. Savages are now starving, where Englishmen would soon live in luxury.—*Translator.*

vast arrangements which manufactures demand, the economy of labour, still capital. The dexterity of the workman himself, resulting from previous instruction and an apprenticeship to acquired experience, which multiplies production, is equally capital. Thus the formation and increase of capital is the first condition of popular progress. Where capital scarcely exists, the most numerous class are in abject distress. Without capital all men can produce, in exempting themselves from labour, is a larger dish for themselves.

If there be luxury, and even in the most ancient society there was luxury of the most extravagant kind, it is an exceptional state shared by so small a minority, that, had the substance of their feasts and pleasures been reportioned amongst the general mass, their existence would not have been visibly altered. They would still have remained wretched and harassed in the flesh and in the spirit. In a word, if, without capital, a somewhat numerous people have to live in a determined territory, it is inevitable that, call it what you will, a great number must live in slavery, that is, in extreme poverty and the most absolute dependence. Without capital, the degradation of a portion of the human race is so inevitable, so obligatory, that the loftiest and most penetrating intellects, the philosophers on whom civilisation

most prides herself, proclaim or avow that there are two natures, the free and the enslaved. This distinction is drawn by Aristotle, certainly one of the mightiest intellects that ever appeared upon earth. It is only with the increase of capital that human labour produces sufficient to allow comfort to a large number, to liberate all from the hideous misery that formerly oppressed them, and which submitted intellect and feeling to a like degrading influence.

This fundamental notion, that it is in consequence of the creation of capital that the great mass arise from their brutalisation, has been foreseen and expressed in an original manner by the same philosopher I just now cited.

“If the shuttle and the chisel could move of themselves,” said Aristotle, “slavery would no longer be requisite.” Well, as soon as the human race possessed capital, the shuttle and the chisel *did* move of themselves; a grand step in progress was accomplished, and slavery disappeared\*. As human societies obtain, in proportion to the population, a strong mass of capital, the material, moral, and intellectual privations can be diminished, or rather must infallibly diminish, for

\* In a few of the most civilised countries only, be it noted.—*Translator.*

the force which pushes forward the great mass, and causes them to profit by new discoveries and acquisitions of every kind, is invincible. I know not who in these days would dispute it.

Thus the increase of capital is an absolute condition of popular progress. Not the only one assuredly : it is necessary that science should follow the same progression, to the end that the increase of capital find more and more useful employment ; it is requisite that the Christian sentiment which teaches us to regard every man as our brother before God, our equal before the law, should expand and go forth from the recesses of the souls in which it has taken sanctuary, to enter into the practical existence of nations. But civilisation, if it has various aspects, is one. There is a law of harmony presiding over its course, by virtue of which it is impossible that civilisation should advance on one side of a people's life without advancing majestically in its totality. In a word, there is not a state in Europe where it is possible that capital should increase without humanity in general being the better for it. There is nothing but retardation and retrogression for every nation in which the sentiment of civil equality and fraternity is repressed.

Thus fall, like houses built of cards, all systems founded on a pretended hostility between the in-



terests of capital and those of labour. That there are, and have been avaricious capitalists, who have availed themselves of their opportunities to oppress the poor, I do not deny ; but it is also incontestable, that the poor have, more than once, when they had the power, retaliated to the utmost. These excesses, whoever is their author, these scenes of avarice and violence, by which the bad passions of the one are revealed to the other, do not weaken in the least the conclusion to which our examination of the facts has led us. Capital is the auxiliary of labour ; it is by the increase and preservation of capital that rags and hunger must be driven from our cities with the vices which ever accompany poverty ; just as capital, according to the prophecy of the Stagyrite, has relieved the slaves of their chains. Thus to manage and urge the increase of the capital society possesses is what should be most eagerly desired by the friends of the working classes, and all who really wish that the theoretical equality, inscribed at the head of our laws, should be converted as speedily as possible into that practical equality which subsists in the United States, for example, where nothing in the clothing, in the ordinary food, in the general habits of life, even in the language itself, indicates a profound demarcation between

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the condition of the workman, the labourer, and the most polished inhabitant of the cities.

Homer tells us that in the mansion of Penelope twelve women were occupied day and night in grinding the corn necessary for the subsistence of the Queen of Ithaca, her companions, and her guests. It would be exceeding the truth, to estimate at more than three hundred persons the number thus maintained by Penelope. In that society, without capital, a person was required to grind ; and what was the extent of her grinding in those days? The grain consumed by five-and-twenty, perhaps even half that number of persons. Supposing that all the population ground their corn, it would be necessary that one person out of twenty-five, or twelve or ten should be occupied in grinding,—an enormous proportion. By this one instance, out of a thousand, may be seen to what a degree the human race was overwhelmed by material labour, to satisfy the first necessities of life, and how truly it may be said that all men could obtain by their labour was to subsist in a most wretched manner. In our days, thanks to the capital which modern civilisation can devote to grinding corn, it has arrived at such perfection, that a great mill, such as that of Saint Maur, near Paris, can grind daily sufficient flour for the

rations of one hundred thousand soldiers, without employing more than twenty people ; that is, one person can grind for five thousand consumers. Since, then, in those days so little resulted from so much labour, Penelope could not do otherwise than treat very hardly the twelve persons kept at the mills, could only give them a very small pittance, clothe them worse, and the same with all other occupations. With a completely organized industry on the footing of the mill of Saint Maur, it would be possible to pay every labourer magnificently. In fact, for three thousand years, owing to want of capital of every kind, with a great number of labourers, there was very little produce. On the other hand, in a society where every branch of industry should be brought to the perfection of the mill of Saint Maur, and where there should be enough capital to employ all the population, the quantity of produce would be immense in proportion to the number of labourers ; the capitalist might have a good profit, and the labourer very good wages.

The amelioration of the lot of the people, then, in the eyes of those who analyse facts, may be translated by the following simple formula : increase capital ; develop all capital, including, be it well understood, that which consists in manual dexterity, in man's activity in labour, in his

taste for labour ; in fine, strive that, in proportion to the amount of the population, capital in all its forms become as great as possible. It is under this formula that the positive condition of amelioration can be proposed—amelioration not only material, but intellectual and moral, of the great mass ; for, once more, all things go together. This formula must take its place in the head of each of us, especially of those whose hands weigh at the present moment the destinies of their country, to the end that it may inspire them in their actions. Since, at this present, the workmen are our sovereigns, they must be instructed and advised. Beyond that, there is nothing for them but chimeras and deceptions ; and for society, to the fortune of which their lot is tied, nothing but peril, agitation, impoverishment, and panics.

The first idea of many persons who have superficially examined this grand question of the age, the amelioration of the condition of the masses, is, that the division of the produce of labour is vicious ; that it must of necessity be changed, and that the sufferings of the workmen would be thus relieved. Hence those loud demands for an increase in wages ; hence the enthusiasm with which the system is hailed, termed Organization of Labour. Under the republican régime, truth ought more than at any other time to throw off

all disguise. Let us examine these two propositions, and throw upon them, to discover their value, as much of the light of truth as is in our power.

#### DIMINUTION OF LABOUR, AND INCREASE OF WAGES.

All increase of wages, without at the same time an increase of capital, must be ephemeral. The laws by which it may be attempted to fix them, and render them immutable, will be dead letters. If they remain in action a few days, it will be the effect of terror; but that cannot maintain itself, for the reason that it is as impossible as to build a self-supporting house in the air, or, to select a comparison more plainly showing the genus of the chimera in question, as to take, from the whole, parts which, in the aggregate, are greater than the whole.

It may be thought to attain the end by diminishing in a strong degree the number of hours of labour; payment by the hour will be adopted. You fix the price of the hour: your imperative mandates will be disobeyed, because they cannot be conformed to; fraud is the reply of the governed to governors who command the impossible. Manual labour is a merchandise whose value is regulated like that of any other object.

It is as impracticable to fix by the arbitrary will of authority the diurnal value of manual labour as that of bread, meat, or iron. It would be very happy for industry if iron were only 5 centimes the *kilogramme*; unluckily it is not possible to make it at the price: suppose, nevertheless, that tomorrow, in its desire to favour industry in general, the Provisional Government decreed that iron should be worth 5 centimes the *kilogramme*; think you the decree would be obeyed? Every dealer in iron who dreaded violence would probably yield, but on the instant every ironfounder would extinguish his furnace. Behold what will be the indirect result in all kinds of production, sooner or later, of raising by law the wages of manual labour.

In the present state of affairs there is one forcible reason why the workmen should not persist in the demand they have made at Paris, in almost every trade, of having larger wages; it is, that there were never less means of increasing wages than just now. The disturbance we have just gone through has destroyed confidence. It is not the fault of any who now direct affairs if the word *French Republic* frightens those who possess any thing, who attach any value to the respect of property and person—those who like liberty otherwise than pasted on the walls; but

the French Republic (I speak of the first) excites the dismay of all these people, and they have witnessed with inquietude the return of the republican Government.

Confidence has disappeared, it has given way to panic. I hope that confidence may be restored ; it is the duty of us all to recall it ; but every thing indicates that it will be slow in reappearing. It is confidence that sustains capital, and that renders it capable of producing and distributing all that society requires for its existence. It is confidence that gives capital circulation and fertility. It comes to pass that with the same extent of land, of houses, of machinery, of roads, of canals, of railways, with the same supply of raw materials and manufactured articles, with the same intellectual capital, in talent, knowledge, and address, that we are all much poorer than we were yesterday. From the bosom of general improvement it is not possible to deduce better conditions of livelihood for fifteen or twenty millions of our fellow-citizens. Manufacturers, agriculturists, merchants, advocates, doctors, scholars, artists,—all who are not actual workmen are at this moment earning much less than a month ago. Is this the time for the workmen to demand an increase in wages ? The question is not to remunerate labour better, it is to have labour at all ;

and Heaven grant that a month hence it be not even scarcer than it is now.

By what law are wages regulated in lands where labour is free? By the abundance of capital compared to the number of labourers who require employment. Here, again, we find that eternal law of relation between supply and demand, which governs every transaction. A manufacturer has only enough capital to occupy one hundred workmen at the rate of four francs a head: two hundred offer themselves; if he must employ them all, he can only give them two francs, it is evident. Thus, the more the population increases in proportion to capital, the lower wages descend. They descend to the detriment of the public health despite the appeal to Christian charity, the cry of injured humanity. They become lowered, till the unhappy workmen are reduced to the *minimum* of subsistence, to the coarsest aliment. It is the history of Ireland, where, in proportion as population has multiplied, whilst capital remained stationary, the wretched peasantry have descended from the use of meat to that of dry bread; from dry bread to potatoes of good quality; from good potatoes, from the farinaceous potato, to the watery and fibrous potato, of which a given superficies renders the largest supply. It is horrible, but it is an inexorable



necessity. Where there is nothing, the king loses his rights, says the old proverb ; it is the same with the people, sovereign or otherwise.

Tribunes, philanthropists, preachers, distract your brains as you may, you will find no other solution than this ; frightful poverty where there are many hands and little capital. Decrees may guarantee labour, may guarantee wages ; impotent attempt ! Your guarantee will be vain unless you can create capital ; and you can only create it by accumulated labour, by saving, by abstinence, by patience. To decree a general increase of wages, or a real diminution of daily labour, whilst capital is not increased, is as chimerical as it is ephemeral. Take this manufacturer who employed two hundred labourers, you desire him to double his wages ; he consents, but he then employs only one hundred workmen. At the most, by a different division of his capital between the purchase of raw materials and wages, he may go as far as a hundred and fifty. What will you do with the fifty or hundred he has dismissed ? To that you reply, The State will give them work ; it will open *national workshops*. Good ; nevertheless, for these workshops capital is required : where will you get it from ? Capital is not to be raised, as Pompey boasted he could raise soldiers, by stamping on the earth. To pro-

vide the necessary capital for national workshops, the State must take or borrow from private industry ; but then the latter, having less capital, will be compelled to dismiss still more labourers. What you add on the one hand is taken away on the other in equal ratio, and, they demanding labour in their turn, you will never be at rest. It is the wheel of Ixion eternally revolving.

Then again, if wages are increased, the expenses of production are raised ; you must sell dearer, under penalty of loss, and then consumption is diminished. Production must consequently suffer the same fate ; hence fewer workmen can be employed. How will you remedy this ? Not by national workshops working with borrowed capital ; I have shown it to be impossible. However, there remains one expedient : draw upon the budget for the maintenance of the unemployed workmen. Behold the nation saddled with a poor-rate. This tax must come from the same source as the other imposts ; this will be so much subtracted from the national capital, for these 200 millions of francs, if you had left them to the tax-payers, would in a great measure have gone to increase the national capital, and the moment you distribute them to the unemployed labourers they are consumed and cease to exist. You oppose, then, the aim which you ought inflexibly to

pursue, if you would ameliorate the lot of the workmen. You ought to aid the increase of capital, and you diminish it. There are a variety of manufacturers which export their produce. France exports more than 100 millions' worth of woollen stuffs, as much cottons and silks, and Parisian fabrications to an enormous amount. As foreign competition presses heavily on the foreign markets, a very slight difference in price, 2, 3, or 4 per cent must secure the preference of the foreign purchaser in our favour. If wages increase otherwise than in the natural course of affairs, the free movement of transactions, our cost of production is increased, we lose our advantage in the foreign markets, and our outlets are closed. The numerous population of Paris, Lyons, Mulhouse, and twenty other towns which manufacture articles for exportation, remain without work. You imagine you have taken a step in advance, you have receded ten.

Is it possible to change at once the division made a few days ago between the fruits of labour, by giving more to the labourer and less to the capitalist? Many people reply in the affirmative; are they not deluded? Most certainly; it is one of those chimerical hopes, which, for their misfortune, myriads of workmen entertain. In a free state of society—and I presume that modern

society would preserve this title so painfully acquired, under the system of free labour, a freedom for which labourers have sighed for ages—the share of capital is determined by the same law of supply and demand which I have already quoted. When there is little capital, and many labourers, the profit of capital is great. When capital increases, its share of the fruits of labour is diminished. History bears out our assertion: what is called the interest of capital goes on diminishing in proportion as civilisation develops its riches. And thus we fall back upon the conclusion, to which we had arrived by another road: if you desire that capital should receive a smaller share of produce, make the proportion of capital to the number of labourers greater. There is no other road of escape.

Let us go further and calculate what might be done, not only by a reduction, but by the total suppression of the capitalist's profit. It is an exaggeration, according to all appearance, to estimate the total material produce of *France* at ten *milliards*\*. Suppose to-morrow that by a revolutionary decree the communist system were established in France, that the whole capital of the country were confiscated for the benefit of the State, and that each of the 35 millions of

\* £400,000,000 sterling.—*Translator.*

Frenchmen had to take his equal share of the 10 *milliards*, that would be per head 78 centimes (not quite 8*d.*) a day. Each unmarried workman would be placed on 78 centimes daily; I know few in Paris who would be content with such treatment, even at the hands and in the name of the Republic. A family composed of six persons would receive 4 francs, 68 centimes (nearly 4 shillings), very little, compared to a multitude of labourers. But it may be said, production would immediately expand its wings, and the 10 *milliards* would rise quickly to 15, to 20. It is a thousand times more probable that, under the influence of terror, confusion, and the disorders and riots of every kind caused by this grand spoliation, it would descend to 6 or to 5, and that this great overthrow would establish speedily an equality, not of comfort, but of want.

There are pretensions which one alludes to with regret, but which it is nevertheless requisite to cite, since they belong to the history of these times. Such is the plan provisionally adopted in some factories of doing away with piece-work, and setting all indiscriminately to work by the day. Bad workmen gain something by this change; but the dexterous and industrious workmen, the fathers of families who, inspired by their love for their children, undertook a small matter and com-

pleted it satisfactorily, can only be losers. It is a violence exerted by the man least interested upon him who is deserving of esteem and care. I wish too we could tear from the annals of French liberty the page where History, inflexibly just, must inscribe the fact, that, in an excess of savage patriotism, Frenchmen demanded that their brethren, the English workmen, should be dismissed, and that they obtained their request.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF LABOUR.

Three years ago I had a public discussion with M. Louis Blanc on the subject, on the publication of his book under this title. This discussion commenced, and, pursued with politeness on my part, was abruptly terminated, after some exchanges of arguments, by a letter which M. Louis Blanc addressed to me in his journal—an epistle of the kind which, in the days of Louis XIV., a duke or peer of the most ancient quarterings might have addressed to a man of letters, or, to speak the language of the time, to one of those beggars who,

“For having been in print and bound in calf,”

thought themselves entitled to criticise great lords. M. Louis Blanc felt in himself the stuff of which dictators are made, and knew that it was reserved for him to become shortly one of the most active members of a decemvirate, which

should dispose of France with sovereign powers, and make statutes for the form of government, and the political and social interests of the country. I must confess my error, I had no suspicion of the destinies that awaited my adversary. I took him for what I was myself, a writer, and my peer save in the difference of talent ; for I have always regarded M. Louis Blanc as a man possessing much, and I do not hesitate to own that I have, on the contrary, nothing for me but goodwill.

M. Louis Blanc will condescend to allow me to resume this discussion with him, interrupted by his will in February 1845 ; it is urgent. I forewarn the reader to take in good part the observations I am about to offer. I have always thought it right to speak low of one's government in a tone of respect ; the very interest of society requires it. Let us then examine quite respectfully the system which has had the good fortune to have M. Louis Blanc for its interpreter. To know precisely in what it consists, I shall take care not to substitute my own style for the words of M. Louis Blanc. I shall quote literally from his work. Behold, then, the chapter with which he concludes the Organization of Labour\*.

\* See translation by the present writer, published by Mr. Clarke (p. 78).

“The government should be regarded as the supreme regulator of production, and invested with great strength.

“This task would consist even in availing itself of competition, that competition might be destroyed.

“The government should raise a loan which might be applied to the foundation of *social factories* in the most important branches of the national industry.

“This foundation, requiring the investment of considerable funds, the number of original factories would be rigorously circumscribed ; but, by virtue of their very organization, as will be seen in the sequel, they would be gifted with an immense power of expansion.

“The government, being considered as the only founder of the *social factories (ateliers)*, must also provide them with laws.

“All workmen giving guarantees of good conduct to be admitted to work in the social factories, as far as the original capital would provide instruments of labour.

“Although the false and anti-social education given to the present generation renders it difficult to find elsewhere than in a surplus of remuneration a motive of emulation and encouragement,



the wages to be equal—an education entirely new, changing all ideas and customs.

“For the first year following the establishment of social factories, the government to regulate the hierarchy of each man’s functions. After the first year it would be different. The workmen having had time to appreciate one another, and all being equally interested, as will be seen, in the success of the association, the hierarchy would proceed on the elective principle.

“Every year, an account of the net profits to be made out, and divided into three portions. One to be equally divided amongst the members of the association. A second to go, in the first place, to the support of the old, the sick, and the infirm ; secondly, to the alleviation of the crises weighing upon other branches of industry—all labour owing mutual support to its fellows. The third, lastly, to be devoted to the furnishing of instruments of labour to those desirous of joining the association, so that it might extend itself indefinitely.

“Into each of these associations formed for trades, which can be exercised on a large scale, could be admitted those belonging to professions whose very nature compels those pursuing them to spread themselves and to localise. Thus each social factory might be composed of various trades grouped about one great centre, separate parts of the same

whole, obeying the same laws, and participating in the same advantages.

“Each member of the social factory to be at liberty to dispose of his wages at his own convenience; though the evident economy, and incontestable excellence of living in community, could not fail to generate in the labour-association the voluntary association of wants and pleasures.

“Capitalists to be admitted into the association, and to receive interest for their capital, to be guaranteed by the budget; but not to participate in the profits, unless in the capacity of workmen.

“The social factory once established on these principles, the result is easily seen.

“In all capital industry, that for example of machinery, of cotton, or of printing, there would be a social factory competing with private industry. Would the struggle be long? No; because the social factory would have the advantages over every individual workshop, which results from the economy of living in community, and of an organization by which all the workmen without exception are interested in producing well and quickly. Would the struggle be subversive? No; because the government would be always at hand to deaden its effects, by preventing the produce of its workshops from descending to too low a level. At present, when an individual of great wealth

enters the field with others less wealthy, the unequal contest can only prove disastrous, because an individual seeks only his personal interest ; if he can sell at half the price of his rivals to ruin them, and remain master of the field of battle, he does it. But, when in the place of this individual stands the ruling power itself, the question changes its complexion.

“The ruling power, such as we wish it, would it have any interest in overturning industry, in confusing all means of living ? Would it not be, by its nature and position, the born protector even of those with whom it maintained a pious competition with the view to reforming society ? Hence, between the industrial war which a great capitalist now declares against a little capitalist and that of the government in our system against the individual, no comparison is possible. The former necessarily induces fraud, violence, and all the evils which iniquity carries in its train ; the latter would be conducted without brutality, without stratagems, in a way simply to attain its end, the successive and pacific absorption of individual by social workshops. Thus, instead of being, like the great capitalist at present the lord and tyrant of the market, the government would be simply its regulators. It would avail itself of the weapons of competition, not for the sake of

violently upsetting individual industry, which it would be, above all, interested in avoiding, but in order gradually to lead it to a composition. Soon, indeed, in every sphere of industry in which a social workshop should be established, workmen and capitalists would hasten to avail themselves of the advantages which it would present to its associates. After a certain period would be produced, without usurpation, without injustice, without irreparable disasters, the phenomenon which is now so deplorably brought about by force of tyranny for the profit of individual selfishness. A very rich capitalist can now, by aiming a great blow at his rivals, leave them dead upon the field, and monopolise a whole branch of industry. In our system, the State would by degrees render itself master of all industry, and, instead of monopoly, the result of our success would be competition defeated, and—association.

“Let us suppose this end attained in some particular branch of industry ; suppose the manufacturers of machines, for instance, induced to place themselves at the service of the State, that is, to submit to the principles of common regulations. As the same trade is not always exercised in the same place, and has different centres, there would be established, between all the factories of the same class, the system of association established

in each particular factory; for it would be absurd, after having destroyed competition between individuals, to allow it to subsist between corporations. There would be in every sphere of labour which the government had brought under its influence a central factory, from which all the others would depend as supplementary *ateliers*."

If I were allowed to condense into these lines this exposition, I should say that the organization of labour of M. Louis Blanc consists in the following innovations: 1st, the suppression of competition; 2nd, saving a period of transition, absolute equality for all, without the dexterity or activity of each being taken into account; 3rd, the abolition of all profit on capital beyond the legal interest; 4th, the election of the leaders and sub-leaders of industrial operations by their inferiors.

In all conscience I think this summary would suffice for the condemnation of the system by any one having the least knowledge of what factory labour is, or who knows how the human heart is made, and what are the habitual motives of men in their affairs.

Under this organization of labour, production would gradually diminish. There would be much less produce to divide, consequently much more poverty. The cause is easy to divine: nobody

would be directly interested to give himself trouble, or would be urged to exertion by the rivalry of his neighbour.

M. Louis Blanc believes that his social factories would be endowed "*with an immense power of expansion,*" and that none of the present industrial establishments could sustain a long contest against his. I appeal to any one who has ever directed a factory. I declare myself beforehand converted to the doctrine of M. Louis Blanc, and I engage myself to become the apostle of his organization of labour, if, amongst all the inhabitants of Paris, to whom manufacturing is familiar, he can find three who are of opinion, that a factory so constituted could sustain for three months the competition of others without filing its schedule.

The absolute equality of payment, whatever the work done, would be an extreme injustice. M. Louis Blanc has adopted it, because he thinks that the sentiment of duty is, in trade, a sufficient motive to excite men to work hard and well. There lies his capital mistake—a mistake which does him honour, since he has taken it from his own mind, devoted entirely to the public good; but a surprising error on the part of a man who has studied history and morals. Industry, as well as all other social institutions, presumes assuredly the sense of duty; but it also presumes more par-

ticularly the sense of personal interest. The law, politic and religious, recommends to mankind their duty, and glorifies self-sacrifice. Society would fall into decay if self-sacrifice and abnegation did not receive the homage of mankind. Raise statues to Cincinnatus, offer palms to martyrs—but do not expect that in the ordinary circumstances of life, in the questions of meat and drink, the human race will adopt and imitate the virtues which the elect have displayed on the most solemn occasions, the one for the advantage of his country, the other for the glory of God under the empire of an exalted religious enthusiasm. In his daily business a man follows the inclination of his interest. The human heart is so constructed.

So much the worse for the human heart, M. Louis Blanc would say. No; so much the worse for your system, we reply.

But, says M. Louis Blanc, you misunderstand my system; *all the labourers, without exception, are interested in producing speedily and well.* Yes; doubtless the entire mass of labourers in its indivisible unity is interested in the productiveness of its labours; but nobody is individually interested in being laborious or zealous, for the individual cannot receive the reward of his personal efforts; he does not receive more than the ten thousandth or hundred thousandth part. It is

like receiving nothing at all. This system would annihilate human personality by drowning it in a confused pantheism. Of each of us it would make what the law makes of a convict, a number. Industry is a domain assigned to the sentiment of individualism. The mainspring of production is individual interest, excited by personal payment, and manifested by competition, just as capital is the wheel-work ; and it is on that account that you disorganize industry by suppressing individual interest, just as you absolutely destroy a watch by taking away the spring.

Believe me, leave in their places each of the sentiments inscribed on the human heart ; do not displace them ; it would be like transplanting the flowers of the Antilles to the icy climate of Greenland, or removing to the warm plains of the tropics vegetables, which nature intended for the pale sun of Iceland. Do not require that the sentiments which animate us when we approach the Forum, where the sacred interests of our country are discussed, or in the solemn moments when our thoughts are absorbed in the Supreme Being, should follow and inspire us when attending to our trades and stipulating for our private interests. You will not obtain your requirement, because it has never been so, never will be so. Cincinnatus himself, the model of patriotic disinter-



estedness, when selling his corn, exerted himself probably like another to get the best price from the buyer. Cato the elder, the man of devotion in politics, was, in private life, very careful ; and St. Paul—the great St. Paul—certainly a most disinterested man, would have been less alert when at his business as a tent-maker, if he had not felt that his daily bread depended on his individual labour.

True equality, that which our fathers proclaimed in 1789, applauded by the whole world, has nothing in common with this phantom which you present to the regards of the fascinated multitude at your heels. The French are equal, that is to say, the French nation is one, public distinctions belong to talents and services, whatever the birth. That signifies that the State gives to all interests an equal support, that it is bound equally to protect the fields of one, the rents of a second, the labour of a third, who has neither land nor rents. The meaning of this fruitful and generous equality is, that by the instruction it spreads the State should prepare all men to be useful to society and to themselves, and that a vast and liberal system of national education ought to seek carefully in the hamlets as in the cities, amid straw and rags as under the roof of opulence, superior natures of whom society has

need, in order to develop them and render them worthy of becoming the depositories of the destinies of the country. But to submit to the same material existence all men, without exception, from the dignitaries of the State down to the humblest workman, is one of those chimeras which are not allowed even to the raw collegian whose innocent fancy dreams of the black broth of the Spartans—far, however, from the refectory, and with well-satisfied appetite. What! the President of the American Republic should lodge, not in the elegant palace of the successors of Washington, but in a numbered chamber like the lowest citizen; should eat from a wooden bowl the common pittance of the rest of the world; should seek relaxation from his grave anxieties on the public green at the same games as the vulgar! When he meditated on the affairs of his country, he should have around him, for inspiration, the household utensils, and the cries of children! This equality would be the vilification of all that is noble and pure in the world.

This system, like many of the ideas now in vogue, is no more than a passionate reaction against the inequalities formerly existing. It would organize the oppression of superior by common natures; active, intelligent, and devoted men, by selfish egotists, fools and sluggards. To use

an expression consecrated by the decrees of the Provisional Government, it would be the *exploitation* of good workmen by bad. It is not to arrive at this that we effected the revolutions of 1789 and 1830; nor will it be the ultimatum of that of 1848.

Competition causes cheapness; it is a truth become proverbial. Now, what is cheapness, if it be not the enfranchisement of the poor man? Competition is the stimulant of industry, and it is by competition that improvements are discovered and propagated, so advantageous to the great mass. Suppress competition, and torpor succeeds to the ardent activity, which is the characteristic of modern industry. Competition is the industrial form of liberty, of that liberty for which our fathers were inspired in 1789, which they conquered for us by such heroic labours, at the cost of so many sacrifices. Systematically to condemn competition is to reject the immortal principles of 1789; it is to require that our country, beating its breast, ask pardon of the human race for having led it into error, and retrace its steps with shame upon its brow.

But, says M. Louis Blanc, competition is the plague of society. According to his views, not only is competition fatal to the workman, but also to the *Bourgeoisie*. Competition, in fact, has

its abuses, the arena of competition is bestrewed with ruins. How many legitimate hopes have been by it overthrown—how often the prospects of a family annihilated! I do not disguise, I deplore it. But has not the progress of liberty been also covered with ruins? Infamous deeds have defiled the holy soil, it has been inundated with blood. The horrible guillotine was for a time inaugurated by it—sanctified even, for they talk to us of the *holy guillotine*. Is that a reason for cursing liberty? Why make the principle of competition answerable for the lies and evil deeds accomplished in its name?

There is abuse in all things, even the finest principles; but it is to abuse one's own reason to imagine that it is possible to arrive at a social organization where violence and fraud will cease to exist. The point is, that the good be not sacrificed to the bad, and, on the other hand, that good itself triumphs over evil. Hence, all things considered, it is what must happen when industry places itself under the flag of liberty or competition; for I cannot too often repeat that competition is but the industrial form of liberty. Competition, like a goad, incessantly urges society towards a state of things in which the quantity of produce will be at length sufficiently great, that each may have the share which humanity

demands ; it is under its pressure that industrial improvements are brought forth, and the general and absolute character of all improvements in industry is to multiply the produce of labour. The goad is sharp, and sometimes inflicts cruel wounds : it must be tried how far it is possible to render these wounds less painful, and to cure them without blunting the spur, and without it ceasing day and night to act as an energetic stimulant ; but to put it down, as M. Louis Blanc proposes, is simply to decree an eternity of want for the great mass of mankind. The forward march of industry would stop short altogether.

Neither nations nor individuals must flatter themselves that they can have a tent pitched for sweet slumbers abounding in pleasant dreams ; we are here to struggle, to be tried, and progress is the fruit of struggle and trial.

It is necessary not only that society advance, but that it subsist, that the social system be conformable to the fundamental conditions of human nature : the system of M. Louis Blanc mistakes them ; he should respect, and his system violates justice. In a word, in this system, evil governs good, and crushes it. Under the *régime* of liberty and competition it is otherwise. It remains only to be seen whether it is not possible to repress that proportion of evil by which

in our days liberty and competition are accompanied.

Behold me at length on ground where I may come to an understanding with the Socialists, perhaps even with M. Louis Blanc himself. I have insisted on the necessity of maintaining competition for the sake of the future prospects of the workmen themselves; but because a principle is good, or even excellent in itself, there is no necessity to follow it to extremes without looking about one. The men who guide society advocate many principles, all equally worthy of respect, which apparently exclude one another, but which have each their part to perform. We can, thanks to Heaven! regulate one by another these principles seemingly so exclusive, and employ them like mechanical forces more or less divergent, which resolve themselves into one final unity of power as result. Just as political liberty must be wedded to the principle of order, without which it would be subject to fatal mischances, so the most notorious evils of competition may be softened by the intelligent application of a principle justly celebrated with enthusiastic praise by all socialist schools—the principle of association.

Thus M. Louis Blanc is wise in recommending to workmen, for the enjoyment of the fruits of

their labour, a life in community. The social system applied to consumption affords a very remarkable economy, and consequently permits each to multiply comfort and pleasure with an equal amount of resources. By association that which, when isolated, was destitution may be changed into a very passable existence. This is not the only benefit to be derived from the principle of association. Association is possible even in production; it is there yet more desirable than in consumption. Before entering into some explanations on this head, I feel the necessity of showing that what I now say is not with me an opinion of circumstance; and that it is not in resignation that I rally to its standard. This is what I wrote in 1841, in a pamphlet against the fortifications of Paris, which the Chambers were then discussing, and I have frequently since reproduced the same idea.

“Within, the dynasty was called on to build up, conformably to the new spirit of the times, a calm and happy society with elements scattered and divided like grains of sand, which have left seeds of disturbances without example. It ought to have given to the people, with full hands, well-being, light and morality, calling to aid, industry, science, and art, and invoking those supreme ideas, beyond which we may seek in vain happiness for

individuals, or stability for thrones and empires. It had to permanently realise, by the regular road of politics and labour, that admirable union of the middle classes and the workmen which made so splendid a revolution of the memorable drama of the Three Days. On the face of the edifice it ought to engrave the principle of equality, the inalienable conquest of half a century of struggles and adventures, the golden fleece brought back from so laborious a pilgrimage—organic equality, that they may not end with an equality of anarchy. In a word, the *task of the dynasty within, a task difficult and tedious, worthy to occupy generations of kings and statesmen, was the organization of labour*, if we may use a term which factions have perverted. This liberal and organizing policy is antipathetic to the martial system ; it necessarily presumes peace, it is not possible otherwise." (*The Fortifications of Paris, Letter to Count Molé, p. 13\*.*)

\* In recalling here what I then wrote in making my débüt in the instruction of political economy, I do not intend to claim a patent of invention. If it is any merit to have proposed the organization of labour by the means of association, I share this merit with all modern economists. Read them all; you will find in the lectures of M. Rossi, as in the lessons of M. Walouski, in the works of MM. Droz and Dunoyer, as in those of M.



But this organization of labour, this mode of association between the middle classes and the workmen—what can it be? Not the organization proposed by M. Louis Blanc, for that abuts on impotence and tyranny, as I have demonstrated. On impotence, because, instead of multiplying produce, it would restrain the quantity by destroying the very spring of production; on tyranny, because the superior natures would be crushed and enslaved, and the drones of the hive would absorb by right the hardly earned honey which the industrious workers had collected. The association required ought, above all, to be on this basis—that all individual reward or payment depend on the amount of individual services rendered.

Hasten at once, the reader will say; time presses, and the house is on fire. If the fire is in the house, make the house part of the fire. It is to be hoped that it will not require too much; for reflection comes, and all the world is thirsting for calm. If a great conflagration burst out, it will consummate the ruin of all the world, including the workmen. This the workmen feel, and it is from this motive that I do not believe in the gene-

Blanqui, M. Faucher, M. Fise, all the masters of the science, in fine, that association is a principle of admirable power; that it cuts the knot of the social difficulties of modern times.

ral overthrow of the social edifice. As for me, I confess I look around me without yet seeing any plan that can be adopted with the least confidence for the organization of labour. We shall not arrive at this discovery than as Columbus discovered the new world, after having long vainly demanded and hoped a vessel, and after a long and perilous voyage. The vessel, please God, we have already ; behold the commencement of the voyage ! I repeat what I said in 1841, it is a difficult and tedious task, and to accomplish it requires the successive efforts of *generations*. Soundings and experiments will put us on the track, and we ought to row with all our strength each time that a brilliant gleam of light points out the path in the midst of darkness. The agitations of events drive us towards the goal of our pilgrimage, not always without interrupting our course. It is thus that we go on since 1789 with a movement like the rising tide of the sea, whose level rises, although a recoil follows each advancing wave. Since for a month past we have plunged into the greatest adventures, there is no reason for refraining from lesser ones ; it is even very appropriate to undertake them. I have no faith in the system of M. Louis Blanc, I have already said. I have not much more in Fourierism. I honour and admire Fourier, but I see only in his works

romances calculated to render association, its moral, appreciated ; and I only admire them for the moral they inculcate.

Nevertheless, in the present circumstances, the appointment of five, six, or ten millions to found an association according to the ideas of M. Louis Blanc, by way of experiment, appears to me to suit the taste of the day. It would be an experiment from which instruction might be derived. It would be also a pledge of the good-will of the government in favour of honest innovators, and a means to calm the impatience which assails us.

Although there be not a new plan for the organization of labour, by which we can to-morrow establish factories and regulate the claims of each, do not let us despair and make ourselves yet poorer than we are. And first, let us understand clearly what organization of labour means. This phrase, to which so many vague desires are attributed, which is inscribed on so many banners now boldly displayed, has never been clearly defined by those who have most contributed to bring it into fashion, and it is perhaps to this circumstance that a great portion of its success is owing. Men, especially the unhappy, attach themselves in preference to that which is mysterious, because then their exalted imagination sees, amid the clouds surrounding the images it presents, all that can

solace their woes and change their sufferings into joys.

The organization of labour, taken in its largest acceptation, ought to consist in a union of institutions offering to the labourer efficacious assistance in all the positions he traverses, from the moment of his birth till his departure for a better world. It is not, then, merely an institution by favour of which his labour may be equitably remunerated ; it embraces all that is requisite to protect his infancy, to form his youth, to encourage his maturity, and to support his old age. Well ! modern society, which dates from 1789, and which then adopted a device from which it will never separate—liberty, offers numerous elements with which to fill the hollow of this vast framework. For infancy—the crib, the asylum, the school ; for youth still school and apprenticeship, the inspection ordained by law of the labour of children ; maturity, engaged in active life, finds a still greater variety of tutelary aids. And then let us speak respectfully of the savings-bank, which does not confine itself to collecting during prosperous times resources for evil days, or for the epoch when the gates of the factory are closed to the workman exhausted by years, nor even to inducing the workman to increase the national capital by becoming himself a capitalist. The savings-

bank has an admirable effect on the morals of the man. As soon as he has made a deposit in the savings-bank, the workman acquires a regularity of conduct, if he have it not already. Property is to the labourer what the contact with the earth was to the giant in the fable, a source of strength. From that moment he knows what it is to foresee; the future has in his eyes a meaning, life an end. Besides the savings-bank, the mature workman has the mutual benefit society. Prompt, impartial, and economic justice is guaranteed to him by the committee of elders. The adult classes offer him a means of refreshing his knowledge, or even being instructed from the first if he has been too much neglected in his infancy. For his old age there ought to be a pension-bank\*, which has been tried in a very imperfect form in England; and which, for some years, honourable citizens have prepared for France. And, lastly, the Revolution of February has brought out the idea of participation in the profits of the establishments they are employed in by workmen, which answers to the communistic idea of organization of labour.

That there exists even in germ sufficient sources

\* Insurance societies grant deferred annuities, to commence at any given age, on very fair terms, for present weekly payments, with several other advantages.—*Translator.*

developed to satisfy the wants of all, I do not maintain, since I have mentioned the annuity bank, which has but very tardily been honoured with a projected law, and especially the participation in profits by the workmen which only exists in perspective, and with regard to which a law would be at present of infinite difficulty to arrange, if it were desired to make it general, and not to do violence to property, or compel liberty to veil her countenance. It is especially to be noted that the network of the organization of labour, even in its incompleteness, of which I have recalled the principal features, is far from being spread over the whole country. Much is required, that all or even a majority of men should participate in these benefits. There should be twenty times more asylums, and then there would not be enough. A prodigious advantage, nothing less than a reform in morals, is to be expected from these touching reunions, and the schools which ought to follow them. The schools of the present day are but the shadows of what they ought to be. It is a head under which at least twenty millions should be added to the budget. I speak of primary schools, which should form for us agriculturists, which we could without blushing place at the side of the cultivators of Great Britain or Ohio, and workmen who should

be the worthy brethren of those of Massachusetts. The law respecting the labour of children in factories has received up to-day but a derisive sanction; we require one serious and grand as the interest it should protect. Will the savings-banks, which had such success that at Paris their clients embraced the sixth part of the population, will they recover from the blow which the penury of the treasury induced the Provisional Government to inflict on them? This ought not to be neglected. The mutual benefit societies have to be extended chiefly in the provinces, for at Paris they are already numerous; they have also to reform their rules, which are defective, and rest on false calculations. The *prud'hommes* (literally *honest men*, the councillors of the society, here) should extend their beneficial jurisdiction. Societies of foresight, such as that which rendered such great services at Lyons, by giving useful employment to unoccupied hands during the commercial crises of 1837 and 1840, should be effected in our other manufacturing towns. The institutions for giving credit to workman, are reduced to the *monts-de piété*\* (government pawn-

\* It is much to be regretted that similar institutions do not exist in England for lending money to the poor, at the lowest rate of interest, instead of the usurious extortion of the present system.—*Translator*.

brokers). It is requisite that the workmen to procure some little money, not only in times of difficulty, but under ordinary circumstances, should find some institutions that would assist at less cost, and which should be less distrustful and better supplied with means. Lyons again is here the model we would cite for a hundred others of our towns; there was, and I presume still is, a loan office which advanced money to well-known workmen on their word, without requiring the deposit of their goods, which nevertheless served as security for the loan. Doubtless some day France will not yield to Scotland in this respect, where an honest workman can obtain with the guarantee of a friend a credit opened to his honour, in order that he too may become a master workman in his turn.

We are then, since 1789, in train to form for ourselves an organization of labour, truly excellent and worthy of envy. The new form of government, which France has just admitted, will hasten the progress of this work, which proceeded much too slowly; I say this now, because I said it a thousand times before the month of February 1848. All the world ought to aid in the work, because all the world is interested in it. It is not only a question of the honour and reputation of the country; all our safety is implicated in it.



We have to choose between a frightful anarchy, where all, even the national independence, may perish, and the majestic union of all citizens for this grand and excellent work, this patriotic act of reparation.

As for the participation of workmen in the profits of industry, in which alone many people make the organization of labour to consist, it presumes a revolution in all our customs. I admit that political revolutions, when deserving this lofty title, lead to a transformation of customs similarly qualified. I believe thence, that this participation must gradually introduce itself into our habits; but many precautions are requisite, that the rights of property be not attacked. These precautions are requisite for the workmen themselves, for respect of property is necessary for the good of every one. I shall not attempt even vaguely to indicate the importance of this participation. I feel the problem to be beyond my strength. Nor shall I attempt to show the condition under which it should be enjoyed, nor the form it should take, to the end that it excite the active improvement of the arts and give more authority to the principle of justice, under the patronage of which, to remain strong, the workmen must ever place themselves; there is no real strength, then, in equity.

This participation is destined to change the character of industry by changing that of the mass of workmen. It will give them a dignity, a love of order, a spirit of good conduct, to which they cannot otherwise attain. The blind contests between masters and workmen, which occasion so many disorders, so much loss of vital forces, will then disappear, as by enchantment; and it is especially these motives of moral, political, of social order, that causes me so ardently to desire it.

In fact, the workmen must not expect from this participation an immediate increase of their gains. True as it is, that an association between all persons cooperating in the labour of a factory, from the master manufacturer to the worker with his hands, must have the effect one day of rendering industry much more productive, it is no less true that time is required for this amelioration. So long as capital differs little in amount from what it was yesterday, so long as the quantity of produce be not sensibly enlarged, the gains of the workman, composed of fixed wages and the addition which a participation in profits may make to those wages, will differ little from what it was. This is inevitable as long as liberty be maintained in society; if it be attempted to violate liberty, it is not an increase of wages that the workman will obtain; it is to a diminution of wages that it will

lead, by force of circumstances, which is more powerful than the decrees of governments, and petitions presented by armed hands.

What is essential, is to inaugurate this participation in a positive manner, by deeds. The organic dispositions to this end are little suited to combine with the actual state of ideas and customs ; but there are some great examples which cannot hesitate to come forward, in which the parties interested are already of accord as to this principle. It is known that, for some years past, the Orleans Railway Company, at the head of which is placed a man eminent by his talents and generous sentiments (M. F. Barthelemy), admits all its clerks to a share of the profits ; it had originally the intention to do the same one day for its workpeople, but was obliged to proceed by degrees. It seems certain, that the greater part of large public companies desire no better than to enter into this view. I am told, too, that many manufacturers of the first order are disposed to do the same. Every body knows that M. Leclair, contractor for painting, has already done so for years past.

By degrees, the authorities firmly supporting it, and opinion seconding with all its power, all manufacturers will contract the salutary habit of sharing profits with the workmen. In render-

ing justice to the Orleans Company, it is generally owned that the system they have adopted is susceptible of much improvement. As soon as possible the participation should be extended to every agent, to workmen as well as clerks; but that is all; it is also agreed that the remuneration ought to depend more directly on the extent of personal efforts and services, and that, in consequence, in the participation the workmen ought to be associated amongst themselves in distinct and homogeneous groups; these groups themselves subdivided, and the attempt made to go as far as possible down to the individual himself.

It is natural that the new custom should commence by joint-stock societies, because the authorities have a commissary to observe them, and their accounts are already subjected to certain conditions of publicity; they are obliged to deposit their accounts at the Tribunal of Commerce. Those now existing would have no objection to introduce into their rules a clause similar to that of the Orleans Company; and henceforth, when a new company is registered, the article could be inscribed officially, as is done with all dispositions which have acquired the force of precedents.

With these measures in favour of the workmen, it would be possible to combine others which

should exercise on their welfare a more immediate and general effect than at present. I will point out a few.

OF CERTAIN MEASURES CALCULATED TO ACCELERATE  
POPULAR PROGRESS.

Taxation is a deduction from the fruits of labour. Taxation is so much deducted from what individuals could have spared, of what they probably would have saved to form capital. When a nation pays 1,000,000,000 f. (about 40,000,000*l.*) of taxes, it may be boldly affirmed that, if aspiring fiscal pomp had not taken this sum from the pockets of the citizens, seven or eight-tenths of it would have gone to increase the national capital, would have prevented the population from suffering hunger or cold, or would have increased the portion set aside for pleasure. There is nevertheless a part of the public taxes which serve to enlighten the nation, to elevate its sentiments, or again to give to labour the facilities which result from good channels of communication. This portion of the budget, taken from the national capital, returns to it as instruction, education, means of transport, all which is capital. We may even liken to capital that portion of the public expenditure which is strictly necessary for the

administration of justice, for the intelligent conduct of the political interests of the country, and the security of business and property. But this immense military apparatus that surrounds all governments to intimidate one another, or keep down the people—we know how well they succeed in that respect—all that goes to constitute and maintain it is subtracted from the national capital, and lost for the nation. The military budget of states is for three-fourths or five-sixths of the population a useless outlay, a criminal attack on capital, the material instrument of social progress; an odious satisfaction which the spirit of domination gives itself. I say so now, because before the Revolution of February I had frankly raised my voice against this fatal abuse\*.

The most palpable act of bad government with which the late ministry is to be reproached is the having increased without measure or reason the military expenses of France, to such a degree, that in 1848 we pay for the war we are not waging, and do not wish to wage, 200 millions (8,000,000*l.*) more than in 1831.

In their ambition the sovereigns of Europe have constantly maintained each in his hand an exaggerated military force, and they wait to regret,

\* Vide *Révue des Deux-Mondes*, 1st February, 1848, article on "The Relations of France and England."

like Louis XIV., till they are on their beds of death. It is thus that European governments have hitherto devoured the very substance of which the prosperity and grandeur of nations is formed ; and thus, after ages devoted to toil with so much ardour and intelligence, after eighteen centuries of Christian culture, Europe finds herself still so poor. Behold a comparison which will show the measure of the damage thus inflicted on all civilized nations. Look at France with its vast forces by land and sea, and the United States, which have but a microscopic army, and whose naval budget is a fourth of our own. On the one hand, place the account of all that France has spent for twenty years past for her military system, and on the other reckon all that the States and private individuals have given in the American Union to dig canals and construct railways, to found banks, to open schools, to launch for the use of trade the innumerable steam-boats which throng the rivers and lakes of the New World ; you will find that the former sum, that which France has paid for her military force, exceeds the latter which the United States have devoted to all the ameliorations which with them have raised to such a height the physical, intellectual, and moral condition of the great mass. We have sacrificed our capital to the demon of

war ; the United States have religiously left to its economies the destination which nature and good sense indicate, they have made capital. They have acted as a wise nation, they are recompensed by the well-being of their citizens ; we have committed or allowed the commission of follies, and we are punished by the restless poverty, agitated and *exigeante*, of a portion of our brethren.

Let us make up as far as possible for lost time. If, as is to be anticipated, the other powers reply by pacific demonstrations to the eloquent words addressed to them by M. de Lamartine, it will be essential for the sake of popular progress to diminish, as far as possible, the unproductive expenses of the state, and especially to reduce strongly the budget of the ministry of war and marine.

By what fatality does it happen that as soon as a cry of war is heard the workmen are the first to receive it with the greatest transport ?

Our administrative system, amongst other defects, is full of petty regulations of an infinite extent. With pretensions to liberty, we are more interfered with, and consequently, I do not hesitate to say, less free in our undertakings, than any nation in Europe. A compact despotism exists in France of dusty papers. The despotism of the *ancien régime* was overturned, that of Napoleon



succumbed as soon as military glory ceased to support it. Nevertheless the *bureaucratie* (official despotism) flourishes more than ever, and the last thirty years have served to give it the deepest root. We are compelled to render it an account of all our projects, to ask its permission for our slightest acts. It takes our demands with a nonchalant air, turns and returns them, and sends them at its leisure from one official to another. It exhausts our patience, keeps our activity on the rack, disappoints our most legitimate desires. Some years ago was published a list of the formalities which are necessary for a proprietor to go through, whose property borders on a river, to place there a ferry-boat. There are not less than forty or fifty despatches, and, following the ordinary course, it would last about as long as the siege of Troy. This monstrous abuse of centralisation, and the official spirit, is a great injury to the public. It is, besides, incompatible with liberty; but not to speak of the material effects of this *régime*, it may be represented under this form, that it deprives us all of half an hour, or an hour a day out of the eight or nine effective hours of labour. The result is then the same as if it despoiled society of the eighth, the ninth, or at least the sixteenth of its capital, of that

which gives us wealth, ease, or subsistence. I leave every one to draw his own conclusions.

Another matter is worthy of notice. Wages mean to most men the satisfaction of their wants, for it is not for the pleasure of handling a piece of money that the workman labours and receives payment; it is to eat, to drink, to clothe himself, and procure lodgings.

The two or three francs a workman gains daily, represent in his eyes a certain quantity of necessaries, especially food. We have examined whether it was possible by arbitrary decrees to augment wages, and the negative was demonstrated; but it is certain that by fiscal and other regulations, the proportion of food received by a workman for his money may be diminished, from what he would receive were he free, and living under a system which regarded his wants. Taxes justly unpopular, and custom tariffs contrived for the interest of a few, to the contempt of the general interest of society, have had this deplorable result. It thence happens to the working population precisely as if, the natural state of things being undisturbed by fiscal privileges, their wages had been lessened, or as if some law had confiscated, and thrown to the bottom of the sea, a part of the capital supporting the industrial activity

of the nation. A government really popular would abstain from all such inflictions, and reform with zeal all those found constituted on such principles. In the United States the hand of a legislator would wither rather than sign a law which tended to render dearer, under any pretext, meat and bread for the people. I have insisted in several preceding pages on the fact that the dexterity of the labourer, his taste for work, and his zeal, form a capital of rare power and great value. This capital has one peculiarity, it belongs exclusively to the workman. A popular government ought especially to aim at increasing this capital. There is a means by professional instruction, an instruction of which we have as yet in France but scattered and imperfect rudiments. One only of our great cities is well supplied with it, Lyons; and she owes it not to the munificence of the State, but to a legacy left by two of her children, the Major-General Martin, and M. Eynard. Add to these what she owes to the enlightenment and good sense of some of her citizens who have continued and put in action an admirable method of instruction, and an excellent plan of study and education\*. All our

\* I mention particularly the talented Captain Tabareau, author of the system, and Captain Montmartin.

great towns ought to have a school of the class of the *Martinière* of Lyons. Smaller institutions could be established in our smaller cities, and for the country districts we could imitate what several German Governments have done with success\*.

To conclude, we repeat once more that these ameliorations which would have been received with affectionate gratitude some years ago, which the workmen of Paris now demand, presented under impossible shapes, require for their realization the cordial union of all. They can only be effected under well-defined circumstances. They are like those beautiful crystallizations which to form their regular prisms and glittering pyramids require calm, and for which agitation only substitutes a mass of dust or confusion. Let us warn the workmen of this. They have demanded liberty—they have it; let them respect it in others. They complained of oppression—they make the laws; let them make them just for all; injustice falls ever upon the heads of its authors: but above all let them not be impatient. There was a people chosen by God amongst all, to make it the people of his love. This people had been placed in bond-

\* One of these projects was preparing before the revolution.

age by the Egyptians. God broke their chains, and promised to lead them to a land of abundance ; but he made them wander forty years in the desert, in order to prepare them worthily to enjoy the rivers of milk and honey, which the land of Canaan was to offer. We, too, have a journey to make before attaining to the system we look forward to, and which, if the public hopes be not vain, will make France the model of all nations by its prosperity and the dignity of its labourers. Patience is the attribute of the strong, impatience is that of children.

And if certain persons exert themselves to excite the popular passions, and let loose the crowd, under pretext that the amelioration should be sudden, that it must be had at all costs, even by the overthrow of the principles on which society has ever been founded, property and family, proclaim these words which *Franklin*, a workman who became a great statesman and philosopher, said to his fellow citizens :—

“If any one tell you that you can enrich yourselves otherwise than by labour and economy, do not listen to him, he is a poisoner.”



ADDRESSES  
OF  
M. LOUIS BLANC

TO  
THE COMMITTEE OF WORKMEN AT THE  
LUXEMBOURG.

TO WHICH IS ADDED  
THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

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LONDON :

H. G. CLARKE & CO., 278, STRAND.

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1848.





# ADDRESSES OF M. LOUIS BLANC,

DELIVERED AT THE SITTINGS OF THE 2ND AND 10TH MARCH, 1848, AT THE LUXEMBOURG, BEFORE THE DELEGATES OF ALL THE CALLINGS; TO WHICH ARE ADDED THE DECREES RELATING TO THE ORGANISATION OF LABOUR, AND THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF THE COMMITTEE OF DELEGATES.

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RESOLUTION OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

*Liberty—Equality—Fraternity.*

Considering that the revolution effected by, should be made for the people :

That it is time to put an end to the long and iniquitous sufferings of the labourers :

That the labour question is of supreme importance :

That no other is more grand, more worthy of the attention of a republican government :

That it belongs especially to France to study ardently, and to solve a problem now proposed to every industrial nation of Europe :

That the people ought to be guaranteed, without the slightest delay, the legitimate fruits of their labour :

The Provisional Government of the Republic resolves—

That a permanent Committee, to be called the *Government Committee for the Workmen*, be named for the express purpose of considering their condition.

To show the importance the Provisional Government of the Republic attaches to the solution of this great problem, it appoints one of its members, M. Louis Blanc, President; and another of its members Vice-President, M. Albert, workman.

Workmen will be called on to form part of the Committee.

The Committee will sit at the palace of the Luxembourg.

Armand Marrast.	Marie.	Louis Blanc.
Garnier Pagès.	Crémieux.	Ledru Rollin.
Arago.	Dupont (de	Flocon.
Albert.	l'Éure).	Lamartine.

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PROCLAMATION.

Citizens,—The *Government Committee for the Workmen* has this day entered upon its duties.

On those seats where lately were seated the privileged legislators, the peers of France, the people sit in their turn, as it were, to take material possession of their rights and mark the place with their sovereignty.

Workmen, your comrades have discussed before us and with us the interests most dear to you. They have done it with the calmness and dignity befitting free men. We have collected their wishes, and to the end that they be promptly realized, we have decided that each calling shall choose a delegate, who shall be called to the aid of the Government Committee.

Meanwhile, till the Government Committee find itself complete by the choice of delegates of the different callings, we are occupied in solving the questions relative to the hours of labour and the abolition of middlemen.

And now, citizens, hasten to resume your labours; reflect that an hour's delay is a treasure lost to your country; that you are one of the powers and solitudes of the Provisional Government of the Republic.

It loves you, have confidence in it, and rest assured that it is almost more eager for your welfare than you are yourselves.

The people have just gained by their courage a

victory for ever memorable ; let them immortalize their triumph by their wisdom.

*The Members of the Provisional Government  
of the French Republic.*

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*Resolved,*

On the report of the *Government Committee of Workmen :*

Considering,

1st. That too prolonged manual labour not only ruins the health of the workmen, but further, by preventing him from cultivating his intelligence, detracts from the dignity of man :

2nd. That the trade in workmen by workmen, as sub-contractors, called middlemen (*marchandeurs* or *tacherons*), is essentially unjust, vexatious, and contrary to the principle of fraternity :

The Provisional Government of the Republic decrees—

1st. The day's labour is diminished by one hour. Consequently, in Paris, where it was before eleven hours, it is reduced to ten ; and in the provinces, where it was before twelve hours, it is reduced to eleven.

2nd. The trading in workmen by the sub-contractors (or *marchandage*) is abolished.

It being well understood that associations of workmen not having for their object the trading in workmen by one another are not considered *marchandage*.

Dupont (de l'Eure).	Crémieux.	Marrast.
Arago.	Flocon.	Marie.
Albert (workman).	Garnier Pagès.	Ledru Rollin.
	Lamartine.	
	Louis Blanc.	

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ADDRESS OF M. LOUIS BLANC.

*Sitting of the 2nd March.*

You say that you are here animated by excellent sentiments, and I know it; but that there are outside many workmen who, perhaps, would not resume their labours unless they receive an immediate solution. Well, behold the mission I confide to your patriotism; spread yourselves through all quarters of Paris; say what you have seen; say that for the first time in your lives you have been spoken to of your real interests—that it has been for the first time declared to you that the law which governs the interests of the people should be made by the people themselves! Say whether you have felt some warmth in our

words, and whether our language has not given you the certitude that our conviction was sincere, unalterable. If I dared, I would tell you that we were more impatient than yourselves for your welfare, for we are more responsible.

The men who are amongst you are only responsible for their own families. We—we have accepted the redoubtable responsibility of guiding the happiness of all the families in France. Behold a great and difficult task, and one requiring some thanks for the men of courage who have taken it upon their heads.

To die on a barricade is heroic, without doubt ; to combat the enemy is also heroic ; but on these occasions one only answers with one's life. There are actions which require more firmness of soul—they are, to engage to answer for the lives of millions of men.

When we accepted this formidable responsibility, we felt in our hearts a force of conviction, a warmth of will which told us we should not succumb beneath this immense task. But this cannot be without your sympathy ; for in you is our strength ; this strength is your confidence, and we require it in return for our devotion.

The assembly separated in the midst of shouts of applause and Long live the Republic !

## PROCLAMATION.

Citizen Labourers,—The Government Committee instituted for preparing the solution of the great problems which interest you, will study to fulfil its functions with indefatigable ardour. But, however legitimate your impatience, the committee conjures you not to let your demands go on more rapidly than its researches.

All questions relating to the organization of labour are complex in their nature. They embrace a mass of interests which are opposed one to another, if not in reality, at least in appearance. They require to be entered on with clearness and fathomed maturely.

Too much impatience on your part, too much precipitation on ours, may compromise all.

The National Assembly is about to be convoked immediately. We shall submit to its deliberations the measures we are at this moment elaborating, with the firm resolution morally to ameliorate your condition ; measures on which your delegates will be called to give their opinions.

This National Assembly will no longer be a chamber of privilege ; it will be, thanks to universal suffrage, a living summary of the whole of society.

Have then firm courage and firm hope, but

even for your own sakes do not throw obstacles in the way of those who are decided to make the cause of justice triumph, or die for it.

LOUIS BLANC, *President of the Government  
Committee for the Workmen.*

ALBERT, *Vice-President.*

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#### PROCLAMATION.

Citizen Workmen,—The Government Committee appointed for you has need of your aid.

Eager to prepare by its studies that which is just, impatient to accomplish that which is possible, it calls you to assist its fraternal deliberations.

Proceed without delay to the election of your delegates.

You know the course to be pursued for that object ; the experience of the last days has proved to us that you have means very simple and orderly of concerting together ; and the admirable order displayed in all your manifestations gives us the certitude that you will choose your representatives without tumultuous assemblages or abandonment of your work.

We place the public peace under the protection of your wisdom, as we have placed our liberty under the protection of your courage.



Reflect only, that if your delegates were too numerous, their intervention could not profit you, because it would delay beyond measure the labours of the Government Committee.

We have resolved, after careful consideration, on the following arrangements :—

1st. Each calling will name three delegates.

2nd. Similar callings will arrange, as far as possible, to name the same delegates, and thus afford an example of their fraternal union.

3rd. The names of the delegates will be printed in the journals as a means of verification for all.

4th. A general assembly of delegates will take place at the Luxembourg, and the former chamber of peers, on Friday next, the 10th of March, at noon.

There we shall make known the measures to take, that the Committee proceed rapidly with its object ; for it is important not to lose an hour when the dearest interests of the people are concerned.

LOUIS BLANC, *President of the Government  
Committee for the Workmen.*

ALBERT, *Vice-President.*

6th March, 1848.

*Resolved,*

On the report of the *Government Committee for the Workmen* :

Considering that all the questions raised by the complex problem of the organization of labour cannot be resolved simultaneously and without delay ;

But that it is important, even now, and whilst awaiting the more efficacious measures which are to be shortly and successively proposed, to realize all the ameliorations consistent with the present state of things :

The Provisional Government decrees—

1st. That there be established in every mayoralty of Paris a gratuitous office of information.

2nd. These offices will prepare statistical tables of the supply and demand of labour ; they will facilitate and regulate the relations between those who seek employment on the one hand, and those who seek clerks or workmen on the other.

3rd. To this end two registers will be kept. In the first will be inscribed, under categories of callings, all demands of employment, with the name and address of the seeker ; in the second, the name and address of all those requiring workmen, taking care to mention the wages offered, and the conditions required.

4th. The Registers will be open to every citizen desiring to consult them.

5th. A Rule of the public administration will determine the organization of these gratuitous offices of informations.

*The Members of the Provisional Government.*

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SITTING OF THE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE FOR  
WORKMEN.

On the 10th of March, at two o'clock, in the ancient hall of peers, at the Palace of the Luxembourg, took place the general meeting of the delegates of the various corporations of Paris, to the number of about 250. The most admirable order reigned in this great assembly. No tumult, no confusion, examples of which had been so often shown in the same place and in another. The absent bell is not required. MM. Louis Blanc, and Albert, President and Vice-president of the Government Commission for the workmen, ascend together to the desk. As soon as M. Louis Blanc mounts the tribune, the most religious silence is established, and to the end of his speech there was no other interruption than that of applause. The effect produced by his words has been immense. M. Louis Blanc thus expressed himself:—

*Electors of Labour, Representatives of those who produce and suffer, my fellow-citizens, my brothers,*

On seeing you assembled within these walls, which privilege had chosen for her sanctuary,—within these walls, where so many laws have been made without you, despite of you, and against you, I cannot help feeling a profound emotion. In this same place where glittered the embroidered vests, behold garments which labour has nobly worn, which perhaps recent combats have rent.

You will remember, from the summit of the tribune whence I speak, a tribune of aristocrats evoked formerly against the republican idea the most sinister powers of the past, and at its voice the Peers of France rose up in indescribable transport; legislators with white heads displayed passions believed to be long asleep and frozen up. Here even the Republic of our fathers was cursed, they dared to forbid a Republic to our children, and every hand was raised to swear hatred to it for the future.

Well! in a few days the tempter has disappeared. Where are they now? Nobody knows, and in their place you, the elected of labour, are seated. Behold the answer of the future. (*Unanimous applause.*)

Behold how the future answered! Yes, a few days since and there were certain men, defenders

of the people, calumniated for its sake. They were called factious, impracticable men—dreamers. Well, it has proved, thanks to the victory of the people and to its courage, that those who were called factious are now charged with the responsibility of preserving order. (*Prolonged bravos.*)

It has proved that the dreamers have now in their hands the guidance of society. The impracticable are all at once become necessary men. They were denounced as the systematic apostles of terror. Hence the day the revolution forced them to the head of affairs, what did they do? They abolished the punishment of death\*, and their dearest hope is one day to be able to lead you to the public square, and share in the splendour of a national fête, to destroy of the scaffold its last remnants. (*Immense applause.*)

Thanks be to you, delegates of the people, by whom these grand things have become possible! thanks be to you! By you France will become what she never should have ceased to be, she will place herself anew at the head of the movement of Europe, and when the French family shall have been constituted, this family will become that of the world. (*Acclamations! cries of We swear it! we swear it!*)

I know, my friends, you permit me to call you

\* For political offences that is.—*Translator.*

so, do you not? (*From every side*; Yes, yes!) I know that the people ought not to be flattered. Let us leave courtiers to the sovereignty of kings, because their sovereignty rests upon baseness and fraud. (Bravo, bravo!) Justice and truth is alone due to the people.

It is impossible for me, although you are the delegates of the people, not to tell you that the conduct of the people this time has been admirable. I say so, because I speak as a free man, and should not have feared, had the people been unjust or violent, to blame them; but we must say it loudly, that Europe may know what the French people are when they rise up with the Republican idea in their heads, and the principle of fraternity in their hearts.

Yes, the people were admirable, not only by their courage, but by their resignation, which is the courage of suffering. Men have come here pale and hungry, demanding the labour we could not give them; and when we answered to them, sadly, "Wait, still!" we have seen them retire with calmness, in the greatest order, crying, "*Long live the Republic!*"

Behold a fault, not to be told without tears, one worthy of an eternal admiration!

*The whole assembly shouted by a spontaneous impulse, "Long live the people!"*

The questions to be investigated are not, unhappily, easy. To touch abuse is to threaten all. From one extremity of society to the other, evil forms a chain, of which it is impossible to destroy a ring without the whole chain being agitated: behold the difficulty of the situation, and it is no small one.

To give you a striking instance: on the morrow of the revolution what did the people demand? The diminution of the hours of labour: a touching demand, founded on heroic considerations. "We require," said the people, "a diminution of the hours of labour, that there may be more employment for our brethren in want of it, and that the workmen may have an hour, at least an hour, to live the life of the intellect and the heart." (*Explosion of applause*).

That was what was said to us; and instantly, without hesitation this time, after having weighed frankly with the heart the tendency of such an act, we said: "that must be done, happen what may (*renewed applause*), for a man cannot be treated as a machine; and if progress such as we imagine it, such as we hope gradually to realize; if this progress accomplish itself, the day must come when the intellect and the heart will have a greater share in the division of the hours of labour than the body, because the better part of

man is his heart and his intellect. (*Bravos, and applause.*)

But what! is not to diminish the hours of labour to affect production, to render produce dearer, to restrain consumption, to run the risk of securing in our markets for foreign produce a superiority which, in the end, might injure the workman himself? Let us not dissimulate; there is something very serious in this objection. It proves that the workmen are interested in setting bounds even to their most legitimate demands; it proves that to be promptly realizable the popular wishes must not be too impatient; it shows, finally, to what a degree, in the present economic organization, all partial progress is difficult of realization.

What instances could I not furnish! You know what deadly and inexorable competition machinery maintains with human labour, and how often, the instrument of combat in the hands of a single man, it has driven from the factory three, to whom labour supplied bread. Nevertheless, machinery is a progress. Whence then this tragical anomaly? From this, that in the bosom of industrial anarchy which now reigns, and in consequence of the division of interests, everything transforms itself into a weapon of war. Let individualism be replaced by associa-



tion, and the employment of machines becomes instantly an immense benefit; because, in that case, they would profit all, and supply labour without suppressing the labourer. (*Bravo! bravo!*)

You see the questions we have to consider must be regarded in their entirety. That which is to be sought for the day after to-morrow, to-morrow, in an hour, is the means of realizing association, of causing to triumph the grand principle of union of interests. This union must be possible in good, since it exists in evil. Society resembles the human body, of which one diseased leg renders the other useless. An invisible but real and fatal connection unites the oppressor to the misery of the oppressed. Yes, the moment comes sooner or later for this union to burst forth in terrible expiations. What has become of the King of France for the last fortnight? Who cares? He fled in a miserable state—I pause, knowing that misfortune should be respected. And yet when misfortune is merited to such a degree, it is well that it should serve as an example. To those who suffer an unjust misfortune, to those, above all, our fraternal pity, an immense pity! Let us resume, let us plead the cause of the poor; it is,—it can never be too often repeated—it is to plead the cause of the rich, of

the universal interest ! Thus we are not here the men of any faction. We love our country, we adore it, we have resolved to serve it by the union of all its children.

These are the sentiments, under empire of which the Government Committee for the workmen was instituted. It has been said that the time was come for the men who had the boldness to desire to rule others, to excuse themselves by dint of their utility ; it has been said, that at length, this grand definition should be assigned to power ; to govern is a sacrifice.

Shall I confess it to you my friends ? when I was named president of this committee, my heart, terrible as was the task to be fulfilled, trembled with joy and pride. I was about to find myself in the midst of those workmen whose lot had been the object of my dearest studies ! I was about to work with them at the realization of ideas which hitherto I could only confide to books without knowing whether they would ever triumph ! Yes, I confess it, I felt at that moment an immensity of pride. If it was wrong, forgive me : it is the happiness of my life ! (*Loud acclamations, cries of "Long live Louis Blanc !"*)

Now let me show you the true character of the mission confided to us. To study with care, with love, the questions relative to the amelioration,

whether moral or material, of your lot ; to arrange these solutions in the form of laws, which, after being approved by the Provisional Government, will be submitted to the deliberations of the National Assembly ; such is the end of the Government Commission for the workmen.

Need I add how august should be an assembly, before which should have been debated the grandest interests which have ever agitated mankind ? For is it not even a question of the abolition of slavery, the slavery of poverty, of ignorance, of evil ; slavery of the workman, who has no asylum for his aged father ; of the daughter of the people, who at sixteen abandons herself for a living ; of the child of the people buried alive at ten or twelve years old in a pestiferous cotton factory ? Is all that so conformable to the nature of things, that it would be folly to think it could be changed in a day ? Who would pretend thus to blaspheme progress ? If society is badly constructed reconstruct it. Abolish slavery ! (*Shouts of enthusiastic applause*).

But, once more, nothing is more difficult, nothing requires more profound meditation, more attentive prudence. Precipitation here might be fatal ; and to enter upon such problems we require the union of the energy, the enlightenment, and the good will of all.

Hence my friends the appeal we make to you—that we may study all, as members of one family.

You are here too numerous, you must well perceive it—that your permanent convocation and daily meeting would not be possible. A committee can only advance with rapidity in its labours with a limited number of members. We can thence only give, from time to time, to the assembly of delegates each important result of our labours. (Yes, yes ! very good !)

When a special question is brought forward relative to the workmen of this or that calling, we shall place ourselves in communication with the delegates of that calling. (*From every side—That is it !*)

*A Delegate.*—Are these ten delegates to represent the whole assembly ?

*The Citizen President.*—They will form a committee which you will name amongst you, delegates.

*A Member.*—Behold a very simple method of nominating this committee : we are here all delegates named by corporations of workmen. We are all brothers. Well ! to avoid all confusion and all contest, let chance decide between us, and let the ten names drawn compose the committee.

*M. Louis Blanc.*—The means are excellent, and most honourable for the feelings of all. (Yes,

yes!) Good! a ballot shall take place immediately.

We have then commenced our labours.

We shall continue them with the greatest activity, and, I have no necessity to add, with the greatest devotion. You may conceive that the men, who have undertaken the rough task of conducting affairs at so difficult a crisis, when there are so many obstacles to vanquish and so many implacable enemies to make, must have had a conviction of great force and firm resolution; this resolution is fixed in our souls—it is indestructible. We proceed then to the commencement of our labours with your concurrence, with your aid, with your information.

This is pleasant to proclaim. We have a noble mission to fulfil; the days of violence are, I hope, at an end.

In the first revolution, our fathers were grand; they were heroic: they exhausted all the bitterness of the work which we have to pursue by science and study. Firmness will not, be assured, fail us, patience still less. God and the people aiding, we will go on without vain fear of difficulties, without fatigue, without apprehension of the enemies of the public good, believing in progress with a resolute faith, whilst rendering to justice such homage, that it shall be impossible that her

reign do not arrive, and we succeed in founding on indestructible bases our grand and dear Republic. (*Universal applause.*)

M. Louis Blanc, being called out on urgent business, concluded—

Permit me to leave you now, but to meet again ; that is to say, at the first great problem to be solved, at the first patriotic act to be accomplished, hasten hither !

*(All the hall is in confusion, the workmen shed tears, yielding to irrepressible emotion.)*

Immediately after the departure of the President, they proceeded to a ballot for the formation of a permanent committee of ten members. An urn was carried from seat to seat by an attendant. Each member of the assembly placed in it a paper containing his name and address. When all the names were united in the urn, a member of the office, M. Vidal, mixed them for a long time, then drew six names in succession. M. Vidal having expressed the desire that the drawing should take place by the hands of a member of the assembly, cries of *No, no !* resounded through the apartment. M. Vidal then proposed that two members should place themselves at his side to watch the operation. This proposition was also unanimously rejected. *No, no !* the assurance of confidence, issued from every mouth.

Chance having pointed out several delegates of the same corporation, the members whose calling was already represented renounced with fraternal self-denial their right to enter into the committee, to the end that the greatest possible number of corporations should be there represented. These are the names of the delegates forming the committee.

*M. M. Phillippe Pointard*, button-maker, Rue de Menilmontant, 44 à Belville.

*M. Louis Perrin*, armourer, Rue de Provence, 2.

*M. Joseph Davoine*, spurrier, Rue Poplin court, 66.

*M. Pierre Barré*, carriage painter, Rue du Colyse, 9.

*M. Jean Celestin Legros*, carpenter and builder, Rue Bellefonds, 5.

*M. Gustave Bernard*, blacksmith, Rue des petits Hotels, 12.

*M. Charles Bremond*, shawl maker, Rue des Rosiers, 23.

*M. J. B. Médéric Hobry*, cooper, Rue et Ile de Saint Louis, 8.

*M. Xavier Chagniard*, iron founder, Rue Saint Charles, 5 à la Chapelle.

*M. Nicolas Arsene Mouton Labrat*, decorator, Rue de Séires, 82 à Vaugirard.

The assembly of workmen dispersed in perfect order,

## PROCLAMATIONS.

Considering that the workmen of the different callings have named delegates to sustain their interests :

That it is just that in their turn the patrons or masters of industry should be convoked :

Considering that the bringing together of classes, and a loyal examination of the rights and duties of each must mutually lead by fraternal accordance of wishes to the most desirable solutions, because at bottom all interests are one,

The President and Vice-President of the Committee of Government for the workmen, make known, that the assembly of delegates chosen by the masters, to the number of three for each profession, will take place on Friday next, 17th of March, at noon, at the palace of the Luxembourg. In consequence, the delegates of the chiefs of industry are invited to justify their powers the day before the convocation.

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The President and Vice-President of the Government Committee for the workmen have remarked with pleasure that many masters are animated with a sincere spirit of conciliation.

And, indeed, to call together for the examina-



tion of questions relating to the organisation of labour, the delegates of the workmen on the one hand, and the delegates of the masters on the other, is evidently to plan the most favourable issue for present circumstances.

The masters will very badly understand their own interests if they do not understand this truth ; and especially if they attempt to punish a workman for having obeyed the call of his comrades.

LOUIS BLANC, *President of the Government  
Committee for the Workmen.*

ALBERT, *Vice-President.*

## ADDRESS OF M. LOUIS BLANC,

ON THE ORGANIZATION OF LABOUR, BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE DELEGATES OF THE WORKMEN, AT THE LUXEMBOURG, APRIL 3, 1848.

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My friends, I have passed part of the day in my bed; I am very much fatigued and ill. If it should happen that my strength fall short of my intention, I claim your indulgence.

Your great business at this moment is to know the men who, in the future National Assembly, will best defend the interests of the people.

It is therefore important that you fix your attention on the ideas best calculated to secure without shocks or violence, but by a certain road, your enfranchisement.

The National Assembly will meet in a month's time. What questions will then be brought before the tribune? How will they be solved? It is of this I desire to speak to you. I come frankly to explain to you in all the sincerity of my heart

the ideas which I believe to be most pregnant ; I come to hold communion of sentiments with you, and to know whether we think—whether we feel in common.

It is some days since we discussed before the permanent Committee a project for the organisation of labour, which has been travestied by malevolent interpretations and interested comments, especially as regards the principle of equality of wages.

Well ! the system which in a summary manner we explained before thirty or forty people, must to-day be resumed by us, and developed before the delegates of the workmen, to the end that it reach by their means the ears of all men of the people.

Since the *Government Committee for the Workmen* has been installed, it has seen passed in review sufferings, the spectacle of which have almost terrified it, and not one of these sufferings which was not the lamentable but necessary result of the present constitution of society !

Thus, it is the safety of the whole of society, by the enfranchisement of labourers and the fertilization of labour, that the National Assembly will soon have to consider. The question is hard to solve, but it is imposed upon us all as the great and inevitable necessity of modern times. (*On*

*every side with emotion, Yes, yes !)* I am, for my part, so convinced of this, that long since I have vowed to myself not to abstract one day from my tempestuous studies, and the vow will be kept should I perish before the solution of the problem.

*(Several delegates rising and holding up their hands, And we too !)*

The principle on which modern society rests, is that of isolation and antagonism ; it is competition. Let us consider a little what such a principle can carry in its train.

Competition, I repeat, is the perpetual and progressive increase of poverty. And, in fact, instead of associating forces that they may produce the most useful results, competition perpetually places them in a state of warfare ; reciprocally annihilates them, destroying one by the other. Of what now-a-days, I ask, do the profits of every factory consist ? Is it not of the ruin of its rivals ? When a shop prospers, is it not because it has succeeded in tearing away like a prey the custom of the neighbouring shops ? (Bravo ! bravo !) What fortunes solely formed of ruins ! And of how many tears is often composed the good fortune of those we call happy ! (*Great applause.*) Is it then a good state of society, which is so constituted that the prosperity of the one fatally corresponds

with the sufferings of others? Is that a principle of order, of conservation of wealth, which makes of society a disorderly confusion of forces, triumphing only by the incessant destruction of opposing forces? (*From various parts of the room, Yes, yes! you are right!*) I thank you for this sympathetic interruption; for your attachment is a rampart, and your support a consolation amid all the attacks which recompense those who, from devotion to the public good, endure so many dangers and fatigues, attacks every day becoming more envenomed. (*Unanimous marks of approbation.*)

Competition is a source of general impoverishment, because it induces an immense and continual loss of human labour; because every day, every hour, everywhere, it reveals its empire by the annihilation of vanquished industry—that is to say, by the annihilation of capital, of raw material, of time, of labour employed. Good! I do not hesitate to assert that the mass of wealth thus devoured is so great, that any one who could at a glance measure its amount would recoil with horror. (*Bravo!*)

Competition is a source of general impoverishment, because it delivers up society to the gross government of chance. Is there under this system a single producer, a single labourer, who does

not depend on the closing of some distant factory, on a failure which takes place, on a machine suddenly discovered and placed at the exclusive disposal of a rival? Is there a single producer, a single labourer, whose good conduct, foresight, or wisdom can guarantee him against the effects of an industrial crisis? Competition compels production to develop itself in darkness, in speculation, with a view to hypothetical consumers and unknown markets. Hence an inexpressible disorder; from the impossibility of establishing between supply and demand that equilibrium whence arises wealth. Thus what do we see? For every market that remains deserted, another is deplorably glutted. It is impotence in confusion, poverty by chaos. And what security is possible under such a system? When I say that competition reduces industry to a murderous lottery, am I to be answered, as by the English economists, "*so much the worse for those who have drawn blanks!*" Yes, anarchy is established, and be assured that it is ruin, and that the ruin will come sooner or later—in a year, in two years, on a given day, which may be for example the 24th February, 1848. (*Prolonged cheering.*) A great lesson, which proves that no means exist to elude this invincible law of human union! A terrible lesson cry-

ing to men, "You would not endure union of interest in good, you shall submit to it in evil fortune!" (*Energetic and unanimous applause.*)

Competition is a cause of general impoverishment, because it renders necessary a herd of parasitical beings, who exist only by the disorder it creates. If society were founded on the principle of fraternity, which I loudly proclaim is the true source of riches, where would be the necessity of so many offices, which now consist only in regulating debates, terminating disputes, and putting an end to quarrels and hatred engendered by the division of interests? Imagine thousands of men constantly employed in building a wall which other thousands are unceasingly occupied in pulling down. Yet such is the image of society, such as competition has made it. ("It is true.")

Let us complete this demonstration. Competition is a cause of general impoverishment, because, far from tending to universalize the discoveries of genius, it confines them in a circle of monopoly, and even often converts them into instruments of destruction. Thus, under the system of competition, if a machine be invented, does it profit all without exception? No, you know it well. It is a club with which the patented inventor crushes his competitors, and lames the arms of legions of workmen. Let me here give

you a striking illustration. Suppose for an instant that human genius had raised itself in the region of discoveries to such a height that all human labour could be replaced by the action of machines, and let us see what would be the result; first, under the system of association, then under the present system of competition.

Under the first of these two systems, which from its nature excludes all privilege, all monopoly, all patents of invention, and partitions wealth amongst all, it is evident that the general substitution of machines for human labour could have but one result, that of allowing all men bodily repose, replacing for their advantage manual labour by the culture of the intellect, by the development of the loftiest studies, and by the more and more perfected practice of all that relates to imagination, poetry, and the arts. Under the system of competition, on the contrary, which leaves every one to shift for himself, and whose standard bears these savage devices,—“*Success to the most dexterous and the most wealthy! Woe to the vanquished!*”—under the system of competition, which makes every invention the exclusive property of one or more individuals; what would happen if they succeeded in inventing sufficient machinery to render all human labour superfluous? What would happen? I tremble to contemplate



it. Three-fourths of the population would die of hunger! (*Profound sensation.*) Do you understand the bearing of such an illustration? (Yes! yes! yes!)

The discoveries of science are thrice sacred; considered in itself, the invention of a machine destined to spare human toil, is an immeasurable benefit. Whence comes it that at the present day thousands of labourers are sometimes reduced to poverty by the discovery of a new process? Is it the fault of science, of genius, of machinery, which renders nature subservient to humanity? No! it is the fault of a system so absurd, so vicious, that good itself can only be produced, accompanied by an immense escort of evils. Would it be so, tell me, under an universal law of association? Do you imagine that genius can ever be for a single moment a subject of inquietude where a union of interests exists in all its splendour? Genius! ah! its grandeur consists in placing itself entirely at the service of humanity; and when it is reduced to furnish to monopoly, to cupidity, the arms of combat, it is, I swear it, because its mission is perverted! (*Great sensation.*)

A *Delegate* rises, and says in a feeling tone, Rest yourself, economise your strength; we have need of you.

*M. Louis Blanc.*—No, my friends, no. I felt

much fatigued at first ; but your sympathy sustains and animates me ; I am fatigued no longer. (*Applause from all present.*)

In explaining to you why competition was a cause of general competition, I have not mentioned that it produces between workmen a competition which compels them to dispute employment with one another ; which reduces them to sell themselves at the lowest rate to obtain the preference ; which weighs consequently upon wages, and compresses consumption, whilst at the same time giving to production a disorderly and devouring impetus. What could I say to you on this point that you do not know, alas ! by most cruel experience ?

But one essential trait would be wanting to this sad picture, if I forgot to add that in creating poverty, competition created immorality. For, who would venture to deny it ? It is poverty, which, grafting despair and hatred upon ignorance, makes the greater number of assassins ; it is poverty compels so many young girls to sell hideously the sweet name of love. Read the judicial reports, the register of thefts, the archives of prostitution, and then reply ! Behold, introduced into the midst of society, by the sole vice of its constitution, hatred, violence, and envy. Behold society placing itself in the alternative of being oppressed from above or incessantly dis-

turbed by attacks from below. Let a system, whence originates so much disaster, defend itself. We accuse it boldly of immorality. (Bravo !)

But, what! we are warned that if we touch competition, we lay hands upon liberty. Is such an objection serious ?

Before rejecting it I would forewarn you against all feeling of irritation. God forbid that I should come here to excite you to anger and appeal to the ferocious impatience of which you yourselves would be the first victims! The very way in which I put the question must sufficiently show that the evils described do not accuse this or that man, this or that class, but a vicious, social organisation, a false principle. Hence, to change a bad social organization, to destroy a false principle, is not a matter of impatience and revolt, but of study and science. As for me, placed daily in communication with the workmen since the revolution of February, I have full confidence in their moderation. It is on this account that I do not hesitate to converse with you of your sufferings. The least passion in your most legitimate desires, the least violence in your actions, might compromise all. This, thanks to Heaven! you feel as much as I can, and it is one of the most glorious indices of our future destinies, this disposition of the people to await its enfranchisement, not from brutal force, but from order,

discussion, and science. Yes, my friends, be calm, be patient, and moderate. Leave the vulgar resources of violence to our adversaries. We have on our side justice and reason ; impugn not reason and justice by distrusting their triumph at the moment they are at length beginning to be heard. (*Applause.*)

I resume ; we are reproached with attacking liberty by attacking competition. Ah ! I avow that such a reproach fills me with astonishment. For, if we desire not competition, it is precisely because we are adorers of liberty. Yes, liberty ; but *liberty for all*—that is the point to be obtained, that is the goal towards which we must march. (*Loud approbation.*) Let us see if the present system leads to it.

That liberty now exists, and in all its plenitude, for whoever possesses capital, credit, instruction, that is to say, the various means of developing his nature, I am certainly far from disputing.

But does liberty exist for those to whom all means of living, all instruments of labour are wanting ? What is the result of competition ? Is it not to place the first at war with the second, that is to say, men armed cap-à-pie with unarmed men ? Forget not that competition is a combat. Hence, when this combat takes place, between the rich and the poor, the weak and the strong, the

cunning and the ignorant man, they do not hesitate to cry out, 'Make way for liberty!' but this liberty is the liberty of savages. What! people do not blush to call the right of might liberty! Well, for my part, I call it slavery. And I affirm that those amongst you who, owing to a bad social organization, are submitted to the tyranny of hunger, the tyranny of cold, the mute and invisible tyranny of circumstances, are more truly slaves than your brothers of the colonies who work under the whip of the overseer, but who at any rate are assured of the morrow. (It is true! it is true! *Shouts of applause.*)

When day after day the unfortunates to whom an unregulated competition closes the avenues of labour come hither to say to us, "For mercy's sake give us labour! give us bread for our wives and children!" and we have nothing to reply to them—are these men free? (No, no!)

Did the standard which Spartacus\* raised of

\* Spartacus was a Thracian shepherd, kept as a gladiator at Capua by Lentulus. He escaped with thirty companions, and assembling forces, defeated two Roman consuls and other generals with great loss. Crassus, after a long struggle, defeated the gladiators, and Spartacus fell at length upon a heap of Romans slain by his hand (B.C. 71). 40,000 of the revolutionists were slain.  
—*Translator.*

old bear a more profound device than that of the Lyonese workmen,—“To live working”—I cannot continue. Were those who adopted this motto\* free? (*Numerous voices*—“They were the slaves of hunger!”)

Let us say it boldly; liberty consists not only in the *right*, but in the *power* given to every one of developing his faculties. Whence it follows that society owes to each of its members both instruction, without which the human spirit cannot develop itself, and the instruments of labour, without which human activity is at once crushed or tyrannically embittered.

To insure liberty, the state must interfere. What means, then, employ for establishing—for securing liberty? Association. Let all by a common education enjoy the means of intellectual development; all by a fraternal union of powers and resources be secured the instruments of labour! Behold, what will produce association, and what most assuredly constitutes liberty.

For the rest, that there may be no misapprehension, we do not invoke this grand principle of association as a mere means of arriving at the abolition of the present state of the labourer, but as a means of indefinitely increasing the public

\* “Live working, or die fighting.”—*Translator*.

wealth. That is to say, we invoke it for the rich, for the poor, for all the world. Forasmuch as competition poisons the sources of wealth, association possesses the power of multiplying and increasing them. With universal association, with a powerful union of all interests, no more isolated efforts, no more lost time, no more mis-spent capital, no more establishments devouring one another, or perishing by some distant and unforeseen failure, no more produce created on speculation, no more new machines becoming instruments of war; in fine, no more labourers seeking, in the midst of an immense disorder, employment without finding it.

And now, what will be under the new system the best plan of re-partition to establish, whether of labour or remuneration?

I suppose, for an instant, society arrived at its last degree of perfectibility; what would be wanting to make all men happy? Two things; firstly, that each could freely develop his faculties and aptitudes; secondly, that each could freely content his tastes and wants. The ideal towards which society ought to progress is then this: to produce according to one's powers, to consume according to one's wants. (Yes! yes! it is evident.)

But can this ideal be attained to at present?

I think not. In the first place, the benefit of education having been as yet accorded to men but by privilege, in virtue of more or less fortunate birth, that is to say, by the indications of chance, functions are in nowise determined by aptitudes, which for the most part are unknown and know not themselves ; in the second place, it is unhappily too certain, that the vicious system of which we bear the burden, and which obscures the laws of nature, has created a mass of factitious wants, depraved tastes, and vain desires, which, in the ideal of which we just spoke, would burst out in ruinous and inordinate demands. If we pretended now to apply the principle of *working according to ability, and consuming according to wants*, where would be the limit of wants, where the scale of abilities ? The objection is serious, fundamental. Doubtless, it would be valueless in the bosom of a society sufficiently enlightened ; because, there evidently the measure of ability would be supplied by education, and the limit of wants clearly indicated by nature, and assigned by morality. But history is not acted in a day. Every age has its duty to perform ; ours is, perhaps, to realize the sovereign principle of order and of justice. In the long journey of humanity towards perfection we have yet some steps to supply. Yet, if it be denied us to attain the supreme goal, let us at



least have the merit of perceiving it, and the glory of marching towards it.

Thus we are brought back to that which may be immediately applicable.

You know the scheme for the organization of labour we lately proposed. You know by what means, taken from the actual condition of things, we calculate that a perfect union of interests might be attained: firstly, between the workmen of the same factory; next, between all factories of the same class; and finally, between all the various trades. (See the *Moniteur*, 24th March, 1848.) We shall soon publish the result of our investigations as to the establishment of agricultural workshops, and of the links that should unite them to other branches of industry, in order to complete our plan\*.

Now, association once established in an *atelier* (factory or workshop), what would be the best mode of partition to introduce? Ought inequality of wages to be admitted, reserving equality for the distribution of profits; or ought equality to be admitted in the distribution of both wages and profits?

Doubtless, inequality of wages is the system best adapted to our education, our habits, our

\* See Report at the end of this volume.

manners, and to all general notions. Doubtless, consequently, this system would be preferable in a purely practical point of view. Nor have we excluded it from our plan, whatever superficial critics may say, interested, perhaps, in obscuring the truth—whatever men may say who deceive, wishing to enslave the people. No, it is not true that we have absolutely condemned the system of unequal ages, combined with equal division of profits. The truth is, that to this system, more conformable to the present situation of affairs, we have opposed another more assimilated to our presentiments of the future. And why have we done so, leaving distinctly the liberty of choice to the workmen? Because it is the duty of those who conduct matters, to think of the wants of to-morrow as well as of to-day. What I lately said I repeat with confirmed conviction,—“*The powers that preceded us boasted themselves the resistance; we, we are the movement.*” It was then our duty, on being raised to such a position, to examine whether equality of wages was even already practicable in the new factories, at any rate for the workmen most anxious to enjoy the benefits of fraternity.

And, before all, be it clearly understood, that we have never contemplated the application of equality of wages to private trade, and under the

present system of competition. It is manifest that where the workmen are attached to one another by no bond, equal payment would be offering a premium to laziness and a check to individual activity.

Indeed, in an establishment where each workman treats *individually, separately*, with the speculator, with him who, till the Revolution of February, was termed the master, (*applause.*) who is interested in his neighbour's conscientious employment of his time? Who troubles himself about it? We labour on another's account, for another's profit; if my comrade folds his arms, what matters it to me? It is the master's affair, not mine. This is precisely what happens in the system of individualism under which we at this moment live. The inequality of wages is an indispensable spur.

Thus we cannot too closely insist on this point, that equality of wages has been solely indicated by us with a view to a system of association and the closest union. For then all is changed—then each is interested in stimulating the zeal of his comrades, in the activity of labour of which each reaps the advantage; it is then that the point of honour becomes a resource of sovereign energy. Who would dare not to pay his debt of labour when with respect to his associates, his brethren idleness would be a cowardice and a thef

(Bravo ! bravo !) Without speaking here of the physical sympathy, almost mechanical, which causes a multitude to march at the same pace, is it a misinterpretation of human nature to believe in that moral electricity which results from the contact of associated men, cooperating in the same work, under the empire of the same idea, under the impulse of the same sentiment ? (*Prolonged cheering* : It is true ! it is true !)

But Heaven forbid that we should regard equality of wages as realizing in a complete manner the principle of justice ! We have given just now the true formula : *that each produce according to his abilities, and consume according to his wants* ; which amounts to saying, that true equality is *proportionality*. Only it is contrary to reason and justice, that instead of being remunerated according to wants, one should be remunerated according to ability, and instead of working according to ability, should work according to one's wants ! (*Sensation.*)

Imperfect as it is, equality of salaries have at least the advantage of constituting a transition between a false and a true proportion ; for that payment should be measured by capacity, could certainly never be carried to its extreme conclusions. At that rate, where there is no capacity there would be no payment ; and we should leave

to die of hunger the idiots, the sick, and the madmen! Why then the hospitals for the one, and Bicêtre for the other? You see, society is here obliged to violate its own principle, so much does that principle outrage nature! And it is not only in the bosom of Christian societies that this contradiction is manifested. In ancient times, by an affecting exaggeration, an insane person was looked upon as sacred, and all men gifted with intelligence considered themselves responsible for the life of the unfortunate whom reason had deserted.

Thus from one end of history to the other has resounded the protestation of the human race in favour of this principle—"To each according to his wants." (*Unanimous marks of assent.*)

Be it well understood, that equality of wages can only be in our eyes a progress towards justice; and, on the other hand, that we believed it our duty to point it out as a condition of order, as a guarantee of the duration of an association; nothing being more calculated than inequality to cause dissension, to excite envy, and to engender hatred.

Now, is it to be maintained, that this equality of remuneration should extend from the workman to the public functionary, and even to the

rulers of the state? We unhesitatingly answer, that if the association became sufficiently vast to embrace all the citizens, and make of the nation one grand family, it would then be fitting to apply the supreme principle of justice—“*Duty in proportion to ability, rights in proportion to wants.*”

Thus would be realized that admirable saying of the gospel—“That the first amongst you should be the minister (or servant) of the others;” and we are not certainly inclined to oppose such a maxim. (*Applause.*)

For my own part, I declare to you I have so lofty an idea of power, that he who sees in it only a question of emoluments appears to me the very lowest of men. There is in the fact of governing one's equals an indescribable presumption only to be excused by zeal for their advantage. To govern is to devote one's self! (*Prolonged applause.*)

It has been asked whether I consented to apply to myself the rule I proclaim. This is my answer—In the system of universal association, in the system completely realized, the subject of all my prayers—*YES!* (*Unanimous acclamations.*) And this *YES* I desire may be printed in 200,000 impressions, that if ever I prove renegade,

each of you, a copy in his hand, may unmask and confound me. (*Renewed and boisterous acclamations.*)

A few words more, at least if your patience be not exhausted. (*From all sides, "No, no!"*) It has been attempted to spread amongst the workmen the fear lest this equality of wages might descend to the minimum level. Each workman, it is said, earning six francs, will be reduced to three, like less skilful workmen. Never have we wished or advanced any thing of the kind. On the contrary, our profound conviction is, that that equality, so far as it is combined with association, would secure to all the maximum of present wages. It is our object not to lower, but to raise higher and higher the level of your well-being.

Besides, you are at liberty to choose between equality and inequality.

Only recollect, that association is fertile in happiness. Fraternity is the science of riches. Be brothers, and you will be rich. Be brothers, and you will become happy in the performance of your duty. (*The assembly separated amid the liveliest emotion.*)

END.





**REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**COMMITTEE AT THE LUXEMBOURG.**



# REPORT

OF THE

## COMMITTEE AT THE LUXEMBOURG.

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SCARCELY announced and installed, the Committee was able to enumerate, by disasters, all the defects of our economical system. A society shaken to its very foundations owing to the too long application of a subversive principle—such was the prospect of the committee. Trades ruined and crying for assistance ; workshops in confusion ; interests at war ; workmen and masters divided by diurnal disputes ; undertakings suddenly stopped ; State interference loudly claimed by the proprietors of factories ; State protection invoked with anguish or anger by a host of operatives reduced to their last shifts—such is the spectacle which has brought under our notice the system of competition, reduced to give a formal account of its miseries.

But, on the other hand, it was easy to perceive that there was a fundamental tendency in this diseased society, if not general, at all events very energetic, to encourage generous attempts, and to endeavour to organize a better system of labour.

To meditate with ardour the code of the *prolétaires* to be emancipated, whilst silently preparing the materials—in short, to confine ourselves to solitary studies, would not have sufficed. Placed in the midst of a confused medley of interests, pressed by the clamours of misery seized by the most legitimate impatience, we had to listen to complaints, to allay irritation, to

settle differences with impartial benevolence, to maintain the tranquillity of Paris by a permanent system of arbitration, to welcome the operatives who offered to establish fraternal associations—colonies of the future by the side of a tottering past.

It does not appertain to our province to explain the dangers of such a mission. In the midst of the most frightful distress, in the tempestuous intoxication of a revolution, under the weight of the most urgent necessities, and with full consciousness of their strength, the working classes, by whom we have lived surrounded, have constantly behaved with calmness and confidence. Facts speak for us.

#### RECONCILIATIONS.

Summoned daily as arbitrators between masters and workmen, we interfered whenever our interference was accepted by both parties. A large number of reconciliations was thus effected. We will mention a few, on account of their extreme importance, for the peace of the capital was staked on the issue.

And, first, we have been generally reproached for having decreed the diminution of the duration of daily labour. Well, apart from the considerations of justice, humanity, and sound economy, which militated in favour of that measure, it is right that the public should know that the question, on the day following the revolution, was one of civil war. What did we do, however? Notwithstanding the ardent and apparently irresistible demands addressed to us, we boldly refused to decide anything before we had consulted the heads of establishments; and having assembled them in large numbers, they hastened to adhere to the demands of their operatives—so equitable did it appear to them to adhere, and so perilous to refuse.

Paris was not aware that on the morning of the 29th

of March the inhabitants rose without any prospect of bread. The journeymen bakers formally refused to continue their labours unless their painful situation were ameliorated without delay. They came to the Luxembourg in thousands to expose their sufferings and their resolutions. All the baking establishments had been abandoned, and were not to be returned to. The masters hastened to us in consternation.

The delegates deputed by the masters and the workmen discussed (thanks to our intervention) all the details of their respective situations. At length, an amicable arrangement was effected; a tariff was adopted which gave general satisfaction, and those thousands of men, whose toil supplies the primary necessities of the city, retired grateful and moved. Paris was supplied with bread the next day, as usual, and the inhabitants did not even dream that they had been reduced to the very verge of starvation!

Some days previously the traffic in Paris had been doubly menaced.

It was at first the pavement of the streets which still kept up the revolutionary movement. No vehicles could pass. Now the paviers refused to clear the thoroughfares, and demanded more exorbitant terms. Recognised as legitimate, in a contradictory discussion between masters and workmen, the demands of the paviers were favourably admitted, and the streets resumed their wonted appearance.

But no sooner had the pavements been replaced, and the resumption of traffic rendered possible, than the vehicles came to a stand-still, in all parts of Paris. At first, it was the omnibuses, *favourites*, &c., next the hackney-coaches, cabriolets—in short, all the public vehicles.

For several days a similar discussion took place. At length an agreement was made, and the traffic was everywhere renewed.

It became necessary to construct a provisional hall for the meetings of the new National Assembly, the old Chamber of Deputies not being sufficiently spacious for the accommodation of the representatives of the Republic. At the very moment when the works ought to have been pushed forward with the greatest activity—the opening of the Assembly drawing nigh—the tilers descended from the roofs, and refused to reascend, owing to some dispute with the contractors. Our intervention was again required, and as soon as we had appealed to their patriotism, the tilers offered to labour gratuitously for the Republic—a generosity which the Republic could not accept, for it thenceforth owed a second stipend—one of gratitude.

These reconciliations are sufficient to show what we have effected. The whole list would be too long. There are few branches of trade which have not appealed to us; we will only mention the mechanics of the *atelier* of Derosne and Fail, those of the *atelier* Farcot, the paper-stainers, the zinc-work operatives, the straw-hat manufacturers, the nightmen, and the washerwomen of the banlieu, &c.

It should be remarked that it was most frequently the masters that were the first to solicit our arbitration, and impart their embarrassments to us. The masters and the operatives approach the Luxembourg by separate roads; they almost invariably depart by the same!

The *procès-verbaux* of these reconciliations are deposited in the archives of the Committee, invested with the signatures of the parties—modest records of labour and of concord!

#### ESTABLISHED ASSOCIATIONS.

Whilst thus labouring to reconcile divided interests, we also wished to connect the future with the present by a few new creations. Several important associa-

tions have been founded by our care, and these societies are now at work in the middle of Paris.

The Old (debtors') Prison of Clichy is transformed into one vast workshop. The journeymen tailors, combined in one association, are there executing great works for the State. We subjoin a few details of the organization and condition of the society.

The principle on which the association of tailors rests is fraternity. A movable one, it is always open to the workman who presents himself at its portals asking for work, and accepting the fraternal conditions of the house.

Those conditions are, equal wages for all the associates, equal partition of profits, and activity in devotion.

A jury, appointed by election, is intrusted with the maintenance of order, and, if necessary, decrees exclusions from the society.

Three delegates, equally elected by the association, represent and administer its affairs conjointly with a ministerial committee.

The committee of examination controls the acts of the administration.

The governmental committee for workmen is represented in the association by an agent, M. Frossard.

The association is installed, and has been at work since the commencement of the month of April.

The State has given it orders for 100,000 tunics at 10*f.* each, and 100,000 pantaloons at 3*f.* each, for the use of the stationary National Guard (the cloth being supplied), and for 10,180 tunics at 11*f.* each, and 10,180 pantaloons at 3*f.* each, for the movable National Guard.

These works are being executed by about 1200 associates. Besides which, the association employs a large number of female breeches-makers out of doors.

Notwithstanding the expenses of installation and

materials, the association has already a profit to divide—moderate, it is true, as all first profits must be, but presenting at once hope and encouragement for the future.

The considerable number of workmen who presented themselves during the first few days, and who were obliged to take part in labour insufficient to employ so many hands, the somewhat disorderly influx of the National Guards, who rushed in crowds to the doors of the workshops to ask for their clothes, and the inexperience of the management, so natural in the outset, at first occasioned some confusion. But measures for restoring order were taken, and now the associated workmen—some assembled in the large hall of the old *parloir*, the others dispersed in groups throughout the cells, are working with the generous order which is inspired by the certainty of developing a fruitful idea. What a noble spectacle in the midst of struggles of universal antagonism, to behold this great assembly of men united by bonds of the closest dependence! What a touching sight to behold this prison becoming the first asylum of real liberty! The barracks of the *Allée des Veuves*, in the Champs Elysées, have received a second society founded on the same principles of fraternal devotion. The saddlers are there working for the equipment of the cavalry.

The journeymen spinners, assembled in a third association, have also received large orders from the State.

New societies present themselves every day to the Committee with their plans and their statutes, soliciting aid and approbation. The masters of factories, on their side, come and offer their workshops to the State, and place at its disposal their implements of labour, some actuated by generosity, and others by an intelligent calculation of chances.



Judging from the force of the current which is carrying away the fragments of the old state of society, the transformation, unless a crisis supervene, will be easy and speedy. The impulse, in short, is given, and it is irresistible. Every thing impels, and is impelled, towards the principle of association—the saving system, which will sooner or later be blessed by those who now decry and calumniate it. The system of competition and antagonism, that is so say, of hatred and anarchy, of disorder and war, abdicates its sovereignty in the bosom of the calamities which it has produced. Perhaps its fall may be retarded by a few temporary compromises, and for our parts we shall not refuse to do our best to prop up this old edifice which is cracking and crumbling on all sides. The public may rely upon us, upon whom, since the Revolution of February, this perilous and ungrateful necessity has only entailed fatigues almost superhuman, abuse, calumnies—and calumnies, too, on the part of the very persons whose security we were protecting at the risk of our popularity, sometimes at the risk of our lives. But let there be no mistake. The time for vain palliatives has passed away. A desperate disease requires sovereign remedies.

And what? We have sought the solution of this question in good faith, taking account of the necessities of a transition with all the care counselled by equity, but, at the same time, setting out from this principle—do your duty, and good will ensue.”

We had not only to provide for the necessities of the present, but to collect materials for the future. Thus we have seriously pondered and carefully discussed down to the most minute details the majority of the questions affecting the safety of the people, by which we mean the safety of society at large, for we cannot too often repeat that interests are dependent

on each other, and if they have come to consider each other as enemies, it is solely owing to a want of study and a defective state of society.

Those who now oppose us with such inconsiderate impetuosity are not aware how far our ideas are calculated to reassure and protect them.

No matter ; the day will come when the blindest of our adversaries will do us justice. Our consciences justify us, and that is enough.

The Secretaries-General of the Ministerial Committee for Workmen, M. François Vidal and M. C. Secqueur, have been instructed to prepare a *resumé* of the principal results of our internal deliberations.

The following is the *ensemble* of the ideas which we have thought it our duty to lay before you :—

To the old territorial and military feudality has latterly succeeded a financial, commercial, and industrial feudality, which it is now our business to destroy, in the name of the mutual dependence of humanity—*i. e.*, for the benefit of all—of *all* without exception.

By the will of God, a new and more lofty conception of right has arisen from the concealed movement of ages. Sentiments and ideas have changed ; customs and institutions necessarily tend to change in modern societies. The monstrous results of the system of *laissez faire* have completed the state of hopeless discredit to which it is reduced. The economical edifice of the past is cracking and crumbling on all sides ; its foundations are undermined, and society, as it has been constituted by competition and isolation, has almost become an impossibility. Trade, commerce, national labour, the whole activity of the European world, find themselves abandoned to a radical and permanent state of confusion, to periodical crises, to absolute blindness as regards the future. Want and disorder are universally prevalent ; the arena of the mer-

cantile world is strewn with wounded and dead. The lot of a large portion of the people is lamentable ; they are attenuated, depressed, atrophied, and decimated by incessant toil, thanks to the system of political economy now so loudly vaunted. For want of work there are some who live plunged in hereditary misery ; there are others who are driven by griefs and privations to succumb to all the suggestions of despair.

But behold the arrival of the hour for coming to a settlement with distress, and considering measures of a remedial and restorative tendency. The sacred standard around which the people rally is inscribed with three words which no hand will henceforth efface, for the realization of this motto is brought about by the resistless course of events—these words are, “ Liberty, equality, and fraternity.”

Now, two great forms or combinations seemed destined to envelope, in a way, the new civil and social relations of mankind ; two great ideas, necessary corollaries of the sentiments of equality and fraternity, alone possess the power in the present day of reconstructing and enriching—on the one side association, the principle of all strength and all economy ; on the other, the disinterested intervention of the State—the principle of all order, all distributive justice, and all unity.

We have sufficiently detailed the benefits conferred by the principle of association ; those benefits legalize its accession, which we announce to you. As to the State, it is clear that, if it has any social duty, it is to interfere as a peaceful protector wherever there are rights to adjust and interests to guarantee ; it is to place all citizens in equal conditions of moral, intellectual, and physical development. This is its law ; and it can only accomplish this law by reserving to itself the right of distributive justice, of furnishing implements of labour to those who want them, in such a

manner as to render the living sources of wealth accessible to all. Take away this economical attribute—take away all foresight from the State—we mean the State as democratically constituted—and the organization of labour becomes a lie, and the intolerable miseries of the people must remain for ever without a remedy.

These principles will have no efficacy unless applied to every sphere of social activity, to every order of labour and interests. If a vast *ensemble* of measures and combinations, conceived in this spirit of unity, do not simultaneously and progressively transform agriculture, trade, and commerce—if the legislator and the political economist, in their views of the future, do not lend equal attention to the production, the distribution, and the completion of wealth—if they do not at once harmonize the mode and the laws—if they neglect to introduce mutual dependence and reciprocity between occupations and between persons—all is compromised and perilled, because all is subjected anew to contradiction, to twofold employment, to antipathy, and to war.

We have already, after having shown you what motives induced us to pronounce the downfall of the system of a liberticide *laissez faire* to substitute for antagonism and isolation the principle of union and mutual dependence, laid before you a sketch of the plan for the organization of labour in the workshops of manufacturing industry, and we have even pointed out how, by the construction of a few vast edifices—*i. e.*, by a single and intelligent architectural arrangement—it would be possible to realize a large saving in the consumption of the working classes, without disturbing any interest.

But we must go further: we never dreamt of confining within such narrow limits the complex problem of the organization of labour.

In fact, are not competition, confusion, and disorder every where prevalent in town and country—in the farm and the shop as well as in the factory? Do they not weigh down every age and sex—do they not oppress women and children quite as much as men and adults? Then the agricultural social workshop, and the workshop of exchange, sale, or purchase, ought to be organized simultaneously with the industrial social workshop.

The commencement of this great work is pointed out to us by the very circumstances in which we are at present placed. Every body must be struck by two great facts, which are aggravated in proportion to our advance—by a twofold tendency, which at once menaces us with the repletion and the pauperism—the too much and the too little—of the state of society in England. Disaster devastates the ranks of the masters, and idleness saps the energies of the people; in many workshops labour is wholly suspended, and a large number of operatives, unclassified and floating, remain excluded from the labours of the nation.

Every day we are visited by the heads of all sorts of establishments, who come to abandon to us their implements of labour, requesting us to substitute the agency of the State for their own, in order to save the wages of their numerous *employées*. As to the unemployed operatives, they rush to us in crowds.

A merciless necessity, therefore, is about to bend the will of the legislature; wants so imperious must be satisfied.

1. The State ought to stop, or at least to diminish the disasters of private trade, to save the masters by purchasing their implements whenever it may be convenient so to do, and when they themselves make the offer. The State ought also to save the operatives by husbanding the means of continuing their labours.

This is the twofold object which we proposed to attain in elaborating the plan of social workshops for trade, to which we have already drawn your attention.

2. The State ought to create new centres of labour and production, to which all the unclassed, unoccupied, and necessitous portion of the population may be admitted immediately, and find prosperity, security, dignity, and liberty. In order to meet this pressing necessity, we propose, as a measure already in principle adopted, the redemption of the railroads, canals, and mines, in order that they may be immediately transformed into social workshops, into dockyards of the Republic.

With the same object in view, we propose the creation of agricultural workshops in different parts of the French territories, where the surplus population of the towns may find an outlet.

We propose *entrepôts* and bazaars, with the object of regulating exchanges, of introducing truth and sincerity into business transactions, of simplifying the circulation, and reducing the expenses of trade, of establishing industrial credit on new bases, and of rendering the use of paper money general.

3. The State ought to insure the financial resources of all these establishments, to found a system of territorial and commercial credit, and for this purpose to decree an *ensemble* of institutions or economical combinations corresponding with the exigencies of an unprecedented state of things.

We consequently propose to transform the system of banks and assurances into national institutions ; to appropriate to the special budget of the organization of labour all the profits accruing from the creation of the bazaars and *entrepôts*, with the economy of which you will soon be made acquainted.

We also propose a project for the organization of

territorial credit, according to which mortgage debts may be redeemed and capital placed at the disposal of the agriculturists on reasonable terms.

Other practical conceptions, which we are elaborating, especially that of a unique tax, will complete this *ensemble* of measures destined to serve as a means of transition from the old to the new order of things; for it is not our business to make a *tabula rasa* of the vestiges of a long past in one moment, but in a manner to engraft the future on the present.

To sum up, we submit to discussion two very distinct orders of measures—on the one hand, social workshops of agriculture and trade, to be organized on the new bases of association and mutual dependence; and, on the other, institutions to be founded, modified, or transformed.

And, first, we will develop our ideas respecting the agricultural workshops, the commercial bazaars and *entrepôts*, the unitarian organization of assurances, and the national or State banks to be established throughout the Republic.

## I. AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture offers to labour a vast and fruitful field—a field almost unlimited. Agriculture permits the constant apportionment of production to the wants and the resources of consumption—it offers to labourers a permanent occupation and certain remuneration. A full development may be given to agriculture without any fear of adding to the accumulation of markets or depreciating produce—without any fear of ruining neighbouring workshops, and displacing, instead of succouring, distress—without fear of throwing upon the streets poor labourers employed elsewhere, or lowering the rate of wages.

The cultivator lives on the soil, on the produce of the soil, and has no need of purchasers. His existence

does not depend, like that of the operative, on the vicissitudes of commerce, chance, political crises, the closing up of a distant outlet, or an unforeseen catastrophe.

The operative employed in trade can only live on condition of finding an outlet for his produce; whereas agricultural produce, strictly speaking, may be consumed by the producers themselves.

Agriculture is favourable to the health and the morality of the labourers; it enables them to vary their toils—to develop their activity and intelligence in the open air, surrounded by the splendour of nature.

Manufacturing industry, on the contrary, accumulates human beings in towns by thousands, in filthy and unhealthy houses, in which men, women, and children pine away and perish for want of light and air; it exhausts the operatives by the excess of a monotonous labour; it devotes them to misery, immorality, and, too often, to premature death.

France is certainly not over-populated, but the population is very badly distributed. A better distribution must be effected; the desert tracts of land in the country must be peopled with the surplus population of the towns; the majority of labourers must make an influx into the fields, and be employed in the work of husbandry; the superabundant population of the manufacturing towns must be allured to these agricultural colonies. The inevitable result of the voluntary emigration of a certain number of labourers would be the amelioration of the condition of the urban operatives, the diminution of the number of the unemployed, the absorption of a part of the labour offered, the consequent abolition of the system of underselling between starving competitors, and the raising of the prices of manufacture or the rate of wages.

Agricultural working depôts or colonies must be created.



We propose the foundation in each department of social agricultural *ateliers*, placed under the direction of the State.

These establishments would be theoretical and practical schools of agriculture; they would guarantee to every labourer not only the right to work, but also the right to the implements of labour and the fruits of toil, the right to education, the free development of the faculties, and the sweets of existence.

A sum of 100,000,000*f.* would be appropriated to this special purpose. This sum would not be raised by loan or taken from the normal budget or the ordinary receipts; they would not be levied upon the taxpayers by means of increased imposts. They would be furnished by new sources of public revenue—fruitful sources which only require to be drawn upon. We will inform you presently how, without adding to the charges which now burden the citizens, but rendering real services to society at the same time, the State might increase the annual receipts of the national treasury by several hundreds of millions.

These colonies, in our opinion, ought to be organized in the following manner:—

A credit of 100,000,000*f.*, destined for the establishment of agricultural colonies, would be placed at the disposal of the State. These colonies would be the property of the nation.

In the first instance, one colony would be created in each department, with power to increase the number, if necessary. Each colony ought to be composed of about 100 families.

Each colony would be directed by an agronomist, who would represent the State, and command and superintend the labourers. This director would choose his principal assistants, and form his squadron of *contre-maîtres*.

When the colony was in full activity, and the in-

habitants had had time to form an acquaintance with each other, the *contre-maîtres* would be chosen by the director from the candidates designated by the colonists themselves.

One-third, at least, of the *personnel* of the colony would be composed of cultivators, another third of mechanics whose labours are necessary to agriculture—such as smiths, wheelwrights, masons, joiners, carpenters, locksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, wooden shoemakers, harness-makers, and farriers; finally the last third would consist of manufacturing operatives taken from the towns.

The qualification for admission would be the knowledge of a trade and indisputable probity and morality. The preference would be given to the largest and poorest families.

The director would decide upon admissions in the first instance; but as soon as the *personnel* of the colony was partially formed, none would be admitted without the concurrence of the committee of management.

This committee of management, composed of 15 members elected by the colonists at large, would deliberate on all the interests of the association, and superintend the carrying on of its affairs under the presidency of the director.

The committee would also decree exclusions, but only after formal inquiry and judicial sentence signed by two-thirds of the members.

The colonies would be subject to the unitarian system, and the principle of culture by associated families.

The colonists would be lodged in one vast edifice, divided into as many separate apartments as there might be families. Each family would have a spacious and commodious lodging, clean, salubrious, well warmed and lighted, the whole for a very moderate

rent ; for every body knows that the construction of a vast edifice, calculated to lodge 100 families, costs less than 100 isolated houses.

There would also be common halls, rooms for meeting and reading, a library, books, journals, all the conveniences met with in towns, all that facilitates intercourse and renders life attractive. There would be an economical kitchen, where alimentary substances would be prepared and sold at cost price ; there would even be lavatories and common wash-houses.

In this manner the colonists would enjoy all the advantages of aggregate and social life, and all the savings of which consumption on a large scale permits the realization, and nevertheless every one would have his home, his domestic fire-side, his interior, where he might isolate himself and cut himself off from all communication, as if in inviolable sanctuary.

Speculation amongst associates is prohibited. There would be neither shops nor merchants in the colony. All the provisions would be purchased wholesale by the managing committee, and sold at cost price.

For the establishment of these colonies waste lands belonging to the communes may be purchased.

Lands may be tilled, ponds drained, marshes rendered salubrious, and new territories conquered for cultivation.

Private property may be bought, and, if necessary, the law of expropriation appealed to, for the colonies are in the highest degree establishments of public utility.

A large domain may be taken, already furnished with a suitable habitation and agricultural implements, &c. There are still chateaux in France which the owners would willingly give up to the State, and old feudal lands which might become magnificent colonies.

By cultivating waste lands susceptible of fertility

—lands the saleable value of which is now insignificant—the colonists would be placed in the most favourable conditions, and the surface of the cultivated soil would be increased.

The colonists would combine agricultural with industrial labours, but agriculture would be the fundamental basis. Even now this combination has become a necessity both to agriculture and to trade, a question of prosperity or decay, of life or death. Thanks to this combination, every one might change his occupation, and find rest from the toil of the workshop in the recreation of field labours, and *vice versa*. Besides, in order to realise the abundance of all things, we must be able to turn to account all available forces of the time and of the physical power which sometimes agriculture and sometimes trade cease to require.

When there is no work going on in the fields—when the season is unfavourable, during frost, rain, and snow, during the intense heats of summer and the long nights of winter—great activity may be applied to mechanics. When, on the contrary, seed-time or harvest requires, at a given moment, the simultaneous cooperation of a large number of labourers, the works of the factory would be suspended, and the cultivation of the fields exclusively attended to. This would be a fruitful marriage of agriculture and trade.

#### CONDITIONS OF ASSOCIATION.

The colonists are to be mutually dependent. They are to be associated for agricultural and industrial labours, and the profits to be divided are to consist of the produce of the two occupations combined.

In the first instance, the wages of labour will be levied on the gross produce of the colony. These

wages will be uniform for labourers of the same class, but there may be several different categories.

The Council of Administration appointed by the colonists, and presided over by the Director, will determine the various categories and fix the rate of wages for each.

The wages will be paid weekly; but, exclusive of these fixed wages, all the associates will have a right to a share of the profits.

In fixing the rate of wages the average actual rate of every profession and every district will be assumed as the basis of the *minimum*.

This average rate taken as the *minimum* on one side, the savings realised in the expenditure by consumption on a large scale on the other, and, finally, the right to a division or a fraction of the profits, will immediately better the condition of the labourers in a very remarkable manner.

The *minimum* of wages will be guaranteed, in every case, by the reserve fund, to which we are about to allude.

After the deduction of the amount of the wages, the expenses (whatever they may be) of the operations, and the charges of keeping materials in repair, &c., will be levied on the gross produce, and, lastly, interest at 3 per cent. on all the capital invested for the profit of the State. These expenses and interest will form part of the annual expenses, and be placed to the debit of the association.

The colonists will thus pay an annual interest of 3 per cent. to the State on all the capital cost of the colony.

The surplus of gross produce will form the net produce or profit.

This profit will be thus divided:—

1. One-fourth will be levied for the profit of the

State, to serve to found new colonies (special appropriation).

2. Another portion will be devoted to the formation of a fund for the maintenance of the aged and the sick of the colony. Out of this fund the physicians will be paid, and the expenses of pharmacy and infirmaries, &c., defrayed. All these expenses will be supported by the association.

3. Another fourth part will serve to form a reserve fund, appropriated to the realization of a mutual dependence amongst the different colonists and all the social *ateliers* of the Republic. In this manner the workshops or colonies, reduced one year to a state of distress, may be succoured by the more prosperous.

This reserve fund, formed by a retention of one-fourth of the profits of all the colonies and *ateliers*, will soon form a considerable capital, which will belong to nobody in particular, but to all collectively.

The reserve fund of all the *ateliers* of France will be confided, under the surveillance of the State, to a superior council of administration, which, in contingent cases, will have to distribute relief, and, moreover, to employ the aggregate capital.

4. Finally, the last fourth of the profits will be appropriated to the colonists, and divided amongst them in proportion to the number of days' labour annually performed by each associate; all working days being considered equivalent.

Women and children of both sexes who may have worked in the colony will have a right to participate in the profits.

Now, as in the industrial agricultural *ateliers* advantage may be taken of the weakest powers and the most limited understandings, the father of a numerous family will not have, as now, to support alone the expenses of house-keeping. On the other hand, the

asylum, the *crèche*, and the gratuitous school will take charge of infantine education, and the colony will provide for the expenses entailed by sickness, and the maintenance of invalids and aged persons from the relief fund.

To these colonies may be annexed establishments which will become certain causes of prosperity and fruitful sources of income—

1. An agricultural school, to which will be admitted pupils paying annual stipends, and bursars maintained at the expense of the state, the departments, and the commune; the professors will naturally be paid out of the budget of Public Instruction; the children of the colony will be admitted to the courses gratis.

2. Asylums to be founded for the incapacitated labourer; houses of retreat for aged persons of both sexes.

3. The charitable establishments now situate in the centre of towns, and which would be far better placed in the country, where they would entail less expense, and where the *pensionnaires* would lead a happier life, at the same time that they might make themselves useful in gardening operations.

4. Orphan and foundling asylums.

The children will be brought up as cultivators of the soil.

As living is cheaper in the country, it will be the interest of the State, the departments, and the communes, which support the expenses of these charitable institutions, to come to an understanding with the management of the colony, and they may thus reduce the civil list of distress, or extend their relief to a larger number of unfortunates.

If the invalids, the infirm, the aged, the indigent, and the fatherless, maintained at great expense in the towns, were transferred to the colonies, the latter would be furnished with consumers for their commo-

dities and their manufactured produce, and the soil would be enriched with the manure which a numerous population would supply.

According to our idea, relations of the closest mutual dependence ought to be entertained between the different colonies, as well as between all the workshops placed under state supervision. These workshops would naturally become customers of each other, and regulate the exchanges of commodities amongst themselves.

Each would produce, in preference, the article in the production of which it most excelled, either by reason of the nature of the soil, or its geographical site, or the superior qualifications of the people. The State, as supreme director, will combine and distribute the labour, distribute the orders, and maintain the equilibrium of production and consumption.

Such is a summary of our plan. We shall have to develop to you its minutest details.

It now remains for us to explain by the aid of what resources the State may be enabled to found colonies. These resources will be furnished to us by the produce of the magazines and the commercial bazaars, the centralized assurances, and the annual profits of the national banks.

#### INSTITUTIONS OF CREDIT.

It is for the sovereign to supply, not to receive credit, wrote Law to the Regent. Behold one of the most fertile ideas ever uttered.

The sovereign is the State, is society itself? The moment has arrived for realising the idea of Law. The first act of a Democratic Government should be to concentrate under its influence all the institutions for credit.

In modern society, credit is the living force, the nerve of industry, the element of labour *par excellence*.



By credit you can accelerate or delay, and direct production, circulation, and consumption ; by credit you govern labour, support agriculture, industry, and commerce ; by the suspension of credit, you can in a given time close all the factories, reduce to misery millions of labourers and thousands of tradesmen, overturn fortunes every where, scatter disorder, keep society at a stand-still, and government in check, &c., &c., &c. Whoever is the master of credit may become master of France.

Ought the power of using or abusing credit at will to be left in the hands of an individual company ? Ought a company of speculators to be permitted to disturb at will industry, commerce, and labour, to possess themselves of all the channels of circulation, to levy tribute on the whole of society, and raise at will the interest of capital ?

Feudality has been talked of in connection with railway companies. The feudality of the *financiers* is much more redoubtable if it ~~could~~ succeed in imposing itself upon the Republic.

All producers, all those who live by their labour and industry are interested in obtaining, at a low price, the instruments of labour.

Those who live without labour, on the other hand, on the interest of their capital, are interested in the non-diminution of their sources of revenue.

The institutions of credit ought not to be placed in the hands of capitalists.

The particular companies seek above all to realise profits in order to distribute to their shareholders the largest dividends. But the State is not interested in levying tribute in labour. It asks no more than a return for its services. Even were it to lend gratuitously, the State would find in the increase of every kind of tax alone (necessary result of the increase of public wealth) an ample recompense for its disin-

terested services. Its best speculation would be to excite every where productive labour, and to place the instruments of production within reach of every one who could avail themselves of them. Thus sowing its seed, it would be certain of reaping an abundant harvest.

The State ought, then, to be the grand distributor of credit: it is to the interest of all; for the State can alone represent the general interests of society.

Hitherto, credit has only been the means of enriching the rich; henceforward it ought to become a means of enriching the poor. Credit has, in times past, been especially employed for the profit of capitalists. Now, and in future, it must also be employed for the advantage of the workmen. The profits of a paper currency have hitherto advantaged powerful companies, they ought henceforward to profit the State and enable it to endow the budget of labour.

By the credit of the State must be definitively consummated the enfranchisement of the people. The mainspring of a bank is the issue of paper. Hence, as to the State alone belongs the right of coining money, to the State should pertain the immense profits of this inexpensive species of coinage. Why should the State yield up to a company this right, formerly regal—this right of which the sovereigns would never allow themselves to be despoiled? The State sets its stamp on metallic currency, the State ought in the same manner to mark with its seal the notes of credit, to control them, and guarantee their title and value, to limit their number, and transform them into national money; for paper would soon be the money generally adopted. If the seal of the State is useful to metallic money, it is indispensable to give currency to money of paper.

The precious metals are the obligatory medium of exchange in societies founded upon distrust and an-

tagonism. When the word of a man is not believed, positive security is required. Metallic money has a double character, it is at once symbol and security; agent of circulation and merchandise, it thus answers for itself.

The precious metals represent much accumulated labour, much expense of every kind. Their quantity is limited by the fruitfulness of the mines and the difficulty of working them. Gold and silver cannot be created at will; first guarantee. The metals are not alone useful in exchanges, they are also employed in the arts and manufactures: hence, as ingots, they always preserve a value equal to the cost of production; second guarantee. The metals have an intrinsic value which cannot easily be altered. The metals can dispense with all confidence, because they are more than symbol, they are reality.

But precisely because they have an intrinsic value, because they are security and merchandize, because they are the necessary money of abnormal societies—metals form a currency socially imperfect, a currency too costly and too limited, a currency which can only be at the disposal of the rich, and which, thence alone, confers upon those holding it enormous privileges.

The money of normal societies, the money of association of democracy is paper. Paper costs little in the making, can be multiplied at will, and placed at the service of the labourer. Paper having no intrinsic value cannot become itself a security; it derives its value entirely from credit; it is but a symbol, valuable by reason of the thing signified, by reason of the confidence it inspires, by reason of the *real* value of the security of which it is the *ideal* representative. Paper is the true money of credit, the money of societies founded on *confidence*.

However, even in our disordered society, paper may

become the medium of exchange, it can merit a confidence equal to that inspired by the ingot ; but to do that it must also represent *accumulated labour, positive value* ; it must never be issued but upon *security* ; in a word, it must always be the *pledged value of existing produce*.

A time will doubtless arrive when the security will be considered superfluous, when a simple *promise* will be worth a reality, and paper currency universal. This will be the epoch of credit *moral* and *personal*, and no longer *real credit*, credit which must be guaranteed by a *thing*. Then the future may be discounted as the present is now ; loans be raised upon promise and future labour \* as they now are upon realised produce. But we have not yet reached this point. At present we must confine ourselves to the only credit possible, credit founded upon *things*, until the time arrives of according confidence to *persons*.

The idea of personal and moral credit is much superior to the conception of *real credit*. Unhappily, in the state of industrial anarchy we live in, moral credit neither can nor does offer a sufficient security. The most honest, the most intelligent, the most laborious, the most economical man is not certain of always finding work, of finding solvent consumers, of

\* To an Englishman possessing any knowledge of commerce and its resources, these financial crudities of the *committee of workmen* will serve to show the admirable utility, as a corrective, of such writings as the preceding little work of M. Chevalier. That credit is in almost all commercial transactions granted upon *labour, yet to be done*, is palpable. Financial theorists often lose sight of one very simple fact, viz : That *general prosperity and confidence* is the only source from which fruitful and unlimited credit can arise. To flood a depressed trade and disturbed country with paper money is suicidal folly.—*Translator*.

selling his produce, of being able to honour his engagements. He may be ruined instantaneously, and despite all precautions by a political or commercial crisis, by an unforeseen failure, by the closing of a market, by the dexterity or dishonesty of an unfair competition, &c.

*Personal* and *moral* credit, which has for aim to supply labourers with the instruments of labour, is only possible normally, where there is organization of labour, where production and consumption are in constant equilibrium: it is proscribed in all society founded upon competition.

At bottom the true organization of credit would be —association.

Without association real credit is alone possible.

But even real credit does not exist now. Our banks only lend to merchants and capitalists. The small trader who has produce to give as security, value to offer as guarantee, can find no capital. The bank is closed to him.

The bank should be opened to industry of every class, real credit at any rate should be founded until personal credit may become realizable.

For that, two things are necessary. First. The creation of *entrepôts* and bazaars of which we have spoken. Secondly, The transformation of the Bank of Paris into a State bank.

The receipts or warrants of the *entrepôts* would enable small traders, not having access to the bank, to participate in the advantages of credit, the confirmed value of the security would cover the insufficiency of the signature.

The State bank would distribute largely commercial and manufacturing credit. It would discount bills of exchange, and make advances on the deposit of the above receipts.

By this credit the State would multiply prodigi-

ously disposable capital, *by giving to the capital employed a circulating value.*

The State bank would work to the profit of bankers, shopkeepers, manufacturers, great and small, and the profits of the discount, instead of going to swell the revenues of opulent shareholders, would supply the State with the means of assisting labour from the price of the services rendered to capitalists, merchants, and industrial speculators.

**THE END.**

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