CHAPTER VIII

THE SOCIAL EVOLUTION OF FRANCE SINCE 1815

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THE LABOUR QUESTION

During the period that was ushered in by the fall of Napoleon I, if a social question existed it was no longer an agrarian-social question as had been the case in the past—it was above all a question of labour. The tillers of the soil had at last come into realisation of the hopes and dreams of so many centuries; the land belonged to them freely, fully, without any burden of rents or taxes beyond that which was necessary for the public support. Thus rural democracy became what it will long remain, the most truly conservative of the nation's elements.

The great importance of the labour question may be accurately estimated by a glance over the field of industry from which we will cull a few figures to obtain a correct idea of the progress made.

In 1815 the united French industries did not consume more than a million tons of coal; in 1831 the quantity had increased to two millions and in 1847 to seven and a half millions.

In 1829 France produced 205,243 tons of brass, 145,519 of iron, and 4,914 of steel; in 1847 these figures had increased respectively to 472,412, 276,253, and 7,130. Thus in twenty-two years the production had not quite doubled.

In 1815 the use of machines in the different branches of industry had not become general, textile industries being practised among families in the home rather than in factories. In the manufacture of cotton fabrics but ten million kilogrammes of raw cotton were consumed; metallurgic industries were still in a primitive state, scarcely any fuel but wood being used in the manufacture of brass and of articles of iron ware.

The most marked development is to be observed during the thirty-three years from 1815 to 1847. In the latter year the cotton industries consumed 55,000,000 kilogrammes of raw cotton, and employed 116,000 looms and 3,500,000 spindles; they produced to the value of 416,000,000 francs. The consumption of wool increased from 46,500,000 kilogrammes in 1812 to 89,000,000. Philippe de Girard left France in 1815, having lost all hope of ever being able to introduce the machine for spinning flax that he had invented; twenty years later the manufacture of linen employed 200,000 spindles, 40,000 of which were in the department of the north. Similarly the Jacquard machine was not taken into use until 1827 by the silk-mills of Lyons which twenty years later had arrived at full prosperity. The city alone employed both for spinning and weaving 60,000 out of the 90,000 looms contained in all France.

In 1846 (the first year concerning which any reliable statistics exist) the urban population of France comprised only 8,646,743 inhabitants, or 24.4 per cent. of the entire population. The remainder, more than three-quarters of the nation, composed agricultural France.

Let us again take up for the present epoch certain of the figures already given. In 1897 the consumption of coal has increased to 37,000,000 tons or thirty-seven times what it was in 1815. In metals the production is 2,484,000 tons of brass, 784,000 of iron, and 995,000 of steel; thus since 1848 the production of brass and iron has doubled, that of steel has increased a hundredfold. In all other industries a corresponding advance is to be observed, our entire industrial production representing to-day a value of over 15,000,000,000 francs.

What has been the increase in urban population up to the present time? In 1896 there were 15,000,000 inhabitants of cities as against 23,487,000 rural inhabitants, a proportion which had altered from 24.4 per cent. at the close of the parliamentary monarchy to 39.5 per cent.[1] Great cities which are the direct creations of industry have come into existence, such as Creusot, Saint Étienne, Roubaix, Tourcoing, towns which were formerly stagnant have revived to bustling activity, and lastly a large number of industrial plants have become established in the country, mostly by the side of waterfalls whose power has enriched the national industries with another variety of fuel, "white coal."

It becomes apparent from an inspection of the foregoing figures that the social question pertaining to labour was of no more importance under the Restoration than at the time of the first constituent assembly; that it had risen to a certain prominence during the monarchy of July; that from 1848 on it was destined to grow with great rapidity; that universal suffrage together with free and obligatory education, by assuring workingmen a certain share of influence in public affairs, hastened the arrival of the time when the utopian ideas in vogue among them, when their prejudices and their passions would all tend to dominate in the interior, eventually even in the exterior policy of France.

Under the Restoration the working-classes as a body caused the government very little trouble, but individually the workingmen were in a large part hostile to it. It cannot quite be said that they were republicans; rather the republicanism they professed was confounded with their worship for the "Little Corporal." During the reign of Napoleon the working-classes had had very little cause for satisfaction, but many of them had served in his armies, thus gaining the name of "veteran," and the glory of the conqueror had swallowed up all memory of the legislator's harshness towards them.

They detested the Bourbons, principally because the reigning dynasty was of that house, and because it seemed to lean with special confidence on the clergy. The law of 1814 which made obligatory Sunday rest (although they might have been idle Monday as well as Sunday), the law of 1816 abolishing divorce (they had not the slightest use for the institution of divorce), the law of 1826 upon sacrilege (notwithstanding that it was never put into effect), the interior "missions" organised by over-zealous priests and religious workers, but above all the executions of the "four sergeants of La Rochelle,"

[1] Let us bear in mind that in England this proportion has for some time been reversed; it is still reversed in Germany after the expiration of a quarter of a century. These two nations have become chiefly industrial; France still remains a rural nation, and has cause to congratulate herself on the fact.

who have remained popular heroes to this day– these were the principal grievances of workingmen, particularly Parisian workingmen, against the governments of Louis XVIII and Charles X. It was possibly during this period that the popular mind received that decided bent towards blind and irrational anti-clericalism that has characterised it ever since, and that still leads it to the commission of the most dangerous follies.

Sad State of the Working Classes

French workingmen—particularly those of Paris—were to play a leading part in the battle of the *trois Glorieuses* which placed the younger branch of the house of Bourbon on the throne. For this branch itself the workman cared but little; he had believed the conflict to be in the cause of a Napoleon or of the republic: Louis Philippe was to him simply the king of the bourgeois, that is to say of the employers. He had hoped much of this revolution, but was soon to see that it had profited him but little; for the landed aristocracy had been substituted an industrial bourgeoisie, or rather the latter had been called to have a share in the power, and no notice at all was taken of the "heroes of July," or the "people with the bare arms."

Yet there was so much that could have been done for the workingman! Upon him fell the full weight of all the shocks, the disappointment, the suspense that mark the beginning of a great industrial transformation. He suffered from the introduction of machines which had for effect, before the great reparatory impulse set in, diminution in wages, the dismissal of many workmen, and utter ruin for the artisan who had set up in business for himself. The troubles resulting from this cause in France cannot, however, be compared to the riots of the Luddites, or "machine breakers" in England, notably during the year 1816.[1]

French manufacturers, less experienced—consequently more timorous than those of to-day—showed a tendency to depress wages at the least appearance on the horizon of a menace of failure for their markets or of the establishment of a formidable rival. It was the workman who bore the brunt of this cruelly prudent policy, nor were any adequate measures taken to protect him against the accidents incident to labour. In the factories defectively installed machinery and in mines the almost total absence of ventilation, the rarity and ignorant use of the Davy lamp, the insufficient precautions taken against fire-damp resulted in a multitude of victims.

The employer found it to his advantage to raise up competitors by the side of the workman in the latter's own wife and children, and no more limit was set to the work of women and children than to that of adult men. Sometimes an entire family would exhaust its forces and destroy its health for a total gain that was only equivalent to the salary that the husband and father ought rightfully to have earned.[2] In cotton-goods factories there were frequently to be seen children of six, even of five years working fourteen and fifteen hours together tying threads.

In the great industrial centres the employer took no notice at all of the

[1] Spencer Walpole, *History of England from 1815*, vol. I, pp. 401–424.

[2] Villermé, *Tableau de l'état physique et moral des ouvriers employés dans les manufactures de coton, de laine et de soie*, 2 vols., 1840. Jules Simon, *L'Ouvrière*, 1861; *Le Travail*, 1866; *L'Ouvrier de huit ans*, 1867. E. Levasseur, *Histoire des classes ouvrières en France depuis 1789*, 2 vols., 1867. See also publications of *L'office du travail*, founded in 1871, instituted by the ministry of commerce; particularly *Statistique des grèves; Les associations professionnelles ouvrières; Statistique générale de la France; Poisons industriels; Législation ouvrière et sociale en Australie et Nouvelle Zélande, etc.*]

manner in which his workmen were lodged. The families herded together in damp cellars, in garrets that were stiflingly hot or bitterly cold according to the season, in insalubrious dens that received neither air nor light and were provided with no conveniences whatever.[1] A single room, sometimes a single bed was the home of an entire family, and half of the new-born children died before the age of fifteen months. There thus grew up a generation of working people feeble in mind and body, without morality or education—schools were in any case rare at that epoch; which represented just so much lost energy and power to France.

Much of this suffering was caused by the indifference, one may say the inhumanity of the employers; but a large part also resulted from the necessity of utilising old, tumble-down buildings, from the inevitable hazards and difficulties surrounding industries at their birth, from the over-rapid growth of these industries in France precluding amelioration in the conditions of either factory or home. That this is so is proved by the superior accommodations provided for workmen in the new centres of industry in Alsace and in the north. There factory workers were lodged in clean, airy houses, as was likewise the case at Roubaix and Tourcoing. At Morvillars (Alsace) the employer rented to the employé for thirty-six francs a year a commodious apartment with a small garden attached.

Under the old régime it had been common to compare the life of the French peasant with that of the negro in the colonies, and to esteem that the latter was the happier of the two; now it was the workers in cities who were given the name of "white negroes," and who in many respects would have been justified in envying their dark-skinned brothers to whom at least food, fresh air, sunlight, and the sight of sky and trees were free.

In the main, however, the lot of the French workmen was the same as that of the workers in every great industrial country, particularly in England, where the investigation started by Thomas Sadler in 1831, having in view the limitation of hours of work for children, had revealed a horrible condition of things

Between the bourgeoise monarchy which seemed insensible to so much suffering and the sufferers themselves (the workers in the cities), strife could not fail to arise.

Early Strikes and Revolts

In October, 1831, the silk weavers of La Croix-Rousse at Lyons demanded an increase in wages. The prefect offered to mediate, an action for which he was afterwards bitterly censured by the oligarchy of employers. The mayor convoked an assembly of twenty-two delegates each from the workingmen and from the employers, that a minimum tariff of wages might be fixed upon. The employers' delegates refused to make any concession, and after a meeting that followed, the weavers descended in a body from La Croix-Rousse and poured silently into the place de Bellecour and the square before the prefecture. The prefect succeeded in inducing them to disperse, that the tariff might not seem to have been imposed by force. The weavers nevertheless signed the agreement: but the prefect having been disavowed by his government, the tariff was not put into effect. Immediately La Croix-Rousse rose in insurrection, erected barriers, and raised a black flag bearing the inscription, "We will live working or die fighting." The insurgents in a struggle of

[1] The lodgings of this sort to be most severely condemned were: at Lille the Saint Sauveur quarter and the cellars of the rue des Étaques, at Mülhausen the cellars of the "white negroes," at Rouen the Martainville quarter, etc.

two days (21st–22nd of November) repulsed the national guard, which did not make any great display of courage, forced General Roguet and the three thousand soldiers of the garrison to retreat, and for ten days remained absolute masters of Lyons. They committed no excesses—nay, even detailed some of their number to keep guard over the houses of the rich. On the 3rd of December they offered no resistance to the entrance of an enlarged body of troops headed by Marshal Soult and the duke of Orleans, eldest son of the king. The workmen were disarmed, the national guard was dismissed, and the tariff abolished. What especially characterised this first Lyons insurrection was that politics, properly speaking, had absolutely no share in it; the movement from first to last revolved around a question of wages.

It was different in Paris, where a series of insurrections burst forth, the most terrible of which were those of the 5th and 6th of June, 1832, on the occasion of the funeral of General Lamarque. These uprisings were the work of certain republican associations, secret or avowed, and the working people in general had but little share in them. Nevertheless it was the working people at whom the government aimed when it passed the law of 1834 on associations (26th of March).

The month of April, 1834, was marked by agitation. Troubles arose at Saint Étienne, Grenoble, Besançon, Arbois, Poitiers, Vienne, Marseilles, Perpignan, Auxerre, Châlon-sur-Saône, Épinal, Lunéville, Clermont-Ferrand, etc.; but the only really serious demonstrations were the second Lyons insurrection and the new revolt in Paris.

In Lyons a change had been brought about in the spirit of the working-classes by the operations of several secret societies. The question of wages was, as before, paramount; but it was no longer unmingled with political feeling. A new idea had arisen for which to do battle, the republican idea. The news of the vote deciding the passage of the law on associations stirred the chiefs to declare revolt. This time the struggle lasted five days—from the 9th to the 13th of April. The workingmen of Lyons displayed a courage so desperate that at one time General Aymar thought seriously of retreat, but in the end the royal troops were victorious.

The Lyons insurrection had not been completely quelled when, on the 13th, broke forth in Paris the revolt that had the church and cloister of Saint Merri for its centre. Fighting continued the whole of that day and the next, but the movement was finally put down by the numerous force employed against it—forty thousand soldiers of the line and of the national guard.

The explosions that shook simultaneously fifteen or twenty cities of France had for result the monster trial called "trial of the April offenders." The accused, to the number of 121, of whom 41 belonged to Paris and 80 to the departments, were arraigned before the chamber of peers, which was formed for the occasion into a high court, presenting a total of 88 judges.

Utopian Philosophies

A last echo of these conflicts was the law voted on the 9th of September, 1835, concerning freedom of the press. From that time forth through a period of twelve years the monarchy enjoyed comparative peace without presage of the fresh revolution that was brewing, a revolution of a character both political and social. The political phase lasted but a single day, the 24th of February; the second or social phase was of longer duration and of a nature more serious and sanguinary. The French workman, however, owed to the monarchy of July the law of March 22nd, 1841, on child labour in

factories, aiming to protect the children of working people against both the weakness of their parents and the greed of employers. The principle of this protective measure was combated by Gay-Lussac who denounced it, in the name of the right of all to work and make contracts, as the beginning of "Saint-Simonism or Phalansterianism." His arguments were a succession of sophistries unworthy of a great mind and masking but imperfectly the egotistical spirit of resistance that animated employers. The law applied only to such industrial establishments as employed mechanical motive power or fires that were never allowed to go out, and gave occupation to twenty or more workers. It interdicted the employment in factories of children under twelve years of age; authorised elsewhere only eight hours of labour a day broken by a rest for children of from eight to twelve, twelve hours of labour from twelve to thirteen, and no night work at all for those under thirteen. Up to the age of twelve years the apprentice, in his leisure hours, was supposed to attend school. Legal sanction was given by a corps of inspectors who had the right to impose fines for any contravention on the part of employers.

It was under the monarchy of July that the crude and vague ideas of which labour socialism was composed began to assume some definite shape and to issue forth as systems. Saint-Simon, the author of the "New Christianity," had died in 1825, but he left behind him a sort of lay congregation, the members of which practised obedience to a single chief, and the holding of all things in common. They were called Saint-Simonians, and at one time under Enfantin engaged in the practice of mysteriously mystic rites, at another in conjunction with the financier Pereire and the economist Michel Chevalier set out to reform the entire economic world. In 1832 the Saint-Simonians, accused of having violated public morality, were arraigned before the court of assizes, where they appeared in the full uniform of their sect (blue tunic, white trousers, and varnished leather belt); three of their number, one of whom was the "father" Enfantin himself, were sentenced to a month's imprisonment. After that the "family" became "secularised"—that is, it dispersed.

Other chiefs and other doctrines arose: Fourier, with his theory of the suppression of property and communal life in his *Phalansteries;* Cabet, with his dream of Icaria, the blessed isle whereon the state, sole proprietor, producer, and dispenser, was to lay down for its subjects their daily tasks, to prescribe the cut of their garments and the menu of their repasts; Pierre Leroux, with his books on *Equality* and *Humanity,* in which mysticism was blended with socialism; Louis Blanc, who in his *Labour Organisation* (1844) advised the state's absorption of all agricultural property and industrial establishments. These various theories shared one trait in common: they all professed communism or collectivism, which simply means suppression of proprietary rights and of individual initiative.

Proudhon departs radically from this idea. Like the other theorists he objects to individual holding of property and sums up his views in a phrase borrowed from Brissot de Warville, one of the most illustrious of Girondins: "What is property? It is theft." Ownership is unjust because it creates inequality, equality is exact justice. But Proudhon opposes communism with equal energy; according to him it is contrary to the primordial as well as to the noblest instincts of humanity.

He would not only do away altogether with state intervention, even where the state is communistic—he demands the total abolition of the state, of its diplomacy, its armies, its frontiers. The principle he advocates is

an-archy in the etymological sense of the word, that is to say the suppression of all authority save that of the father. The only social force that he admits is the force that springs from the free association of workingmen.

The sincere and ardent republicans who, on the 24th of February, formed the provisory government, promised to assure the workingman, to whose courage was due the success of the Revolution, an improved position in society. They conferred upon him the right of suffrage and free admission into the national guard, which was thus changed from a body of fifty or sixty thousand men to one of two hundred thousand.

In restoring absolute liberty of association and of the press, the provisory government made two very dangerous gifts to the excitable and profoundly ignorant Parisian workingmen who, in consequence of the general perturbation caused by the sitting of February 24th, found themselves suddenly without work. Idleness and want made them accept as the wisest counsels the seditious utterances of the newspapers and of the demagogues at the clubs.

As early as the 25th of February a crowd of armed workmen bearing the red flag as symbol of republican socialism assembled at the Hôtel-de-Ville. It required all Lamartine's eloquence to induce them to discard their unworthy emblem and raise in its place the tricolour, which had already made the "tour of the world." [1]

The situation of the workers soon assumed an aspect too serious to admit of any delay in providing relief. But was it possible to succour all the suffering toilers who were deprived of work? The attempt was made. Orders were given to the bakers and butchers to supply with bread and meat any of the armed citizens who had a requisition from their chief. All the articles pledged at the Mont-de-Piété since February 1st upon which had been advanced a loan of not over ten francs were to be returned to their former owners. The palace of the Tuileries was thrown open to receive invalided workmen, and the government proposed to "restore to the workingmen, to whom they rightfully belonged, the million francs that were about to fall due from the civil list." To these acts of gross flattery towards the men of the people were added declarations of the utmost gravity. The government took upon itself to "guarantee the existence of the workman by means of work," that is to "guarantee work to every citizen." Twenty-four battalions of "mobile national guard" were created, each soldier of which was to receive a daily pay of thirty sous. At the same time were opened the "national workshops" which cost enormous sums to support and which completed the demoralisation of the artisan by exacting from him a merely nominal return in work for a daily wage of one and a half or two francs. Also followers of the finer crafts, such as jewellers, clockmakers, engravers, etc., were frequently to be seen spoiling the delicacy of their hands by pushing a wheelbarrow or digging ditches.

The National Workshops and Their Consequences

The government determined to effect still more. It instituted in the palace of the Luxembourg "a governmental commission" for working people, of which several workmen were elected members, and which was given a president and vice-president in the persons of two members of the government, Louis Blanc and the workman Albert. Louis Blanc in addition to his other duties undertook to explain to the workers just what was meant

[1 Concerning Lamartine, the politician, a very interesting book appeared in 1903 by M. Pierre Quentin-Bauchart.]

by the "organisation of labour." Thus by lectures and fine speeches the government sought to make the people forget their miseries.

The many secret societies and professional demagogues (Blanqui, Barbès, and Félix Pyat had already made for themselves a wide reputation) profited by the inexperience of the labouring classes and drew them into all sorts of dangerous manifestations. Such for instance was the movement of the 17th of March, which demanded the withdrawal of the troops from Paris, and that of the 16th of April, so menacing for the government that it ordered out the national guard into the square before the Hôtel-de-Ville. The workingmen, incited by their leaders to mingle in matters that did not concern or even interest them, were beginning to make of themselves an intolerable nuisance, while the Bonapartist or royalist agents that took an active part in their manifestations constituted a grave peril to the republic.

Another source of danger, and one that threatened more seriously day by day, was the workshops. In the beginning the number of workers they contained was but a few thousand; a short time after, the total had risen to 110,000. The strikes, encouraged by the commission of the Luxembourg, multiplied without any apparent reason; the participants doubtless preferred the *dolce far niente* of the national workshops to any serious toil elsewhere. Instead of breaking up these workshops into groups more or less widely distant from each other, their director, Émile Thomas, allowed them to become concentrated in the single district that to-day forms the Parc Monceau. He had instituted in these workshops an almost military discipline and organisation. By such measures the government hoped to raise up for itself a great power of defence; but it was soon found that the vast assemblages of workmen furnished nearly all the recruits for the popular manifestations.

When the constituent assembly came together (the 4th of May) the gravity of the situation was revealed to it by the audacious action of the labour leaders. On the 15th of May, under pretext of presenting a petition on behalf of Poland—many workmen believed that that very evening a relief expedition was to be undertaken in favour of the "France of the North"—a mass of people, nearly two thousand unarmed men, led by Blanqui, Raspail, Quentin, Huber, and Sobrier, made irruption into the assembly. Huber proclaimed it to be dissolved. After that the rioters were expelled without bloodshed by the mobile guard. They proceeded at once to the Hôtel-de-Ville, but were dispersed by Lamartine, who followed them at the head of the mobile guard.

The assembly showed less disposition to forgive this criminal aggression than had the governments of the Hôtel-de-Ville. It proceeded at once to close several clubs, decreed the arrest of Barbès, Blanqui, Sobrier, Quentin, and even Albert, the former member of the provisory government. It broke with Louis Blanc, and made minister of war a tried republican and valiant African general, Eugène Cavaignac. Lastly it formed a commission solely to investigate the matter of the national workshops and render a report.

Unfortunately the person charged with making this report was one of the most ardent members of the legitimist and clerical Right, the apologist of the terrible pope-inquisitor Pius V, and future author of the law of 1850 on public instruction, Alfred de Falloux. The assembly, acting on blind impulse, adopted his conclusions. It displayed as great an inexperience in closing the national workshops as that revealed by the governments of the Hôtel-de-Ville in creating them and allowing them to develop. It had not, however, the excuse of the latter in the eyes of posterity—their profound pity for the sufferings of the people.

One circumstance which was certain to produce bloodshed in Paris was the precipitate haste of the enemies of the national workshops in carrying out their measures of repression. On the 29th of May, by means of an arbitrary warrant that recalls the *lettres de cachet*, Émile Thomas was arrested and taken to Bordeaux.

The watchword of the reactionists was "An end must be made at once." In his report Falloux, with odious hypocrisy, denounced the national workshops as the agency which had worked the "saddest deterioration in the character formerly so pure and glorious of the Parisian workman."

On the 22nd of June a decree, published in *Le Moniteur* and signed by Minister Goudchaux, declared that "all workmen between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five must on the following day enlist in the army under pain of being refused admission to the workshops." On the 23rd barricades were erected all over the city and firing commenced. Eugène Cavaignac, "chief of the executive power," was in supreme command, having under him several of the ablest and bravest generals of the African service. The battle between the workmen and the regular state forces raged with unparalleled fury for four whole days; the troops had the task of tearing down hundreds of barricades. On the 25th General Damesme was fatally wounded, the generals Bréa and de Négrier were assassinated, and Monseigneur Affre, archbishop of Paris, was killed.

The assembly now saw the mistake it had committed and voted three millions for the relief of needy workmen; the greater part of the insurgents, however, never even heard of the measure. The struggle ended on the 26th by the bombardment and capture of the faubourg St. Antoine. The workmen of this quarter had taken up arms on hearing the rumour that the royalists were attacking the republic; what was their surprise to see the troops, the national guard, the mobile guard—the latter composed entirely of workmen—all scaling the barricades to cries of "*Vive la république.*" During that series of wretched misunderstandings which have come down to us as the "days of June," French blood was shed in streams. There were in all six or seven thousand wounded. The government troops, which went uncovered to the attack of the barricades, behind which were sheltered the insurgents, counted fifteen hundred dead, and among them seven generals. The insurgents lost but half that number. Of the rebels who were taken captive, 3,376 were transported to Algeria, where many of them founded colonies.[1]

The recognition of the "right to work" and the faulty organisation of the national workshops have cast a great weight of blame on the memory of the provisory government; but still severer condemnation attaches to the assembly and to those political intriguers who made it do their will; who showed themselves so woefully ignorant of the psychology of the mass of workers, and so forgetful of their devotion on the 24th of February.

It was the republic that had to suffer by the mistakes made on every side. The remembrance of the "days of June" had due weight on the occasion of the presidential election on the 10th of December, 1848. The name of Louis Napoleon was cast into the urn by citizens eager for peace, and by workingmen who hoped to obtain through the nephew of the first emperor, through the author of *L'Extinction du paupérisme*, a signal revenge.

[1 Alexandre Quentin-Bauchart, *Rapport de la Commission d'enquête sur le 15 Mai et l'insurrection de Juin, 1848.* 8 vols. in 4. See also the apologies of Émile Thomas, *Histoire des ateliers nationaux, 1850. Histoires de la Révolution de 1848*, which are likewise apologies, by Lamartine, Garnier-Pagès, and Louis Blanc.]

The Working Classes under Louis Napoleon

The two republican assemblies, the constituent and the legislative, were neither of them capable of offering a final solution to the labour problem; the first because of its brief term of existence, the second because of its internal divisions and over-conservative tendencies. The laws they passed were merely those of the 18th of June, 1850, on superannuation funds; of the 15th of July, 1850, on mutual aid societies; and of the 22nd of February, 1851, abolishing certain limitations—a survival of the old régime—to the number of apprentices. The law of the 27th of November, 1849, on coalitions of working people simply reproduces certain provisions of the Penal Code of Napoleon. The humiliating formality of the *livret* and Article 1,781 of the Civil Code were also allowed to remain in force.

Moreover, both republican assemblies, but especially the legislative, which more directly felt the pressure of the Napoleonic executive power, had departed widely from the principles of well-nigh absolute liberty promised by the provisory government as the foundation of the new republic. The constituent assembly by the enactment of July 28, 1848, which aimed particularly at secret societies, restricted liberty of meeting and association, and the legislative interdicted, for a period of time which was afterwards renewed, all clubs and public meetings. It did not venture, however, to re-enforce either Article 291 of the Penal Code or the law of 1834.

About the same course was pursued in regard to freedom of the press. That a stop might be put to the multiplication of subversive journals the constituent assembly redemanded the former security; then it pronounced penalties against writers who should attack any of the existing institutions—the national assembly, the executive power, the constitution, property-rights, the principles of universal suffrage or the sovereignty of the people, liberty of worship, the family, etc. The legislative assembly reissued almost all the provisions of the law of 1835, then re-established the stamp-tax in addition to the obligatory security.

Finally the assembly committed the supreme folly of exacting, in the law of May 31, 1850, not six months' but three years' residence as qualification for the right to vote, which was virtually to exclude the whole body of workingmen, forced as they are by the exigencies of labour to frequent changes of habitation. Thus the assembly struck an annihilating blow at the very system to which it owed its existence, universal suffrage. No enemy animated by the most perfidious designs could have counselled it to a more self-destructive act. The proclamation of the usurper-president had now, in order to make sure of the workingmen's neutrality, but to include this simple declaration: "Universal suffrage is again established."

To sum up, the republic—provisory government or assembly—had given so little satisfaction to the masses of the people whether urban or rural, had fallen so far short of fulfilling, not their dreams but their most legitimate hopes, that it was an easy matter for any new rule, however autocratic, to establish its sway over them. The act of perjury and the massacres in which this dawning power took its rise might render inimical to it a certain high element among the people; it none the less succeeded in flattering the interests and thereby gaining the sympathies of the great majority of the nation.

Its first display of ability was in recognising that it was above all a government of universal suffrage and that its most pressing need was to conciliate the masses. All new laws must be framed with these facts in view;

they were the key-note that dominated the policy both at home and abroad. For how, if universal suffrage had not existed in France, could they have instituted a plebiscite before taking possession of Savoy and Nice, and have demanded of the king Victor Emmanuel that he confirm by a plebiscite his Italian conquests?

The rule that followed upon the coup d'état, bearing first the name of decennial presidency, then that of empire, had the support of the rural classes, which the provisory government had alienated by establishing the impost of 45 centimes—that is, increasing direct taxation by 45 per cent. It was easy enough for Napoleon III to win the favour of village inhabitants by building dwellings for the mayors, erecting churches, and cutting new parish roads; and to capture their suffrage by means of a cleverly executed system of official candidateship. A series of full crops and harvests completed the general well-being in the country, and the superstitious peasant was inclined to attribute all to the magic name of Napoleon. Even now old inhabitants love to recall the times when grain and cattle "sold so high."

Napoleon III rendered inestimable services to the workers in cities; in him indeed may be seen the organiser,—hesitating at times, without full knowledge of the work he was accomplishing,—of that great power, urban democracy. His autocratic rule brought to realisation what none of the liberal monarchies or republican assemblies had even dared to attempt. The nephew of the great emperor in his law of the 25th of May, 1864, struck out of the Code Napoleon Articles 414, 415, and 416 which interdicted coalitions, abrogated at the same time the law of 1849 and put an end to a system which forced the tribunals to judge each year an average of seventy-five trials resulting from strikes. The new law recognised the right of workingmen to concert for the purpose of obtaining an increase of wages, and to make use of the means most effectual for this end, the strike. It punished only those offences which brought about simultaneous cessation of labour by means of acts of violence, menace, or fraud. The government made it a point of honour to protect as fully the labourer's right to cease work as his right to work. Freedom so unrestrained might become, according to the use it was given in the hands of workingmen, either a powerful instrument for their material improvement or the most dangerous weapon that was ever turned against both themselves and the industries of the nation. Was it to be hoped that they would always use it wisely? Led away by the ardour of political feeling, they were frequently guilty of unwarrantable acts that brought them into violent contact with the public authorities charged with protecting liberty of labour. From such encounters resulted sanguinary episodes like that of the Ricamarie "massacre" (1869), in which were killed eleven persons, two of whom were women.

By the law of the 2nd of August, 1868, the government abrogated Article 1,781 of the Civil Code. In 1854 more timidity had been shown, as for instance when the *livret* was insisted upon with greater rigour, and it was obligatory upon each new employer to have it endorsed by the police. The evils resulting from this practice becoming more apparent as time went on, an inquiry was ordered in 1869, which was about to end in the suppression of the *livret* when the Franco-Prussian War broke out. Hospitals were multiplied for the labouring classes, and asylums for infants and old people. The empress took under her especial patronage all these works of public charity, and one of the asylums on the Seine was given the name of Prince Imperial.

The species of popularity which Napoleon III enjoyed among Parisian workingmen was founded on the abundance of work provided by the recon-

struction of a large part of the capital by Haussmann, the prefect of the Seine. The people were fond of saying in presence of this gigantic *haussmannisation*, "When the building trade flourishes everything goes well." The number of workmen employed in building alone was almost doubled—71,240 instead of 41,600. The total number of labourers employed in all the twenty districts of Paris had increased from 342,530 to 416,811, of which 285,861 were men, and the rest were women, girls, and young boys. Besides these, 42,028 people were employed in the public establishments and by the great companies, 26,242 were sub-contractors, and 62,199 were engaged in work on their own account. The whole made up an army of more than 500,000 Parisian workers.

The labour delegates that the emperor had allowed to be sent to the Universal Exhibition of London in 1863 noted the liberty enjoyed by the English labourers, and studied the working of their trade unions. Some returned affiliated to the dangerous International Association of Workingmen; others, more practical, merely brought back a deep veneration for the principles of mutuality. In the report of the typographers is to be read: "Association is the truest and most efficacious method of promoting the peaceful and progressive emancipation of the working-classes." Moreover, the influence was widely felt in France of the success obtained in Germany by Schulze-Delitzsch, who had created the workmen's mutual credit system and the people's banks. Soon in every part of France—naturally with the authorisation of the government—co-operative societies in the fields of consumption, production, and credit began to multiply. The progress of the urban working-classes was also shown by the great number of mutual aid societies that arose among them: five years after the passage of the law of July 15th, 1850, there were no less than 2,695 of these associations.

In 1853 the manufacturer Jean Dollfus of Mülhausen founded the Mülhausen Society of Labour Settlements, which not only assured the workman comfortable and salubrious quarters, but permitted him to own his home after the lapse of a few years by the payment of a small sum annually. This example was shortly followed in every part of France.

The Commune of 1871

The fall of the second empire, occurring as it did when a foreign war was at its height, was preceded and followed by revolutionary movements. After war had been declared it was found necessary all over the country, in order to supply the deficiency of troops of the line, to muster in the "mobile guards," the "mobilised troops," and the "national guard," which altogether made up a force that held discipline in contempt and, being also without military training or instruction, could render effective service—glorious service it was sometimes—only in case of siege.

In Paris, especially, nothing had been accomplished save to organise an armed conflict between political opinions of the bitterest and most fervid character. Those members of the "government of the national defence" who remained shut up in Paris soon had an opportunity to distinguish between the "good battalions" and the "bad battalions."[1] The latter were in general quite as active in opposing the German invasion as the others, but under all their patriotism lay the ulterior purpose of making the republic that was proclaimed on September 4th, and acknowledged throughout France,

[1] Depositions before the committee investigating the acts of the government of the national defence, preceded by the report of the Count Daru.

a socialistic republic. Many of these "bad battalions" were under the direct influence of leaders who had gained fame in previous revolutions, Blanqui, Félix Pyat, or certain new demagogues who, with the exception of Flourens or Delescluze, were for the most part unknown. Among the "bad battalions" there were many "worse" ones, for example those of Belleville who tore up the flag given them to raise on their march towards the enemy, but who were always in the lead when any rioting took place.[1]

In reality the famous "commune" existed when Paris was still in a state of siege. The events of October 1st, 1870, when the government was penned up for fourteen hours in the Hôtel-de-Ville by riots which fortunately terminated without bloodshed, also those of the 22nd of January, 1871, when firing broke out in the square of the Hôtel-de-Ville between the "mobiles" of Brittany and the 101st battalion of the national guard, were all the work of the commune.

After Paris had capitulated, nearly one hundred thousand men belonging to the well-to-do classes, hence to the "good battalions," hurried to rejoin their families and the field was left free to the revolutionists, who until then had not been in the majority. It was at this juncture that they assumed the name of "federates." Upon the temper of this populace possessing 450,000 rifles, 2,000 cannon, and innumerable stores of powder, upon the spirit of men, already tried by the sufferings of the siege—sufferings that had resulted in enormous infant mortality—and a prey to the hallucinations of the "siege fever," and of patriotism exasperated by defeat, a number of incidents that now took place acted with disastrous effect. On the 1st and 2nd of March the Parisians saw the German troops march, according to the terms of capitulation, from the Arc de Triomphe to the garden of the Tuileries; they also had reason to believe that the national assembly, now in session at Bordeaux, was acting disloyally to the republic, and learned on the arrival of the representatives at Versailles that the royalist majority had received with violent hostility the complaints of the Paris mayors.

Finally, the dearest interests of all were attacked when the assembly gave forth that the notes which had been allowed to lapse through the whole duration of the siege were now demandable within forty-eight hours, such a decision being equivalent to paralysing Parisian commerce and plunging its leaders into bankruptcy. The episode of the cannon of Montmartre on March 18th caused the insurrection to burst forth with a fury that resulted in the shameful assassination of two generals. The revolutionists of Lyons rose at the same time and assassinated the prefect of Loire, and in Marseilles the riots were not put down without much bloodshed. M. Thiers resolved to evacuate Paris that he might obtain possession of it again the more surely. Though justifiable from a strategic point of view, this action virtually delivered Paris over to the tyranny of mob rule, with all its attendant chances of pillage, burning—perhaps even of total destruction.

Taking up his position at Versailles with a body of troops, small at first but growing in number as the prisoners from Germany returned, M. Thiers for two months held Paris in a state of siege, visiting terrible reprisals on those "communard" battalions which ventured out into the plain. On the 21st of May the Versailles troops took by surprise the gate of Saint Cloud and poured into Paris; after which commenced the "week of blood" or the "battle of seven days," which as far exceeded in horror the terrible days of June, 1848, as the latter surpassed the uprisings of 1831, 1832, and 1834.

[1 Jules Ferry, deposition before the committee of investigation on the 18th of March, 1871, reproduced in vol. 1, page 549, of his *Discours et opinions*.]

The "proletariat" manifested its new-found power in an ever-growing thirst for destruction. The whole centre of Paris—Legion of Honour, court of Accounts, Tuileries, Ministry of Finance, Palais Royal, Palais de Justice, Prefecture of Police, and Hôtel-de-Ville, that marvel of the Renaissance—formed but one cauldron; everywhere insurgents of both sexes were going about making use of petroleum. The cannon of the Versailles artillery and those of the communards opened fire on each other from one quarter to another of the very heart of Paris. Unable to hold out longer, the commune ordered the massacre of the "hostages," among whom were the archbishop of Paris, Monseigneur Darboy, and the president, Bonjean. The last of the federates were finally crushed among the tombs of Père-Lachaise.

Of the members of the commune, Delescluze had found death on a barricade, Jacques Durand and Varlin had been executed, the ferocious Raoul Rigault had been killed by a pistol in the hands of a policeman, and five others had received wounds. All the rest had taken to flight.

It was upon the poor devils, the humble members of the various national guards who were for the most part unwitting instruments, that the punishment fell most heavily. Seventeen thousand of these participants perished during or after the combat, and 37,000 were driven on foot through torrid heat to Versailles, where they were arraigned before a council of war. This trial resulted in 26 executions, 3,417 deportations, 1,247 detentions, 332 banishments, 251 condemnations to penal servitude, and 4,873 diverse penalties. "Paris has cruelly expiated the error into which it was plunged by certain guilty and irresponsible men; surely after the sufferings endured and the heroism displayed during the siege the city did not deserve a destiny so hard."[1]

For more than two months the commune ruled supreme over one of the greatest capitals of the world, and to this day the collectivists, the anarchists, the unruly, and the lawless of every country on the globe celebrate that brief triumph as the most splendid manifestation of the power of the people that the world has ever seen.

It cannot be denied that the commune was guilty of monstrous crimes. To offset these crimes, what social ideals did it realise, what doctrines or plans of reform did it hand down to posterity, what guiding signs did it place along the route of succeeding generations or what foundations lay ready for the future constructions of humanity? The truth is that the commune distinguished itself for nothing so much as a complete dearth of ideas, a prodigious inability to do anything but repeat certain terrorist proceedings of '93, to strut about under the same stripes and dignities as those worn by the citizen-governors. The "central committee of the commune" was made up in the beginning of very ordinary individuals, who were obscure at the time of their selection and remained so even while wielding a power that was practically unlimited. Bound together by no common ties and for the most part grossly ignorant, these men had not even a true conception of the principles they represented; hence were utterly incapable of arranging, either singly or in concert, any plan for united action.

The central committee was supposed to consist of a hundred members, but rarely did more than twenty or thirty come together at a sitting. "The records of these meetings reveal the strange body to have been after all little more than a makeshift; instability is always apparent, as well as great confusion and a lack of sequence in ideas. Certain successful candidates suddenly

[1] Gabriel Hanotaux (former minister of foreign affairs), *Histoire de la France contemporaine*, vol. I, Paris, 1903.

relinquished membership, others abstained from attending any of the sittings, while yet other individuals, without having been elected, presented themselves in company with a friend and took part in the deliberations until a complaint was made and both were expelled."[1]

An all-powerful commune (using the word in its true sense) holding universal sway by virtue of the terror it inspired, demanding of all provisions, bravery, and willing arms, was a legend rather than a fact. In reality a few audacious men both within and without the committee, such as Rossel, Flourens, the "generals" Duval and Bergeret, Raoul Rigault, and Delescluze, arrogated to themselves the greater part of the power and abused it shamefully. So long as lasted the commune the conditions under which men governed, tyrannised, fought, killed, and themselves found death were those of pure anarchy. Were it otherwise, had any serious organisation or system existed, would it have been possible for the Versailles troops to enter Paris and pass through the gate of Saint Cloud without discharging a shot from their rifles?

The suppression of the Paris revolt might—so hoped the assembly's Right—wipe out the republic itself, but this hope was not fulfilled. Democracy, though vanquished, was still formidable, and the republic in whose name it had been subdued retained such an appearance of power that M. Thiers, in whose hand lay the destinies of France, accentuated his evolution towards the Left. Moreover, the rural populations and the bourgeoisie of 1871 displayed more reason and self-possession than had characterised similar classes in 1848. Far from hastening to set over themselves a master, as had the latter, they gave all their support to the aged statesman who was doing his utmost to place the republic in a position of safety.

Recent Legislation for the Betterment of Labour

It was now universally comprehended that a republic should exist for the good of all classes of the nation, should be *res publica* in the full meaning of the words; whereas former revolutions had furthered the interests of one class alone. The assemblies which succeeded each other after 1875, having greater wisdom, more time for deliberation, and wider experience than those of the second republic, elaborated so many useful laws that a complete change was brought about in the situation of the workingman.

Powerful as was the instrument of emancipation put into the hands of working people when universal suffrage was proclaimed in 1848, the gift needed another to complete it—free and obligatory education for the masses as provided by the Ferry laws; also the adult schools, complementary to the primary school system, and technical instruction of all sorts.

The law of the 21st of March, 1884, on syndicates, borrowed the best features of early labour organisation in France and at the same time guaranteed, it was hoped, full liberty to the individual. The law of July 2nd, 1890, suppressed the obligation of the workingman to carry a *livret*, or certificate. The law of the 8th of July, 1890, provided for the appointment of delegates of miners, who were to be elected by their comrades and charged with securing safe conditions of labour. The law of the 27th of December, 1892, instituted optional arbitration in litigations between employers and employed. The law of the 9th of April, 1898, awarded an indemnity to workmen injured while performing any ordered task, even when the injury could

[1 Camille Pelletan, *Le Comité central de la Commune*, New Edition.]

be shown to be the result of their own imprudence. In case of death from such a cause the indemnity is to be paid to the wife and children of the deceased. The law of the 30th of June, 1899, extended to agricultural labourers this same right of indemnity in cases where an accident was caused by the use of machines worked by inanimate forces (steam or electricity) and not by men or animals. The laws of the 19th of March, 1874, and of the 2nd of November, 1892, interpreted by numerous decrees, were intended as revisions of those elaborated by the chambers under Louis Philippe; but so complicated is the matter owing to the endless diversity of professions that it is found difficult to formulate a good general law. The many provisions and prohibitions come near to being vexatious, even ruinous, to the workingman himself.

By a law of 1883 commissioners and inspectors of child-labour are also charged with the enforcement of the law of May 17th, 1851, regulating the number of hours of work a day for adults.

The progress of the working-classes can always be estimated by the rate of advance of certain allied institutions. Thus the mutual aid societies, which in 1853 numbered 2,695, had attained in 1899 a total of 12,292, with 1,725,439 active members, 292,748 honorary members, and a capital of 312,000,000 francs.

The superannuation funds, including the "national" fund of that name founded in 1850, also entered upon a period of great development. The laws of June 25th, 1894, and July 16th, 1896, organised similar institutions for the benefit of miners, and the French parliament is constantly entertaining projects looking to the further extension of the idea.

In 1847 the savings banks contained in deposits only 353,000,000 of francs, in 1869 the amount had increased to 711,000,000, and in 1882 to 1,754,000,000. At the beginning of 1899 the banks had received in deposits 4,000,500,000 francs, represented by 7,000,000 bank-books.

The free medical aid system was established by the law of January 22nd, 1893; that of free judicial aid, created by the law of January 22nd, 1851, was reorganised by the law of July 8th, 1901.

It is evident that the working people, not wholly but in great part, compose the mutual aid societies, contribute to the superannuation funds, and own the three or four thousand million francs deposited in the savings banks of France. It is equally apparent that to them falls the largest share of the benefits arising from prosperity. According to calculations the consumption of meat has almost doubled since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the consumption of wine has doubled, that of coffee trebled, of sugar increased tenfold, and of beer augmented in the proportion of 70 per cent. Now the rich man hardly consumes a greater quantity of meat, wine, beer, coffee, and sugar than does the labourer, nor is the economical rural worker given to using half as much of these commodities as his urban brother; hence it will be seen that the general increase of prosperity has benefited most of all the labourers in cities.

The workingman of to-day is better fed, better clad, better housed, more generously provided in every way with worldly goods than was the workingman of thirty years ago. He profits by all the inventions of a philanthropic legislature, enjoys for himself and his children free medical service and judicial aid, but can it truly be said that he is happier than his congener of fifty or sixty years ago? And if it is true, will he admit it? It is ingrained in the nature of man to let his sufferings for the lack of certain things outweigh his happiness in the possession of others. French workingmen are not inclined

to seek comparisons in bygone times, they refuse to take into account any period but the present, to see anything but the existing difference between their own and their employer's condition. They display a greater animosity to-day toward the bourgeois class, that has made for them many sacrifices, than was ever cherished by their forerunners against the egoistical employers of 1830. Many among them would think it quite right to work only eight hours a day for high wages, and to have funds established for them to which they themselves would not have to contribute. Others also, who are depositors in savings banks and mutual aid societies, and in receipt of the income assured them by these institutions, give themselves airs of "proletarians" after the fashion of the workingman of 1830 whose only capital was a pair of shrunken arms. If they vote it is very often in favour of some extremist candidate, as though they had a horror of public tranquillity, and were not themselves the first to suffer from any disturbance of the peace. Furthermore they are beset by solicitations to join one or more of the many socialistic organisations—the Blanquists or the Allemanists—whose avowed mission it is to foment hatred between the classes, to prepare the way for a "universal strike," and whose favourite counsel to the workingman is to "study the chemistry of revolution."

Present-day Doctrines

We have left far behind us the days of Saint-Simon, of Enfantin, of Fourier, of Cabet and other mild utopians, of Proudhon, and of Louis Blanc. The new masters to whom socialists swear allegiance are more terrible ones whom they have found across the Rhine; from Ferdinand, but more especially from Karl Marx, proceed the most radical collectivist and the most destructive internationalist doctrines that have ever been uttered. Among the French disciples of Karl Marx a certain set of fanatics acknowledged as their leader Jules Guesde, the high priest with the wasted visage, who styles himself "chief of the French labour party"; others, who are the truly clever ones, call themselves independent, and, in company with Millerand and Jaurès, have enjoyed more than one foretaste of the bliss they promise the people in a more or less distant future.

Many workingmen were carried away by the formula, lately fallen into disuse, of the "three eights" (eight hours for labour, eight for relaxation, eight for sleep). Its inventors concerned themselves but little with those trades or professions that are marked by alternations of activity and stagnation. Other labourers—forming not a tenth part of the mass of French workers—allowed themselves to be drawn into the so-called professional syndicates which, in violation of the law of 1884, were diverted from their original purpose and transformed into agencies for strikes. Fortunately there arose against the despotism of strike leaders and "red" syndicates the powerful association of "yellow" syndicates, which dared show themselves independent even in the face of revolutionary tyranny.

The collectivists are hostile to the idea of country, army, uniform, or flag, and their bitter hatred of the priesthood leads them into complete forgetfulness not only of the nation's interests but of their own. This is what makes the management of public affairs so easy for unscrupulous politicians: one good campaign against religion will take the place of ever so many social reforms, even those that have been declared the most urgent.

The power gained by the labouring classes, now the "fourth estate," has by no means contributed everything towards the general welfare; it has pro-

moted neither the public peace, continually disturbed by so-called "social reclamations," nor the industrial prosperity of the country, repeatedly endangered by unjustifiable and sanguinary strikes such as those of 1898 and 1899; while it has as certainly not added to France's glory in the eyes of the world, since all her institutions of national defence are the subject of the most hostile and annihilating criticism.

The old régime of France with its kings and nobles counts fourteen centuries of a glory whose origin is lost in the legends of antiquity; the predominance of the bourgeoisie during the revolution, the first empire, and the parliamentary monarchies was marked by splendid progress, victories, and expansion of ideas; just what will distinguish the era ushered in by socialism in every country of the globe it is difficult to conceive, nor is it easier to foretell the future lot of humanity when the collectivist state shall have become an accomplished fact.

We are frequently assured that if every country were to disband its armies the peace of the world would be secured. Who can guarantee, though, that all the inhabitants of any given country would calmly consent to relinquish their property, bow their necks to the heaviest bureaucratic yoke that has ever been imposed (for many more officials would be required to run such an enormous phalanstery of a state than are employed to-day), and endure without rebelling the wearisome, monotonous, and depressing existence that would be theirs under the sway of the least enlightened classes of the nation? Nor would the suppression of the states do away either with the different ethnological groups that form their support, nor with the inclination of these groups to live their own life, to speak their own tongue, to draw inspiration from the legends of their own past, to feel themselves in a word separate and distinct from all the other groups around them. There have been innumerable wars in former times between those national personalities calling themselves in the present France, Germany, England, Spain, and Italy—feudal wars, monarchical wars, Jacobin wars, bourgeois wars, and tariff wars, wars for pillage, wars for principles, and wars for display. It is not clearly apparent how any of these wars could have been averted had each of the nations participating been ruled by a collectivist autocracy and bureaucracy. And again, who can assert that the diplomacy of the future will be as skilled in avoiding causes of conflict as the diplomacy of the present? The collectivist state, moreover, having assumed control in each country of all the agricultural, industrial, and commercial interests, will be ill inclined to brook that a neighbour shall hinder its traffic in grains and other produce, or shall contend for the markets in its possession. Evidently a custom-service will be a necessity, with a regiment of officials, and frontier-lines will again come into prominence. Thus, with a police force on land to guard against sedition by malcontents, and warships on sea to protect its counting-houses, the collectivist state's institutions of defence will offer a very close parallel to the standing army of to-day.

The future that has been pictured for us in such glowing colours may, after all is said and done, be simply a repetition of the present with a few worse features thrown in. There will doubtless still be wars, but the warfare will rage about a singularly diminished object; in the poverty-stricken commonwealths that will succeed to the opulent nations of to-day there will be no doing battle for glory or for the propagation of ideas, the inhabitants will seek to exterminate each other on account of a few sacks of rye. The citizen wars of the Revolution and the empire were marked by a fiercer spirit than had characterised any of the previous monarchical wars; it is to

be feared that the "labour" wars will exceed them all in ferocity and hate, will in fact turn the world back again to the modes of living and degree of civilisation of the cave-dwellers. Let us hope, however, that the men of the "fourth estate" will discover before it is too late the vanity, the danger, the absurdity of the collectivist utopia; it is not well to serve as a springboard for ambitious men who, without believing in the possibility of the realisation of their utopia, understand marvellously well how to exploit it.