

CHAPTER IV.

SOLIDARITY

LIBERTY, ORDER, SYMPATHY

The French Revolution was an insurrection of common people against a government that was riding on the back of the people. Court and nobility were like greedy parasites that sucked the life-blood of the people. The fourth of August was the most significant incident in the Revolution, but lack of organization had prevented the people from taking lasting possession of the sources of wealth which they had taken from the nobility on that notorious night. The enthusiastic abolition of all monopolies and all privileged property had given the impetus to a strong social movement whose different phases, in the course of the following century, looked as if they were going to result in the formation of a new class of rich who, although less parasitic than the nobility of "l'ancien régime", stood aloof from the real life and work of the people. The upper class in France did not become an industrial class, as Saint Simon had hoped, not an organized army which set out to increase the working-field and working-output of the French people, but it became a financial power that seemed to be merely a different edition of the old one that knew how to rob the people of the profit of their work.

The social problem in France was not how the work of the people should be organized, but how the people should be guarded against constant robbery. The group of moral and religious ideas, on the basis of which the Revolution had vindicated its right, had, in the meantime, undergone a great many changes; but social movements were still regarded in close connection with views on the whole meaning of life. In his positivist philosophy, which was hostile

to all kinds of metaphysics, August Comte did not in the least deny the connection between man's moral and social ideals and the principles that may be deduced from the course of history and historic evolution. To those who concentrated all their efforts on a fight against poverty, poverty became much more than a condition that arouses our sympathy. It came to be viewed as a mark of disorder, an infringement of universal solidarity, by which it may be possible for us to ascertain the utility of those social structures through the instrument of which we may hope to establish social order. In the course of the Revolution one structure was replaced by another. The legal apparatus had under the "Code Napoléon" undergone a thorough revision, the intricate apparatus of administration had been highly rationalized and centralized, and the organizations of trade which held together and also specialized the different branches of industry, seemed through this system of government to have been laid open to such arbitrary reformation as might be desired in any given case. Poverty must then indicate an error in the social structure. The view set forth by Condillac and Helvetius in the preceding century still prevailed; according to this view all men are by nature endowed with equal possibilities of evolution, and their different development is due to a difference in exterior circumstances. The great social differences were due to an error in social conditions. It was merely a question of perceiving clearly what it was that made it possible for one to seize immense riches, while it prevented others from attaining to tolerably easy conditions. Throughout the century the idea prevailed among the French intellectuals that the cosmic power that penetrates everything is order, solidarity; and poverty, being disorder, is the social phenomenon which should first and foremost be fought.

Proudhon (1809—1865).

Pierre Joseph Proudhon belonged from his birth to the poorest peasant-class of France. His father was a cooper, his mother a cook, he himself was a common shepherd-boy in his childhood and early youth. Through the assistance of friends he obtained a sizarship at the college in his native town, Besançon, but at the same time as he attended his lessons he had to earn his livelihood in different

ways. He was so poor that he had no school-books, but at the town-library he borrowed books, to such an extent that he surpassed the other pupils at the school. When he was about twenty he was apprenticed to a typographer and, in the following years, he earned his modest living in this capacity.¹⁾ Proudhon felt a farmer all his life, in town he felt uprooted from the soil. Life in the field was to him the only life which held the joy and purpose of living.²⁾ He knew from personal experience the hard conditions of the poor, and he was aware how near the property-less approaches to the shameful and impersonal way of living of the prostitute. All his life through he had to struggle with poverty. But during this struggle it was not the modest and thrifty way of living which aroused his resistance, but the slavery in the way of thinking and living which poverty encouraged. In order to guard himself against the deprivation of his liberty he put all his energy and intellectual power into this work of fighting and putting an end to this misery.³⁾ Where the misery involved by poverty is allowed to exist, society must fall into ruins. To perceive the cause of poverty became to him, from the very beginning, not only a question of national economy. It became to him a question of a whole metaphysical theory of the world, where the existence of God and the ruling of Providence are treated side by side with economic problems concerning production and consumption, property, work and wages, Free Trade and Protection. His guiding idea is the idea of order which is one with the idea of equilibrium. Disorder and chaos arise when the equilibrium is disturbed. His well-known doctrine of mutualism develops, both into theories of our religious and moral valuations, and into theories of work and commerce, government and liberty, credit and money affairs. What is necessary in order to maintain order in these matters no authority can decide. "God" he writes "advances in his glorious majesty holding the scales in his hands, and the gravel under his chariot-wheels produces scarcely the faintest trembling in the scales".⁴⁾ It depends on the further

¹⁾ A. Desjardins, P. J. Proudhon, sa vie, ses oeuvres, sa doctrine. 1—2. 1896 I. Chap. prem.

²⁾ A. Berthod, P. J. Proudhon et la Propriété. 1910. pp. 4—6.

³⁾ Sainte Beuve, P. J. Proudhon. 1872. pp. 3, 83.

⁴⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Système des Contradictions économiques ou Philosophie de la misère*, 1846, II, p. 83.

circumstances whether in this image we see a Juggernaut who crushes those who are in his way, or Fate, as described by Hegel, which is the passage of God through the history of the world.

In Proudhon's speculative train of thought an influence from the Germans makes itself felt, especially from Kant, more superficially from Hegel. Proudhon read Kant with great enthusiasm. Particularly his doctrine of the antinomies became of importance to him. It colours his whole train of ideas; he is fond of discussing theses and antitheses and occupies himself with the possibility of their reconciliation. His great work "Système des Contradictions, 1846", bears in its very title the mark of his propensity and its contents is a collection of chapters, each of which treats its own great question, which, looked at from one viewpoint demands one answer, from another viewpoint the directly opposite answer, and therefore necessitates an attempt to point out their different starting-points, seen from which each is proved to be right. The reason that our societies are sunk in such deep misery is that we have not been able to find the right solution of the antinomies. In every man a tendency to contradictory points of view makes itself felt.¹⁾ Every man contradicts himself at every moment of his life. But he is not always aware of it. We love order and yet we always want to rebel against it, our thoughts try for ever to exceed the sphere of our knowledge.²⁾ In Proudhon's noble doctrine of justice we recognize Kant's ideas of reason as the disturbing factor in the peaceful and natural life of the instincts, as the will to peace that creates contest, the Fall which we do not really want to evade and which we yet do everything to retrieve.

Hegel, however, Proudhon only knew from hearsay and through instinct.³⁾ He did not read Hegel and it was therefore possible for him to believe that Hegel's dialectics and Kant's antinomies were one and the same thing. Karl Marx prided himself on its being he who, in the course of their personal discussions, during their life together before Marx was exiled to France, had infected Proudhon with Hegel. Already in 1845 Marx mentioned Proudhon in "Die

¹⁾ A. Desjardins, P. J. Proudhon, sa vie, ses oeuvres, sa doctrine. 1—2. 1896. I. p. 81.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, Contractions, II, pp. 84, 87.

³⁾ Sainte-Beuve, P. J. Proudhon, 1872, p. 87.

heilige Familie", in a far from flattering way, although appreciating the polemical value of his first controversial pamphlet "Qu'est-ce que la propriété?" Shortly after this they met during Marx's brief stay in France. But the great difference in their dispositions and social endeavours soon led to an irremediable breach. In 1846 Proudhon sent Marx his book "Système des Contradictions économiques ou Philosophie de la Misère" to have it reviewed; in his book "La Misère de la Philosophie" Marx lacerated it in the most merciless manner, without showing the slightest sign that he understood Proudhon's points of view. On the contrary, he condemned Proudhon most sharply by calling his view the view of the "petit bourgeois". Marx was doubtless right when he asserted that Proudhon did not understand Hegel, but this was of quite subordinate importance considering the ideas that Proudhon endeavoured to express, which Marx failed to comprehend, and which he had no possibility of comprehending. The reason why Proudhon was influenced by Kant's antinomies and not by Hegel's dialectics was that Proudhon, being of a liberty-loving disposition, felt attracted by the relativity of human points of view. We always get entangled into contradictions when we want to reach the absolute. Hegel's dialectics is the method of reaching beyond the relative to the absolute. Marx was of a more robust and objective disposition. The instincts of Proudhon, which Hegel completely lacked, and which made Proudhon all his life through regard it as the greatest joy which life contained to bask in the soft grass of the meadows and to run barefoot on paths along ditches and hedges, left Marx uncomprehending and unsympathetic towards Proudhon's individualistic profundities, which fought shy of all categorical judgments and action that to Marx seemed to hold the only right solution. Many years later, after the "Paris Commune", Proudhon's ardent admirer and Marx's constant opponent, the Russian, Bakunin, gave a characteristic description of Marx. "Never", wrote he, "was there any confidence between us. Our dispositions were too different. He called me a sentimental idealist, and he was right. I called him perfidious and vicious vanity, and I was right too. — — — It is possible that Marx may be able in theory to develop a system that stands as a still more rational expression of liberty than Proudhon's, but he lacks the instinct of liberty: he is from top to toe the man

of authority".¹⁾ Strange that the myth of Hegel's influence on Proudhon should go on living.²⁾

Proudhon was very fond of philosophical discussions and many amusing stories are told of how, when at parties, he would go on discussing till the small hours of the morning to the despair of his host and his fellow-guests. Karl Grün, through whom he was made acquainted with Feuerbach's movement, and his admirer, Bakunin, were frequent disputants in these mental battles. This propensity of Proudhon's originated perhaps, to a certain extent, in his delight in asserting himself and showing off the learning he had acquired under such unfavourable circumstances. Bouglé calls him "the insatiable bookworm".³⁾ But his principal idea was the same that bore his love of antinomies, his desire to create order in his thoughts and constantly to see how far they could reach. His profound desire to find the final basis of reality is perhaps what best explains the strange attraction which his personality and writings constantly exercise, in spite of their great short-comings which Marx so mercilessly made the object of his derision.⁴⁾ It was German thinking that exercised the greatest influence on him, as French thinking was superficial and did not go into the depths because it did not want seriously to discuss the social question. Cousin had felt the violent fermentation which went through German thinking, but he lacked the courage to break out, and he only used German thought to give a new colour to his genius. The philosophy of fashion which he created reigned in France for thirty years without leading to one valuable truth. Renan followed in his steps and entered German philosophy as one steps into a church; it gave him a consecration, but no method. Proudhon received his method from Germany. Towards the positivist movement, which Auguste Comte had just set forth in so excellent a

¹⁾ M. Bakunin, *Oeuvres*. II. Notice biographique. pp. XII, XIV.

²⁾ C. Bouglé, *La Sociologie de Proudhon*. 1911. p. 121.

³⁾ *Opus cit.* p. 115.

⁴⁾ Franz Mehring, *Aus dem litterarischen Nachlass von Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels*. 4te Aufl. 1923. II. Die heilige Familie, pp. 118—152; Karl Marx, *Das Elend der Philosophie*, deutsch v. E. Bernstein und K. Kautsky, 1885, pp. 94 ff.: Marx's letter in "Sozialdemokrat" 1865, printed in "Das Elend", XXV—XXXIV, "ich infizierte ihn zu seinem grossen Schaden mit Hegelianismus", XXVIII.

manner, Proudhon took up a very sympathetic attitude; Comte had, however, completely cut away metaphysical antinomy, and this could not be dispensed with without leaving positivism with no basis. Cousin's eclecticism was without depth. Comte's positivism without point. Proudhon wanted to arrive at a clear conception of the ruling powers of life; he concluded that they are justice and equity, and that they are creative forces because they are something beyond the individual's will. They are testimony to something that stands above the individuals, without, however, being different from them.

It is difficult to say whether the problems which first presented themselves to Proudhon were religious or sociologic. Anger against God as the incarnation of tyranny and arbitrariness, and anger against society which allows and produces poverty and slavery are from the beginning confused in Proudhon's mind. National economy as positive social science became to him also the science of the order of the universe. With great authority Proudhon sets up the claim that no form with which man invests his moral ideas, at the head of which ideas stands justice, has the least value if it does not improve material economic conditions through the abolition of poverty. Proudhon has therefore been regarded as a precursor of Karl Marx and his materialistic view of history. But in his profound examinations concerning Proudhon's teaching Pirou has rightly shown that there is so essential a difference between Marx and Proudhon that we may surmise that Proudhon, if he had become acquainted with Marx's materialistic view of history, would have disavowed it. Proudhon does not base his ideas of right and justice on economic methods of production, but looks upon economic conditions as the conditions which should, first and foremost, be regulated, as, without them, ideas of justice become mere empty talk. Proudhon is a realistic metaphysician who regards the evolution of communities as the realization of the idea of justice.¹⁾ Perhaps the difference in the views of Proudhon and Marx is not so great as Pirou makes it, but if this is the case, it is not Proudhon who is more materialistic than

¹⁾ G. Pirou, "Proudhonisme et Marxisme" in "Proudhon et notre temps". 1920. pp. 262—266.

was presumed, but Marx who has far more of the Kant-Hegelian idealism than is generally supposed. The difference between them is fundamentally a difference in their dispositions, but is also influenced by the different economic conditions in the societies which they wanted to improve. We shall return to this question in the description of Marxism; here we shall only state that to Proudhon the main point was to consider the solution of the economic question in relation to the system of the universe and its principles.

Already in Proudhon's first revolutionary writings, the three famous memoirs concerning the question of property: "Qu'est-ce que la propriété? 1840". "Deuxième Mémoire, Lettre à M. Blauqui, 1841", "Troisième Mémoire, Avertissement aux Propriétaires, Lettre à M. Considérant, 1842", this tendency makes itself distinctly felt. It becomes absolutely decisive in his first great work: "De la création de l'ordre dans l'humanité, 1845". Sainte Beuve says of this work that it was little read and deserved no better.¹⁾ Proudhon admitted himself later on that it was "un livre manqué". He did not know enough. He threw himself eagerly into the study of national economy and was soon able to publish his great, far more valuable work: "Système des Contradictions économiques ou la philosophie de la Misère, 1846", the work which Marx lacerated in "Misère de la Philosophie". Proudhon preserved, however, his own high valuation of "Création de l'ordre". It seems to us that the work possesses incontestable advantages. It gave a real and a better philosophy than the German one, and it showed us a world with a new face. It showed us Proudhon's spiritual large-mindedness in such a penetrating manner that, in many respects, it is better worth while studying that book than the other, which, from the point of view of national economy, was superior, but which, as regards philosophy, was less fresh and original.

"Political economy", says Proudhon, "is not a special science of production and distribution of wealth, but a science of forms of government, legislation, public education, the family and the ruling of the earth. It is the key of history, the doctrine of order, the last word of the creator."²⁾ Nothing that can be of interest to hu-

¹⁾ Sainte Beuve, P. J. Proudhon, 1872. pp. 170, 217.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, Contradictions. pp. 351 ff. pp. 250 ff.

manity lies outside its sphere. St. Simon once used the phrase "work is to society what gravitation is to the universe". Proudhon makes this "mot d'esprit" the central point round which all our ideas and actions centre. He considers himself the descendant of Adam Smith who in work found the source and measure of every value.¹⁾ The laws of work, being the laws of equilibrium, are the laws of society and nature. Work is man's intelligent action on matter. This it is that distinguishes man from the brute. Our aim on earth is to learn how to work. All his life through, Proudhon cherished a deep-rooted love of work, which gives firmness to character; while evincing at the same time a great moral shyness at the spiritual "abandon" that follows inevitably from allowing ourselves to be governed by our feelings and passions. Pirou sees rightly in this different attitude to life a quite decisively distinctive mark between Proudhon and Marx. Proudhon condemns instinctively life in idleness and superfluity, and praises a strictly regulated laborious life with its natural pleasures. Marx hates work and desires a careless life in uninterrupted pleasure.²⁾

Work must presuppose a balance between activity and product, and its laws become an expression of the cosmic law which shows us that order is created wherever such balance is found, but, whenever order is disturbed, confusion and chaos arise. We do not call it work when we allow nature to take its own way or when we perform actions without any definite plan; this would be to ascribe no significance to our own plans. When we seek the law of Nature, we seek her secret plans; the fundamental design, of which the laws are the expression, we call the balance. The plans according to which we build up communities must therefore, to have any prospect of succeeding, rest on the equilibrium between action and production, which is the same thing as equilibrium between work and wages. Where work does not receive its full wages, there arises disorder and unrest.

In isolated man there is a balance between production and consumption. But in society, disturbances are apt to arise, as there may be circumstances and situations where wages are given with-

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Avertissement*, pp. 29, 34; *Création*. p. 397.

²⁾ Pirou, *Opus cit.* p. 19.

out any work being performed or vice versa. Political economy cannot evade treating political questions, for it should be examined whether the positions held by kings and officials are justified by their utility, whether the advantage they enjoy are compensation for work, whether everywhere work is exchanged for work.¹⁾ This is the inherent law of work, and an organization that violates this will not be allowed to live. The contrast between capital and labour is a mark of an error in the organization of labour or trade, capital being accumulated through the curtailing of the wages of the workers for the benefit of him who has performed no work.²⁾ Society exists through the means of trade, and this must be free. But it is possible that it is organized in such a way as to prejudice the workers. The workers must be protected against this. There exists an antinomy between protection and liberty, which must be solved by all communities. In a criticism of the repeal of the corn-laws in England Proudhon asserts, with great force, that the entire movement for the repeal of these laws was only a sanctimonious attempt at cowering the working-class in the interests of the capitalists, at plundering the world by flooding it with industrial products without other compensation than money.³⁾ Proudhon concentrated himself more and more on fighting the injustices with which trade and the system of credit are encumbered.

The ideas by which we act and organize our societies, etc. must be true. Religion and philosophy have given us ideas, but no measure of the truth; they have given us self-valid ideas, which cannot be proved by reason.⁴⁾ Only metaphysics, which is by Proudhon regarded as an explanation of existence, and which is not very different from positivism, as set forth by Comte,⁵⁾ may give us a measure of the truth, as it does not endeavour to study substances and forces, but examines the connections, the series. "Nothing is born in Nature or unfolds itself except in connection with the rest. Interdependence is the necessary condition of life, of existence, of beauty, of science and reason. Every phenomenon that

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Création*. p. 352.

²⁾ *Opus cit.* pp. 379, 383.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contradictions*. II. pp. 61, 63.

⁴⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Création*. Chap. I & II.

⁵⁾ *Opus cit.* Chap. III.

does not contain its own law in itself, is an unnatural phenomenon, in its essence destructive and futile."¹⁾ Political economy becomes in this sense applied metaphysics (*métaphysique en action*). Orthodox political economy teaches us many valuable laws, but it sins in not seeing the limitation of these laws. It believes that the laws which it observes under present conditions are eternal laws. Their series are incomplete. In order to make them complete, it avails nothing to set up "à priori" constructions. That only leads to utopias.²⁾ St. Simon and Fourier, from whom Proudhon took his doctrine of series, failed to view their constructions in connection with positive facts. Social order is not found through arbitrary constructions, it lies off the beaten road and is without historical presuppositions. It is found in the examples of the past and in traditions. More than everything else it is found in the present. In order to beat all inventors of social utopias off the field only one phrase suffices: our predecessors? our forbears? Show us the relationship that connects you with present society.³⁾

Metaphysics is the science of truth. Political economy is the science of what is true. The former sets forth the doctrine of the series, the lawfulness and solidarity of the phenomena within the groups. The latter examines how the law of work makes itself felt under different conditions. To perceive the series is to divide existence into different groups and combine these until everything appears to us as one great union of individual groups. Where no such series are found, chaos reigns. In human society it is the series which divide war from peace, despotism from justice.⁴⁾ The Romans' way of treating their slaves as flocks of animals, according to whim and fancy, was simply butchery. Only introduce order in the treatment and the slaves will obtain rights and slavery disappear. The despot ceases being a despot as soon as he creates rules. He is himself bound by them, and he becomes the custodian of law. Liberty and equality are born. Despotism is killed by the introduction of order. Through the series we learn to understand that work in society is constantly more specialized.⁵⁾ In this way the

¹⁾ Opus cit. p. 357.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Avertissement*. p. 47. *Création*. p. 363.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Création*. pp. 469, 511.

⁴⁾ Opus cit. pp. 284 ff.

⁵⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Création*. p. 360.

workers are driven to combine, associations are formed, and as a member of the group man yields more than he does separately. The whole society becomes to Proudhon as it became to Fourier, one great system of associations. Instead of the "phalansteries" proposed by Fourier, Proudhon imagines the system of associations as a free combination of self-governing communities; the organization of the communities in nations, and of the nations into federations. If the laws of association are violated, society ceases to exist, and violence and chaos reign. The laws of association are the laws of work, and political economy, which is the science of work, becomes the science of universal order. In the great manifesto: "Idée Générale de la Révolution au Dix-Neuvième Siècle", in which Proudhon formulated his protest against the course of the February Revolution, he drew up an imposing picture of future society which he thought was going to replace present society which suffered so mortally under poverty. We will cite his own words:

"First of all, we see the peasants, at length the masters of the land which they cultivate and where it is their intention to strike root. Their indomitable numbers, tied together by a common bond and a common interest for ever ensure the victory of democracy and the safety of the social organization (Contrat)."

"Next follow those numerous groups of small manufacturers, artisans, and merchants, the independent men of industry and business who work separately or in small groups. The freest of all individuals who prefer their unequalled independence to land-bound mastery, sure of always finding their country where they have their work."

"Last of all there are the crowds of workers, the real armies of the revolution, where the worker like the private in the field acts with the precision of machinery, where thousands of strong and independent wills are united in a common purpose, as the arms which they move in unison produce a collective power that is greater than the sum of their individual powers."

"The tenant who by his payment of rent was in a constant state of feudal slavery, was made free through the institution of the new bank, and through the system of co-operation. Land becomes, in extent as well as in depth, the immense basis of equality."

"In the same way the wage-earner in great industries had, by be-

ing separated from the collective power, been condemned to conditions that were worse than those of the slave. But through the acknowledgment of the right which is given him by this power which he creates, he gets back his dignity, nay, he is once more placed in favourable conditions. Great industry, which is the terrible creator of aristocracy and pauperism, becomes transformed into the foremost instrument of liberty and public welfare."

"The laws of political economy, it will easily be understood, are independent of man's and the legislator's will: it is our privilege to recognize them, it conforms with our dignity to obey them."¹⁾

Proudhon maintains, like Fourier, that the groups produce more than separate individuals. This leads him to recognize that association is not only order, but also progress; we are therefore constantly approaching the ideal. It is the ideal that religion shows us as God, and it is therefore necessary to set forth an explanation of the nature of God together with political-economic examinations. Society must have been created in accordance with God's desire. Like Feuerbach, Proudhon sees God as an expression of the nature of man and his desire for order. But God is, as the idea of him takes form, a contrast to man: man is sinful, God is holy.²⁾ In sinful man the forces that shape his life, his love of liberty, and his egoism, grow and lead him to a demand for justice as a happy medium between those demands. God is the refutation of those individual obstinate wills, he demands justice tempered with mercy.³⁾ The more society builds on an appeal to God, the more the appeal assumes the form of cowardly hypocrisy or a threat against liberty. And yet men are seen constantly following this appeal, thus revealing that a secret harmony exists between our soul and existence, the world of infinity, a longing for peace, which is constantly frustrated and yet for ever renews itself.⁴⁾

According to Proudhon this longing has its roots in the relation of individual and society. Society gives man more than man gives society. This shows that men in groups, in communities, attain more than men do individually. We might say that society, i. e. God, is

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée etc.* p. 254.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Création*. p. 24. *Contradictions*. I. Chap. VIII. II. Chap. IX.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contractions*. I. pp. 356, 389, 397.

⁴⁾ *Opus cit.* I. p. 387.

an expression of increased value. Proudhon therefore does not intend to oppose this ideal longing, but he wants to oppose with all his might the idea that increased value is attained through the suppression of the free development of our individual nature. Proudhon especially turned against the authoritative tendencies of the Catholic Church. The division of labour creates inequality, but co-operation is impossible if inequality leads to overbearingness in one party, suppression of another party, and discord all over. Co-operation must be attained through the unity of all those individual wills. If we seek to attain to it through our faith in God, we subject all wills to his sovereign power. For in God's personality there is no room for all these individual wills, and without personality God does not exist.¹⁾ We here find an antinomy which Bakunin, the adherent of Proudhon, set forth in a very forcible manner: "If God exists, man is not free. If man is free, God does not exist". Nobody can solve this antinomy.

Proudhon thus sets out to fight God. Without God, there is no property, with property there is no society.²⁾ The institution of the right of property is a crime that was committed by the supreme being. Man has only one duty, one religion: to deny the existence of God. When Proudhon was being admitted to a masonic lodge, he was asked what we owe to God: "War", he answered.³⁾

Every lasting organization of society must be based on the full interplay of free wills according to their own inherent laws. In antiquity as well as at the present day we see communities fall into ruins instead of developing. Their political systems have had an artificial, but no scientific basis. Our culture is built on prejudices, and has not arisen out of man's own laws.⁴⁾

Those laws are the laws of work. They are expressed in wages, which are nothing but work expressed in its product. It is the close gradation of wages to work that we call justice. An imperfect gradation will overthrow society, a thorough regularization will confirm that industrial condition which seems to be the form of God's

¹⁾ Opus cit. I. p. 377.

²⁾ Opus cit. II. p. 236.

³⁾ A. Desjardins, P. J. Proudhon, sa vie, ses oeuvres, sa doctrine. 3me Éd. 1923. I. p. 186.

⁴⁾ P. J. Proudhon, Création, p. 480.

government (complément) on earth.¹⁾ Work demands specialization and division, but such progressive division will lead to pulverization (and consequent destruction of the increased value), to dull, mechanical manipulation, where neither natural gifts nor cleverness can assert themselves.²⁾ It will cripple the minds of the workers. There must be unity on the question of division of labour. This is the point on which the worker's personality and individual liberty and also his responsibility depend. If the wages are too low, the worker suffers, if they are too high, he receives undeserved advantages.³⁾ The science of law may therefore be explained as the science of the division of the tools and products of work. Through a just organization production is socialized, universal solidarity created, and mutual security ensured. Justice is placed on an immovable foundation, and equality is guarded against encroachment. The principle of liberty, which all recognize, is thus confirmed by political economy, i. e. by an almost wholly material science that does not ask for a purpose. If we could demonstrate immortality by means of a mathematical equation, the result would not be more surprising.⁴⁾

We need not be surprised that Karl Marx turned sharply against Proudhon. He actually held quite different ideas from those of Marx. Karl Marx was the spokesman of English large scale industry, he thought its methods should be made into social laws, he did not want to alter them, but he only opposed their application to private undertakings. He considered a revolution within production itself, brought about through its own inherent conditions, to be inevitable. He foresaw a state of affairs when the workers had been completely swallowed up by large scale production, to which individual lives were of no consequence. Proudhon, on the other hand, was as Karl Marx contemptuously called him "un petit bourgeois". He was of a peasant's family, and had a peasant's mind. His ideal was the small independent, free, individual homes. He creates the doctrine of increased value which Marx, to a great extent, derived from him. But what an immeasurable difference there was between organized factory work, which Marx had in mind, and the association of free,

¹⁾ Opus cit. pp. 241, 419.

²⁾ Opus cit. p. 398.

³⁾ Opus cit. p. 425.

⁴⁾ Opus cit. p. 421.

co-operative individuals or homes that is the aim of Proudhon. "To return to Proudhon is to go beyond Marx", says Bouglé.¹⁾ Both want to prevent the capitalist from receiving a wage without working for it. But Proudhon does not for a moment think that to attain this purpose it is necessary to make society into a factory. From the very beginning Proudhon declared that revolution was necessary for a radical reformation of society, but, at the same time, impossible, as violence leads to no good. If equality has not been able to triumph by the sword, the reason is that it ought to triumph by the word.²⁾ The word, i. e. the debates and discussions of free men, Violence will lead to impossible social conditions, either to the existing ones, under which the many and weak are exploited by the few and strong, or to communism, where the strong are exploited by the weak.³⁾ Proudhon wanted revolution to come at once, decisively and completely; but peacefully, in the form of a liquidation, like that which took place on August 4th, 1789.⁴⁾ The important point is that everybody should be given what he has produced, neither more nor less. Proudhon regards society as one great clearing-house. He adopts and carries through Fourier's idea. According to Fourier the "phalanstery" was to keep a register of each member's accounts with the association, so that a sharp and exact distinction was drawn between the property of the individual and that of collective society. Proudhon, who for a time, earned his living as an assistant in a maritime clearing-house at Lyon⁵⁾, gained in this post a good deal of practical experience in the keeping of accounts, which later on became of great benefit to him in his banking plans, and which was very important for the development of his view of society, as consisting in the keeping of honest accounts among the members. On this point also Proudhon differs decisively from Marx, who takes no interest in the individual question of property, but whose aim is communism. As early as 1846 Proudhon wrote to Marx his refusal to assist in a revolutionary riot in favour of socialism. Marx wants the break to be violent in its nature, because he wants

¹⁾ C. Bouglé, Proudhon. p. 303.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, Qu'est-ce que la propriété? p. 28.

³⁾ Opus cit. p. 227. Création. p. 383.

⁴⁾ P. J. Proudhon, L'Idée générale. p. 196.

⁵⁾ A. Desjardins, P. J. Proudhon. I. p. 67.

to destroy all individualism, to abolish all private property, all private and family life. Proudhon wants to safeguard all those ideas. He attacks property, but only unlawful property; he detests communism.¹⁾ Maybe it has been of importance in the past, but it is detestable. "The impossibility of remedying the injustices of the Communist system, the violence it exercises on sympathies and antipathies, the iron yoke with which it fetters the will, the moral torture in which it keeps conscience, the inertia into which it sinks society and, to put it in one word, the animal and stupid uniformity, by which it ties free, active, critical, rebellious human nature, has violated ordinary common sense and irrevocably condemned communism." One of the best-known parts of his great work "Contradictions" is a further development of this attack. It is an almost explosive utterance of Proudhon's feeling of liberty which, according to Bakunin, was entirely wanting in Marx.²⁾

From the very first Proudhon turns against the two great destructive injustices: the society in which the few and strong exploit the many and weak, and that where a weak majority exploits a strong minority. His first revolutionary book "Qu'est-ce que la propriété?", 1840, he begins with the declaration, which he later on called the greatest event in the world and felt proud to have launched into the world: "La propriété c'est le vol! Voici le tocsin de 93! Voici le branle-bas des révolutions!" But he adds at once: "Reader, do not be frightened, I am no spokesman of disorder, neither am I a rebel or incendiary."³⁾ He began by calling property homicide, and like other political economists of his period he fairly often uses the expression — "assassinat", homicide, or like Renouvier "anthropagie", cannibalism. But it is more characteristic of him when he says that property is theft, as this indicates the way in which the poor are murdered or devoured.

The property that Proudhon calls theft is the power man, under the protection of the law, has acquired of procuring an income without having to work for it, of seizing land and demanding rent from the holders, and of extorting heavy interest on loans. Property

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Qu'est-ce que la propriété*, p. 226.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contradictions*. II. Chap. XII.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contradictions*. II. p. 254; A. Desjardins, P. J. Proudhon. I. p. 42.

that involves such power is theft, as it is rooted in the seizure of other men's lawful property. It is indifferent whether it is single individuals who are given such right of property or whether, as in the case of communism, it is the community that is given the right of proprietorship, i. e. the right to deprive all other individuals of their property. This tyrannical power which property gives the owner makes every society impossible and abolishes equality. Proudhon calls it "Propriété". As a contrast to this he sets up "Possession", a just and necessary form of proprietorship, which he finds some difficulty in defining in precise terms. By it he seems most nearly to understand everybody's right to claim access to a piece of land which he is allowed to cultivate at his pleasure. From the very first he regards land as the great natural basis of human existence, it is in the picture of the communities as set forth above, the root of everything. In conformity with Sayes he emphasizes in his first "Memoire" the fact that land, in contrast to all that is manufactured by men, is imperishable and necessary to all human activity, and he asks with what right some men seize this earth which Nature has given gratis to all, and with what right they demand payment from other men for permission to cultivate it.¹⁾ It is not quite clear what Proudhon meant by "Possession". But we may presume that his principal idea was that everybody who wanted to, should be given an opportunity of settling with his family on a piece of land in order that he might cultivate it, and where he in complete independence might support himself and his family. But he should not be entitled to dispose of such allotment if he did not cultivate it himself; he should not be allowed to rent it out to other people, and himself live in idleness on the products of the cultivator.

Proudhon develops this idea more and more, until he may be said to be the inheritor of the Physiocrats and the precursor of Henry George.²⁾ In the power of the ownership of land lies the germ of the power to plunder one's fellow-beings. In his later writings he develops how a system of property in land may be created which secures the lasting possession of the full profit of his work to the cultivator. Already in his first pamphlet he asked who was

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Qu'est-ce que, etc.* pp. 71, 250.

²⁾ A. Berthod, *P. J. Proudhon*, p. 127.

entitled to receive the ground-rent, and under the influence of the Physiocrats he came in the following years to the conclusion that it should be divided between the cultivators and the municipalities. He is not quite clear as to whether the increase in ground-rent is not due to the cultivator's care and efforts;¹⁾ he therefore thinks that the cultivator ought to have part, one fourth or half of it.²⁾ The ground-rent must suffice to supersede the taxes that are now levied by the State without her having any thought of how she appropriates to herself the citizen's wages, which is his blood, his life. Now, sixty years after the fourth of August, a new liquidation is necessary. We are still masters as to how it should be carried through and with what degree of moderation. But we must take care that the moment does not slip away. There are periods when society takes pleasure in wide-reaching regulations and great leaps. What is more childish than to be content with a third part, a fourth part, a tenth part, nay, a twentieth part of a revolution? Has capital not profited long enough by its state of power? Has it been so very honourable, so very noble and pure, that we owe it to it to sacrifice it another fifty years of rents?³⁾ The more he thus concentrates his attention on a social system, where society receives the ground-rent or a substantial part of it for the payment of necessary expenses, while all are secured the possession of their income and have access to the place of work which Nature has given them gratis, the more he abandons his somewhat artificial distinction between "Propriété" and "Possession", and uses also the word property (Propriété), which sounds so sweetly in the ear of the peasant,⁴⁾ even of the ownership of land. In his prize thesis, "Théorie de la Propriété, 1862", he asserts the right of property to its full extent.

Bouglé shows that this change in Proudhon's view is due to the fact that Proudhon with a growing distrust of the State as landlord gained greater confidence in free associations among the citizens themselves.⁵⁾ Proudhon originally wanted to prevent arbitrary use

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 229.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *La Justice, Essay d'une Philosophie populaire*. Nr. 3. pp. 121, 123.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. pp. 227, 232.

⁴⁾ *Opus cit.* p. 227.

⁵⁾ C. Bouglé, *La Sociologie*. p. 320.

and accumulation of property in order to protect equality. Now that he has seen a way of preventing the accumulation of property which is not gained by work, he no longer fears any danger to equality. He sees the free citizens in their voluntary associations strong enough to keep the State in check, without desire or power to subdue each other, as each is his own landlord. Liberty now appears to him as the supreme good and the fundamental condition of social life. We see Godwin's opinion of the superfluity of all government re-appear in Proudhon. It is sufficient when an agreement is made among the citizens, the maintenance of which is placed in the hands of the municipality;¹⁾ it is such a society of free, independent and industrious families which Proudhon wants to create, and which is to replace the cowed and crippled, the impoverished and famished population.

Poverty does not come of laziness and ignorance, or of the potentates' cowardliness and incapacity, of conspiracies and disturbances. Proudhon declares that he is tired of all those futile disputes in the Chamber and in the papers. The interests of the Chamber are diverted from the essential things, and it amuses itself with debates concerning sovereignty, legislation, and government.²⁾ Poverty is due to the fact that we have not yet conceived the right understanding of those commonly used and sacred words: Justice, Equity, Liberty. It is acknowledged usury that bears the blame for this. It will disappear when men learn to use their common sense and act according to reason, instead of following their blind instincts. We should seek the truth and criticize mere authority. He who does so is a rebel. If we only obey the king when we can prove that he is right, we no longer accept his authority. "Therefore", declares Proudhon, "I am an anarchist".³⁾ This declaration that he was an anarchist was the second great pronouncement which Proudhon launched in his first "Memoire". In this, as in his earlier utterances Proudhon did not advocate the cause of lawlessness; but he summoned people to fight the lawlessness that existed under cover of the laws. He is an anarchist who only obeys the voice of reason and submits to the natural laws in his private affairs as in so-

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 222.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Qu'est-ce, etc.* p. 251. *Idée*. p. 208.

³⁾ *Opus cit.* pp. 4—9, 237, 241.

ciety. He respects justice, independence, and relativity. To do this is to assert liberty. It is the law of man's nature to live in society and to follow a leader. Society should be organized according to its own laws; and we should learn to perceive that the origin of all evils is to be found in arbitrary laws which supersede natural law. "All evils", he writes to Blanqui, "originate according to Leroux, in the caste system. The family is good, but the family caste (the nobility) an evil. One's native country, considered by itself, is a good thing, but considered as a caste, a sovereign, prone to rule and conquer, it is an evil. Property as possession is good, but as the property of the caste, "propriété", it is an evil. Vicious "propriété" is that which consists in the supremacy over the working-classes. To put an end to this power is to put an end to what we, at the present day, call property".¹⁾

With the greatest anxiety Proudhon foresaw the approach of the labour revolt and the February Revolution; he perceived clearly that the workers did not understand the kind of reform which was needed. What they wanted was not a free republic that respects the opinions of the individuals, but a government by the masses under which there is no liberty. Undoubtedly it should not fall to the lot of an élite, an upper class, philosophers and men of science, to evolve a democratic social organization. The feelings and desires of the people should be considered. But they desire just as much to be free and personally independent, as to have their desire for pleasure satisfied. The eternal ideal of all mankind is rooted in the former. The latter comprehends only material desire. There is a danger that the latter shall gain the upper hand.

This was what happened when the Republic was established, as a government of the majority, where it is not liberty, but the majority that reigns, the most despicable form of government that can be imagined. In a small pamphlet, "Solution du Problème social", that dates from March, 1848, Proudhon derides, in the severest manner, this absurd and unfortunate Revolution. In what way the people speak, he does not know. Whether they like God speak through their conscience or in some other mystic way, he cannot tell. But he knows one thing, they do not speak through a chance majori-

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Avertissement*. pp. 13, 106 ff.

ty. He subjects himself to the people, they being the representatives of liberty, equality, and fraternity in their social organization, but he objects to being the shuttlecock of a charlatan. The republic is the government under which the people, through the interplay of their free wills, act as a unity, where every citizen in performing that which he feels inclined to do and only that, partakes immediately in legislation and government; in the republic each citizen is a king. Republic is positive anarchy. Liberty is mother to order, but not her daughter. Democracy is a parody on all this. "It is a State, whose aim it is to put a stop to beggary, provide for the helpless, procure work for the able-bodied, exercise social charity, and who in order to do all these services only demands money. But the only thing that is left out of consideration is where the money should be got."¹⁾

The thing to be attained in society cannot be bought for money. The aim is to make the people free and supply their wants. This can only be brought about in a society like that which appeared with the clearness of a vision to Proudhon's eye. In this society there was a free play to all forces, everybody had plenty to do, loved work and detested idleness, did his duty to his family, and co-operated with his neighbours. Such a society is only created where everybody wants to be free; follows his reason instead of his passions; is his wife's faithful support and protector, and does not abandon himself to the tender emotions of a lover. This is only possible in a society where nobody possesses or desires power to oppress others, but where everybody perceives that he who receives more than he earns, is unfree, whatever advantages he may derive by this means. Liberty consists in it being possible for everybody to live in accordance with a contract and thus voluntarily settle his pecuniary accounts with other people.²⁾

Contract is order, it being the organization of the economic forces.

We underline this emphasis on the contract, and Proudhon's incessant work to organize society in such a way as to make a really free contract possible. It seems to us that the central point in Proudhon's view on society is here outlined in its greatest peculiarity

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Solution du Problème social*. pp. 53, 102, 119.

²⁾ Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 235.

and magnificence. His contrast to Marx becomes also more marked. Proudhon is a peasant, both in his nature and in his way of thinking. He belongs to a nation where, as he is proud to say, two thirds of the population are peasants, where the free peasants are the strength of the nation; the peasants who, in the great days of the Revolution on the fourth of August emancipated themselves, and took what rightly belonged to them as the free gift of Nature. Marx is a stranger to all this, he sees the hopes of the future in the large industry. It becomes therefore Marx's task to create organizations that include everybody, and therefore he condemns the spirit of the "petit bourgeois" which allows free play to the small industries, but fails to create harmony. Proudhon, although willing enough to create order in civic society, sees the possibility of doing this in voluntary solidarity, and not in compulsory organization.¹⁾ Voluntary solidarity should be the actual basis of all association. Proudhon's doctrine according to which he distinguishes between association and organization, may be expressed in the following terms:

Proudhon wants first and foremost to give every man a place where he may live. He wants to make it possible for every man to disassociate himself from an association with others with which he is not satisfied. This is the principal point. It is this which makes every man into a king and an anarchist.

The aim of the Revolution in 1789 was anarchy. But it was not completed, and became an absurdity. It has for ever put an end to authority, and yet it retained "the State". Instead of setting up a free republic it instituted a democratic government, and it must therefore end in absolutism like "Cæsarism", where one man governs in the name of the people. But so long as the State, i. e. "le gouvernement" exists, the plundering will go on. The division of labour will stupefy the minds of the workers, reduce wages and increase poverty. The people will not benefit from free competition, which will create a new form of feudalism, a kind of business-aristocracy, which, under the protection of the State, enriches itself through large scale speculation, makes itself master of all the working-material of the country, and creates monopolies. Rous-

¹⁾ C. N. Starcke, Proudhonistische und Marxistische Strömungen in der Gegenwart.

seau's doctrine of "le Contrat social" leads to such conditions; it takes only the political organization into consideration, and leaves all other decisions to be made by the agreement of the majority.¹⁾ A fictitious contract between the people and the government is erected. It should be replaced by real contracts between men mutually. A real contract rests on discussion, but in the sense in which Rousseau takes it, the contract is only a form of dependence and exploitation. It became treacherous and took refuge in commands and punishments. In this form the social contract becomes the contract of hatred.²⁾

As we have seen, Proudhon is confident that the society of free associations which he depicts, will afford no cause of conflicts of the kind that leads to one party's suppression by another. The causes of any more serious conflicts will therefore be done away with. Proudhon builds his confidence in such a peaceful society on his belief that it is possible to establish an equilibrium of the economic powers, and make production and consumption balance each other. So long as it is possible for one man to exploit another, exploitation and a state of mutual war will go on. This power of exploitation is rooted in the power of land. It is the stronghold of all capitalism; supported by the power of land the landlords and their agents know how to extend their plunder also to other people than the agriculturists, it being not only those who pay ground-rent; all the citizens pay it through their consumption. Already in his first pamphlet he concentrates his thoughts on the fact that the worker cannot buy back his product and that there must consequently be an error in the accounts, which must eventually produce social bankruptcy.³⁾ In the system of credit he sees more and more the instrument by means of which the moneyed interests are enabled to command production, the granters of credit pretending to render a real service for which we do not merely owe them payment, but also gratitude. The actual service they render, consists, partly, in making it very difficult for the borrower to free himself of his debt, partly, to give him less money than he pays for. Prou-

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 67.

²⁾ C. Bouglé, *La Sociologie*. p. 237; P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. pp. 123—130; P. J. Proudhon, *Du Principe Fédératif*. 1863. pp. 64, 75, 222.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Qu'est-ce que la propriété*. pp. 146, 162.

dhon seems very proud of the experience he had gained in practical business, and thought that it would be necessary to politicians to gain such practical insight in order to be able to show how people are still plundered and their debt is constantly increasing. In his book "Contradictions" he already set forth some of his ideas, especially emphasizing that credit in reality does not look for security in what you possess, but in what may be imagined to be your future pecuniary value.¹⁾ The object of credit is quite different from the object of sale. Credit does not dispose of your products, but it makes values fluctuate and promotes trade. It is wholly based on your guarantee that you can sell your produce. Proudhon therefore takes up a very sympathetic attitude towards John Law's well-known experiment, and adopts his fundamental idea that credit is not a system of exchange of goods, where the borrower gives security and obtains money in compensation, that credit is simply an expression of confidence in trade. This applies also to the nature of the instruments of credit. Money is not estimated at its metallic value, but as the recognized legal tender of the State. Metallic money cannot be replaced by notes, the value of which depends solely on the confidence that is placed in the issuer, and the possibility of circulation that may be reckoned with. Bank-credit does not give anything to the borrowers which they do not possess already; on the contrary, it gives them less than they possess, and less than that which they place as security. What it gives is confidence in future transactions, i. e. in the borrower's future. The borrower only represents production, but this is again completely dependent on consumption. Credit is the breath and blood of our modern societies;²⁾ it might therefore, when rightly organized, be acclaimed without reserve as a blessing to society. But in giving something different from what it pretends to give, and by prejudicing one party in the transaction, credit becomes a fraud and therefore a theft.

The function of credit is to bring production and consumption into so close a connection with each other that a line of production which can safely count on selling its articles can also find capital to carry on the production. As a member of the Chamber in the new

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contradictions* II Ch. X. pp. 93—96, 131, 139, etc.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 49.

Republic, Proudhon tried in 1848 to institute a bank for the people that made money more easily accessible, so that the whole life of trade ceased suffering under the dominion of the system of credit. The fundamental idea was that as the bank incurs no risk in granting credit it has not any claim on payment for the service rendered by it beyond the modest payment for office expenses. The leading idea of the people's bank was this: the confidence which we can place in the individual and his future, may very well lack foundation, but the more it is a question of the trade of the whole country or of large associations of trade, the less is the risk in believing in the stability of trade. If we can organize trade as a whole and join producers' and consumers' interests together, we become ourselves masters of credit, and have only to pay the office expenses. The bank becomes only the clerk of credit and not its master.¹⁾ The new bank gained many adherents and seemed likely to prosper. But Proudhon's conflict with the new government, which led to his three years' imprisonment, deprived the bank of its manager and it went into liquidation. Proudhon was made to feel that against capital it avails nothing to be in the right. With a rage like that with which the eagle defends its nest, the lion his den, and the pig its trough, capital adheres to its interest.²⁾

In many respects Proudhon's views on credit, on the means of exchange, and on the system of payment by cheques has been carried through at the present day.³⁾ But his desire by this means to weaken the supremacy of the giver of credit has been brought no nearer its realization. The trading, i. e. the exchanging, the producing and consuming society has not become master of credit, and the better understanding of the technique of banking and of the true basis of credit has increased the power of the banks. Proudhon calls attention to the absurd circumstance that the greater the production and turn-over becomes, the greater becomes the indebtedness, the more eager the State or private individuals are to pay off their debt, the more it grows; nay, he even says that the payment of a debt is

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Gratuité du crédit*. p. 67. *Idée générale*. p. 237. *Théorie de l'impôt*. p. 304.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 216.

³⁾ W. Oualid, "Proudhon Banquier" in "Proudhon et notre temps." pp. 144, 151, 154.

equivalent to the starting of a revolution.¹⁾ The solidarity which Proudhon expected to be brought about through the organization of credit, did not come, as the conditions which, in his opinion, were necessary to produce balance in the accounts were wanting. It is through the system of interest, through the accumulation of capital and the system of taxation, that money creates the increasing slavery of the workers, which only differs from that of antiquity by a deeper and more vicious sanctity.²⁾ Proudhon maintains rightly in opposition to Bastiat that interest is never in itself desirable. If it be possible to abolish interest it is unwarrantable to keep it. Bastiat set out to prove that capital is not so extortionate as it is made out to be; it is a fact that interest declines when capital increases, and the share of the capitalist in the aggregate profit is constantly decreasing, while the share that falls to the worker increases. Proudhon does not ascribe any significance to this circumstance, but bases his view on the fact that the aggregate profit of capital increases. The profit of work is constantly consumed, but capital is accumulated and this is due to the principle of interest. Interest as a theoretical part of economic life causes a disturbance in the economic balance.³⁾ The controversy between Proudhon and Bastiat concluded in very strong language.

Proudhon does not only think the interest too high in proportion to the service which the granter of credit in reality renders the borrower, but he also objects to the system of interest that it practically binds the borrower for time and eternity. Proudhon demands that interest should be considered as part-payment of the debt, so that the debt should be considered to be liquidated when the amount of the principal has been paid in interest. The annual payment is capitalized at the rate of interest, i. e. at twenty or five-and-twenty times the amount. But when you have paid the above amount for twenty or twenty-five years it is reckoned as interest, i. e. you still owe the principal uncurtailed. Thus it is very nearly impossible to get out of a debt. The balance will be further disturbed as capitalization involves a rate of exchange on the grantings of credit,

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 205.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Gratuité*. p. 109.

³⁾ *Opus cit.* pp. 127 ff. p. 137.

and the amount which the borrower receives is always smaller than that which he engages to pay interest on and pay back.

How destructive the system of capitalization is, becomes most marked in the case of private ownership of land which enables the owner to live on the rent paid by the user without doing any work. As has been mentioned above Proudhon adopts the idea of the Physiocrats that the ground-rent belongs to society and that society when it receives the ground-rent should leave off taxing the working income of the citizens. He is, however, of opinion that a certain part of the ground-rent ought to belong to the users.¹⁾ But so long as this monopoly is maintained, and a few people are able to seize what Nature has given gratis to all, usury will pervade all society, and instead of being the tools of trade, the banks will be powerful extortioners.²⁾ Other means of interfering with the absurd distribution of property will avail nothing so long as the politicians protect the unjust possession of monopolies. In "Contradictions" Proudhon recommends both a property and income tax on a rapidly rising scale; later on he wants to abolish taxes completely, and in his academic prize-pamphlet "Théorie de l'impôt", 1861, he arrives at the conclusion that it is no good making the State progressive, as a progressive State is always progressing in the wrong direction, and all taxes can be shifted on to other shoulders, so that, in the end, it is the masses who pay the taxes; in existing society it will be impossible to levy the taxes in a rational way.³⁾

It is the belief in authority which poisons society, it is inborn in people as a fear that order will be destroyed if there is no government. People fail to see who those are who fear the change, what are the conditions which the upper classes try to maintain, the constantly increasing indebtedness and people's patient submission to it. People do not perceive that the authorities always side with the rich; order is believed to be the progeny of government.⁴⁾ Order is the first claim of society. But the order which is maintained by authority is no order, but a wavering balance which constantly

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *De la justice* I. Essay No. 3. pp. 121 ff.; *Idée*. pp. 227 ff.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *De la justice*. pp. 86, 94.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Théorie de l'impôt*. pp. 191, 196, 203; Picard, *Proudhon et l'impôt*. p. 164.

⁴⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 119 ff.

threatens to break down. It is the speculators and the monopolizers who want to safeguard their privileges. It is natural that they should want to do so, but this is not for the benefit of the nation. Physical power is the principal means of keeping the people in awe and hindering them from throwing off their bonds; but other means also are used, means that do not tend to subdue revolutions, but which tend to kill the very desire for liberty and make people accept their bondage. The most important means which the authorities use to keep the people content is charity; this is the strongest chain with which they tie the proletariat.¹⁾

Proudhon did not succeed in breaking the belief in the power of the State or in creating a new association of the discontented that was strong enough to supersede the State. He had, so to speak, debarred himself from the way to a new organization through his immediate announcement of anarchy, an announcement which followed naturally from his passion for liberty and equality. As he proceeded, his efforts to safeguard the individual from being swallowed up by the system or, as we have described it, his endeavour to enable everybody to secede, meant a diminution of his fighting-power. In this respect Karl Marx was distinctly at an advantage. While the government was in the hands of a narrow circle who considered themselves an élite, and who could not derive any benefit from a change in the unfortunate system to which they were tied by all their interests, Karl Marx obtained supreme influence in the main organization of the lower classes, the "Internationale", although the French workers were constantly in opposition. With them (Tolain) Proudhon's influence prevailed. The Proudhonists distinguished themselves in the "Internationale" by giving the discussions a theoretical turn, as if it were a study-circle that was going to work out the principles of government, and not a union, the object of which was to carry through definite aims.²⁾ When the Empire fell and German armies flooded France, Bakunin, the disciple of Proudhon, endeavoured to call the people to arms in favour of Proudhon's programme. In his well-known "Lettres à un Français" Proudhon placed his confidence especially in the agricultural class and

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. p. 71.

²⁾ K. Diehl, *Über Sozialismus, Kommunismus und Anarchismus*. p. 329.

their love of the land, and he called upon all municipalities to declare themselves to be independent and only connected with each other in a free federation. "I am convinced", he wrote, "that in this way a living organization will be created, a thousand times stronger than the one in existence."¹) After the war an attempt was made in Paris at urging on such a movement, but "the municipality" had no organization which might give impetus to the movement. The provinces distrusted Paris and expected the new movement to be a repetition of the terrorism of the Jacobins. The attempt failed and further weakened Proudhon's rebellious, anarchistic tendencies. "What kind of a republic is that?" wrote a socialist writer like George Sand: "I see in it nothing important, nothing sensible, nothing fixed and nothing which can be fixed. It is an orgy of self-installed innovators, who do not entertain an idea nor a principle, who have not the simplest organization or the least solidarity with the nation, and who do not give the least thought to the future."²) In the industrious and vigorous French people the great majority was constituted of small farmers; it was on those that the new France must be built and was built. But this farming population was not disposed to violent riots. Proudhon agreed quite with their views, when he definitely condemned strikes and dreamed of a second fourth of August. But circumstances made it look as if communism, which Proudhon detested, was the natural consequence of his doctrine, and as if the "propaganda par le fait" with its violent deeds, was the true offspring of Proudhonism. Bakunin kept up a connection with all the revolutionary organizations in Southern Europe and in the South and East of France. There was a violent rupture between him and Marx, and Marx succeeded in having Bakunin expelled from the "Internationale" in 1872. While the weakened remnants of the Marxist part of the "Internationale" moved its head-quarters to New York and there regained its strength, Bakunin started a new Internationale in Saint Imier in the Swiss Jura which took for its standard the "propaganda par le fait". For four years until his death in 1876 Bakunin was the leader of this movement which was received by the citizens with great irritation,

¹) M. Bakunin, *Oeuvres* II, pp. 81—134. IV. pp. 5—222.

²) G. Hanotaux, *Histoire* II. p. 522.

which did not benefit the workers, and which left the peasants quite uncomprehending. By being identified with Bakunin's new formation Proudhonism lost considerably in esteem and influence. Even at the present day it is very difficult to distinguish between Proudhonism and revolutionary syndicalism. Syndicalism regards Proudhon's anarchism, in its later development towards federalism, as a gospel; it shares Proudhon's love of work and aversion to luxury and immorality, but it takes for its standard the glorification of the strike, this being the expression of the free will — this goes in reality quite counter to Proudhon's views.

In his later years, when Bonaparte's dominion suppressed all expressions of liberty, Proudhon occupied himself with the evolution of his thoughts within the different spheres of intellectual life; his anarchism was transformed into a theory of free associations, a federative system that comprehends both nature and society. He becomes constantly firmer in his assertion that liberty is the mother of order and justice, that it puts an end to all economic disorder, to extortion and slovenliness, to all moral laxity and to defective personal dignity. One tendency pervades all his writings: "La Guerre et la Paix", and "Le Principe Fédératif", and "De la capacité politique des classes ouvrières". We may say that it is the antinomy, war and peace, that occupies his thoughts, peace as the great ideal, which would, however, spell disaster if we reached it, war as equivalent to life and movement, with work which is the price of self-assertion, but which is destructive if it leads to isolation and discord.

Order and justice are the daughters of liberty. They express the balance of the associated wills. They are best secured through negotiations, but those negotiations must be something more than a mere exchange of opinions. A conflict in opinions is an expression of living forces, and those cannot always collide without making a noise. If it were otherwise, how should we be able to distinguish between the strong and the weak? Like Hegel, Proudhon therefore regards war as the arbiter of justice and injustice. Men's ideas are expressed in will and action, and are not merely pretty thoughts; no exterior force, neither a national government nor an international association can teach men how to establish a lasting balance among themselves, such a balance can only be created by the will of the

people.¹⁾ So long as people remain blind and deaf to the group of ideas which determine the balance, the influence of reason is circumscribed. Under such circumstances it is possible that the worth of the ideas may be measured by the force with which they are set forth, so that it is in reality this force which is the means of opening out a way for a lasting and true order. Proudhon makes the far-reaching statement that power itself has its right of existence. It is power which is the basis of right. This reflection seems at variance with his view that it is the word and not the sword that should defend the cause of liberty, while it also disagrees with his constant condemnation of strikes and acts of violence. But if we go deeper into the matter, this is not the case. The more we become self-determinative, the more our self-assertion loses in violence, while it gains in strength. The more men recognize the economic laws which go on independently of all arbitrariness, and the more trade, freed from all monopolies and usury, is able to develop unhampered, the less room there is for violence and the more for reason. The conflict of ideas does not cease; then the world would die; but it ceases to be a physical conflict and becomes a test of intelligence the aim of which is to prove the truth, the basis, the extent and depth of the ideas, and their capacity for concentrating all their spiritual value. In such conflicts the important thing is what idea you are going to assert, and that the idea you are advocating is worth a fight, as this creates the increased value which is invariably the companion of association. In other words it is a question of whether we, in advocating our own cause, advocate something which, regarded by reason, seems likely to enrich society, to promote justice, to make liberty more real and to strengthen solidarity, to create a balance between authority and liberty. The preponderance of society, of the association, over the isolated individual should be emphasized. Economics should predominate over politics; anarchy will manifest itself by making government a mere delegate of the associated municipalities. This kind of government is called self-government.²⁾ Bouglé is right when he repudiates the assertion that Proudhon has given over anarchy.³⁾ Proudhon only

¹⁾ J. L. Puech, C. Bouglé.

²⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Du principe fédératif*. pp. 21, 23, 25, 29, 109.

³⁾ C. Bouglé, Proudhon. p. 255.

asserts that centuries will pass before it is possible for people to dispense with all government. Proudhon, who in his youth condemned the State mercilessly, came, in later years, to look upon it in a somewhat different way, but at the same time he changed his view of the function of the State. Both in his early years and in his old age he refused to regard the State as a commander, she only performs the services of a clerk. He contests her inherent dignity, but asserts her right. His whole federative system is built on the supposition that the strongest groups in the world are those that consist of free, intelligent men who combine in a free contract. This is best accomplished within the small groups, the farther you go beyond those, the fewer are the common tasks. It may even be possible that the smaller groups will be obliged to assert their independence against the larger ones by opposing them. It is not an object with Proudhon that the federation should comprise all nations. On the contrary he is afraid that such universal association may lead to general death when all conflicts are abolished. The State is the representative of the united will of the federative States, and the federation is a free contract. Proudhon's view of the State, as we see it in his doctrine of federation is, in part, joy in human strength and will to assert what we think of worth, in part, a growing recognition that the common sphere for men's common interests is of a quite definite nature and should be safeguarded according to rules different from those which frame our legal society. It is a question of a set of technical tasks which should be performed in the name of the whole of society, and not of the safeguarding of the individuals' liberty and equality. The former gives us Proudhon's definition of the State as seen in relation to his reflections on war. The latter gives us his attempts at defining the sphere of the function and collective tasks of the State.

We have mentioned that Proudhon like Hegel considered war as a kind of divine power, that decides which of the combative parties is right.¹⁾ "What I love most in man is this combative spirit that places him above all authority, all love, all fatalism, and through which he reveals himself as the legitimate sovereign of the earth, as he who perceives the relation of things and is free."²⁾ But at the

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *La Guerre et la Paix*. I. p. 130.

²⁾ *Opus cit.* II. p. 381.

present day war is no longer the proof of a conflict of free and powerful ideas. It has become the expression of merely pecuniary greed, and it is promoted by society's supporting the unjust social conditions under which the workers are plundered and despicable pauperism is created. This war must be put an end to, an end must be put to plunder and bloodshed; but the peace that comes should not efface everything that makes life worth living, but men should continue putting all their force into defending their way of living against assaults from without. "Mankind", Proudhon concludes his book on war and peace,¹⁾ "is as one mighty brain, in which all sorts of thoughts move, but where truth always ends in conquering over delusion. — — — But whatever men may do, we should be without anxiety for the future; men are small, to a certain extent they may disturb the course of events, but by doing so they only injure themselves. Mankind only is great, it is infallible. I presume to say on its behalf: Mankind does not want any more wars."

To assert oneself and fight for the liberty of the individual, Proudhon considers to be the supreme law. He hates communism because it moulds everybody into the same shape. To efface oneself is to lose one's self. Time after time he turns with strong words against his contemporaries, denouncing their pleasure-loving and superficial life, in which all serious interests, all conscience and morality seem to be effaced, and where a catastrophe may be expected which will go through society like a storm. In existing society it is especially the upper classes, "la haute bourgeoisie", who are to blame, but Proudhon does not think that this state of affairs can be remedied through strikes and deeds of violence. It is the "petite bourgeoisie", the class of industrious producers and modest consumers, who together with the working-class are going to organize the system of credit and the conditions of production in such a way that there is no longer room for all the parasites who sponge on society. The more certain Proudhon grew in his belief in the actual producers' claim to reserve to themselves the profit from their work and to possess a place to live where they might subsist modestly, the less interested he is in advocating definite revolutionary actions or in laying down definite plans of action. It is impossible to

¹⁾ Opus cit. II. pp. 455 ff.

coerce a nation of free individuals each of whom wants to do what he thinks right and beneficial.

The pronounced consciousness of individuality, the strong and stubborn will to assert one's place in society that Proudhon conceives to be every individual's inmost being, has caused him to be placed in the same category as Nietzsche. But this is due to a quite erroneous valuation. In Proudhon's theory there is no room for any sovereign will. The individual has a strong and stubborn will to defend his place in society, but this consciousness of one's own individuality is miles apart from the desire to be a leader; he does not want to conquer the world, but neither does he want to be an isolated object without connection with the rest. He feels himself completely under the influence of society, but it does not reduce him to a nonentity, it does not deprive him of the least iota of his independence, on the contrary it adds to his value.

Anarchy becomes the most exact expression of free solidarity. The State must accord with this principle, otherwise it will cease to exist. It is natural for man to live in society, but it is possible that he changes it in a way that is not in harmony with the natural state of balance, with liberty and equality. Men are unequal, in gifts as well as in character. They are potentially tyrants and slaves before they become so in fact.¹⁾ Inequality becomes a source of honour and esteem for one and humiliation for another. But from where do the powerful derive their brutal arrogance? It has its roots in unnatural ideals which are not founded on work and therefore can create no balance nor assert any right. Society progresses through work, through science and through right, but it retrogrades through the ideal which is without a balance.²⁾ There is only one way to go, and that is to oppose one's desire for freedom against all aggressions and to do so with understanding. The great capitalists acted without balance as did the robber chiefs of the Middle Ages who plundered the caravans and treated their victims to a feast afterwards.³⁾ The capitalists plunder the proletariat one day in order to build hospitals for it the next day. As the despotism of the princes in the Middle Ages disappeared, so will capitalism also disappear

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contradictions I* p. 355.

²⁾ A. Bourgin, *Proudhon* p. 44.

³⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Contradictions I* p. 362.

when man's will harmonizes better with the laws of Nature. We imagine that we have found this harmony in the democratic State. But democracy is not a balanced social order. Democracy is an antinomy. It breaks the power of the strong, but replaces it by the power of the weak. It asserts equality, but becomes the rule of the majority. It is a charlatan who cannot claim that we should submit to it. So long as the State has a government that speaks of the ten commandments of the law of Moses and commands "ye shall not", it becomes without justice and without balance, whether it be aristocratic or democratic. Only anarchy is just, for only anarchy establishes a balance.¹⁾

The first claim on a State is that it should do away with authority. Proudhon entertains a quite exact idea as to what such a State should be like. It is created by a revolution which, as has been mentioned above, is a repetition of the fourth of August, i. e. where a national assembly enacts the laws which instead of being the establishment of a social organization, abolishes all those existing regulations which are only rights enjoyed by parasites, all those monopolies which are not created by work, but which are only judicial privileges. The State is not an institution that overrules laws in order to enforce its power, but a living will that comes to the aid of that individual who performs useful tasks.

But this mainly negative picture of the State received in Proudhon's later years a more positive character,²⁾ as technical apparatus was just then beginning the gigantic development which it has since continued. A great number of new things arise which must be seen to or all will suffer irremediable injury. While trade on the whole is only promoted if centralization is broken, as centralization destroys all initiative and individual enterprise, there are a number of undertakings, such as the building of roads, canals, and railways, and the institution of the postal and telegraph services, which are not actually branches of trade, but constitute the basis of it, the frame for it. These matters also come under the public authorities. Also the organization of the system of credit and the institution of the necessary banks come naturally under the domain of the future

¹⁾ P. J. Proudhon, *Idée*. pp. 340 f.

²⁾ Vernon Lee, *Gospels of Anarchy*. 1908. Chapter 7.

State. But Proudhon does not countenance any kinds of charitable institutions, while he refers the cause of education to the free decision of the parents. The constant attempts of the Catholic Church, supported by the State, to decide all questions of education has right up to the present day exercised a strong influence on the question of the children's education. It was a matter of course that Proudhon had to side with the antagonists of the Church. This new group of common interests which was thus assuming a definite form while it grew in extent was not given a fixed or definite shape by Proudhon, but it is quite clear that Proudhon considers them to be of great moment in the State of the future, and that he realizes that in the technical State of the future there is nothing that restricts anarchy i. e. the liberty of the individual. The federative groups, the individual municipalities, the agricultural and industrial co-operations agree as to the roads, canals, and railways which are to be built, but the technical organization is not dependent on any individual judgment. This does not, however, detract from the liberty of the groups. It is matters which fall quite outside the judicial sphere that are the fundamental expression of the individual's mutual social connection. It is characteristic of Proudhon that he does not want to subject the system of judicature to the State. From the very first day Proudhon began to write up to the time of his death, he was possessed by one and the same thought. His bold programme was, as Bouglé writes at the end of his excellent description of Proudhon, to force social consciousness to recognize personal right.

Proudhon's whole train of ideas is determined by two conceptions, liberty and order. He regards liberty as mother to order, and in the definition of those two conceptions he distinguishes himself from Kant in a characteristic way by combining the two conceptions in, so to speak, a physical manner, while Kant emphasized their theoretical connection. Liberty is in Kant's view the moral category in which all morality originates, and liberty means that the regulations to which we subject ourselves as moral beings receive their validity from the categorical imperative in ourselves, and not in the least from the conditions of Nature of which we are part. Proudhon views liberty in all essentials as a passion with which we are born and which makes us oppose everything which hinders our self-de-

termination. Proudhon finds the necessary condition for making the many arbitrary wills agree in the inherent laws of natural balance. Order becomes the daughter of liberty, order being the realization of balance. To Kant order is an expression of the nature of our consciousness, which only considers that to be morally and absolutely binding which is something more than an accidental constellation, i. e. the inmost nature of our consciousness. What appears to us as temporary, relative and changeable, cannot be legally or morally certain. The positive definition of right may change, but no positive right can appear as right unless it may be included in the category of liberty. A common life which can only be carried through by one set of wills subordinating themselves to another can never attain a morally binding character. Liberty has a twofold character according to the views of Kant and Proudhon; in the former case it becomes the expression of the value which is not dependent on the causality in Nature; in the latter it is a living force that opposes physical hindrances. If such physically determined striving for liberty cannot also appear to our consciousness as being categorically valid, it will not lead to a lasting social order. The two spheres must accord, or they will both disappear. The metaphysical transformation of Kant's critical reflections, which we see in Hegel's works in the form of the deification of history, can also be found in different forms in the works of a number of philosophers, some of whom attempted to prove the identity of order and liberty, while others tried to acknowledge order as the natural evolution of physical as well as psychic nature. As everywhere, where attempts at getting beyond critical methods are made, the efforts are supported by efforts to make "liberty" and "order" coincide, although they do not do so in their definition. Instead of being in accord those two conceptions seem to war against each other, liberty seeming to be in opposition to compulsion, and compulsion to be a term which comes under the category of order. Between liberty and order there is an apparent antinomy.

The attempts to solve this antinomy have their root in the trains of ideas which endeavoured to assert themselves in spite of the Empire; it was, however, only after the fall of the Empire, during the development of the new Republic, that it became absolutely imperative to solve the above antinomy. We shall here mention the

characteristic attempts which are made by Cournot, by a purely mathematical and "erkenntniss-theoretisch" way, by Fouillée and Guyau by purely psychological means, and by political means through the drawing up of the constitution of the liberal State.

Cournot (1801—1877).

Cournot was an eminent mathematician who sought to apply the principles of this science to the spiritual life of the whole of mankind, to its view on Nature and its social life and to its metaphysical and religious tendencies. He was attached to the inspectorate of education and for more than thirty years he contributed vastly to the improvement of secondary education; at the same time he administered with remarkable capacity, first the secondary school at Grenoble, later the school at Dijon. In 1862 he retired on account of an exacerbation of his eye-sight which had always been weak. Although very nearly blind he continued his writings right up to his death in 1877. Quiet and modest, he occupied himself with the greatest problems. He thoroughly abhorred all kinds of advertisement and intrigues, and he never cultivated any "useful friendships". His writings were not much read during his lifetime, especially as his views went counter both to Cousin's eclecticism and to the positivism of Comte. At the present day he is regarded as one of the most eminent minds of his age.

Besides his books on mathematics in which he propounded and supported the doctrine of probability, the theory of statistics and the fundamental principles of national economy, his four comprehensive philosophical works are of the greatest importance, as they set forth what may be called the philosophy of culture.¹⁾

What we call order is really a function of our reason. We try to combine all our experiences not merely as cause and effect, but as parts of a collective process. We are unable to understand causal connection, until we have conceived it as a rational whole. Cournot considers it to be of the greatest importance that the rational activity of our mind goes far beyond proving a merely causal or con-

¹⁾ H. L. Moore, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 1905, p. 521. Here we also find a number of treatises on Cournot by different authors, concerning his activity and various points in his philosophy.

stant connection. Causal connection only states a fact, but it supplies no reasoning, i. e. it gives us no such satisfaction of the connection of the parts as to enable us to answer the interrogative. Rational reasoning consists in such an answer. But in Cournot's opinion this will lead to a demand to include an examination of the purpose in our "Erkenntniss".¹⁾ While it is generally taken for granted that the mechanical and the teleological view on things work against each other, it is Cournot's object to point out their close connection. It is the aim of philosophy everywhere to prove this causality and gather all observations under "la raison des choses".²⁾ Everywhere it is the task of research to prove which are the living forces or the acting causes, but the "Erkenntniss" is only established when we can prove how they are all included in a system, so that all that happens is part of the fulfilment of the collective whole. The whole is a dominating reality, but it is not a substance, it is rather a tendency which shows itself within the different spheres.³⁾ The more composite an object is, the more we feel it to be marked by action rather than substance. We imagine physical forces to be inherent in matter, but life e. g. does not belong to a substance, but to an active whole. Within each separate branch of science, within each group of phenomena we should try to grasp the peculiar whole that displays itself there. The single groups are collected in larger wholes, from the individual we proceed to the species, to the group of individuals, to society and at last to the whole universe. But the larger the whole becomes, the more vague it grows.⁴⁾ The old form of metaphysics and the eclecticism of Cousin got no further than at these vague wholes, and it gave us no results, because it neglected the study of positive facts. Positivism is guilty of the opposite mistake in waiving all metaphysics. Philosophy comprises more than mere positive facts.⁵⁾

Cournot approaches very near to Kant in his views in attaching such great significance to our synthetic desire to form wholes. But he differs very definitely from Kant in protesting against his "phe-

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Essai* I. pp. 30, 43, 71, 145; *Traité* I. Chap. V—VII.

²⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Considérations* II. p. 232.

³⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Essai* I. p. 287. *Traité* II. 3. I. Chap. VIII.

⁴⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Traité* I. pp. 15, 493.

⁵⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Considérations* II. pp. 211 ff.

nomenalism". Our subjective desire is not merely subjective, our arrangement of the phenomena is not merely a game which we play, which is of no deeper objective importance. "It cannot," he says, "be due to our eye-sight that we see everything as defined in space. It cannot be us who institute order in the world, as the constant verification of order must then rest on chance. All measuring of probability, all induction and all analogical conclusions build on the idea of order."¹)

These general reflections are applied to social science in the following way. The living forces in society are the instincts. The gradual supremacy of more comprehensive ideas is expressive of the joining of the instincts in more and more complicated syntheses which make their workings subject to new systems and give them a new form (*le cadre*). The instincts are neither weakened nor abolished, but become parts of the philosophy of society instead of the philosophy of the individual. Originally, ideas are propounded by great men, who in this way exercise an authority like that of the ruling monarch; later on the importance and necessity of the great man becomes less as the means of spreading the ideas to all becomes constantly better and more effective.²) Societies thus grow into a cobweb of ideas that reign through the connection they establish among the various instincts by illustrating their purpose separately and the collective purpose which they serve as a whole. What moves in us without finding its place within this frame is arbitrary and without importance. The kingdom gradually collected within itself all the scattered forms of government which the different provinces had formed through their especial conditions of life. But as soon as the kingdom had thus concentrated in itself all the different modes of government, it was itself reduced to a merely administrative machine that might be employed by any government.³) The order which people produce under primitive conditions is not supported by any idea of lawfulness. It is not the consequence of such an idea, but the idea of lawfulness follows from the idea of order. It is primitively explained by religion, which is the frame within which the

¹) A. A. Cournot, I. pp. 162, 179. II. pp. 377, 384.

²) A. A. Cournot, *Traité* I. p. 492. II. pp. 17, 23.

³) A. A. Cournot, *Considérations* I. p. 414.

instincts move, and by tradition, the memory of common experiences. Science does not do away with religion, but religion is done away with through its conflict with social facts and new forms of life. The idea of natural right arises as a kind of instinctive attempt to get rid of Common Law. The old vigorous feeling of justice, which has its roots in the instincts and the customs of our ancestors, is replaced by a general idea of the necessity of definite rules. These rules should be constructed on the basis of experience. Jurisprudence becomes a positive science, a branch of social physics, and it is from this that it derives its authority.¹⁾

Cournot therefore draws up a distinction between the legal order of society, which depends on the structure and mechanism of the whole social body, and social formations. As the coin retains its intrinsic value, although the image imprinted on it changes with the sovereign, so society retains its nature and character although the political government changes. Political government is determined by passions and therefore political contests cannot be avoided. But the political government is quite subordinate in importance to the general economy of society. All social factors are, however, so closely connected that the system, if it is threatened at some point or other, reacts spontaneously and tries to re-establish the balance. Political power is organized with the object of preventing constant ruptures in social order. Its "raison d'être" is the function of social power.²⁾

Cournot places the legal system and religion in a relation to each other which he does not quite maintain. He is apt to look upon the legal system as more constructive in its essence than religion. "Religion", he says, "can no more be constructed than can language". But he comes to a remarkable conclusion in supposing that religion, if it does not quite disappear from the group of social institutions, and there is no reason to suppose that it will do so, will become a fixed nucleus within the societies. The legal system will become the expression of the constant efforts of the people under different changing conditions. The legal system gets its first definite development when people strike root in the earth. All judicial rules deal with

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Traité II*. pp. 183, 149, 187—190.

²⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Traite II*. pp. 221, 226, 240. *Essai I*. p. 109.

the relation to land, land being a definite standard of men's mutual relations and the purpose at the back of them, even the relation to the tools, the cattle and the slaves are included in the relation to land. Modern economic evolution has disturbed this state of affairs, as agriculture has not kept pace with industry in the utilization of the improved technique. But the great fortunes which are created by industry lose their stability, as they cannot be maintained for any length of time. This fact causes a decline both in intellects and morals, as an unchanging élite yields the place to a number of upstarts. Where democracy reigns the conditions of the masses will improve, but the intellectual level will sink. The religion of society should be considered in the light of its relation to the changing legal systems.¹⁾

Land creates a kingdom, industry creates republics, civic government and a kind of socialism. The better the means of communication become and the more comprehensive the economic conditions are, the more will the large States become like large cities and the more will the industrial economic conditions become of greater importance than the territorial ones; those industrial conditions will act in a democratic direction through a constantly increasing regulation and levelling; it should not, however, be overlooked that not only products, but also ideas are exchanged. Men have now become like the concessionaires of a whole globe and it is mining that is going to decide their fate. Political passion will constantly grow to be of less importance although we do not get rid of it and cannot dispense with the State until reason reigns supreme. — This we cannot expect to happen.

In his last work Cournot occupied himself with the growing importance of socialism and tried to make it a link in republican economic evolution. In his opinion socialism has its root in all that binds people together, in a large all-comprehensive social evolution. He sees the line of evolution as leading to a bee-hive, where the existence and actions of each individual are determined by his place within the hive. As an example of the extent to which evolution organizes and at the same time levels, he mentions that the modern means of communication have put an end to the old-fashioned individual ways of travelling. Now everybody, rich and poor, moves

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Considérations* I. p. 353. II. pp. 203, 235, 243, 333.

from one place to another by rail; they have all lost their liberty and must submit to the regulations. Cournot shares Proudhon's high valuation of national economy and looks upon it as a science for the mathematical treatment of our highest ideals. The free decisions of the individuals conflict more and more with the regulations of the State and they are therefore restricted.¹⁾ It is the vigorous growth of the technical State, which was already noticed by Proudhon, that seems to Cournot to lead to an automatic organization of society where everything happens at definite times, in definite forms, comprising everybody. Socialism is deeply rooted in this social evolution; Cournot, however, doubts very much whether it is really the supreme aim of this evolution, its "raison d'être". The carrying through of it will mean a weakening of the social forces of which it is the product; the more active and creative will be made to support the inactive. Cournot sets forth views which in the time to come were resumed by Renouvier and Borel, and which in their cool theoretical aloofness seem to be without the least influence on actual social evolution; they give us, however, one of the most thorough perceptions of social movements as they actually are.

History became in the view of Cournot the great illustration of the growth of the principles of order. What history contains is the evolution of societies. History shows us how the ideas gradually gain power and lead the play of the instincts onward to a rational order. History is not a chain of cause and effect. There is no history where only necessity rules. In history we must, to a great extent, reckon with the casual. If, e. g. Martin Luther had not been born, if the Reformation had not come, the world would have looked different. But, on the other hand, history is not a series of events without an inner connection. At all ages, through all casual events, it shows us "la marche des idées". When we make forecasts for the future, it does not mean that we predict certain events, but that we here, in case of such intricate conditions, do the same as we do in all inductions and legal regulations, i. e. we continue a line the direction and order of which we have perceived.²⁾

This extremely profound reasoning is a strange attempt to apply

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Considérations* II. pp. 245, 253, 255.

²⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Essai* I. p. 95. II. p. 201.

mathematical perception to those spheres where it seems to be of great importance to us to be able to predict and forecast, but where we seem to be unable even to guess. The social question depends essentially on the relation between liberty and order which we think that we ourselves are able to fix. If liberty does not originate in causality, all order presupposes force, for order is equivalent to law and is incompatible with liberty. Liberty, which to Kant is the category under which all moral phenomena must be viewed, if there is any question of morality at all, and which to Hegel appears as the spontaneous universal or historical process, constantly maintained its alien position towards the events in Nature, in which moral phenomena must be included, if they have any reality. Seen from the point of view of natural causality it seems inevitable that moral and all social values which are comprised in this term must disappear when liberty disappears. The "ding-an-sichlich" or metaphysical liberty in which Kant and Hegel, each in his own way, looks for support, proves unsatisfactory because in theory it goes counter to the scientific basis on which all natural science builds, namely mathematics. Cournot shows us, however, that this contrast is not absolute, as even mathematical science deals with the casual and in the rule of probabilities has constructed a kind of free mathematics. It was the exposition of the rule of probability which founded Cournot's fame as a mathematician.

What we call the casual (*le hasard*), is not the causeless, but that which is produced by an intricate series of circumstances which cannot be expected to continue undisturbed. By means of statistics we have found laws and rules for the most casual events in daily life, but these laws are all applications of the law of high figures and they show us that law and order are not incompatible with liberty, as the law of high figures always prevails even though an individual case may come outside the law. We can no more imagine each molecule to move independently in the air without the thermal laws suffering the least interruption, than we can imagine men to be individually free without their common life in society suffering in regularity. To explain the matter further, the more simple the law is under which a series of cases may be comprised, the more evident becomes the action of a regulating factor, the more intricate the law is which applies to a number of cases, the more probable it

is that it is due to a casual event, that is produced through the interplay of variable causes. If we, for instance, within the series one to a thousand draw four figures, and these are 25, 100, 400, and 1600, it is obvious that a regulating factor has made itself felt. If, on the other hand, four figures are drawn which only according to a very intricate law may be called a series, it is due to a casual event that these figures are drawn, i. e. an interplay of variable causes. It may be thus expressed: what we call lawfulness concerns simple laws and is a testimony that the links are mutually dependent, whereas what we call a casual event is a law-bound co-operation of variable causes. "This", says Cournot, "shows that the existence of order and "raison des choses" is identical with solidarity, whereas the existence of arbitrariness, of the casual event "le hasard" is identical with the mutual independence of the acting causes. Solidarity and order become thus synonymous ideas. It is order which our reason seeks — reason itself determines what is order, but such order must be rooted in objective solidarity and cannot rest on a casual event. Order must be objective."

Probability goes through all our perception and what we call certainty depends in most cases on a high degree of probability. The essential point is therefore to be able to estimate the degree of probability, to calculate the chances for the fortunate throw of the dice, for the making of the right experiences, for drawing our inductions and analogies. But in order to be able to speak of the degree of probability we must presuppose that an order exists, i. e. that the events are interdependent. When we cannot foresee complicated cases such as a man's actions or an historical event, it is not because these have no definite causes, but because they are so complicated that we cannot combine the contesting influences in an equation, but must consider them as mutually independent. The supposition that there is no order, i. e. connection in the world, and that we should nevertheless be able to utilize the idea of order in our actions and judgments, is far more improbable than it is to suppose that the order which we imagine and which other people also imagine and which is made probable by many circumstances really exists. In order to find the "raison" of the composite, we must look for its explanation in the simple.¹⁾

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Essai* I. pp. 71, 99, 145, 155, 179. *Traité* I. p. 91.

Man's reason is simply that function of him which seeks order and solidarity, and it gains power over the disconnected play of forces that is characteristic of his independence. All that connects gradually gains more power over that which divides. We may therefore say that social evolution which strengthens solidarity has greater probability of conquering than that which weakens it or leaves it imperfect. Social forces constantly strive to create solidarity. But this very striving is a movement towards social death, just as the establishment of balance in Nature would lead to the death of the universe. Whether society will find means of actively counteracting its own stiffening or whether the individuals will find the means of maintaining their liberty and mutual independence under such strict social rule as is represented by government, we cannot know. Here all our calculations of probability stop, we cannot continue the line of which historical evolution has given us the beginning, which is the past and the present.

Order and harmony cannot be due to casual facts. This is Cournot's main idea. A co-operation of causes can be established in three possible ways. Either by trying every means — this is what we call a casual event — or through prudent interference, or through a mutual connection. The casual event becomes the more improbable, the more complicated the case is. Two watches that go alike must either be connected, so that they are in reality one watch, or they must constantly be regulated through exterior interference, or they go alike because they are both exact. In the age of Cournot the problem of life was often discussed; the question was whether it might be explained mechanically, or whether we must presuppose a supreme intellectual being. The mechanical view must, in life with its specified material presuppositions, be explained by casual coincidence, but the existence of such coincidence is very improbable. Vitalism rests on this improbability. This view makes it appear to be hopeless to explain reason on the basis of the mere phenomena of life. The fundamental difficulty in Darwin's doctrine is that it builds on quite improbable coincidences as expressive of a purpose. Neither can the sacredness of morality be explained through the interplay of interests.¹⁾ The idealistic metaphysical spe-

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Essai* I. p. 103, 362. *Traité* I. p. 483. *Considérations* II. Chap. III.

culatation rests on the fact that co-operation is something more than a merely unexpected casual event; it errs in imagining a ruling power (un artisan), instead of keeping to the facts. These are only concerned with the law for the series of the phenomena. We cannot see the infinitely small, but we must presuppose its existence for the sake of what we see. It is included as a part in our scientific image of the world. But the infinitely great we are unable both to observe and imagine, there is nothing that compels us to presuppose its existence. We may imagine one world comprised in another, but we cannot imagine the atom to be infinitely divisible. The line which the world follows is that of increasing order and it falls to the share of positive research to examine how this line shapes itself. By considering the mutual accord of the laws we come to understand the cause of this accord; this cause we call purpose. The supreme cause is one with supreme wisdom.¹⁾

By education, habits, and intellectual development Cournot belonged to the "élite"; it will thus be seen that there is a marked difference between him and Proudhon. But in all essentials they supplement each other. Proudhon's principal idea that order is the fruit of liberty, is argued and proved by Cournot. But his proof rests on a presupposition which Proudhon does not share. This presupposition is that liberty leads to order, when the freely acting elements are in their inmost being solidaric. In Proudhon's opinion solidarity is the result of the interplay of forces, Cournot takes his starting-point in solidarity and sees the interplay not as an amassment of details, but as a system of wholes that react against disturbances and tend to counteract any disturbance that might threaten the whole. Cournot attaches great importance to the fact that such wholes exist also in mechanical Nature (Chatellier's law), as this proves that the order which is produced by the interplay is more than a balance or a state of equilibrium, as Proudhon calls it. They agree, however, in strongly emphasizing solidarity and it is characteristic that Proudhon's criticism of Rousseau is founded on the fact that completely isolated individuals cannot found a society except under the government of tyrannical plutocracy. Solidarity is in Cournot's writings emphasized as the necessary condition for order;

¹⁾ A. A. Cournot, *Traité* I. pp. 37, 298, 293. *Essai* I. pp. 134 f.

Proudhon is, however, first and foremost, interested in each individual getting his right within the association uncurtailed. Proudhon wanted to safeguard the liberty of each individual by giving him the chance of seceding, when the association showed signs of absorbing him. Cournot regarded democratic rule as the government of the future, because it is the most simple expression of solidarity. Cournot lived in an age when France had been ruled by an élite; between this and the masses there was an abyss of indifference. He lived to see France sink nearly hopelessly into this abyss. The élite consisted of a self-satisfied intellectual aristocracy, its incapacity was revealed in 1870. Whoever had taken a degree was a man of distinction, very much superior to the general farming population and the class of "petits bourgeois". The class of "petits bourgeois" stood, so to speak, on the boundary line between the Parisian élite and the farming population; they regarded the élite with a mixture of suspicion and admiration and lived in complete ignorance of the conditions of the farming population.¹⁾ This social indifference was the most dangerous sign of a defective function of the French people's most important vital organs.²⁾ The future of the nation hung in the balance if an end was not put to this indifference. This was done by the defeat in 1870; now the feeling of national solidarity reappeared in all its primitive violence; it found its most vehement expression in the violence with which the people turned on the "Commune". This violence was not caused by anger at the social

¹⁾ G. H. Hanotaux, *Histoire de la France contemporaine*. 2me Éd. II. pp. 516 f.

²⁾ As an example of the deadly danger which mutual social indifference contains, we shall here cite what Samuel Dill writes in his work "Roman Society in the last Century of the western Empire":

"The real cancer at the root of this society was not gross vice, but class-pride, want of public spirit, absorption in the vanities of a sterile culture, cultivated selfishness. It is difficult for a modern man to conceive the bounded view of society taken by people like Symmachus and Sidonius, the cold, stately self-content, the absence of sympathy for the masses lying outside the charmed circle of senatorial rank. The bureaucratic system of government stifled all interests in public affairs in the natural governing class ... To such a condition of deathlike repose or immobility had the imperial system reduced the most intelligent class in the Roman world. Faith in Rome had killed all faith in a wider future for humanity. Society had been elaborately and deliberately stereotyped (p. 211) ... The crowd were regarded with the blank uninterested gaze, which sees in the vulgar only a dim and colourless mass (p. 190)."

aims of the Communists, but it displayed an irritation that a part of the nation, at a moment which threatened the whole nation with ruin, should secede and go its own ways. The institution of the Republic and the constant endeavours to establish it on a more secure basis together with the final carrying through of universal franchise, which placed the decisive power in the hands of the peasants and workers, made the blood circulate once more through the whole body of society. Everybody who has the least knowledge of modern France, knows the immense work which is performed in order to further and develop the capacities of all classes of the French population. Cournot belonged to those who from the point of view of the élite looked with sympathy at the new age. In the "Paris Commune" he did not see an explosion, the consequences of which must be averted, but he saw in it the forerunner of a great transformation of society which was being accomplished. Through the democratic movement solidarity was assuming more definite and freer forms, where everybody was secured safe conditions, but where perhaps the conditions of the élite were made less favourable. After all, liberty stood for the same to Cournot as to Proudhon, but the latter had undoubtedly less understanding of the liberty of strongly developed personalities, the liberty of the élite; he considered liberty rather to mean the equality of all men, as human beings. Cournot experienced the justice of Tocqueville's prophesy that democracy would tend to level all men, and lack the capacity of selecting the specially gifted. But Proudhon and Cournot agreed in the conviction that what was being accomplished socially was a transformation of the structure of the people towards expressing the solidarity of the whole nation, the actual character of which was forced into the background so long as political contests played such an important part. Proudhon hoped that the State might be dispensed with, Cournot only considered the State to be indispensable because our reason does not wholly control our passions. The State should mainly be regarded as a kind of safety-valve for the constant breaches of social laws; but considered merely as a play-ground for ambitions she is without importance for society.

All the philosophical and sociological discussions of the succeeding periods deal with the problem of solidarity and liberty. Here France is represented by Foullée, Guyau and Tarde, who all mainly

advance a psychological explanation. In England the attempts at explanation are based on Darwinian principles. Bagehot, Spencer, and Benjamin Kidd are the most characteristic representatives of these views.

Fouillée (1838—1912).

We must now discuss the individual's liberty as opposed to the power and supremacy of the State. If the State does not represent the living moral ideal, its rule is only a question of power, and the individual must, the more he asserts his liberty, take up a similar attitude towards the State as he does to any other external authority. It may be necessary and wise to submit to the State, but it cannot be a duty. Kant and Hegel endeavoured to show that the liberty of the individual does not consist in his power to make arbitrary decisions, but in making the central will control all spontaneous impulses. The liberty of the individual consists of his claim to morality, that is, his claim as an intellectual being. The State is the external objective form of reason and she is therefore a moral power. The State is in Kant's opinion an expression of the attempt made by reason to establish harmony among the conflicting instincts under a civil legal system; in Hegel's opinion the State is the supreme form of the absolute as worldly power. Round this idea all attempts to determine the relation between the individual and society centre. But these attempts must continue revolving in the same circle, so long as we maintain the immediate definitions of what should be understood by the liberty of the individual, and the State's demand for sovereignty. Only the State that expresses the moral will of the individuals is justified in her demand. Only that individual is morally free who submits to the moral demands expressed by the State. The central point may be found in the individual or in the State, the result is always the same: the assertion of the general will.

In order to resolve the difficulty Alfred Fouillée concentrates all his attention on a more exact definition of the nature of human liberty and of the condition that is necessary to prevent the feeling of liberty from changing into a feeling of coercion. Fouillée was a very productive author and he was able in a long series of writings, about twenty volumes, fully to develop his ideas and take up an

attitude towards the changing forms which the struggle between the State and the individual underwent. Right up to the end he retained a great capacity for working and a vivid intellect, and although we often find repetitions in his writings they all witness to his rare intelligence; they contain a great number of acute observations.

Fouillée's name is mainly known for his doctrine of "les idées forces", by which is meant, in part, a general psychological theory concerning the nature of ideas, in part a more especial representation of what may be called the order of precedence of ideas, i. e. the place of one idea in our consciousness in relation to the rest.

First of all, we must emphasize the revolution within psychological science which is brought about by Fouillée's explanation of the idea. An idea is not an image, but an attitude; it is not essential in its nature as an image, but in its nature as a driving force it is. Every idea is an impulse and a germinating action. The consequence of this is that our intellectual life does not display itself mainly in speculations, but in actions, or, more correctly our speculations express our attitude towards life. Speculation itself is only supreme, disinterested action. Already before Fouillée had collected his theory of "les idées forces" in a special book, he had applied it in a number of other spheres, especially to the examination of human liberty. The idea of being free is an important factor in a man's actions, it is not to be attributed to his greater or less knowledge of his own motives, or of the causes of these motives — it is due to the experience of power, that I have a will, that I am the source of my actions, that I am independent. The notion that I am myself master of my actions may counterbalance all other motives — it exercises a strong influence on my character. If this idea disappears, my will slackens. But however necessary this idea is to my mental life, it cannot be maintained if it cannot be rationally explained. If perception makes us regard all resolutions as the necessary, inevitable consequences of our motives, our attitude towards that which happens in us ceases to be active, and becomes passively expectant.

Fouillée maintains that all attempts to regard Free Will as the expression of Indeterminism as against Determinism, are quite futile. The only way of maintaining the belief in Free Will is to view it