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LAND AND LABOR IN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES.

La Fin d'un Monde; par Edouard Drumont.

Les Etats-Unis Contemporains; par Claudio Jannet. 4th edition.

La Réforme Sociale; Bulletin de la Société d'Economie Sociale (January to December, 1888).

IN an admirable discourse delivered last summer before the united societies of Social Economy and *Les Unions de la Paix Sociale*, M. Claudio Jannet summed up all the conclusions which he embodies in the last edition of his great book on the United States. A devoted and practical Catholic, an enlightened student and admirer of our country, M. Jannet is eminently fitted to pronounce on our institutions and our people, on our present social and economical condition, as well as on our future dangers and prospects, a judgment that should commend itself to American statesmen and publicists.

“What is specially characteristic,” he says, “of the situation of the United States is that, while the political situation has improved, the social question, on the contrary, has assumed a degree of intense acuteness greater even, if that be possible, than anything known in this old European world of ours. The inequality of conditions develops itself, step by step, in accordance with the progress of American society. This is a law which all societies obey; it is not in itself an evil; it is a fact which we here record.”

VOL. XIV.—I

We shall see, in the course of this article, with what a judicial, but still kindly, impartiality this eminent professor of political economy in the Catholic University of Paris points out the evils and dangers arising from the present state of the land and labor question in our Republic, as well as the remedies and safeguards which Providence places within our reach.

As to France—and what is said of France applies in a great measure to all continental Europe,—we may take the information furnished us by another eminent Catholic, a devoted and practical Catholic, who wields his pen and exposes his life with the chivalric fearlessness of the French crusaders of old.

If M. Jannet, in his writings and his private life, might serve as a type of the old time *magistrature* of the best epoch, M. Drumont is no unworthy representative of his Breton forefathers, who fought in Palestine under Louis VII. and Louis IX., or followed George Cadoudal and his heroic *Chouans*. If his terrible pen spares no class, no living names in the cowardly, time-serving, mammon-worshiping, corrupt and corrupting French society of to-day, he only does what the patriotic Swiss Catholic did, what more than one of the old Crusaders had done,—seized a bundle of spears aimed at his fellow-soldiers by the foe, and pressed them into his own devoted breast. He hopes that others, more happy, will rush in after him through the breach thus opened in the enemy's ranks, and help save France from the hosts of Antichrist.

Let us see, first, what the author of *La Fin d'un Monde* has to say about the social question, about land and labor in his own country. We shall then follow M. Jannet in his instructive analysis of our own social condition.

I.

How often have we heard from the lips of Catholic scholars, and read in works now classical, the statement that the French Revolution of 1789 conferred at least one unquestionable benefit on the French popular masses,—that of creating millions of small landed proprietors, instead of the few thousands of nobles who, before 1789–1793, held the soil of France as their inheritance! This sole benefit we have heard set off, in 1848, a few years ago, as a compensation for much of the destruction wrought by the revolutionary convulsion in the ancient French monarchy.

The fact is that the National Convention, in confiscating the property of the French landlord class, acted on the same principle on which James I., Charles I. and his unscrupulous minister, Wentworth, and the Long Parliament under the Commonwealth, acted in confiscating every foot of Irish soil and selling it to "adventurers." Cromwell did for his soldiers what English kings and

parliaments had done before him,—divided the land of the Irish Catholics and Protestant loyalists among them, and drove beyond the Shannon all of the old native owners whom he could not exterminate.

The ancient Irish land-laws, either before St. Patrick or after him, never attributed to or acknowledged in the chiefs who bore the title of kings the right to hold, singly or collectively, the whole soil of the island as their own. This was the claim of the feudal sovereigns, which essentially differed from the proprietary right which obtained in Ireland.

There each tribe or clan held the territory, its patrimonial territory, as its own. The tribal chief, who was elective, as were the higher chieftains or kings, was allotted a certain portion of land for his own use. But of this he only had the *use*, not the ownership. He could no more barter it away, or hand it down as an heirloom to his sons or kinsfolk, than he could any other thing not his own.

Hence the outcry raised, when the first Irish chieftains were induced to make their submission to Henry VIII., and to accept from him the titles of earls or barons, together with the investiture of their lands, which they were thenceforward to hold as fiefs from the sovereign. The people protested that the land was not the chief's to transfer to the king, or to hold from him. It was, they said, and truly said, the property of the whole clan, solely and inalienably.

And this protestation, which even English historians note as just and unanswerable, was again and again renewed, when the new earls and barons, growing weary of their vassalage, revolted, were attainted, and saw their lands escheated, or forfeited to the crown. Their people protested that the rebels might rightly lose their titles or their lives in punishment of their treason to the liege-lord they had chosen; but that the attainder could not reach or affect *the land*, which never belonged to the rebels, and never could be forfeited by those who did not own it.

We have made this statement to show that the ancient land-laws of Ireland essentially differed from those of England, from those of France and of most continental countries, where the feudal system prevailed.

But, without at all entering into the right or wrong of the wholesale confiscation or "nationalization" of land, as decreed by the French Constituent Assembly and its successor, the National Convention, we must here meet, with a peremptory denial, the assertion, so confidently made and so universally believed, that the French Revolution created a large class of small farmer proprie-

tors, who took the place of the former landed aristocracy, dispossessed from 1789 to 1792.

Let us, on this most interesting question, hear what M. Drumont and the authorities he quotes have to say :

"What is most astonishing," he writes, "is to see our middle-class Conservatives (*Conservateurs bourgeois*) shrugging their shoulders, and to hear their indignant outcries, when one presumes to discuss, in their presence, the principle of property, especially when one remembers that this French middle-class (*bourgeoisie*) are now living, in a great measure, on the fruits of the most monstrous, brutal, and bloody appropriation that the world has ever witnessed. These middle-class men, whom the very term of 'nationalization of the soil' throws into a violent fit, forget that such a 'nationalization' has already taken place within the present century. Only, far from turning out to be profitable to the entire nation,—a result which never could have been an excuse for the horrible conditions under which it was effected—this 'nationalization' benefited none but the middle class, a fact which should prevent them from uttering such loud protestations.

"One hundred years have not yet passed by since we have seen applied to the whole of France the very theories which, as formulated by the Anarchists of our day, strike the most indulgent minds as something frightful. . . .

"People have generally accepted, and I have myself believed as Gospel-truth, the formulated assertion, 'the Revolution gave back the land to the peasants.'

"The assertion is an absolute falsehood, and socialistic writers, as well as official economists, at present agree in acknowledging its inaccuracy. 'Letrosne informs us,' says Michelet, 'that when Turgot became minister, the one-fourth of the soil belonged to those who tilled it.' In our day, on the contrary, all statistics go to prove that the small farmers do not own one-eighth of the land cultivated.¹

"Of 14,000,000 of registered land-properties, 61 per cent., that is 8,600,000, include only a total of 2,574,589 *hectares* (each hectare being over two acres) of taxable soil in a grand total of 49,338,304 hectares, that is, only 5.19 per cent. ; whereas, the holdings of large proprietors owning fifty hectares and above, with 122,000 registered titles, comprise nearly 18,000,000 of hectares, or more than 5 per cent. of the national arable territory."

Toubeau, in his *Impôt métrique*, and the journal *La terre aux Paysans* (Maurice, editor, 1885), furnish us with the following table:

¹ See Chirac, *La Prochaine Révolution*, and *La Revue Socialiste* of February 15th, 1887.

| | Hectares. |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Lands not owned by those who till them: woods, forests, waste lands, marshes, fallows, grazing lands and pasturages, | 16,000,000. |
| Lands tilled on the half-profit system, | 4,000,000. |
| Lands tilled by tenant-farmers, | 12,000,000. |
| 49,000 holdings of more than 100 hectares cultivated by farm-laborers, | 12,000,000. |
| Houses, out-buildings, orchards, nurseries, gardens, | 1,000,000. |

“ Total, 45,000,000 of hectares to be subtracted from 49,000,000 ; remainder for small farmer-proprietors, 4,000,000 of hectares.

“ The share of this latter class is, therefore, *less than one-ninth*.

“ The truth is, as we are told by the authors of *The Land Question*, MM. R. Meyer and G. Ardant, that the French Revolution neither created small proprietors nor destroyed large landed proprietors. It only called forth from another social class men who bought up the old lordships or who built up with their money new and wide domains. To the territorial nobility succeeded the land-owning middle class (*Bourgeoisie*). The former was only invested with the *dominium directum* (the direct ownership, without the *use* of the soil) ; the latter enjoys, over and above this, the *dominium utile*. Moreover, the new proprietary class in France have added to the property once held by the ancient nobility a very large portion of the lands and tenements belonging to the Church corporations, and, during the century last past, they have still further increased their property by purchases from small farmers. In the absence of statistics, this fact is made evident by personal observation.

“ So, then, the large-landed proprietary class possess more.¹

“ The French Revolution has benefited some people, since, according to M. Fernand Maurice, the Rothschilds now own 200,000 hectares (between 400,000 and 500,000 acres) of the lands of France, more than the nobles did a century ago ; and the title on which it

¹ The author of a deeply interesting volume, *La Réforme agraire et la misère en France* (“ Land Reform and Poverty in France ”), M. Fernand Maurice, refutes, in nearly the same terms, the legend of the lands having been given to the peasants by the Revolution :

“ Just as the land existed before 1789, just so do we find it a century thereafter. The farmer has kept hold of his cottage and of the garden attached to it ; this is the progress. The other 3,500,000 farm-laborers have not even gained the right to have a roof of their own, no matter how wretched. For it must not be forgotten that, alongside the 3,000,400 small proprietors of holdings of less than ten acres (5 *hectares*), who are mostly obliged to work for others, agriculture employs also 3,500,000 laborers, real proletarians these, who have only their stout arms to win bread for their families.

“ This explains why the farm-laborers emigrate, why the soil remains uncultivated, and why, from 1831 to 1881, 6,000,000 of persons have forsaken the country for the cities.”

is wrongfully held is more absolute and more simple than it had ever been since the Roman period."¹

Passing to the use the *bourgeoisie*, or new landlord class in France, made of their power, M. Drumont says that they began by persuading the people, the laboring classes in town and country, that *they*, the people, it was who had done all that was wrong in the Revolution.

"This was just as untrue," he says, "as was the legend of the land given back to the peasants by the Revolution. The men dressed in fish-women's clothes, whom Choderlos de Laclos, the agent of the Duke of Orleans, hurled against Versailles in October (1789), the men armed with pikes, . . . the active *sans-culottes* who composed the Terrorist army, never counted more than 2000 or 3000 persons in France; and these were recruited from among men who had lost caste, or who were convicted malefactors, rather than from the ranks of the people.

"Just when the Revolutionists were finally suppressing all corporations, the laboring classes made a formidable protestation against the act. On June 10th, 1790, five thousand shoemakers met in the Champs Elysées; and the carpenters grouped themselves about the Archbishop's residence. The masons, slaters, and printers assembled at other places in the city. Bailly, Mayor of Paris, who was rightfully guillotined for having shot down the people when he was in power, and who excited the people to rebel when he was out of office, . . . said to the assembled tradesmen: 'As men, you possess every right, especially that of starving. . . .' A combination of workingmen to obtain uniform wages, and to compel their fellow-workmen to accept the rate of wages thus fixed, would be a coalition injurious to their own interests. It would be a violation of the law, an upsetting of public order, a serious injury to the general welfare."

"This," M. Drumont goes on to say, "is just what those in power to-day in France, the *bourgeoisie* of 1889, are just doing over again."

After having been mocked by Bailly, the tradesmen petitioned the National Assembly. There all meetings of workingmen and tradesmen are declared to be unconstitutional, inasmuch as corporations have been legally abolished.

A little later the Committee of Public Safety decreed that all workingmen who dared to unite to demand an increase of wages should forthwith be sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal—that is, to the guillotine!

Not till the reign of Napoleon III. were workingmen in France allowed to associate or to strike for higher wages.

¹ *La Fin d'un Monde*, Book I., pp. 3-6.

Furthermore, it is now well ascertained that the people, the true people, both in the cities and in the country-places, were almost unanimously opposed to the Revolution. And M. Drumont quotes, in proof of this, statistics published by that excellent workmen's journal published in Paris, *La Corporation*, going to show that out of 12,000 persons condemned to death by the guillotine, and whose names and professions are well ascertained—7545 were men of the people—peasants, farm-laborers, workmen, servants.

And it was the popular masses who were sent by the Convention, and afterwards by Bonaparte, to fill the Revolutionary and Imperial armies, and to die on all the battle-fields of Europe.

Not till the old and victimized popular generation had disappeared were the all-powerful *bourgeoisie*, through the public press, able to convince the younger generation that the Revolution was the work of the people. Then the *prolétaires* or non-proprietary classes began to work for the middle-class who now owned the land and gathered the golden harvest, and to secure to them the possession of their ill-gotten power and wealth.

The men who filled the National Convention in the last days of its reign had all cheaply purchased their broad acres and warmly feathered their nests. They decreed that the old custom of confiscating property, as a punishment for enormous crime, should be done away with, as a relic of medieval barbarism!

They thus secured their own estates against all future accidents.

The restored Bourbons sanctioned all that 1793 had done, by refraining from troubling the new possessors. So that the *bourgeoisie*, now completely triumphant, were free to settle their relations with the working classes. *They reorganized labor as they pleased.*

And here comes in what is most vital in the social question in France. The abstract question of the rights of property has long ago been exhaustively discussed in France, both on the side of the Catholic Church and on that of the positivists, socialists, and theorists of every color. So have been the relations between capital and production, between the employer and the workingman. The Catholic Church is no theorist. She sets about binding up and healing the wounds of society, while others are speculating about their origin, their consequences, and their treatment.

In no country in the world—since the Revolution and anti-Christian Freemasonry have taken out of the hands of religion the people and institutions of Italy—has that same religion done more for the workingman and the indigent classes than in the land of France. Nowhere, at this moment, can the statesman and economist behold such admirably organized hosts of men and women, whose best efforts are devoted to the enlightenment of the laboring

classes; to their moral, intellectual, and physical elevation; and to bringing about between capital and labor, between masters and their workmen, that perfect harmony of interests which can only repose on practical brotherly love.

The three published volumes of Count Albert de Mun's discourses leave not one question regarding the wrongs and rights of workingmen untouched. There is not a single practical remedy ever devised by human wisdom, or supernatural charity, for the evils which embitter the hearts and darken the lives of the toilers of earth or its disinherited poor, that the noble director of the workingmen's circles has not most eloquently described and most efficiently applied.

Here in Paris thousands upon thousands of the children of toil, young and old, look up to him with a gratitude and a veneration which are only paid to men who have something God-like about them, and who are felt to be God's instruments for good.

To us it is a wonder how one man, of delicate health too, and with heavy and responsible duties to discharge in his place in Parliament, can find time and strength to multiply his presence all over France, wherever there is need of founding or developing one of these workingmen's circles, and to deliver there a discourse which you could wish to see printed in letters of gold, on tablets as durable as bronze, and hung up there forever.

Catholics in America, friends and helpers of the workingman everywhere, who only know and love Count de Mun for his most eloquent and most successful advocacy of the duties as well as the rights of capital and labor; for his enforcement of the Gospel law of equality, fraternity, and liberty, will be sorry to see any shade cast on so bright and pure a name in M. Drumont's pages.

But there are, besides, among the *bourgeois*, or wealthy middle classes in France, many and many a noble Christian man and woman who make it the pride, the duty, the pleasure of their life to help Count Albert de Mun in promoting all his great works of social charity. We need only mention the two Harmels, father and son, wealthy manufacturers, who are not only benefactors and fathers to their numerous workmen, but who are, without doubt, the apostles of that true Christian socialism which the Church practises, enforces, whenever or wherever she is able to do so.

Again, looking to the Catholic journalists and publicists of France, men who have rendered, during the present century, the most precious services to religion and society, we find that five-sixths of them belong to the middle-class. We have only to name such men as the illustrious brothers, Louis and Eugene Veillot, together with the staff of men who, for more than fifty years, have been foremost in the front ranks of the battle against Antichrist.

Noblemen and *bourgeois* stand there side by side, forgetting all the differences of birth and social position, and mindful only of the one duty of doing a true yeoman's work in the cause of God and the poor.

The same is to be said of the French Catholic clergy. Its ranks are recruited from every class in society. If the majority are taken from the families of the peasantry and the laboring poor, the wealthy *bourgeoisie* contribute many glorious names to the minority, while, perhaps, the old nobility contribute a still larger contingent.

It is none the less but too true that the Voltairian middle classes are now more than ever, and have been ever since 1830, the controlling force in French politics, French public opinion, and French education. Since the accession of Napoleon III. the Masonic power has drawn into its nets the generations educated in the government schools. By slow but steady degrees the lodges have controlled the administration, the army and navy, the hosts of men and women under the command of the Minister of Public Instruction, and the still more numerous hosts of officials in every department of the public service.

It is, at this moment, notorious that no man or woman has the slightest chance of public employment or advancement, unless such as are affiliated to these openly and avowedly anti-Christian lodges.

It will throw no little light on what we have to say of the land and agricultural movement in the United States, to glance here at what monopolists are doing in France to ruin the latter and depreciate the former.

"The most odious monopoly of all," says M. Drumont,¹ "the monopoly which will end by letting loose on the Jews and their followers the public indignation, is that which is practised on all articles of prime necessity, on the industry and very existence of mankind. . . . The Rothschilds could not help being impelled into such monopolies as this, and thereby to aim at our absolute, shrewd, total subjugation.

This *Graineterie Française* (the 'commerce or monopoly of grain') . . . has covered the market-places of Paris with fresh produce for the sad trials already heaped on our growers; the 'combine' has flooded the market with foreign corn, and has thus taken away from our French farmers the small profit they might have derived from a season exceptionally favorable.

"This grain monopoly, exclusively controlled by German Jews, we are informed by *La Gazette des Campagnes*, seeing that, during the month of May (1886), there was, all through Europe, the

¹ *La Fin d'un Monde*, pp. 56-58.

prospect of a poor harvest, . . . made an arrangement with the Bank of Nevada, and purchased all the wheat stored up in Chicago, New York, St. Louis, and San Francisco. On June 15th they had thus purchased 37,000,000 of hectolitres of American wheat.

"Thus encouraged, the Jewish speculators bought up that same week all the grain to be found on the markets of Liverpool, London, Hamburg, and Berlin, to the amount of 3,500,000 of hectolitres.

"In less than a week the Jewish combine had raised the price of wheat up to \$10.50, \$11.75, and \$12.00 a sack.

"The trick was played, and the unfortunate purchasers who happened to be uncovered, were obliged to pass through the *Furcæ Caudinæ* of the band.

"Then came fine weather in June; the prices fell, and the 37,000,000 of hectolitres of American wheat were sold for \$2.00, \$2.25, and \$1.80 the hectolitre.

"This edifying narrative (says M. Louis Hervé, quoted by *Le Monde*) gives us some perception of the *Crédit Agricole* as carried on by the Semitic race both in the Old World and in the New. This explains to us the incredible and absurd fluctuations undergone by grain and flour during the last four months.

"Free traders must be very blind if they do not, by this time, know who is to be held accountable for the high price of bread, and that the wheat-grower is the first victim of these cosmopolitan stock-gamblers. . . . At this moment they are laying their Semitic claws on the coal-mining stocks of England, Belgium, France, and Germany, so as to control the sales and dictate their law to all buyers."

M. Drumont here accuses the French Minister of War of playing into the hands of the "Cosmopolitans," and of so ruining French agriculture that in case of a war with Germany, German Jews would alone have the provisioning of both armies. "The protestations of our farmers," he says, "the remonstrances of the Department Councils, petitions addressed to the Government—all is useless. The Minister of War, no matter who he is, knows well that on the very day he would cease to serve the Jewish interest he would be put out of office by the votes of the Freemasons, who are sold to Israel."

These are terrible accusations. But up to the present moment no one has attempted to refute them seriously. The only replies to the author's courageous denunciations of such wholesale treason come from persons who smart under the pitiless lash of the writer.

"What we have said," M. Drumont tells us, further on, "on the syndicate on wheat, is literally applicable to the syndicate on sugar. . . . The Jews began by disturbing the market by their wholesale purchases and their deals. The sugar manufacturers and re-

finers, unable to contend against this formidable combination, were either ruined out and out, or forced to play into the hands of the speculators. Those who thus sided with the Jews have had no reason to complain. For, in the sitting of the Chamber of Deputies of January 15, 1886, M. Sans-Leroy declared that the refiners of Paris received in a single year eight millions of dollars as their share of the fraudulent profits thus realized.

"While these parasites are thus growing rich, the true laborers—the producers—are reduced to extreme poverty. Many farmers have given up cultivating flax, growing wool, wheat, and the white poppy,¹ and concentrate all their industry on raising the beet-root. They have gained nothing by it.

"Never, since the world has existed, have men seen a band of cosmopolitan freebooters displaying such hardihood, upsetting with such light-heartedness all the conditions of existence among peoples; introducing so unblushingly into the peaceful habits of trade gambling, false reports, lying, and thereby brutally ruining thousands of men to enrich themselves. This is the phenomenon of the closing century."

The *bourgeois* class, therefore, who now govern France, have saddled the country with an ever-increasing load of debt out of which there seems to be, in the present paralysis of agriculture and the rapid decline of all manner of national industry, no issue but national bankruptcy; these are the men on whom M. Drumont vents his patriotic wrath. Just as we are writing this, the lawsuits instituted, with the authorization of Parliament, against the two Deputies, Daniel Wilson and Numa Gilly, promise to unveil such an extent of official corruption as fully justifies M. Drumont's vehement and frequent denunciations.

Too true is it, then, that the *bourgeoisie* to-day in power are the descendants and the heirs of the men who made the Revolution of 1789, who alone profited by its wholesale confiscations, and who, in 1889, are determined to wrest from their Catholic or monarchical adversaries every remnant of their vested rights, every shred of religious and political liberty.

This is the situation which the civilized world should consider attentively. It has its lessons for the freemen of America, as well as for the subjects of every power in Europe.

The Paris Municipal Council, the great majority of which is made up of men of the class we have been describing, is openly devoted to the realization of the most advanced forms of anti-Christian socialism. Nothing but the merest accident can prevent this powerful body of determined men from proclaiming, at any

¹ The salad oil produced by the white poppy (*œillet*) rivals, among the poor at least, the fruit of the olive.

moment, the supremacy of the Commune. And this example is sure to be followed by Lyons and Marseilles, and other French cities. The present Floquet-Lockroy Ministry are pledged to a revision of the Constitution in an extreme radical sense, to the abolition of the Senate and the Presidency, to the repeal of the Concordat, the suppression of the salaries paid to the clergy, to the sequestration of all Church property, as well as of that belonging to all religious or quasi-religious associations, or even individuals.

On the ruins of the Church and State, of the old Christian order, thus swept out of existence, the men in power will build up, or attempt to build up, a community governed by the principles of advanced socialism, collectivism, and anarchism combined. They will, perhaps, call it a Social-Democratic Republic; but God only knows what it will be.

M. Drumont, who, it seems, is not unwelcome among the anarchistic leaders, thus describes their near expectations: "Once," said they, "that we are put in possession, ourselves, our wives and children, of the palatial residences and beautiful houses of the aristocratic quarters (of Paris), and when we shall have burned down the registry offices, those of the lawyers and notaries, the seat of every public administration—those who should attempt to turn us out must be clever indeed!"

"It is through kindness to me," adds M. Drumont, "that several of these men have assured me that they entertained no special ill-will toward the churches; that they only intended to burn all baptismal registers that could help people to establish their civil standing."¹

The supremacy of the hitherto oppressed and suffering working classes, without any faith in God or belief in the life to come; without any religion but the worship of their own notions of right, and no law but the gratification of their desires, such is the IDEAL government these madmen contemplate.

Is it, then, wonderful that, in presence of such imminent and fearful changes, all Frenchmen who love the true greatness of their country, who cling to the religion of their forefathers, and would preserve the popular masses from the anti-Christian deluge now sweeping over Europe, should combine and exert themselves heroically to bring the laboring classes and the poor into the Ark of Christian principle, peace and practice?

We should be, therefore, much more anxious to see the Workmen's Circles founded by Count de Mun and M. Chesnelong, and patronized by such true "Knights of Labor" as the MM. Harmel, Abbé Garnier and Cardinal Langénieux, flourishing and mul-

¹ *La Fin d'un Monde*, p. 28.

tiplying their numbers over France, than concerned about the plans proposed for recovering from the International Bank and the Rothschilds the thousands of millions accumulated by criminal and fraudulent speculation.

Until Frenchmen themselves cease to tolerate, to encourage, to participate in these godless schemes for acquiring sudden and enormous wealth at the expense of the public, to the detriment of all lawful industry and of the national honor and credit—it were, apparently, idle to declaim against the foreigners who build up gigantic fortunes on the foibles and follies of the native-born citizen.

We in America are all too familiar with the methods of such greedy and unprincipled speculators. Until the laws of our country, supported by a sound public opinion, shall have stepped in to restrain stock-gambling and to punish the gamblers, we shall continue to have our “Black Friday.” We have also our trusts, our pools, our combines, our monopolies—as they have them in France and the adjacent countries.

All these are the curse of legitimate and honest labor, just as they are the excesses and abuses of the money-power in every State. Nevertheless, in the interest of labor itself, it were better not to call in the interference of the State, unless compelled to do so by the direst extremity.

But in France, as well as in Belgium, the only remedy found for the oppression and suffering produced by the omnipotence of capital, and the greed of great corporations, is to adapt to modern circumstances the systems counseled by religion in the mediæval cities, and which made starvation, pauperism, and a helpless old age things unknown among their guildsmen or trades-unions.

To come to specific and practical measures for benefiting the laboring classes, those, in particular, who are employed in large manufacturing or mining centres, we must be allowed to quote here from *La Réforme Sociale* of October 16th last, passages from a paper read at Lille, in the month of April, before a general assembly of the Catholic Unions of Flanders, Artois, and Picardie. The paper was written and read by M. Guary, Director-General of the Coal Mines of Anzin, who presided in the Assembly at Lille, and is a type of the true Catholic *bourgeoisie*, devoted heart and soul to the work of elevating the thousands of miners and workers under him.

The object of the paper is to show how the “Patronage” of the great Coal-Mining Company of Anzin, established in 1757, is exercised for the protection of all its employees and their families, so as to secure them cheap clothing, provisions, medical assistance, comfortable and healthy lodgings, religious education for the

children, religious instruction for all, and certain provision against infirmity and old age.

In 1865 the company established co-operative stores, under the name of "Co-operative Society of the Coal-Miners of Anzin." They began with a capital of \$5000 divided into \$10 shares. This was employed in purchasing cloths and stuffs, hosiery, etc., together with flour, bread, groceries, lard and bacon. At first butcher's meat was bought and sold out to the men. But they gave it up in summer. All the articles bought are of good quality, and are sold at the current prices in the district, the profits all going to the miners themselves, who are the only shareholders.

The capital invested steadily increased, till it reached \$50,000 in 1888, the number of shareholders being 3,022, about one-half of the employees of the company. Many of the miners live too far away from the stores or shops, of which there are fourteen, to be able to avail themselves of their advantages.

The company at first only gave the ground for the first store, then it gave gratuitously the ground and all the building materials. Now that the society is a great success, it limits itself to carrying free all the merchandise and provisions needed by the stores.

The directors aimed not only to teach the workingmen the rules and practice of domestic economy, but the manner as well of managing the entire business of the co-operative stores themselves. So among the nine members of the Board of Managers, five are workingmen; the others are an ex-agent of the company, an engineer, the superintendent, physician, and a druggist. All these are selected by the shareholders.

The first effect produced by the working of the society was to prevent the miners from getting into debt, and to help them to get out of it. The shareholders are given a fortnight's credit for their purchases. These must be paid for at the end of the second week. No advance is given on unearned salaries. If the last fortnight's accounts are not paid up, no articles are given to the debtor, except for cash paid down, unless he should have sickness or some misfortune in his family, which in the judgment of the board should justify an extension of credit.

The lodging-houses provided for the miners are spacious, healthy, comfortable, well kept, and erected with a view to securing family privacy. Each family pays about \$1 per month for house-rent. Each cottage has also a nice garden-plot.

In the beginning the company generously encouraged their workmen to become the owners of their own cottages; and for this purpose they gave the buildings just for what they had cost, accepting instalments of about \$3 a month in payment of the debt and no interest being asked on the capital expended in the erec-

tion. But, as the French law does not allow parents to leave their property to the oldest or the best-behaved child, these cottages, on the death of the first owners, were sold by the Government at public auction to the highest bidder. And in more than one instance the house thus sold was turned into a tavern. 'Twas a pity; but the company found it wiser to help the cottagers to live comfortably and to lay by their savings for old age.

Since 1833 means have been taken by the company, with the co-operation of the miners, to establish a savings bank for sickness and old age; for widows and orphans. Thereby these thousands of laborers can look forward without anxiety to the time when they can no longer work.

As religion, since the first establishment of this company, has been one of its directing forces, one may expect to see the education of the children and young people also well provided for. They have religious masters for the boys; and the girls' schools are under the charge of Sisters, who also minister to the sick and bring them the prescribed medicines, etc.

To the girls' schools are attached workshops, where the pupils are taught household work, sewing, mending, washing, bleaching, and tailoring. As there is a school for master-miners, the boys, after their first elementary instruction, are sent to this when they give good promise of talent and proficiency.

Every mining village has its church, where the people regularly attend the Sunday services, and are instructed in the Christian doctrine and the duties of Christian life. The children, on making their first communion, receive each a gratuity of 12 francs; and the boys get a complete outfit the first time they are sent down in the mines.

The expenses of public worship, the services of the priest, and those of the physician, are all paid by the company.

M. Guary, from whose paper these details have been taken, has some passages toward the end which should be textually quoted. He is a disciple of Frederic Le Play, and thus speaks of what happened at the meeting of the Society of Social Economy in 1887:

"In his eloquent address at the opening of our annual assembly of 1887, M. George Picot described what he had witnessed at Lille. Let those whose modesty I may alarm by quoting his words—for souls above the common modestly conceal their good deeds—forgive my repeating what he says, since they illustrate the truth I would inculcate. I should have known nothing, says the eminent Academician, 'if I had only followed the material details of the care and solicitude of the president of the company. I learned that not one workman was ever laid up who was not visited in his sickness by the family of some one of his em-

ployers; that not a child fell sick, or a death occurred without having some member of their families to see to the little sufferer, or to comfort the dying in the hour of supreme need. Thus was peace made between master and workman; thus was it maintained. . . .'

"Why," continues M. Guary, "does the magnanimous conduct so touchingly described by M. Picot find so few imitators among us? Why are the poor and the rich so seldom brought together by an intercourse which is the incomparable remedy for curing the wounds of both the one and the other? . . . By such intercourse we could teach the sufferer that the Christian religion, from which people try to turn his heart away, is his sole and best comfort and consolation, as well as the honor and glory of the lowly and the weak.

"We need intermediaries between the workingman and those above him. Since we are all here a single family, the family of Frederic Le Play, allow me to speak out what is in my mind. While glancing over the list of our 'Social Unions,' it seems to me that we have in them an army of officers; but there are neither non-commissioned officers nor soldiers, without whom there is no chance of winning a battle. We must by all means recruit this class of men;¹ and they are to be found among educated young men who have a career before them and a reputation to make. Then they should help to direct and protect the future of artisans and head-workmen, of all that numerous class who, to use the words of M. Picot, 'have many spare hours to dispose of, many idle days on their hands; and who, if they could only be banded together, would soon cast off their drooping spirits, and become joyous and energetic in the new hopes which would give them restored life and strength.'

"How shall we realize our purpose? This is a question to which the leaders of our school of social peace must, in their devotion, find an answer."

Deep as is the need of that social peace in France, we in America begin to feel that the mighty struggle between capital and labor should, among ourselves, be brought to a speedy and peaceful issue.

The past year was stormy and threatening enough in the world of industry. The Church, the Divine Teacher and Peacemaker,

¹ These Social Unions, as mentioned in a preceding article, are made up of two distinct but kindred societies, the "Society of Social Economy" and the "Unions of Social Peace," both combining their efforts to carry out the darling object of the illustrious Frederic Le Play—the reform of society in France. The members of both groups are the most distinguished magistrates, jurists, publicists, and economists in Europe; they should, as suggested by M. Guary, call to their assistance all the Catholic educated youth of their country.

has done not a little to still the tempest. It is timely, it is wise, to listen to the men who have again and again crossed this stormy zone, and noted its phenomena. Such a one is M. Claudio Jannet.

II.

In order to prepare the fourth edition of his now classical work, *Les États Unis Contemporains*, M. Jannet visited our country as well as Canada, observing, noting everything worthy of observation; conversing with the most eminent public men; examining our public establishments of every kind; questioning men of opposite parties and opinions; in one word, taking every means to arrive at a just and enlightened opinion regarding our political and economical condition.

With the former issues of his book the most competent publicists in America, Protestant as well as Catholic, have expressed their great satisfaction. Doubtless, ere this article appears in print, the American press will have pronounced their judgment on the two volumes now before us, and which contain the mature and perfect fruit of the author's conscientious researches.

His conclusions are summed up in a remarkable address delivered on the 29th of last May, before a general meeting of the *Union de la Paix Sociale*, and which we had the pleasure of hearing. The discourse, published in *La Réforme Sociale* of October 16th and November 1st, bears for title "The Social Constitution of the United States in 1888."

Speaking of the land and labor questions as influenced by the rapid increase of our population and the incoming yearly tide of emigrants from foreign parts, M. Jannet says :

"A very important fact is here to be noted, namely, that in our days there has arisen quite a hostile movement against further immigration, an evident desire of stopping this increasing influx of strangers. First, the Chinese were excluded, and this was justified by good reasons. It was important that a population of an entirely different race should not grow in the Pacific States and the West, just as the Negro race had grown up in the Southern States. At this moment, the opposition goes further : it is sought to exclude all poor immigrants, even those of European race. And we may reckon upon it as certain that, ere many years have passed, the United States will employ restrictive measures to prevent a too great increase in immigration from Europe.

"More than one law has already been enacted to hinder European capitalists from getting hold of lands. The citizens of the United States are determined, henceforth, to keep for themselves their patrimonial domain, immense as it is.

"Do the United States, then, feel that their population is

becoming too dense? No. Is the natural wealth of their territory exhausted? Certainly not yet. But notwithstanding the fact that this territorial wealth is still unexhausted, and that there is a wide and fruitful field for the investment of capital, it is none the less undeniable that the country no longer teems with the abundance of nature's gifts as it did some years ago. The vast territorial expanse between the Alleghanies and the Missouri is nearly all filled up. Instead of getting land there for nothing, as in former days, the would-be settler has to pay for it a comparatively high price. Lands to be had without payment are only to be had a great way off, further west, in the country between the Missouri and the Rocky Mountains. There the climate is dry and less propitious; woods are scarce, and in some regions artificial irrigation has to be resorted to.

"What conclusions shall we draw from all this? That to own land does not make a man rich; he must also have capital to enable him to cultivate it. Hence the culture of land in the Far West demands, as a necessary condition, the investment of capital to give value to the husbandman's possessions."

M. Jannet goes on to remark that, to a very large extent, the owners of land let it out to farmers. This system, he says, is doing great service to the country. Very many persons thus work for others in order to earn money enough to enable them to purchase afterwards farms of their own. "To attempt to settle on land, without any capital whatever, is for any man ruin, destruction."

In other territories of the Republic, especially where long droughts prevail, the only remunerative industry is cattle-raising. Immense extents of land are devoted to the rearing of oxen and horses. On these border-lands there is a continual rivalry, and not unfrequently bloody frays, between the capitalists and the settlers who plant their homesteads along the water-courses, and who represent the small farmer class devoted to raising cereals.

Great changes have occurred of late years in the agricultural condition of the Eastern and Middle States. The international commerce which has produced such an acute crisis in the value of land and all farming produce in Europe, has had its parallel in the American Republic. The wheat from India and the rich cereal crops grown in Manitoba have depressed the value of the same articles both in the Far West and in California.

In the Eastern and Middle States no more cereals are raised. Pasturage, dairy work, the growing of vegetables, the rearing of fowls, etc., have, according to M. Jannet, replaced the old agricultural occupations of New England, whose farmers and house-wives now aim to supply the daily markets of their numerous and populous cities.

So much for the land and its industries.

Now, as to the great manufacturing industries and the labor question. M. Jannet begins by asserting a fact which may be new to most of the readers of the *REVIEW*. It has been ascertained that the density of the population between Boston and Baltimore is nearly equal, square mile by square mile, to that of France, Belgium, and Germany. This is the region which is thickly studded with great cities. There are situated the rich deposits of coal and petroleum. It is also the seat of the great manufacturing industries. The economical conditions of this part of the United States are not unlike those of Western Europe.

Such is M. Jannet's estimate.

"Nevertheless," he says, "this same great district has a great advantage, as compared with us. And that is, that whosoever is active, laborious, persevering, and, above all, temperate in his habits (this is a vital condition in America)—every man who is temperate and saving can more easily raise himself up to competence and wealth than such a man could in our old Europe.

"A gentleman of wide experience in Worcester, a large industrial city of Massachusetts, proved some short time ago that of 100 leading manufacturers of that city, ninety began by being simple day-laborers. This tells us that in such a country there is room for all to make their way upward, and that many succeed in doing so."

This is the bright and hopeful side.

But the dark side has not escaped M. Jannet's observation. Women and even children have, as in France and Belgium, to work in our factories in order to enable the family to live. And although the workman's wages is nominally higher with us, the cost of living is, comparatively, so much greater that our laborers are worse off than in Europe. Then with us strikes are more frequent, and these are a serious drain on the workingman's resources.

While we are still following the sagacious French observer along the soil of New England into the Middle States, we must note one very natural omission in his work—the ruin of our ship-building industry, and the deterioration of our magnificent seafaring population into factory hands, wasting their lives away in the great shoemaking workshops of Lynn and Boston, or in the cotton and woollen factories along the coast and in the interior.

Before our great Civil War, and the deep disturbances it caused both in our social and in our economical conditions, we do not think there was in the world anything superior to the men who commanded and manned our fleets of clippers and steamships. Apart from the irreparable ruin caused to our native ship-builders, and to our carrying-trade on the ocean, there is the loss of our generations of hardy and intelligent sailors, who could have always

secured us the supremacy on sea along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

What statesman will take this matter up and revive our shipping industries, and with them call back into life the glorious American seamanship of fifty years ago?

If the politicians of the Atlantic States are too selfish and short-sighted to heed the warnings of quite recent events, why does not California set the patriotic example? She should be mistress of the Pacific.

M. Jannet next touches on what constitutes the great social peril of the United States, the birth and growth of that gigantic money power which not only threatens to oppress all individual and local initiative in industry and commerce, but to enslave hopelessly our laboring populations.

"In America," he says, "the heads of great industries, powerful companies like the Standard Oil Company, which monopolizes the sale of petroleum, the proprietors of the Pennsylvania coal mines, will of a sudden stop or limit their output, without any thought of the hundreds of workmen thrown out of employment.

"I am here pointing out," he continues, "what is the sorest spot in the social constitution of the United States. There have sprung up there great financial societies, which make up a power against which it is hopeless to struggle. Unhappily these societies have not always a conscientious regard to their duties, and treat their workmen with heartless cruelty." The author quotes, in support of his assertion, the report of the Pennsylvania Secretary of State in 1885: all but two millions of dollars stolen yearly from the workmen by a well organized system of fraudulent weights and measures; the salaries paid only once a month, and cut down from ten to twenty per cent. in punishment of pretended infractions of the rules. Then the system of paying the balance of the miners' wages in orders on the company's clothing and provision stores—all the tyrannical wrongs which coöperative stores of the miners of Anzin so effectually remedied.

But the readers of the REVIEW, after all the harrowing scenes of last year's experience in the coal regions of Pennsylvania, need only to be reminded of the abuses arising from this irresponsible money power to appreciate the successful efforts made in France and Belgium to attack the evil in its very root.

Coming to the efforts made to withstand the oppression exercised actually, and the still greater oppression threatened in the future, by these "combines," "trusts," monopolies, etc., M. Jannet proceeds:

"The doctrine which seems to prevail in the socialistic organizations of the United States is the collectivism of Karl Marx. What it proposes is to make war on capital, war on industrial and commercial capital, with the aim of one day handing over all this

capital to the State and to the workingmen's corporations under the control of the State.

"These notions were extensively circulated among the Knights of Labor, although their present master-workman professed opinions diametrically opposed to them. The majority of the local branches of the order were, two years ago, more or less under the influence of Karl Marx's teaching, if one may judge from their official organs in the public press."

M. Jannet then gives a brief sketch of the order up to the present year. "Mr. Powderly," he says, "always repudiated, in his own name, the collectivist doctrines. He would settle all labor troubles by arbitration, or by a friendly understanding between employers and workmen. But strikes were always the last resource (*ultima ratio*) with the Knights of Labor, especially where they were the masters. Besides, the entrance into the order of numerous associations already formed, together with their staffs of politicians and leaders, did not conduce to unity and strength. These bodies had no idea of being entirely assimilated; they persisted in pursuing their own separate purposes. So that the general direction given by Mr. Powderly was not followed in practice by the mass of his adherents. The socialistic elements, underhand, did their own work and spread their own ideas."

The condemnation of the Canadian Knights is then mentioned. A branch of the order, with all its Masonic signs, etc., had been founded in Montreal by a Jew of the name of Heilbronner, and had caused no little trouble between employers and workmen in a country where the social peace had never before been disturbed. The Canadian bishops, together with the Cardinal-Archbishop of Quebec, condemned the order.

"In the United States, however," says M. Jannet, "the American bishops had equally good reasons for not condemning the Knights of Labor. For, in the Republic the workingmen, having no direct bond connecting them with their employers, no permanent relation founded on custom, stand in need of an organization to protect themselves against the exactions and extortions committed against them by the great industrial companies. And, as the direction given by Mr. Powderly to the order at the time [the condemnation was pronounced in Canada] was a just and proper one, it is easy to understand why the American bishops remonstrated with the Holy Father, and prevented his giving formal condemnation.

"After all, when we examine the official programmes issued by the Knights of Labor, and consider only the general direction given to the order by its present master-workman, we can discover, at most, a few economical errors. Now, Rome has never yet excommunicated anybody for economical errors; and this is fortunate. Mr. Powderly wants the State to work the railroads and telegraph

lines itself; wants it to issue bank-notes to an unlimited amount; and would have the State interfere in many ways in controlling labor.

"These are mere scientific errors—nothing more. And hence the prohibition uttered by the Canadian bishops against the Knights of Labor was suspended in consequence of a memoir presented to the Propaganda by Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore."

The decision of the Propaganda, as well as the more recent decision of the Holy Father, with respect to the Knights, is not, as M. Jannet remarks, to be considered in any wise as an *approbation*. "The majority of the American hierarchy," he adds, "who took part in this proceeding, were careful to declare that the Holy See had not approved the order. Every Bishop, in his own diocese, gave the Knights a severe warning, recommending most especially that they should not violate the freedom of other laborers who do not belong to their association, if they did not wish to court, later on, a sentence of condemnation.

"But," concludes M. Jannet, "there never will be any occasion for condemning them, since this gigantic soap-bubble has already burst."

The conclusion, we are happy to say, was a hasty one. The order, though apparently much weakened by defection and divisions, is powerful still. They have once more held their general convention, and again placed Mr. Powderly at their head as General Master-Workman. This, with the latest instruction of Leo XIII. regarding them, will be an inducement to be more careful in selecting and admitting their members; more careful still in avoiding everything that savors of socialism, even of the State socialism advocated by Mr. Powderly.

With men like Cardinal Gibbons and his associates in the Episcopacy to counsel and warn their leaders, the Knights may long fill an important place in our social economy, and stand as a bulwark against the encroachments of combined capital on the rights of the workingman.

We need such organizations, when well-principled and wisely directed, in our great and free country. But what we need more—and what must be the joint creation of the clergy, the capitalists, and the workingmen themselves—are such societies, founded on Christian charity, as those existing in France and Belgium, and which we have only glanced at in the preceding pages.

There is among American employers too much of inborn generosity, love of justice, and appreciation of the rights of manhood, not to make us hope for prompt coöperation from them when rightly appealed to.

We want combined action in doing the work of God and the brotherhood. The time needs it, and the country is ripe for it,