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THE CONCEPT OF THE INDUSTRIAL CLASS IN
FRENCH POLITICAL THOUGHT
1789 - 1825

by

Michael Henry James, B.A.

A dissertation submitted for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of Durham

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May, 1973

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P R E F A C E

The first draft of this dissertation was devoted entirely to a study of the thought of Henri de Saint-Simon. By the time I had completed it, however, I had come to the conclusion that Saint-Simon's concept of the industrial class was both a highly important and an under-researched element in his social theory. I decided, therefore, to deepen my enquiries into that aspect of his thought; and the final draft is an account of the rise and fall of the concept of the industrial class in the writings, not of Saint-Simon alone, but of his predecessors and contemporaries also.

I wish to thank Mr. Henry Tudor, of Durham University, for his patient and thorough supervision of my research. Thanks are due also to the Social Science Research Council for awarding me a research studentship for the period 1966-69, and to Mrs. G. Durrant, for speedily and efficiently typing the dissertation.

M. H. James.

March, 1973 .

S U M M A R Y

During the eighteenth century, the term industrie possessed a narrow sense, denoting the personal qualities of skill and ingenuity, and an extended sense, denoting the ensemble of productive and commercial institutions. The narrow sense appeared in Roederer's socio-economic analysis, being distinguished as a species of mobile property. The extended sense appeared in Barnave's historical treatment of the Revolution, and connoted the popular movement for the political emancipation of society's productive potential. The former kind of theory thus emphasised the social distinctions within the Third Estate; the latter emphasised the distinction between the Third Estate and the nobility. These distinct connotations of industrie were reconciled in the expectation that the Revolution would establish a democracy of independent proprietors. The concept of the industrial class, as first elaborated by J.-B. Say, drew upon both the above kinds of theory. The Restoration liberals were thus able to employ the concept to denote either the bourgeois managers of industry or the entire working population, bourgeoisie and labourers alike. In 1819, Saint-Simon rejected liberalism and prescribed the institution of an elite of leading artists, scientists and industrialists. He continued to assume an identity of interests between all groups within the industrial class, but he increasingly distinguished between industrial captain and manual labourer, and employed references to the entire class only in rhetorical

contexts. The industrial class had in reality dissolved in the elite-mass distinction. Simultaneously, as some political economists were aware, the development of industry was generating a new class conflict between bourgeoisie and proletariat. The concept of the industrial class was becoming an increasingly threadbare ideological weapon. It contained an echo of a genuine Revolutionary demand, but was inappropriate in the context of continuing industrialisation. Hence its disappearance after Saint-Simon's death.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The concept of the industrial class tends to be associated today almost exclusively with the thought of Henri-de Saint-Simon, an association which secures for it a respectable place in the history of political ideas. But it was, originally, a tool of analysis employed by an entire school of liberal thought which arose at the time of the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in France in the early nineteenth century; and it played a crucial role in the attempts of that school to demonstrate that the Restoration constitution provided the framework in which the liberal order could be realised. It was only after leaving the liberal school in 1819 that Saint-Simon began to develop the concept in a manner that was entirely his own. The concept of the industrial class thus appears in a variety of intellectual contexts, and forms a worthy object of study in its own right. This work examines its origins, formation, articulation, and, finally, its disappearance.

Nowadays, when class analyses usually assume a class division to exist between employers and employees, the concept of the industrial class, embracing as it does both these groups, lends itself to immediate interpretation as being at the heart of an ideological attempt on the part of the increasingly powerful bourgeoisie to present their particular interests as the interests of society as a whole in opposition to those of the landed aristocracy. This work, so far from revealing some surprising new light on

the concept which might tend to modify that interpretation, seeks to show that it is essentially correct. But it also sets out to explain why the concept was so useful and suggestive in the writings of those who employed it. The central argument to be presented is this: the concept of the industrial class inherited, partly from the intellectual milieu of the French Revolution, partly from the established usages of the term industrie, a vital flexibility which enabled it to stress the points of unity which bound in a single class all individuals engaged in productive activity, without losing sight of the internal functional distinctions within that class; but, in the hands of Saint-Simon, although it gave rise to an entire and original social theory, it was ultimately unable to reflect the increasing tendency of these functional distinctions to become class distinctions as industrialisation proceeded. In short, it was a concept rooted in eighteenth-century experience, and was unable to reflect adequately the experience of the nineteenth century. Hence its brief life-span, and its replacement with new class analyses by social thinkers who recognised that the abolition of privilege demanded more than simply establishing the producers in positions of political power.

In the course of this work, I do not assume that there existed any "real" meaning to the phrase "industrial class". Rather, I examine the ways in which the term was employed by various writers in various contexts. In particular, I pay attention to the different purposes to which the relevant writers addressed themselves on

different occasions; for this often greatly affected the nuance of meaning with which the concept was endowed. Conversely, I do not assume that the concept of the industrial class resides only in the phrase la classe industrielle; for it can be equally well conveyed in terms such as industrieux and artisans. And since this linguistic variation is interesting in its own right, I normally allow it to speak for itself by leaving the relevant terms untranslated.

In Part 1, I survey briefly the social and economic background of France at the time of the Revolution, and examine the concept of industrie and the kinds of social theory in which it played an important role. Part 2 is concerned with the emergence of the concept of the industrial class in the context of Restoration liberalism. In Part 3, my concern shifts to the thought of Saint-Simon, and I examine the implications of Saint-Simon's departure from the liberal camp. Part 4 is devoted entirely to an exposition of Saint-Simon's theory of the scientific-industrial system, in which the concept of the industrial class received its most sophisticated treatment. Part 5 is a study of the final disintegration of the concept of the industrial class in Saint-Simon's later writings. Finally, in an appendix, I provide a translation of a little-known work which Saint-Simon drew up for publication from the notes of his friend, Dr. E.-M. Bailly.

Although much of this work is devoted to the writings of Saint-Simon, my aim in Parts 4 and 5 is, not to offer a radically new interpretation of his thought, but to examine

the relationship between his conception of the industrial class and that of the scientific-industrial system. Consequently, I do not provide a sustained comparison between what I have to say and the interpretations of his commentators. But where his commentators do have opinions relevant to my concerns, I attempt to give them due regard.

P A R T O N E

CHAPTER ONE

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The pattern of property-ownership and production which had emerged in France at the time of the Revolution was a complicated one. It was certainly not as simple as the widespread contemporary use of the agriculture-commerce-manufacture distinction might have led one to suppose. For it was not possible to separate in a perfectly corresponding manner the personnel engaged in these three branches of the economy. For instance, manufacture was largely under the close direction of merchants of varying degrees of wealth and influence; again, the rural poor frequently divided their working year between agricultural and manufacturing labour. It is significant that, of all the social distinctions raised in public argument during the Revolution, the most emotive and compelling was the extremely simplified dichotomy between rich and poor. Such was the variety of economic relations holding the people together, and of the size and nature of their estates, that even a straightforward demand for justice for the propertyless at the expense of the propertied would have been inappropriate and misleading. Nevertheless, for all its ambiguity, the tripartite distinction between agriculture, commerce and manufacture provides the clearest framework for an understanding of the general features of French social and economic life at this time; and, so long as this ambiguity is guarded against, it may be safely employed.

First, agriculture. It is possible to identify three groups of landowner in eighteenth-century France: the Church and the old nobility (or "nobility of the sword"); the wealthy bourgeois proprietors and the new nobility (or "nobility of the robe"); and the independent peasant proprietors, or laboureurs. The first group, albeit the most prestigious in a social sense, was gradually losing its economic pre-eminence during the eighteenth century; it appears that the best of the land was passing out of its hands and into those of the other two groups. The bourgeois and neo-noble landowners were investing in the land surrounding the cities, while peasant proprietors had, by 1789, acquired one-third of the national territory.¹ The management of the land, meanwhile, was mainly in the hands of the tenant-farmers, known as fermiers, or, in the case of those who paid rent in kind, metayers; but the peasants, of course, both owned and managed their property. As for the millions of rural poor, by far the greatest number belonged to the class of seasonal labourers, who, in the face of growing population and the unemployment which accompanied it, were compelled to seek work for some of the year in the towns, or to engage in domestic industry. The most unfortunate of them sank into vagabondage, beggary, and even banditry.²

1. A. Cobban, A History of Modern France, vol. 1, London, 1962, p. 155. Cobban remarks that Arthur Young complained that the land of the great nobles was given over to forests and waste, and he takes this as evidence of the tendency of the better land to fall into the hands of those more interested in cultivating it.

2. Ibid., p. 51

Secondly, commerce. It is more difficult to draw the distinguishing lines of commercial than of agricultural activity, since it was so closely involved in the manufacturing sector of the economy. For it was the merchants who supplied most of the capital, and took most of the risks, associated with the entire non-agricultural field of enterprise. It is possible, however, to distinguish three broad categories of merchant: the maritime merchants, the wholesalers, and the retailers. The first two groups contained some of the wealthiest men in pre-Revolutionary France; they were sometimes known as négociants in order to distinguish them from the marchands or boutiquiers, the retailers.¹ The maritime merchants, the most prosperous of all, were the owners of large fleets of ships; with government help, they thrived on the expansion of trade between France and her colonies which took place during the eighteenth century.² The wholesalers, by way of contrast, were a much larger and more heterogeneous group, but most of them were closely involved in the organisation of manufacture. The wealthiest of them were sometimes referred to as "ayant manufacture" in recognition of the control which they exercised over the level of manufacturing activity.³ But however large-scale their operations, the manner in which this control was exercised was the same. In both town and country, they operated a system known as fabrique (the

1. E. G. Barber, The Bourgeoisie in 18th. Century France, Princeton University Press, 1955, p. 25

2. Ibid., p. 28; Cobban, op. cit., pp. 42-3

3. Barber, op. cit., p. 26

merchants sometimes being known correspondingly as fabricants) whereby they distributed raw materials to the owners of small workshops and bought the completed products for eventual re-sale.¹ When necessary, they sold, lent or hired the appropriate tools or machines to the workshop personnel.² The final group, the retailers, were the owners of small shops where goods were sold direct to the public. Frequently, they were artisans in their own right, and personally produced the commodities which were sold on their premises.³

Finally, manufacture and industry. This area of activity may be divided for convenience into large-scale and small-scale. The former was relatively uncommon and was to remain so until well into the nineteenth century.⁴ Such as did exist before the Revolution was confined to the manufactures royales and to specific fields of enterprise. The former were set up with state protection and subsidies, and were charged with maintaining the flow of luxury commodities for royal consumption. Otherwise, industry developed into large units in the fields of coalmining, iron, paper, and textiles; and, in the last of these, opportunities existed for the introduction of advanced machinery.⁵ In all these fields, of course, development

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1. Cobban, op. cit., p. 47; A. Soboul, "Problèmes de travail en l'an II", Journal de psychologie normale et pathologique, vol. 52, no. 1, 1955, p. 42; G. de Bertier de Sauvigny, La Restauration, Paris, 1955, p. 297
 2. De Bertier de Sauvigny, op. cit.
 3. Ibid., p. 296; Soboul, op. cit., p. 43
 4. H. Sée, Histoire économique de la France: Vol. 2: Les temps modernes, (1789-1914), Paris, 1942, p. 109; D. Landes, "French entrepreneurship and industrial growth in the nineteenth century", Journal of Economic History, vol. 9, no. 1, May 1949, p. 48.
 5. Cobban, op. cit., pp. 46-7

continued during and after the Revolution, the requirements of the national army maintaining a high level of demand. But in an economy where capital was invested predominantly in commerce, the persistence of domestic and small-scale industry was inevitable. The workshops in which such domestic industry was carried on were owned by master-craftsmen or artisans, who, in addition to their families, often employed labourers, known as compagnons. These were frequently apprenticed to their employers, and hoped to achieve the rank of master-craftsman in their own right. Most participants in the workshop trade were thus more or less skilled in that trade; and division of labour existed between workshops rather than within them. The number of employees in the workshop varied widely. In a study of the Parisian sans-culottes, A. Soboul provides evidence of just how varied the pattern was:

In June 1793, there were nine carpentry businesses in the Section du Faubourg-Montmartre employing a total of more than 81 workmen, or an average of 9 to each business. However, one concern gave employment to 31 men, another to 14, and seven employed 3 to 7 workmen. The concentration is less marked among the wheelwrights where there were 146 men employed in twenty-three concerns; an average of 6:1. The largest enterprise employed 24 workmen, two of them had 14, one 12, and another 11. But two wheelwrights worked alone, two of them had only one employee each; three workshops accounted for two workmen, two employed three each. Three wheelwrights were partners in the same workshop; four others, also partners, had four employees.¹

This account of the pattern of production and property-ownership in eighteenth century France may be concluded by

1. A. Soboul, The Parisian Sans-Culottes and the French Revolution 1793-4, Oxford, 1964, pp. 40-1.

some qualifying remarks. First, mention should be made of two important groups which fall outside the simple economic classification employed above: the financiers and the professional classes. The financiers were among the wealthiest individuals of their time. They made fortunes by extending credit to the king when deficits appeared in the national budgets. They enriched themselves also by speculating on the exchanges, and, in the case of the forty Farmers-General, by buying, every six years, the right to collect the indirect taxes.¹ The professional classes, on the other hand, spanned the scale of wealth and influence, ranging as they did from intellectuals, lawyers and doctors, to lower clergy, law clerks, and assistants of various kinds.² Many intellectuals and lawyers were closely associated with the nobility, but it was from the ranks of the professional classes that some of the best known revolutionaries came.³ Secondly, it should be noted that this sketch of the social and economic structure of eighteenth-century France holds true, in essentials, for much of the nineteenth century too. For the Révolution did not bring about the immediate reduction in the inequality of wealth-distribution for which its most extreme supporters had hoped. While the personnel occupying the most lucrative and influential positions in society had largely changed, the positions themselves remained. The Restoration of 1815 established, in the place of the old hierarchy of nobility, clergy, and financial bourgeoisie, a new hierarchy consisting partly of returned

1. Barber, op. cit., pp. 29-33; Cobban, op. cit., p. 41

2. Barber, op. cit., p. 20

3. Robespierre and Danton were lawyers; Marat a doctor.

emigré aristocrats and partly of military officers and bureaucrats, who, having been elevated by Napoleon, were endowed with land undistributed since the Revolution. Moreover, the typical producer continued, as in the eighteenth century, to be the small merchant-manufacturer, retailer, or peasant; the last of these, however, had become enriched through the purchase of some of the land confiscated from the privileged orders. And it was the importance of this middle class of small producers that many of the social thinkers who contributed to the emergence of the industrial class were concerned to stress.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF INDUSTRY
IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FRANCE

During the eighteenth century, the concept of industry evolved in a manner that reflected the changes taking place in the economic structure of France and Britain. The terms industrie and industry originally referred to the human attributes of ingenuity and inventiveness. But, with the development of manufacture and commerce, they came to enjoy a second meaning: the ensemble of productive and commercial institutions, and their activity. The earlier, narrow meaning by no means disappeared as the later, extended meaning emerged. Indeed, it survives to the present day, and dictionaries of both French and English give it as the primary meaning.¹ But the connection between the two is clear. The production of goods and services was conceived of as the application of human ingenuity to natural materials and the consequent expression of that ingenuity in concrete terms. It was the flexibility of the term which, in the case of French social thought, helped to make possible the emergence of the concept of the industrial class. The present chapter is devoted to a study in some depth of this crucial linguistic development; and it begins with an examination of two articles on this very topic which appeared in two of the 1925 numbers of the Revue historique.

1. The distinction between the two meanings is perhaps best seen in the fact that each has given rise to its own adjectival form. The narrow meaning is retained in the term industrieux (industrious), and the extended meaning in industriel (industrial). This is pointed out by R. Williams, Culture and Society, London, 1958; Penguin edition, p. 13.

In the first article, entitled "A propos du mot Industrie",¹ Henri Sée attempts to demonstrate that, during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the term was used only in its narrow sense; and that the later, extended sense began to evolve only with the publication in 1819 of J. Chaptal's De l'industrie française. Sée asserts that, prior to this event, the terms usually employed in references to the institutions of production were arts et métiers and arts et manufactures.² It was Chaptal who took the step of replacing these expressions with the simple term industrie, and thus initiated the extension of the term in the direction of the familiar modern sense. He did not, however, entirely dispense with the more customary terminology. According to Sée, Chaptal continued to employ the terms manufactures, métiers and fabrications when referring to particular industries; for instance, he never spoke of the industrie cotonnière, but always of manufactures cotonnières.³ Industrie was thus reserved for productive activity in a general sense. But Sée also observes that Chaptal used industrie as a collective term in two ways. Sometimes he used it to refer to manufacture, as opposed to commerce

1. Revue historique, vol. 149, 1925, pp. 58-61

2. The phrase arts et métiers may be roughly translated as "arts and crafts", though "arts and tasks" would probably make for a more accurate, albeit more clumsy, rendering. There is evidence to suggest that an art was a skill, while a métier was an occupation contributing to the production of a commodity, but which did not necessarily involve a skill. Thus, we read in P. L. Roederer's Mémoires sur quelques points d'économie publique (1800-1) "C'est la division de métiers qui a perfectionné les arts." - the division of labour has perfected skills. Oeuvres de Roederer, vol. 8, Paris, 1859, p. 53.

3. Revue historique, vol. 149, 1925, p. 60

and agriculture; sometimes he used it to refer to production of all kinds, as for example in his use of the expressions industrie agricole and industrie manufacturière.¹

The second article, entitled "Le mot industrie chez Roland de la Platière"² was written by Henri Hauser in order to refute Sée's assertion that the extended sense of industrie did not begin to emerge until well after the beginning of the nineteenth century. Hauser notes that, during the eighteenth century, both the production and the marketing of commodities were often subsumed under the single term commerce,³ and that the term arts, whether followed or not by either métiers or manufactures, was widely used to refer to productive activity.⁴ But industrie was also employed, sometimes virtually synonymously with manufacture.⁵ Hauser draws his evidence mainly from the "Discours préliminaire" of volume one of Manufactures, by J. M. Roland de la Platière, which was published in 1785. He finds industrie occurring four times in the "Discours préliminaire", and each time it is used in a sense wider than ingenuity and inventiveness. The first occurrence of the term is on page (i), in the phrase "objects of industry";⁶ here, Roland was referring to objects which incorporate human labour and owe their existence to it. Again on page (i), Roland spoke of "the pleasures procured by industry";⁷ the context established

1. Ibid., pp. 59 and 60

2. Revue historique, vol. 150, 1925, pp. 189-93

3. Ibid., p. 189. Hauser points out that the modern expression "Chamber of Commerce" is a survival of this early meaning of the term.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., pp. 189 and 191

6. Ibid., p. 190

7. Ibid.

that here industrie stood for human endeavour enlightened by technical skill, rather than simple labour. The last two occasions on which Roland used the term involved a more general extension. On page (iii) he stated that "need gave birth to industry",¹ and on page (xxv) he asserted that, during a period of poor financial management in France, "industry, constrained, chafed against its chains."² Hauser clearly establishes his case; and later writers who have dealt with the topic accept that industrie was being used in a way that transcended its original sense long before the publication of Chaptal's work.³

The fact that Hauser finds fault with Sée's article is less important, however, than the fact that each author observes that the extended sense of industrie was itself susceptible to several shades of meaning. See notes that industrie, in the hands of Chaptal, stood either for production in general, or for manufacturing production in particular. Hauser's quotations indicate that Roland de la Platière used the term in a less than uniform manner; there is a clear difference between the objects of a man's industry, and industry chafing against the restraints of financial policy. It was, in fact, only the context that established, not only whether the term was being used in its narrow or extended sense, but, in either case, the precise nuance of meaning it was intended to convey. And an examination of some of the literature on social

1. Ibid., p. 191

2. Ibid.

3. H. Gouhier, La Jeunesse d'Auguste Comte, vol. 3, Paris, 1941, p. 34; P. Harsin, "De quand date le mot industrie?", Annales d'histoire économique et sociale, vol. 2, 1930, pp. 235-44.

and economic problems written during the Revolution reveals that industrie, when not being used in its narrow sense, was capable of considerable flexibility. Most often, it stood for manufacture and commerce as distinct from agriculture; though it sometimes referred to manufacture only, and sometimes to all three branches of production. For examples of the use of industrie to refer to both manufacture and commerce, we may cite the writings of J. J. Lenoir-Laroche and J. Barnave. Lenoir-Laroche identified two kinds of property: territoriale and industrielle. The former arose from the application of human faculties to the land, in the form of cultivation; the latter, from the application of these faculties to "different kinds of industry".¹ By implication, the industrial type of property must include not only that involved in manufacture, but also that involved in commerce. Barnave, however, was more explicit. Like Lenoir-Laroche, he was intent on legitimising the claim of the revolutionary bourgeoisie to full political rights, and he identified "industrial property" as the source of the power of the Third Estate.² It was industrial property which had brought "the people" to power; and by dividing "the people" into three groups, workers, manufacturers, and merchants,³ he made it clear that industrial property embraced the funds of

1. De l'esprit de la constitution qui convient à la France et examen de celle de 1793, Paris, 1795, pp. 113-4.

2. Introduction à la Révolution française, 1793; ed. F. Rudé, Paris, 1960, p. 9

3. Ibid., p. 31

the commercial as well as the manufacturing sector of the economy. But perhaps no writer so fully brought out the flexibility of the term industrie as did P. L. Roederer. Take, for instance, his use of both narrow and extended senses in quick succession in the following:

.....the faculty of developing, of perfecting his means of labour, his industry, his talents, his strength, is no less appropriate to man... than the faculty of enjoyment. Now, this development, this bringing to perfection, would be impossible in a country where, since the land belonged to everyone, all property, and, with it, all division of labour, would be forbidden to everyone, since industry proceeds from the division of labour...¹

Moreover, in his use of the extended sense, Roederer usually referred to manufacture and commerce only; yet sometimes he referred to agriculture as well. Thus, he spoke at one point of the "dependence of agricultural operations with respect to those of industry";² but, at another point, of how "manufacturing industry" gives rise to extensions of "agricultural industry" - thus anticipating Chaptal by nearly two decades.³ Nevertheless, such was the availability of alternative terms that industrie was sometimes dropped and the expressions arts⁴ and fabriques employed with reference to manufacture: hence the neat phrase la culture, les fabriques, le commerce⁵ - agriculture, manufacture, commerce.

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1. Roederer, Mémoires sur quelques points d'économie publique, 1800-1, in Oeuvres de Roederer, vol. 8, Paris, 1859, p. 44
 2. Question d'économie publique, Paris, 1793, p. 3.
 3. Oeuvres de Roederer, vol. 8, p. 64.
 4. Question d'économie publique, p. 6.
 5. Ibid., p. 9.

From these examples it may be seen that the simple analytic distinction between the three branches of the economy was often regarded as at least no more important than the distinction between agriculture on the one hand, and industry - i.e., manufacture and commerce - on the other. For it was in the light of this distinction that the owners of industrial property justified their demands for political rights. They believed that agriculture was a subordinate form of economic activity, and that, since industry was the mainspring of the generation of wealth, the organisers of industrial enterprise should no longer be denied the political recognition which their social importance merited. Hence the tendency among late eighteenth-century writers to draw a sharp distinction between agriculture and industry, and then to argue about which was the more important - bourgeois writers favouring industry, reactionaries favouring agriculture. It was, indeed, one of the advocates of agricultural interests - a member of the "physiocratic" movement - who most clearly elaborated on the distinction between the two kinds of enterprise, at least until the Revolution itself broke out. It is in the work of the Marquis de Mirabeau that we can best understand how and why industrie developed in meaning in the way it did, and became so useful in the hands even of those opposed to the position held by Mirabeau.¹

As a member of the physiocratic movement, Mirabeau subscribed to the belief that only the agricultural sector of the economy gave rise to a net surplus. The manufacturing and commercial sectors were capable of producing only a

1. Philosophie rurale, 3 vols., Amsterdam, 1766

normal return over necessary costs. Mirabeau's class analysis corresponded to these assumptions.¹ He posited three classes in all: the propertied, the productive, and the sterile. The propertied class consisted of the owners of the land; it was they who organised production, appropriated the surplus, and, in spending it, maintained the flow of wealth in the economy. The productive class was constituted by those who were actively engaged in agricultural labour. The sterile class consisted of those employed in services and travaux - services and works - which Mirabeau referred to collectively as industrie;² and, later, he spoke of la classe sterile, industrielle et laboureuse.³ The apparently pejorative epithet sterile actually made sense in the light of physiocratic economic theory, as the following passage makes clear:

.....the sterile outlays made by those men employed in the services and in works, which not only produce no surplus, but which do not even produce the remuneration due to the men employed on them. Their remuneration, in fact, cannot be paid except by the wealth which the labours of the men of the productive class bring forth each year from the bosom of the earth.⁴

1. Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 13-16

2. "On the right are the productive expenditures relating to agriculture; at the centre, the expenses of the surplus; lastly, on the left, the sterile expenses relating to industry." Ibid., p. 16.

3. Ibid., p. 152.

4. Ibid., p. 15.

The mechanics of the transfer of a portion of the surplus to the sterile class was explained thus:

.....it is (the sterile class) which buys from the productive class the primary materials of its products; which maintains by these purchases a stock of annual advances equal in value to half the surplus; which, by its labour, adds to the value of the primary material the price which need or fancy gives to its products, and lives on this excess in price which brings it reward for its labour.¹

But although Mirabeau originally used the term industrie to refer to both manufacture and commerce (services et travaux), he introduced, in volume two of Philosophie rurale, a clear distinction between industrie and commerce.

"All goods come from the land; commerce gives them the quality of wealth; and industry appropriates them for the use of commerce."² Thus, Mirabeau employed the extended sense of industrie to refer either to manufacture and commerce, or to manufacture alone. His most interesting comments on industry, however, are to be found in volume three. Here, he indicated that the narrow sense of industrie, so far from being obliterated by the emergence of the extended sense, in fact continued to be very much alive in it. "Human industry", he wrote, "has drawn men out of the station of the brutes and engendered the arts and sciences."³ In the following passage, we have an example of industrie being employed in such a way as to reveal in a nutshell how easily the narrow sense gave way to the extended:

1. Ibid., pp. 152-3

2. Ibid., p. 135

3. Ibid., p. 2

Considering industry from this noble and true point of view, it embraces first the sciences and the higher arts, which have the first influence on the education, the ennoblement, and the elevation of man; then the mechanical arts, which are useful for subsistence and comfort.¹

The notion of industry as the application of human ingenuity to raw materials is apparent also in the following:

What is the primary and fundamental object of industry? It is to procure men's needs, comforts and pleasures, by means of the appropriation of commodities to their various uses.²

Thus, the physiocratic economic theory did not by any means require that industry be despised. Although economically subordinate to agriculture, in that it prepared rather than produced the essential commodities of life,³ industry was a necessary activity from a wider, social standpoint. To Mirabeau, industry meant the application of specific crafts and techniques to primary materials by way of preparing them for distribution; and in this way he retained, in the term industrie, all that was of significance in the narrow sense of that term. With the development of the "mechanical arts", all the natural ingenuity and inventiveness locked up in the human mind was able to give itself abundant expression in terms of the great variety of commodities now available to mankind.

We may now summarise the findings in this chapter concerning the use of the term industrie in eighteenth century France. First, we have confirmed that the extended sense of

1. Ibid., p. 4

2. Ibid., p. 60

3. It was a travail second, not a travail premier.
Ibid., p. 62.

the term was fully established alongside the original sense long before the Revolution. Secondly, in its extended sense, it was usually employed in reference to manufacture and commerce; but it was sometimes used to refer to manufacture alone, and sometimes to all three branches of economic activity. Thirdly, the analytical distinction between agriculture and industry, which was brought to the forefront of public argument by the physiocrats, provides us with our most important clue as to the precise meaning of the extended sense of industrie: the application of human skills to the products of the land by way of preparing them for distribution and consumption. Thus, industrie at all times retained this basic reference to the human attribute of inventiveness, a fact which explains how the term came to stand for two distinct but closely related ideas. The importance of the distinction between agriculture and industry was such that even those writers intent on refuting the claims of physiocracy found it fruitful to continue to observe it.

CHAPTER THREE

"INDUSTRIE" IN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS:
P. L. ROEDERER

It might have been assumed that the concept of the industrial class emerged simultaneously with that of industrie itself, and on similar lines to those examined in the previous chapter. There is, indeed, evidence to support such an assumption; we have already seen how Mirabeau, once having introduced industrie into his economic analysis, was able to proceed to talk of the classe industrielle without having to explain himself further. It remains the case, however, that the idea of the industrial class had hardly, by the end of the eighteenth century, entered the milieu of concepts shared by writers on social and political matters. During the eighteenth century, and especially during the Revolution, the analysis of society in terms of class was articulated very largely either in the context of the existing legal framework, whereby society was divided between nobleman and commoner (roturier), or in the context of the more impressionistic division between rich and poor. These two sets of distinctions were not, of course, exactly parallel. We have already noted that there existed social groups such as the maritime merchants and the financiers who, while sharing the life-style of the nobility, were nevertheless of non-noble birth. But the most common way in which the two criteria of class-membership - birth and wealth - were reconciled, was by appeal to the manner in which wealth was acquired. If a prosperous non-noble had a vested interest in

the continuation of the ancien régime, then he was, to all intents and purposes, thought of as a member of the nobility. But this simple test did not always work. While groups like the financiers were, by general agreement, inevitably bound to the nobility, the prosperous merchants were still regarded with suspicion by the urban masses, however honestly they had acquired their riches, and however much they had to gain from the abolition of privilege. But the persistence in the French mind of the broad distinction between the privileged and the underprivileged was such as to affect in a crucial manner the emergence in a clear form of the idea of the industrial class. As will be seen, the concept was employed only by writers who believed that there existed a natural harmony of interests between all underprivileged groups, and that the conflicts occurring between those groups resulted from confusion and ignorance.

In examining the intellectual antecedents to the concept of the industrial class, however, our focus of concern is precisely these subdivisions within the underprivileged class; and, in particular, the distinction between the wealthy middle classes and the impoverished masses. This distinction was overshadowed to a great extent during the Revolution itself, when the issues were largely fought out in the context of the legal distinction between the orders. But most writers were aware of a difference of function between the professional and commercial classes on the one hand, and the poor on the other. Although each of these groups attempted to assert its predominance in the constitutions of 1791 and 1793 respectively, there was nevertheless a difficulty

involved in enshrining property-rights in such a way as to make it appear that the entire underprivileged section of society benefited as opposed to a mere section of it. This was a difficulty which was to reappear in the heart of the concept of the industrial class, and was never entirely resolved. In the meantime, however, we may simply note that there existed two distinct lines of thought in the social and economic thought of the eighteenth century which together constitute the ideological origins of the idea of the industrial class. The first line of thought drew upon the narrow sense of industrie, and associated it with the commercial and professional middle classes; the second line of thought drew upon the extended sense of industrie, and associated it with the entire non-privileged class. The present chapter is devoted to an examination of the first of these lines of thought, as exemplified in the work of P. L. Roederer. It deals also with Roederer's refutation of the physiocratic claim that agriculture alone was a truly productive form of activity, and his corresponding proof that manufacture and commerce - the "industrial" branches of the economy - were equally productive.

We have already referred to Roederer as a writer, who, in various works on political economy, made use of the term industrie in both its narrow and extended senses; and, in the latter case, so as to stand for all three branches of economic activity. We are now concerned with examining in much greater detail the precise manner in which he employed the term in his Mémoires sur quelques points d'économie publique. In its narrow sense, industrie was identified

by Roederer as a species of property, quite distinct from land and capital; while in its extended sense, it was made to stand for agriculture as well as commerce and manufacture, but with the implication that all three were interdependent and equally entitled to a share of the product of the land. Both of these exercises contributed to Roederer's overall purpose in composing the Mémoires: to defend the claims of the owners of mobile and industrial property to full political rights. This defence involved rebutting not only the claims of physiocracy, but also those of the niveleurs (levellers), who claimed that property was unnatural, the cause of all evil, and should be suppressed in the name of equality. For our purposes, however, we may ignore Roederer's attack on the levellers, and concentrate on the three areas of enquiry central to Roederer's thesis: the origins of property; the different forms of property; and the justification of the claim of each of these forms to a share of the national product. In the course of examining these three topics, we should gain an understanding of how Roederer so refined both the narrow and the extended senses of industrie so as to impart upon them important new connotations.

Roederer's account of the origin of property was derived largely from Locke's. He accepted Locke's belief that it was labour alone which established the title of property, and that civil society had come into being in order to protect that title. But he was concerned principally to demonstrate that mobile property was prior to landed property, and that the owners of all kinds of property were equally entitled to full political rights. The right of

property, he claimed,¹ was founded on two elements: the need for sustenance, and the natural faculties all men have for satisfying that need. Man was a property-owner in this fundamental sense of being free to direct his natural faculties in any direction he chose; and in directing his energies on to the natural objects around him, he laid claim to these also. This was the origin of mobile property; it sprang immediately from the property-right inherent in man's natural skills. "The savage climbs a tree and picks the fruit from it: this fruit is his; it becomes his property through the pain and skill that he has put into gathering it."² But what of immobile property, i.e., land? This sprang from a combination of human faculties and the mobile property which those faculties had brought into being. By itself, labour, the application of natural faculties to natural objects, was insufficient for the appropriation of land. For bringing land into cultivation for the first time was not quite the same kind of act as picking fruit from a tree. In order to cultivate the soil, man required not only the ability to labour but also the fruit of previous labour: first, he had to keep himself alive while he was engaged in working on the land, and, secondly, he needed seed to ensure a harvest from it. It was these which completed entitlement to the land. The mobile property consumed in cultivation consisted of products of labour which had been saved; instead of being immediately consumed, they had been converted into a capital sum, and invested so as to ensure a long-term increase in consumption. The right to

1. Oeuvres de Roederer, vol. 8, Paris, 1859, pp. 42-3

2. Ibid., p. 42

landed property sprang, then, partly from the labour expended in cultivation, and partly from the capital consumed during cultivation. Natural faculties, mobile property, and landed property existed in that order of priority. Civil society itself came into being when men realised the vastly superior productivity of cultivated land as compared to the untilled common which provided only limited opportunities for survival. The scope of civil society was limited to the certification and defence of property; it had no right to modify it. In a later passage, Roederer asserted that the cultivation of the soil was itself a sign that a social contract had taken place; and it followed from this that landed property was not prior to civil society. "...no field was cultivated before being enclosed; no-one enclosed it until certain that the fence would not be torn out."¹ Mobile property, or capital, on the other hand, was prior to both civil society and to landed property. "...how has man taken possession of the land? By opening it up, cultivating it, and planting it with seeds. But with what has he opened it up, cultivated it, planted it with seeds? Undoubtedly, with a mobile fund (fonds mobilier); it is, then, mobile property which is the first of all the properties; it is that which is the foundational of all the others."² It followed, in Roederer's view, that political rights could not justly be confined to the owners of land.

Having established the primacy of mobile property in the economic system, Roederer went on to demonstrate that there

1. Ibid., p. 60

2. Ibid.

were three classes of property-owner, each class corresponding to a specific mode of investing mobile property. These were, first, the propriétaire foncier, or landowner; secondly, the propriétaire mobilier, or capitalist; and, thirdly, the propriétaire d'industrie, or owner of a fonds d'industrie.¹ The first two classes were easily identified as the owners of land and moveable goods respectively. Roederer was at pains, however, to distinguish the capitalist from the mere owner of moveable goods who reserved his property for his personal use. The true propriétaire mobilier not only owned his goods but used them as a source of revenue: in other words he invested in them. The clothes-merchant, for instance, bought clothes for the purpose of selling them rather than wearing them himself. The third class of property-owner, however, received much more explanation from Roederer. The propriétaire d'industrie was an individual who had invested his capital in acquiring a trade or training for a profession. Roederer's first examples of members of this class were the carpenter, the painter, and the doctor. This manner of disposing of savings rendered the beneficiary as much a property-owner as did the appropriation of land or capital goods; it yielded a revenue which eventually covered the initial costs of training, and was no less a species of property for being expressed in terms of a body of knowledge rather than in terms of tangible assets such as were owned by the landowner and the capitalist. Writing of an imaginary propriétaire d'industrie who trained as a doctor, Roederer explained:

1. Ibid., pp. 57-8

.....it is clear that after four years of study, during which (the doctor) has consumed his capital of twenty thousand livres, he has become a proprietor of an equivalent amount of knowledge; that his capital is fixed, placed in himself; his head is truly furnished with it, enriched, as his colleague's shop is furnished with cloth; he is a capitalist of twenty thousand livres knowledge; he is a propriétaire d'industrie, he is a property-owner.¹

In a later passage, Roederer introduced into his analysis of property-ownership certain important modifications which related in particular to the third class of property-owners, the propriétaires d'industrie. These refinements emerged in an attempt to prove that the propriétaires mobiliers and d'industrie were more concerned with the maintenance of public order than were the propriétaires fonciers.² The landowner, according to Roederer, was concerned with law and order only to the extent that he stood to lose a year's revenue from a year's chaos: a prolonged breakdown in public security would probably cost him a harvest. The capitalist, on the other hand, stood to lose not only a year's revenue but also his entire stock of capital. Now, it was when Roederer turned to the propriétaires d'industrie that he introduced some modifications into his analysis of that class. He divided its members into, on the one hand, those who required tools and raw materials for the exercise of their skills, and, on the other hand, those who needed no such aids. The latter included painters, doctors, writers, lawyers, scientists,

1. Ibid., p. 58

2. Ibid., pp. 60-2

and artists, all of whom required the tranquillity accompanying public order for their skills to be appreciated and demanded. The former group, those who needed access to capital equipment in order to realise their skills, were named artisans and divided into maitres (master-craftsmen) and ouvriers (employees). The former were the owners of shops, tools, machines, and so on, and, as such, were capitalists - propriétaires mobiliers - as well as propriétaires d'industrie (or capitalistes d'industrie, as Roederer was beginning to call them). It followed that the master-craftsmen were concerned for public order in the same manner as were those property-owners who controlled mobile property only. As for the workshop employees, they experienced a "community of interest" with their masters;¹ since they relied upon the latter's stock of capital in order to exercise their skills, they too had an interest in keeping public peace. At this point, Roederer introduced a further distinction among the propriétaires d'industrie. It was, he said, necessary to distinguish among them those who were entitled to legal recognition as capitalistes d'industrie (the emphasis on capitalistes); for, as he put it, "there are some skills so crude, they they can be acquired in a very short time, and thus apprenticeship costs no capital to him who undertakes it".² The text would suggest that Roederer was referring here only to workshop employees; it was, he said, "dans cette classe d'ouvriers"³ that the distinction was to be made, and the term ouvrier,

1. Ibid., p. 60

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

as we have seen, stood for employees as opposed to the masters of the workshops. But the crucial distinction Roederer was intent on drawing must have applied to both groups. For in either case, the validity of a claim to be a true capitaliste d'industrie depended not upon one's rank within the workshop, but upon the nature of one's skill. Only if the acquisition of one's skill involved an apprenticeship sufficiently lengthy to require a sacrifice of current income could one be said to have made an investment, to have become a property-owner. The workshop master who was skilled only in a very simple craft could not have been a propriétaire d'industrie at all; he would have been a property-owner only in the sense that he owned a stock of tools and raw materials, and would therefore belong to the class of propriétaires mobiliers, albeit one who provided his personal labour to his enterprise. Correspondingly, the workshop employee was a propriétaire d'industrie if his apprenticeship was such as to warrant it; if not, he could not be counted a propriétaire in any sense at all, and would remain a mere provider of manual or semi-skilled labour.

The propriétaires d'industrie, then, were a class of property-owner identified by their ownership of a fonds d'industrie, i.e., a skill whose acquisition had involved considerable sacrifice and was, therefore, of the nature of an investment. Clearly, this class of property-owner was an "industrial class" in some sense. But Roederer did not explicitly employ any such concept. To identify a social class, as opposed to a mere social group, is to identify

certain common interests binding a group together and marking them off from other such groups. Roederer's propriétaires d'industrie could not be reckoned a social class. They appeared as a group only in the context of Roederer's analysis of the various directions in which mobile property could be employed. It would have been absurd, for instance, to claim that the highly-skilled workshop employee shared an interest with the lawyer which he did not share with the unskilled workshop employee, even though the last of these three, unlike the first two, could not be included among the propriétaires d'industrie. Moreover, in his subsequent analysis of the economic process, Roederer often did not observe the distinction between the propriétaires mobiliers and the propriétaires d'industrie. Rather, he adopted the categories of land, capital and labour, which, since Adam Smith, had become standard in political economy; and in this way he ascribed a similar economic function to all owners of capital, whether this was expressed in terms of equipment and materials or in terms of acquired skill. But Roederer's refinement of the narrow sense of industrie, so that it stood, in the context of the phrase fonds d'industrie, for a specific kind of property, was, nevertheless, an important step. It enabled the term to enter the vocabulary of French political economy, and, in context, to take on a meaning more highly specialised and technical than that conveyed by the extended sense of industrie. But with the extended sense too Roederer was an important innovator. We have noted above that one of

his aims in composing a treatise on political economy was to demonstrate that manufacture and commerce were as productive as agriculture, in the sense that they generated a real proportion of the national product rather than merely adding to the price of the products of agriculture. Roederer's success here assumes its significance in the light of the emergence some years later of the concept of the industrial class as the sole productive class in society. Our examination of Roederer's work concludes with an account of his demonstration of the productivity of the non-agricultural sector of the economy, and the implied unity of interest among all those engaged in production.

As we have seen, one of Roederer's first exercises was the establishment of the priority of mobile over landed property. The right to landownership was based on the combination of the labour of cultivation with the fruits of previous labour, i.e., the sustenance required during cultivation and the seed necessary for ensuring a harvest. In this way, the propriétaires fonciers were the first class of property-owner to become established. Now, Roederer accepted the physiocratic claim that all commodities originated from the land; but he did not agree that these commodities were distributed by the landowners in the form of wages to all other members of society. "They are distributed almost entirely by virtue of the right which all owners of capital have to the products of the land, and by virtue of a secret convention which recognises this right."¹ How did this right arise? Roederer began

1. Ibid., p. 63

answering this question by outlining briefly the manner in which manufacture stimulated the maximum productivity of the land. The landowner was obliged to save a portion of his annual produce in order to secure the produce of the following year. He had to save seed and sustenance for his employees; and he managed, by thrift or by intense labour, to convert part of each year's product into a capital sum. But how was this saving assured? What incentive was there to encourage the landowner to think ahead? It was, according to Roederer, the expectation of future enjoyment which alone maintained production. "Without hope of profit, no savings, no capital, no cultivation beyond the needs of the landowners and their servants."¹ But, in turn, how were these future enjoyments to be secured? By the expansion of manufacture. In this way, a variety of new commodities was brought into existence, for "to extend enjoyments is to diversify them".² So vital was the existence of manufacture to agriculture that, without it, three quarters of Europe's land would have remained out of cultivation.³

Roederer then proceeded to give a more detailed account of the origin of manufacture and of the propriétaires mobiliers as a class of property-owner distinct from the landowners. The landowner, he claimed, was originally prompted to save a portion of his current income through fear of future harvest failure. Accordingly, he drove his employees to the hardest labour of which they were capable, and thereby gradually built up a large surplus of produce. But this surplus presented a problem in itself; for, being

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

composed of perishable material, it had to be consumed in the short term or else left to rot. The landowner was saved, however, by the ingenuity of his workers. For a number of these, who had hitherto been employed on the simple tasks connected with agriculture, and were later deployed on the production of moveable goods, whetted their master's appetite for more ostentatious wealth. The landowner therefore increased the numbers of his employees engaged on manufacturing projects - he "tested the growing industry of his workers".¹ And by supplying them with the necessary sustenance and raw materials, he diminished his surplus of agricultural products. But he was, of course, committed also to the maintenance of his other employees, those who were still working on the land; and the surplus would be in danger of disappearing completely unless steps were taken to provide a constant flow of products for his manufacturing workers. He therefore consumed the remainder of the surplus in expanding the area of land under cultivation, and the increase in agricultural production thereby secured was a direct consequence of the emergence of manufacture. "...it was thus that manufacturing industry extended agricultural industry, and added to the products of the land the value of its wages."² It was this which explained the increase in agricultural output which accompanied each round of investment in manufacture and commerce.³ In time, the workers engaged in manufacture became freed from their masters. As the scale of

1. Ibid., p. 64

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

manufacturing production increased, so they were able to make savings from their wages, and eventually formed enough capital "to exercise their industry in full liberty".¹ At this point, the landowner no longer needed to advance to the manufacturers their raw materials and capital equipment. Rather, he was able to increase the output of the land by that amount more. "From then on, the products of the land were increased in exact proportion to the manufacturer's capital."² It was in this way that the manufacturers became entitled to a share of the product of the land; as propriétaires mobiliers, they had made possible a corresponding increment to the output of the land, and thereby established a rightful claim to it.

Finally, Roederer went on to explain the origin of the commercial sector of the economy, and how it established its claim to a portion of the land's product. Manufacture soon exhausted the potential allowed by the expansion of agriculture which it had stimulated; and, if its full natural potentialities were to be realised, it stood in need of further diversification. This could be achieved only by means of the division of labour, not only among the entrepreneurs, in the sense that each capitalist should concentrate on the production of a single commodity, but also within the workshop itself, where each worker and each machine should be devoted to the performance of a single task. But this development relied, in turn, on the opportunities for large-scale production; and so, in order to save manufacture from gradual recession, the entrepreneurs

1. Ibid., p. 65

2. Ibid.

of manufacture and agriculture hired agents who were to discover the nature and extent of demand over a wider area than had hitherto been accessible. They were also to establish warehouses and thus make possible long-term calculations of demand and eliminate the risks associated with mass production. At first, these commercial agents were the employees of the farmers and the manufacturers, and received from them the necessary mercantile capital. Now, this involved an expansion of cultivation in order to secure subsistence for the commercial agents; as commercial activity grew, agriculture expanded to an extent corresponding in value to the agents' remuneration. But, in time, these agents began to save part of their income, and thus to provide their own capital and become independent proprietors. At this point, the manufacturers and farmers ceased to provide wages for the merchants, and were thus able to devote that much more to the expansion of agriculture. The merchants' claim to a portion of the product of the land was established in the same manner as that of the manufacturers previously. "It seems, then, to be clearly established that agriculture, manufacture and commerce have equally a fundamental and intimate right to the product of the land, and that this right is the origin of their revenue."¹

Roederer's attempts to refute the claims of physiocracy thus did away with the idea that industrie, while consisting of the application of human ingenuity to natural materials, was, nevertheless, strictly unproductive. Mirabeau had

1. Ibid., p. 66

spoken of la classe sterile, industrielle et labourieuse, but Roederer's achievement was to establish that industrie, in its extended sense, so far from standing for useful but unproductive activity, referred unequivocally to productive activity as such. Agriculture, manufacture and commerce were mutually interdependent and each had a secure claim to the products of the land based on the fact that the existence of each stimulated the creation of a portion of the national product which would otherwise have been lost. So Roederer, as well as establishing a specialised usage of the term industrie in its narrow sense, by identifying a new class of property in the fonds d'industrie, also enlarged the connotations of the extended sense of the term. For these reasons, Roederer is to be considered as having provided some of the most important intellectual antecedents to the concept of the industrial class.

CHAPTER FOUR

"INDUSTRIE" AS A POPULAR MOVEMENT:
J. BARNAVE

So far, we have concentrated on the purely economic distinctions between the various groups involved in economic activity. We have noted that the non-agricultural sectors were characterised by a network of manufacturers, artisans and merchants of various size and influence, most of them independent proprietors in the legal sense but often highly dependent on one another economically. In this chapter, however, we are more concerned with the social attitudes which emerged from this environment, since it was these which made it possible for the wealthier, more distinctly bourgeois sections of the community to appeal successfully to the urban poor and to guide the revolutionary movement towards support for a liberal constitution. This is not to deny that great differences did appear between, on the one hand, the professional and commercial bourgeoisie, and, on the other, the small shopkeepers, artisans, and workers. But it does help to explain why the Revolution remained essentially bourgeois in character, even under the most extreme egalitarian influences, and why it was never challenged seriously by a militant proletarian movement. The significance of this for the present study lies in the fact that the persistence of this mentality in post-Revolutionary France helped to make plausible a concept of the industrial class.

As we have seen, the most typical institution of production in late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century France was the small workshop. Although the participants in the workshop activity did not share the same legal status, being divided into master-craftsmen and employees,¹ they nevertheless shared the same social status, being united in their political outlook and social aspirations. During the Revolution, they formed a social group known in Paris as the sans-culottes, and demanded political and social equality and the abolition of privilege. It is not difficult to understand how this homogeneous workshop mentality emerged. The workshop as a whole depended for its survival on the market demand for the goods it produced, and, in the event of an economic recession, all the inhabitants would suffer equally and together. The continual face-to-face contact between the artisan and his employees, and the fact that the latter were very often apprentices and hoped to become artisans themselves, induced a social unity that transcended the functional and legal distinctions within the workshop and created a common attachment to the vision of a

1. The terminology employed to describe the distinctions of rank within the workshop appears to have admitted of some variation. Roederer, as we have seen, used the term artisan in reference to any propriétaire d'industrie who required certain capital equipment with which to exercise his trade; and this could apply either to the master-craftsman (maître) or to the workshop employee (ouvrier). H. Sée, however, uses the term ouvrier to refer to both maître-artisan and compagnon, as he calls them; see his Histoire économique de la France. Vol. 2: 1789-1914, Paris, 1942, p. 158. I have preferred to use the term "artisan" to stand for the workshop-owner or master-craftsman only.

society of independent small proprietors.¹

We may emphasise two aspects in particular of this common workshop mentality: the absence of any concept of abstract labour or of a corresponding labouring class, and the attachment to the principle of property-ownership. Given the close economic relationship between the artisan and his employees, there could be no proletariat of unskilled labourers whose fate was to be thrown in and out of work by market forces in sharp contrast to the fate of their employers. Correspondingly, there was no conception of a just wage determined by the value of labour. It is true that the workshop employees demanded a minimum wage, but this was related to the cost of living; a rise in the level of wages was usually a response to a rise in the cost of food.² But while there was no concept of abstract labour, there was a powerful attachment to the right to own property. If the employee was an apprentice, his position was temporary, and he looked forward to the day when he would become a master-craftsman in his own right. But while the right to property was supported, it was modified by the egalitarian principles which lay behind the demands of the sans-culottes: the levelling of wealth

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1. "In small-scale industry, there remained some memories of old customs. Workers and employers were not quite detached from one another. They worked in the same establishment, and the community of labour maintained a certain community of sentiment." E. Levasseur, Histoire des classes ouvrières et de l'industrie en France de 1789 à 1870, vol. 1, Paris, 1903, p. 664.
 2. A. Soboul, "Problèmes de travail en l'an II", Journal de psychologie normale et pathologique, vol. 52, no. 1, 1955, p. 44.

and the creation of opportunities for all to own property and thus form a property-owning democracy. "Their aim, insofar as they had one, was a state of affairs in which all men would individually own a few tools, a plot of land, or a workshop - just enough to support a family."¹ As an example of the petit-bourgeois outlook of the sans-culottes, we may cite their hostility to the growth of large-scale factory production, which was based on their fear of being reduced to destitution and of losing their relative independence.²

Thus, the social and economic life of the working urban masses produced an egalitarian ideology, expressed in the demand for popular sovereignty and for limited property-rights. There was, however, a certain difficulty in this position, the nature of which it is essential to appreciate if we are to understand how the revolutionary pressure of the urban masses was directed towards the establishment of a liberal, rather than egalitarian, constitution. Soboul has described this difficulty thus:

Hostile towards capitalism, which threatened to reduce it to a proletariat, (the sans-culotterie) was nevertheless bound to the bourgeois order because it was already proprietor of field or workshop, or aspired to become so. It demanded taxation, the limitation of property, and that property be based on personal labour; but it claimed simultaneously the independence of the shop, the workshop, and rural property.³

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1. G. Lichtheim, The Origins of Socialism, London, 1969, p. 20
 2. According to Soboul, the sans-culottes demanded that no-one should own more than one workshop or one store. This was to prevent the concentration of the means of production. The Parisian Sans-Culottes and the French Revolution, 1793-4, Oxford, 1964, pp. 67-8
 3. A. Soboul, "Problèmes de travail en l'an II", pp. 57-8

This difficulty is evident in the writings of some of the most influential of the revolutionary orators, who attempted to reconcile the popular pressure for democracy with the establishment of absolute property-rights and the frustration of levelling aspirations. We may look first at the work of E. J. Sieyès, whose influential pamphlet What is the Third Estate?¹ reveals a certain ambiguity on the part of its author towards the poor.

According to Sieyès, the Third Estate was composed of four classes: landworkers, manufacturers, merchants, and those who rendered services.² The Third Estate was a self-sufficient society, and it embraced nineteen-twentieths of the population of France. The remaining one-twentieth consisted of the privileged orders, who were not an essential part of the peuple or nation - terms which Sieyès used synonymously with tiers état - and were parasitic on it.³ Sieyès thus appeared to be presenting the issue as a straightforward conflict between the immense majority, the nation, which created all the wealth, and the tiny minority which consumed a wholly undeserved portion of that wealth; and this image of a war between rich and poor, and of a tyrannical few living off the labour of the underprivileged masses, remained perhaps the most powerful spur to action throughout the Revolution. Sieyès went on, however, to recommend that certain sections of the Third Estate be denied the full franchise. Tramps, beggars, and servants,

1. Originally published in 1788. References here are to S. E. Finer's edition, translated by M. Blondel, London, 1963

2. Ibid., p. 53

3. Ibid., pp. 54-8

for instance, were unreliable, since "in every country in the world, the rabble belong to the aristocracy".¹ The interests of these groups were not necessarily opposed to those of the Third Estate as a whole, but such rootless individuals were easily swayed into supporting their natural enemies. But whatever the reasons Sieyès advanced for excluding the most destitute classes from the political life of the nation, there clearly existed a compromise between the principle of democracy and the need for security against counter-revolution.

Sieyès seized the opportunity to give active expression to his beliefs when the Constituent Assembly was drawing up the Constitution of 1791. This constitution contained two major departures from the principle of universal suffrage, both expressed in terms of property-qualifications. First, citizens were divided into "active" and "passive", the former alone having the right to vote at the primary assemblies and to sit on the National Legislative Assembly. In order to qualify as an active citizen, one was required not to be "in a position of domesticity" - i.e., a servant - and one must pay a tax equivalent to the value of three days' labour.² Secondly, eligibility to membership of the Electoral Assemblies - the bodies which elected the representatives to the National Legislative Assembly - was

1. Ibid., p. 182

2. J. H. Stewart, A Documentary Survey of the French Revolution, New York, 1951, p. 236.

reserved for active citizens of considerable means.¹ In this way, Sieyès hoped to save the body politic from the potentially counter-revolutionary elements within the nation and to place power securely in the hands of the middle class of property-owners and those who received sufficient income to make the prospect of future proprietorship not unlikely.

Certain other writers, however, provided considerably fuller justification for the franchise limitations contained in the constitution, and expressed the hope that, in time, all citizens would qualify for full political rights.

A. de Saint-Just, for instance, explained the purpose of the constitutional safeguards thus:

Natural equality is preserved in France. All participate equally in sovereignty through the uniform stipulation which governs the right to vote. Inequality exists only in the government: all can vote, but not everyone can be elected. The class of utter paupers is hardly numerous; he who pays no taxes is not rendered useless; he is condemned to independence or to emulation, and enjoys the social rights of natural equality, the safeguard of justice.²

This quotation reveals the precise nature of the attitude

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1. The qualifications were as follows: In cities of more than 6,000 inhabitants, ownership of a property yielding a revenue equivalent to the local value of 200 days' labour, or tenancy of a dwelling yielding a revenue equivalent to the local value of 150 days' labour. In cities of fewer than 6,000 inhabitants, these values were lowered by 50 days' labour; while in rural areas, ownership of a property yielding revenue of 150 days' labour, or tenancy of land yielding revenue equivalent to 400 days' labour. Ibid., pp. 236-7. Sieyès also proposed, unsuccessfully, that members of the National Legislative Assembly be required to pay a tax of about 52 livres. A. Cobban, A History of Modern France, vol. 1, London, 1962, p. 167
 2. Esprit de la Révolution et de la Constitution de France, Paris, 1791; in Oeuvres complètes de Saint-Just, vol. 1,

of many revolutionary leaders to property and poverty. Saint-Just looked upon proprietorship as a necessary qualification for full citizenship, but looked forward to the eventual emergence of a property-owning democracy, where all men would have acquired a certain amount of property and thus earned their right to participate fully in the political life of the nation. When Saint-Just stated that the man who paid no taxes was condemned to "independence" or to "emulation", he meant that such a man had the choice of remaining outside the body politic or of earning a way into that body by securing for himself a modicum of property which alone could give him a genuine interest in public affairs. A similar point was made by J. J. Lenoir-Laroche, who, in his analysis of property-ownership, claimed that it was the ownership of property which induced in a citizen an awareness of the need to maintain public order and defend liberty. The aim of the government in this respect should be to take action to ensure that all citizens became property-owners:

.....there are those who, having absolutely nothing but their hands, and being reduced to weak and limited means of industry, could not be considered as property-owners. Being able to carry with them all they have, they lead only a mobile and precarious existence. As they give society only their labour, in order to receive subsistence in exchange, they are not attached to their country through any of the links which ensure that the citizen has an interest in defending liberty and maintaining public order. Their coarseness of habit and lack of education place them in the class of those

ed. Vellay, Paris, 1908, pp. 271-2. Saint-Just appears to have ignored the distinction between active and passive citizens when he asserted that all citizens could vote; but the point he wished to make is still clear enough.

who should be under the protection of the law, though they should not have the right to participate in formulating it. The mind of the government and institutions should tend to aid and diminish this class; but while it exists in society, it would be dangerous to give it too large a part in the affairs of the state.¹

We may gain further insight into the importance of property in the revolutionary mentality by looking briefly at the work of an author who is not usually thought of as an outstanding figure in the Revolution, but who expressed in an illuminating manner the aspiration that a democracy of small proprietors would soon be realised. In 1793, C.-F. Volney published his La loi naturelle ou Cathéchisme du citoyen français, in which he asserted that a certain solidarity and fraternity sprang up amongst men through the activity of labour. "All the individual virtues ... tend to provide man with the means of life in abundance; and when he has more than he consumes, it is easier for him to give to others and to practice actions which are useful to society."² That Volney was referring to something other than mere philanthropy is indicated by the following:

Now, since charity cannot be distinguished from justice, no member of the family (of the nation) may claim the enjoyment of these advantages except in proportion to his utility and his work. If he consumes more than is forthcoming from these, he necessarily encroaches upon other people; and it is only insofar as he consumes less than he produces or possesses that he can acquire the means of sacrifice and generosity.³

It was, to Volney, the possibility of a surplus of

1. De l'esprit de la constitution qui convient à la France et examen de celle de 1793, Paris, 1795, p. 115

2. Edited by Gaston-Martin, Paris, 1934, p. 136

3. Ibid., p. 160

production over consumption that created the bond of brotherhood among men and formed them into a society. Volney offered no definition of property as such, but the notion of a surplus which should be used in the public interest rather than in excess consumption was equivalent to the notion of mobile property, or capital, as developed by the political economists. The most important implication of Volney's work, however, was the acceptance of inequality in the distribution of wealth, and, indeed, the necessity of it in the drive to abolish poverty. Every man had the right to dispose of the product of his labour as he saw fit, but it was the natural fecundity of labour, its tendency to produce beyond men's immediate requirements, that ensured that no-one need starve or be deprived of the opportunity to labour and hence own property. If the nation's savings were wisely invested, the plight of the poor would be remedied without any need to compromise the principle of property-ownership by enforced redistribution.

In their attempts to reconcile the principles of property-ownership and democracy, the early leaders of the Revolution were generally successful. It is true that, during the early 1790s, more extreme egalitarians came to power, and the distinction between active and passive citizens was suspended;¹ yet the original leaders had managed to capture the intellectual initiative, and bourgeois liberalism, which re-asserted itself in the Constitution of the Year III,² was to remain the most

1. This was affected by the Assembly's decree of August 11, 1792, and carried over into the still-born Constitution of 1793. Stewart, *op. cit.*, pp. 311 and 458-60

2. This came into effect on September 23, 1795, and lasted until the Autumn of 1799. Ibid., pp. 572-3.

influential radical ideology in France until well into the nineteenth century. It was only in an intellectual environment of this kind, where the interests of the poor were believed to be compatible with those of the wealthy commercial and professional bourgeoisie, that the more sophisticated social analysis represented by the widespread adoption of the concept of the industrial class could take root. But, by way of completing this study of the ideological origins of the concept of the industrial class, we may examine the work of J. Barnave, who, in his Introduction à la Révolution française,¹ introduced a new factor which greatly enhanced the assumed unity of the peuple as an organic society in its own right and in its struggle against the privileged order: the factor of history. By appealing to the apparent logic of European history, Barnave hoped to demonstrate that the way of life which had become established in the cities was destined to supersede the way of life of the landed aristocracy. Barnave was thus an important forerunner to the historiographers who were to become active in the post-Restoration era, and who adopted the idea of industrie as a popular movement along with that of the industrial class.

Barnave prefaced his exercise by emphasising the need to adopt a method appropriate to the study of the Revolution. It was useless, he believed, to look at the Revolution "in an isolated manner, by detaching it from the history of the empires which lie around us and of the centuries which have gone before us".² Instead, it was essential to "perceive

1. Paris, 1793; ed. Rudé, Paris, 1960

2. Ibid., p. 1

the place which we occupy in a wider system; it is by contemplating the general movement which, since feudal times up to the present, has led European governments successively to change their form, that the point at which we have arrived, and the general causes which have led us there, will be seen".¹ Accordingly, Barnave cast his gaze at once on the earliest societies. Here, he claimed, a form of primitive communism existed, and government was based, not on property or force, but on knowledge. Since the prevailing level of enlightenment was low, government inevitably fell into the hands of an "aristocracy based on science", consisting of priests, doctors, old men, etc.² In time, the expansion of population created the need for a more secure existence, and eventually property came into being in the form of land. The ownership of land and the need to cultivate it gave rise to the habit of labour; and from this there arose, in turn, a new form of property, known as "industrial property". The growth of commerce and of the arts brought about a change in the distribution of wealth in favour of the people (peuple), and paved the way for a corresponding distribution of power. "Just as the possession of the land raised up the aristocracy, industrial property raised up the power of the people."³ It was by means of industrial property that "the people assembled in those great manufacturing workshops that are known as towns, and succeeded, through its unity, in putting up an effective

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 5

3. Ibid., p. 9

resistance against the aggression of the great landowners".¹

Barnave discerned the beginnings of the rise of the people to political power in the emancipation of the commons which took place during the Middle Ages. The aristocracy succumbed to the temptation to squander their wealth on the increasing variety of commodities issuing from the urban workshops, and thereby reduced their ability to finance the wars in which they habitually indulged. In order to maintain their income at the required level, they sold political liberty to the towns and allowed them to become internally self-governing. They also began selling land to their serfs.² These moves produced two important results: the people were freed from the temporal authority of the papacy, and mobile property was free to move across the national boundaries within Europe.³ The response of the people to these changes varied according to the size of the state. In small states, the people were often powerful enough to set up purely commercial republics; but these were mainly taken over, in time, by a new aristocracy of finance, an aristocratie bourgeoise:

The aristocracy which today rules the majority of the republics of Europe has nothing in common with the equestrian and feudal aristocracy. Most of these republics began in a truly democratic spirit, but commerce, which, at first, had been the principle of the people's power and emancipation, later led certain families to acquire excessive wealth. These families little by little usurped public power and succeeded, by various means, in making the magistracies hereditary.⁴

1. Ibid., p. 20

2. Ibid., p. 21

3. Ibid., p. 14

4. Ibid., pp. 29-30

In the larger states, however, the people formed a more powerful body of citizens who lent their support to the monarchy in its struggles against the aristocracy. The influence of royal power in advancing the political influence of the people was considerable.¹

One of the aspects of the struggle between the people and the aristocracy was the radical difference between the principles upon which their ways of life were based. In each case, the manner in which property was acquired revealed these principles. Thus, industrial property, acquired by the people, was "the fruit of labour", while the landed property of the aristocracy was "originally the product of conquest or occupation".² In short, the people's way of life was based upon the principle of peace; that of aristocracy, on war. In another work, entitled Du Progrès des sociétés,³ Barnave elaborated this theme. "Activity, and the natural restlessness of the mind, will incline towards the arts of war or towards those of peace."⁴ Provided that the great majority of the citizens were not involved in the pursuit of military glory, which Barnave admitted to have a great attraction, then a general concentration on the peaceful pursuits of self-enrichment through labour would be secured.

Barnave's conception of the peuple was, then, virtually identical to Sieyès' conception of the tiers état. Like

1. Ibid., pp. 14 and 51

2. Ibid., p. 13

3. Rudé added this work to the Introduction in the form of an appendix, but did not date it.

4. Ibid., p. 67

Sieyès, Barnave envisaged a self-sufficient association of producers, and included in this association both the poor and the wealthy - at one point, he explicitly subdivided the peuple into ouvrier, manufacturier, and marchand.¹ Both authors assumed, moreover, that the interests of this association were irreconcilable with those of the privileged orders, who preyed upon it and, in fact, depended upon it for their existence. But Barnave emphasised, to a far greater degree than did Sieyès, the positive, internal unity binding the groups constituting the people, as opposed to the external unity imposed upon them in their struggle against the common enemy. By pointing out the peaceful, labour-oriented way of life practiced by the people, Barnave brought to light a point of contact which bound all the groups constituting the people. This is not to deny that Sieyès believed in the existence of any such links binding the third estate together as a class. But the main thrust of his polemic was to demonstrate the common suffering of the people rather than their common allegiance to the morality of peaceful production; and, indeed, as we have seen, he and his fellow-statesmen of the liberal phase of the Revolution had some difficulty, after removing the apparent cause of that suffering, in convincing the poor that their interests were being secured by a constitution that denied them full citizenship. Barnave, admittedly, was himself a moderate,² but his belief that the peuple were the subject of an historical movement, destined

1. Ibid., p. 31

2. Barnave and Sieyès had together participated in the revolution in Dauphiné in 1788. M. J. Sydenham, The French Revolution, London, 1965; University Paperback ed., p. 37

to give the world a new morality based on peace and plenty, was a powerful weapon in cementing the interests of all the groups covered by the term peuple. Thus, the political leadership which the bourgeoisie claimed on behalf of the entire nation could be accepted not only in the light of the expectation that a society of small proprietors was about to emerge, but also justified in the light of the new morality of production which all could share and in which the manual labourer could acquire a dignity to compensate for the relative obscurity and insecurity of his position. And in talking of "industrial property" as the basis of the people's existence, Barnave inevitably extended the import of the term industrie and imparted upon it the ideological overtones which were to become so important later.

P A R T T W O

CHAPTER FIVE

THE INTELLECTUAL IMPACT OF THE RESTORATION

In the first part of this work, we examined the linguistic complexities and connotations which the term industrie had acquired in the eighteenth century, on the grounds that these developments were necessary conditions for the eventual emergence of the concept of the industrial class. But, although they were, indeed, necessary conditions, they were not sufficient; the concept of the industrial class was not the inexorable consequence of the intellectual developments of the eighteenth century. Rather, the emergence of the concept as a major tool of social analysis was contingent upon the revival of social and political thought which accompanied the demise of Napoleonic rule and the restoration in 1815 of the Bourbon dynasty. It is a major contention of this work that the concept of the industrial class was rooted in the concerns and experience of the eighteenth century, and in particular of the Revolution; consequently, it is essential to understand how it was that the intellectual movements associated with the Restoration kept alive the issues of the Revolution and thus provided the appropriate context for the emergence of the concept of the industrial class and for its popularity with one particular school of thought.

The old republic-royalist dispute which returned with the Restoration was tempered by the realisation that neither

untrammelled privilege nor naked terror could be allowed to recur. It was, moreover, overshadowed by a new factor, which stood out with inescapable importance: the example of England. England had emerged victorious from the European wars. Her institutions were intact, and her economy prosperous as never before. She was an object of wonder to a continent shattered and impoverished by war. Her influence was felt in a variety of ways. In the light of the victory of the commercial nation over the militarist, Benjamin Constant was able to declare with great effect: "We have arrived at the epoch of commerce, the epoch which must of necessity replace that of war, as that of war has of necessity preceded it."¹ There was a brief fashion for elaborating schemes for European unity, whereby the free nations of Europe would voluntarily submit to an international constitution drawn up on lines similar to the English constitution.² There was a great increase in the interest shown in political economy, a discipline closely associated with English social thought. And, on the institutional side, the Charter, which had been proclaimed during the First Restoration and which formed the basis of the new constitution, granted France a constitutional monarchy on the English model.

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1. De l'Esprit de conquête et de l'usurpation, 1814; Benjamin Constant. Oeuvres, Paris, 1957, p. 959
 2. E.g., C. Comte, "Considérations sur la situation de l'Europe, sur la cause de ses guerres, et sur les moyens d'y mettre fin", Le Censeur, vol. 3, Paris, 1815, pp. 1-41; and Henri de Saint-Simon and Augustin Thierry, De la réorganisation de la société européenne, Paris, 1814; in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 153-248. (For an explanation of the method of referring to works by Saint-Simon, see the first part of the bibliography.)

The political order created by Louis XVIII's Charter contained a strong bias against mobile property and in favour of land. Between 1789 and 1815, a vast amount of land, known as the "national" properties, had been confiscated from the nobility and the church and distributed to other orders. Some of it had been acquired by the peasants and tenant-farmers; some was granted by Napoleon to military officers, lawyers, and bureaucrats in recognition of services rendered. Some of it was still undistributed at the time of the Restoration; this was promptly returned to its former owners. The result was that, in 1815, most of the land of France was in the hands of an oligarchy consisting partly of aristocrats of ancient lineage and partly of state functionaries.¹ Meanwhile, the Charter contained a property-qualification designed to ensure that this oligarchy enjoyed a monopoly of political power. The extent of the suffrage was severely limited by the requirement, set out in Article 40, that the electors of deputies to the lower house must be at least thirty years old, and pay a tax worth at least three hundred francs per annum. This qualification yielded an electorate of around 100,000.² The advocates of mobile property and of an extension of the franchise to property-owners of more modest means inevitably took on the appearance of an opposition to the status quo; but such was the general consensus which had formed around the charter that this opposition was usually of a reformist rather than a revolutionary kind.

1. D. Thomson, Europe since Napoleon, London, 1957, pp. 86-7

2. J. P. T. Bury, France 1814-1940, University Paperback edition, London, 1969, pp. 18 and 303

This return to land-based oligarchy was supported by the revival of a number of arguments designed to justify this new settlement. One such consisted of the revival by the Comte de Montlosier of the thesis that the French people were divided into two ethnic groups, Franks and Gauls. This thesis had been advanced originally by the Comte de Boulanvilliers in the early eighteenth century in order to justify the absolute hegemony of the French nobility.¹ In his Histoire de l'Ancien Gouvernement de la France, (1727), Boulanvilliers asserted that the French nobility were the descendants of the Franks, a Germanic race, who had, in medieval times, established mastery over a territory, later known as France, and its original inhabitants, the Gauls. The rule of the French nobility was therefore justified as being the inheritance of their ancestors' original right of conquest. This argument was elaborated as an ideological weapon against the Third Estate,² who were, of course, identified as the descendants of the defeated Gauls, and who were expected to accept the fact that their continued subordination was morally justified. During the Revolution, however, the spokesmen for the Third Estate made no attempt to rebut the ethnic argument; instead, they put forward arguments based, as we have seen, on the Lockean principle that one had a right to the produce of one's labour. Sieyès, for instance,

1. For details of this argument, see H. Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, Meridian Books edition, Cleveland, 1958, pp. 161-5, and J. Barzun, Race: A Study in Modern Superstition, London, 1938, pp. 27-39. See also M. Seliger, "Race-Thinking during the Restoration", Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. 19, 1958, pp. 273-82.

2. Arendt, op. cit., p. 162n

dismissed the ethnic argument as being both factually inaccurate and inappropriate; the two races had, he believed, undergone miscegenation, and, in any case, racial lineage was irrelevant to the issue at hand.¹ But in 1814, when Montlosier revived the argument in his De la monarchie française, the response from the newly-emerging liberal school was somewhat different. Montlosier's work was an attack on the rise of commerce and industry, which he believed would, unless checked, bring the Third Estate to political power and deprive the Bourbons, the inheritors of the Frankish conquest, of their birthright. But the liberal response, so far from dismissing the ethnic distinction as irrelevant, was to assume its authenticity and to turn it back on itself. The Gauls had suffered Frankish domination for hundreds of years; now, they were about to throw off the yoke and assert their independence once more. The historical mission of the Third Estate was about to be realised. In this way, the revival of the ethnic argument helped to keep alive the social categories in terms of which the great debates of the Revolution had been conducted; the great mass of the population, the peuple, the nation, who stood opposed to the parasitic ruling orders, were also the Gallic nation seeking liberation from an alien ruling race. We shall see later how useful this ethnic distinction was to prove to Saint-Simon as a rhetorical device in his efforts to enhance the solidarity

1. What is the Third Estate?, trans. M. Blondel, London, 1963, pp. 60-1

of the industrial class.¹

Another argument which emerged to justify the Restoration settlement consisted of a revival of the claim that the ownership of property qualified the owner for public service in such a way as to justify restricting the franchise to property-owners. It is true, as we have seen, that the statesmen of the early phase of the Revolution had insisted on a restricted franchise, and had inserted a property-qualification, albeit a low one, in the Constitution of 1791. We have also seen how they justified this on the grounds that it was property-ownership alone which gave one an interest in the maintenance of public order and a stake in the public realm generally. But there now occurred a revival of a rather different justification, one which was originally expounded by Aristotle. It was argued that politics was a matter best dealt with by cultured gentlemen; and cultured gentlemen were to be found only among the property-owners, who alone could devote themselves to the public good. Benjamin Constant, for instance, believed that, in order to enjoy full political rights, a man must own property of an amount and of a kind that enabled him

1. Augustin Thierry, a leading member of the liberal school and secretary to Saint-Simon until 1817, was most deeply impressed with the ethnic argument, and made it the methodological basis of several historical works. In 1825, he sent Saint-Simon a copy of his Histoire de la conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands; according to F. Manuel, "Saint-Simon disagreed with Thierry's emphasis upon the racial conflict instead of upon the great social progress which the Norman Conquest had brought to England". The New World of Henri Saint-Simon, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, p. 364

Secondly, agriculture developed the intellect in a way that industry could never do. The one required experience and sound judgement; the latter, involving as it did the division of labour, reduced men to the performance of mechanical tasks.¹ Thirdly, ownership of land encouraged patriotism; the landowner's interest in preserving his property could not be separated from his interest in securing the freedom of the country as a whole. Industrial property, however, being mobile, could be easily transferred from one country to another, and thus did nothing to encourage patriotism in its owner.² Finally, the owners of mobile property, being concentrated in the towns, were susceptible to enlistment in seditious factions. The landowners, meanwhile, who were dispersed throughout the countryside, were far less easily aroused, and thus provided a more stable anchor for public order.³

Constant's arguments in favour of the political hegemony of land bring to mind Roederer's efforts to justify the political equality of all kinds of property. We have seen how Roederer identified three types of property.- landed, mobile and industrial - and employed arguments based on political economy to demonstrate that the owners of mobile and industrial property deserved the same political rights as those enjoyed by the landowners. According to Roederer, the owners of mobile and of industrial property stimulated the generation of a distinct proportion of the national product. Moreover, they stood to gain from public order even more than did the landowners; for while the

1. Ibid., pp. 1116-17

2. Ibid., p. 1117

3. Ibid.

to develop his critical faculties:

.....the patriotism which gives one the courage to die for one's country is one thing; that which makes one capable of really knowing one's interest is another. A legal condition is necessary, therefore, beyond a legal prescription of birth and age. This condition is the leisure which is indispensable for the acquisition of knowledge and sound judgement. Property alone guarantees this leisure; property alone renders a man capable of exercising political rights.¹

Not surprisingly, Constant maintained that, of the various kinds of property, only land fulfilled these conditions. He admitted that the constitution did not explicitly exclude mobile property from the franchise, but he declared that he would have opposed any attempt to place it on an equal footing with land. His basic objection to mobile, or, as he called it, "industrial" property, was that it lacked the "spirit of preservation necessary for political associations",² He substantiated this claim by drawing attention to a number of differences between land and industry. First, agriculture induced a spirit of sobriety and independence unknown in industry. The farmer took few risks; he lavished patient care on his investment; and he depended little on other men for the success of his enterprise. The owner of industrial property, on the other hand, lived an irregular and unpredictable life; his investment was fraught with risk; he depended wholly on others for success; and his wealth was capable, not of improvement, but only of accumulation.³

1. Principes de Politique, 1815; Benjamin Constant. Oeuvres, Paris, 1957, pp. 1112-13

2. Ibid., p. 1115

3. Ibid., pp. 1115-16

latter stood to lose a year's revenue in the event of a collapse of security, the former would be threatened with the loss of their entire capital.¹ Constant appeared to be ignorant of these arguments. But he was aware of the claim, which Roederer had elaborated, that ownership of a professional qualification constituted a species of property;² and he was determined to destroy any idea that the professional classes, whatever the standing of their claim to be considered property-owners, should be automatically entitled to political rights. The claim which he was intent on refuting asserted that the man who possessed a professional qualification, such as the lawyer was as attached to his country as was the landowner and so deserved identical rights. "His fortune is in the confidence he inspires. This confidence depends on several years of labour, intelligence, and skill; on the services which he has rendered; on the habit his clients have established of turning to him when they are experiencing difficulties; on the local knowledge which his long experience has accumulated. Expatriation would deprive him of these advantages."³ Constant refused to accept these considerations as sufficient justification for political emancipation, on the grounds that professional and academic people were not especially well-known for their wisdom on public matters. It was true that the advocates of "intellectual" property admitted that this particular species of property relied for its continued existence solely on public opinion, and that only the

1. See above, p. 34

2. This was the kind of property which Roederer named "industrial".

3. Constant, *op. cit.*, p. 1118

successful intellectuals would retain a secure claim to proprietorship. But the Revolution had brought to the fore men who, despite impeccable professional qualifications, proved to be disastrous statesmen. There were, moreover, dangers in allowing into the public realm men whose standing, being so dependent on opinion, were susceptible to rebuff.¹

Constant's appeal to aristocratic arguments, then, seemed to take no account of the existence of political economy and of the support implicit in that discipline for the political aspirations of proprietors other than the landowners. Rather, Constant appealed to the wisdom inherent in the long political experience of the aristocracy in order to justify his support for the hegemony of landed interests in the new liberal order. And the continuing association of land with politics appeared to be generally accepted at the time of the Restoration. Even Henri de Saint-Simon, the writer who was to become the most enthusiastic champion of the demands of industry, was at this time a subscriber to the belief that land was the form of property par excellence. In his De la réorganisation de la société européenne, written in conjunction with his secretary Augustin Thierry, and published in 1813, Saint-Simon prescribed that members of both houses of the proposed European parliament must be landowners. He did depart from strict aristocratic principles by allowing all literate men the right to vote, and by laying down that a certain number of members of each house should be eminent scientists, merchants, magistrates and administrators who were not

1. Ibid., p. 1119

already landowners. But he went on to insist that these landless members should be granted substantial estates, and he justified this proposal thus:

It is true that it is property which makes for stability in government, but it is only when property is not separated from knowledge that it provides a solid base for it. It is to be recommended, then, that the government should co-opt and endow with property those who are without property but distinguished by outstanding merit, in order that talent and property should not be divided. For talent, which is the greater and more active force, would soon seize on property if the two were not united.¹

Saint-Simon was, then, prepared to admit that, while property-ownership was a sign of talent, not all talent was blessed with property. But in a series of articles published later in Le Censeur, the leading liberal journal of the day, he expressed doubts concerning the political worthiness of the more influential classes of landowner, namely, the established aristocrats and the recently endowed state functionaries. Instead, he championed the cause of the remaining class of landowner, the owners of the "national" properties, whose security of ownership was guaranteed by the Charter under Article 9.² Saint-Simon's interest in this class sprang from his enthusiasm for constitutional government. In his Lettre sur l'établissement du parti de l'opposition³ he maintained that constitutional rule would be possible only if based on a party-system, whereby a "ministerial" party and an "opposition" party represented a balance between the various interests in society, while recognising the sovereignty of the

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 200-1

2. Bury, op. cit., p. 299

3. Le Censeur, vol. 3, Paris, 1815, pp. 334-56

constitution itself. Given the powerful position of the ministerial party, the party of reaction and privilege, the main task now was to form an opposition party out of those elements of the population who were capable of perceiving and defending the national interest. The owners of the national lands were the main contenders for this position. In a second article, Projet d'une association des propriétaires de domaines nationaux,¹ Saint-Simon set out his reasons for preferring them to the other landowning classes:

.....there are now three kinds of landed property in France: namely, the hitherto seigneurial lands, those called de roture, and the national properties; each of these three types of property carries with it, so to speak, a certain order of ideas which the landowner, whoever he is, can renounce only with great difficulty. The seigneurial proprietor easily allows himself to be led by memories and traditions to ideas of superiority over his neighbours The owner of non-noble lands receives with his title notions of non-existent duties and memories of his old services. The national landowner alone is not inspired by titles to ideas of superiority or inferiority, to desire for illegal authority or to a tendency to servility. Consequently, this last class of landowners alone lives according to the spirit of the constitution.²

The smaller landowners represented a class of individuals whose private interest was identical with the public interest and formed the basis of public opinion essential to the survival of the constitution. The point where their private interest coincided with the public interest lay in the value of the national lands, which was at the time

1. Le Censeur, vol. 4, Paris, 1815, pp. 10-31

2. Ibid., pp. 23-4

depressed by the fear that the king's successors would do away with the constitution altogether and thereby open the way to the reclamation of the national lands by their former owners. Saint-Simon hoped that this fear would compel the national landowners to combine in a national association and, by forming an opposition party, both within parliament and in society at large, to generate a degree of confidence in constitutional government which alone could restore the value of their lands.¹ And constitutional government was in the interests of all.

Saint-Simon's attempts to found an association of national proprietors quickly came to nothing. But his search for a class of men whose particular interest coincided with the public interest continued. His attention was soon to move on to a wider class of individuals, which included not only the national landowners but also the owners of manufacturing and commercial capital, and their employees. This was to be the universal class, the class which, by pursuing its own interests, advanced the interests of society as a whole. This was, in fact, the industrial class. But before there emerged a general recognition of the need to grant industry political power equivalent to that enjoyed by the landowners, there occurred an event of great importance: the publication of the second edition of Jean-Baptiste Say's Traité d'économie politique. It was Say who established the popularity and respectability of political economy in French academic life. By continuing the pioneering work of

1. Le Censeur, vol. 3, pp. 347-8

Roederer, he acted as a catalyst for the many strands of thought which had arisen with the establishment of constitutional government. It is to an examination of his work that we must now turn.

CHAPTER SIX

JEAN-BAPTISTE SAY AND THE
EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Say's Traité d'économie politique had originally been published in 1802, but it made a far greater impact when it appeared again in the more receptive environment of 1814. Say's intention was to introduce to the intellectual classes of France the latest developments in political economy; and, in particular, to popularise the work of Adam Smith. He did not, however, limit himself to a simple reproduction of the work of the famous Englishman. On the contrary, he added many original features, and, in so doing, reflected some of the currents of thought which were characteristic of France in the post-Revolutionary era.¹ For instance, he embodied in his work a class analysis which was set firmly within the traditions of French, rather than English, political thinking. In this respect, Say made great advances; he sharpened the terminology which had been employed frequently in social theory, and recast it in an altogether more subtle and illuminating manner.

Say defined political economy as the scientific study of the production and distribution and wealth. In its turn, wealth (richesse) was defined as the surplus arising out of production; it consisted in the stock of commodities which were not provided by nature but which were the result of

1. M. Palyi points out that Say's emphasis was on production, while Smith's was on consumer satisfaction. "The Introduction of Adam Smith on the Continent", in Adam Smith, 1776-1926, Chicago, 1928, p. 206

the application of human activity to raw materials. The production of wealth depended in the main on two factors of production, capital and industry. The two always operated in conjunction. Human activity, in its economic aspects, must be directed towards the alteration of pre-existing matter, and this frequently entailed the use of implements, themselves the results of previous activity. Industry, then, was the human agency which operated on a pre-existing stock of objects, whether natural or man-made; and this stock constituted capital.¹ Industry united thus with capital constituted production. Say distinguished a third factor of production, the agens naturels, the stock of natural elements which entered the productive process, but which were not the result of previous human effort and which did not themselves undergo alteration. As examples of natural agents, Say cited the wind which propelled the sails of a mill, and the law of gravity, without which nothing could be produced at all.² Of the many natural agents, however, only some, such as fields and rivers, were capable of appropriation, and hence entitled to a claim on the wealth produced; other agents were the property of all.³

Say's identification of three factors of production would suggest a corresponding distinction between three classes - the providers of land, capital and industry - a distinction which had become commonplace in English

1. Traité d'économie politique, vol. 1, 5th. edition, Paris, 1826, p. 28. All references are to the fifth edition.

2. Ibid., pp. 33-5

3. Ibid., pp. 41-2

political economy. In fact, Say introduced a class analysis considerably more refined than those employed by his predecessors. He posited a hierarchy of three class systems, in a descending order of detail. First, he divided society into those who contributed to the national product - the producteurs - and those who did not. Secondly he divided the producteurs themselves into three classes: the landowners, the capitalists, and the industrieux¹ - this was the orthodox tripartite division. The total claim on the national product, known as the profit,² was distributed among the three classes in the form of rent, interest and wages respectively. Thirdly, Say divided the industrieux into three groups, and thereby introduced an important and original element into the class analysis of society. The scientist (savant) contributed his technical skills to the productive process; the manager (entrepreneur) took command of the three factors of production and organised their operations; and the worker (ouvrier) supplied his labour under the guidance of the manager.³ It is important to note that it was possible for both the industrial functions and factors of production to be united in a single person. Thus, "...a man who, at his own expense, cultivates a garden which he owns, possesses the land, the capital and the industry".⁴ The manual worker usually provided a capital sum in the form of his basic implements.⁵ Again,

1. This term, originally an adjective, was employed by Say as a substantive. Say rejected Saint-Simon's alternative industriel, which appeared around 1817 in the latter's work. See Traité, vol. 3, p. 297n

2. Ibid., pp. 313-4

3. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 51

4. Ibid., p. 45

5. Ibid.

the manager of an enterprise, whether of the agricultural, the manufacturing, or commercial kind, might contribute some of the capital himself, in which case, like the worker in the previous example, he claimed interest as well as wages from the final product.

It is in Say's identification of the industrieux as the contributors of one of the three productive factors that we can perceive, at last, the emergence of the concept of the industrial class. This becomes clear if we examine his emphasis on the fact that the industrieux constituted, not merely a group with a special function to perform in the productive process, but also a class with interests distinct from those of the suppliers of land and capital. We have already noted that Say did not equate the industrieux with the producteurs as such. The latter category included all the owners of factors of production, so that the industrieux shared with the landowner and the capitalist the distinction of being a useful member of society. Say was, however, at pains to exclude from the producteurs those landowners and capitalists who did not actually put their property to productive use.¹ Moreover, he regarded the industrieux as more admirable than even the most public-spirited landowner or capitalist. He rejected the claim that the returns on capital sums tended to become equal through competition and thereby secure the greatest possible public advantage. He pointed out, too, that it was the capital itself, rather than the owner, that was truly productive; and even then, it could only be so in the

1. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 308

talented hands of a manager. The landowners were particularly susceptible to unproductive idleness. According to Say, they took little interest in the activities of their tenant-farmers and squandered their rents on lavish consumption rather than re-investing it in their enterprises.¹ Say's basic reason for favouring the industrieux at the expense of the two other productive classes is made clear in the following passage:

The least challengeable property is that of the personal faculties, as it has been granted to no-one else. The next is the property of capital, since it was originally acquired through thrift, and whoever saved a product could, by consuming it, destroy anyone else's right to the same product. The least honourable of all is immobile property, since it is rarely that it does not derive from a fraudulent or violent spoliation.²

The upshot of the difficulties which Say experienced in including the capitalist and the landowner under the producteur rubric was that the terms producteur and industrieux became virtually interchangeable. It was all the easier to regard the industrieux as the only truly productive class in view of the fact that industrial managers and labourers could supply their own capital; for this implied that the pure capitalist was unnecessary. It is worth emphasising the distinction which Say drew between the manager and the capitalist, and, correspondingly, between the wages of management and the interest on capital. "The English do not have a term which translates entrepreneur d'industrie; which is, perhaps, what has prevented them

1. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 366

2. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 315. The "spoliation" to which Say referred must have been the Frankish conquest of Gaul.

from distinguishing, in the operations of industry, the service rendered by capital from that rendered by the capacity and the talent of the employer of capital."¹ And there existed a clear, albeit implicit, clash of interest between the industrieux and the owners of the other productive factors. So long as some capitalists remained personally idle and some landlords remained spendthrift, the industrieux were being deprived of the means of potential self-enrichment. The most desirable state of affairs would exist when all capitalists and landowners took personal control of their property and thus contributed to the maximisation of the national product: in short, when the entire body of property-owners became industrieux. The industrieux, then, were not only a distinct social class; they were also a universal class. Their interests were not antagonistic to the interests of society as a whole; on the contrary, the two sets of interests were identical.

But the industrieux could be regarded not only as a social class with interests essentially hostile to those of other such classes. They could also be seen as an internally differentiated group of individuals, performing distinct but mutually interdependent functions, and thereby bound to one another from the inside, so to speak, as well as under the external pressure of opposing classes. In understanding the internal relations of the groups that constituted the industrieux, we can understand also the sense in which these groups formed, specifically, an

1. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 51n

industrial class. In identifying the industrieux as a distinct social class, Say drew upon, and united, the two senses in which the term industrie was regularly used; more precisely, he combined the two kinds of social analysis which were based on these two senses, and which we have examined as typified in the writings of Roederer and Barnave. This becomes apparent if we note, first of all, the fact that Say's identification of three factors of production - land, capital and industry - constituted a modification, albeit an apparently trivial one, of the orthodox Smithian tripartite distinction between land, capital and labour. This modification - the substitution of industry for labour - is, for our purposes, of the greatest importance. Say's purpose was to emphasise that industry was in some sense productive whereas mere labour was not. That labour was not necessarily and in itself productive is clear from his definition of labour (travail):

Continuous action, directed towards an end. Labour is productive when it confers on any object whatever a measure of utility it is unproductive when no value results.¹

The distinction between wasted and productive labour is clear enough. Moreover, we can easily comprehend how labour guided by industrie, used here in its narrow sense as the qualities of dexterity and ingenuity, would be much more likely to result in the production of utility than labour not so inspired. At this point, however, Say diverged from those writers who, like Roederer, looked upon industrie

1. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 327

as a single, undifferentiated capacity. Say, rather, looked upon industrie as a quality that was constituted by three sub-capacities, namely, technical knowledge, managerial ability, and physical labour. Each of these three sub-capacities, taken singly, was economically barren; in order to be productive, it required to be combined with the other two. The elevation of travail, then, to the status of being treated as one of the three factors of production was unacceptable to Say, and was replaced by the more complex industrie.

But it was the consequence in the field of social analysis of this substitution of industrie for labour that is really important from our point of view. We have seen how Roederer treated industrie as a unitary capacity, and thus associated it only with single individuals in the form of a species of personal property. But Say's subdivision of industrie into three component parts automatically involved treating industrie as a social, rather than an individual, capacity. It was possible, as Say admitted, to find all three industrial qualities in a single individual; but most of the productive enterprises in the economy were based upon the division of the great majority of the community into three groups corresponding to these industrial qualities. And at this point, Say's analysis falls into that tradition of social thought which included both the employers and the employees in a single social class; this was the tradition which, in the writings of J. Barnave, became associated with the extended sense of industrie. To Roederer, it was,

by definition, impossible for semi- and unskilled workers to be included among the owners of industrial property, since such property could be formed only by the investment of a substantial amount of current income in some kind of apprenticeship. But Say, by making industrie a social capacity, admitted the lowest orders of society into the industrial class. The manual labourer, however unskilled, was as unequivocally an industrieux as was the entrepreneur. Although he played little or no part in the initiation and management of an enterprise, his status was assured by the fact that his contribution, labour, was as vital to the success of that enterprise as was the contribution of the entrepreneur. In this way, Say's political economy embodied the assumption implicit in the writings of the leading statesmen of the Revolution: that the interests of all those who were socially useful were identical, irrespective of wealth; and that the enemies of the socially useful were the idle parasites who used their wealth as a means to undeserved excess consumption. Say's industrieux were, from this point of view, identical to Sieyès' nation and Barnave's peuple.

Say's understanding of the industrieux, however, contained an important advance on the understanding which the Revolutionary orators had had of their favoured social groups. This advance lay in the nature of the position accorded the manual workers on the social and political scale. The statesmen of the early Revolution had assumed that the propertyless classes would, under the incentive of the political bias towards proprietors, make haste to

establish themselves as independent property-owners and take their place as full members of the body politic. These assumptions expressed the aspiration of the urban masses to escape the degradation of poverty by becoming small farmers or workshop-owners. Say, however, appeared to assume that the ouvriers were a permanent feature of industrial organisation; that there would always exist a certain section of the industrieux characterised by the labour which they contributed to the industrial process. It is likely that, as the years following the Revolution had witnessed the continuing existence of a class of destitutes, there was some disillusionment concerning the possibility of a property-owning democracy ever coming into being; and it might have been suspected by some that economic development created, and even required, a pool of permanently mobile labourers. On the other hand, it should be remembered that the term ouvrier did not necessarily signify the utterly helpless proletarian, stripped of all but his labour-power, that was to impress Marx so deeply. Rather, as our earlier examination of the socio-economic background revealed, the division between employer and employee was not so clear as it was later to become. Many workers owned their basic implements, as Say knew; and the size of industrial concerns varied considerably, as did the patterns of ownership and control. Thus, the extent to which one was an employer rather than an employee depended on the size of one's personal property as compared to that of the property owned by the individuals both above and below one in the organisational hierarchy of

industry. A fully-trained craftsman might be the owner of a small workshop, or he might simply be chief craftsman in a workshop owned by a large merchant. This may explain Say's emphasis on function rather than property in his identification of the industrieux. Correspondingly, the entrepreneur was not identifiable with a certain quantity of property, but with a certain relationship to other industrieux. But the pinpointing of labour as a distinct industrial function must have reflected to some extent the existence of a corresponding class of labourers. In any event, it was a necessary concomitant to the discovery by later champions of the industrial class of a mass of poor who were not benefiting from the expansion of industry. In the meantime, however, the assumption was that the mere labourer, so long an object of contempt or of pity, was an integral member of the industrial class; and Say's analysis contained implications of the solidarity of the "people" in the face of the orders who were privileged, whether legally or economically.

By thus employing the discipline of political economy in the service of binding the ordinary people into a common enterprise, Say established the concept of the industrial class in French social theory. His specific contribution was to bring together two kinds of social analysis: that inherent in political economy, as exemplified by Roederer; and that employed by the more ideologically motivated orators of the Revolution. But, by binding the two together around the concept of industrie, he inserted the ambiguities inherent in that term. Say's successors

were unable, ultimately, to reconcile the two senses in which the term was used; in more concrete terms, they were unable, for all their noble intentions, to treat the masses, whatever their internal differentiation in terms of proprietorship, as the equals of the growing number of influential bankers and industrialists. But this is to anticipate. The years following the publication of the second edition of Say's Traité were marked by the elevation of the concept of the industrial class to a position of central importance. This was reflected most strongly in the appearance, in 1816 and 1817, of two journals: Le Censeur européen, the successor to the short-lived Le Censeur; and L'Industrie, which became the vehicle of thought for, above all, Saint-Simon, the most fervent champion of the industrial class. We turn now to study how the concept of the industrial class developed in the hands of the contributors to these journals.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FROM POLITICAL ECONOMY TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

During the three years which followed the publication of the second edition of the Traité d'économie politique, many of the leading publicists of the day digested the contents of the work and realised its significance. Charles Comte had reviewed it at length, soon after its appearance, in Le Censeur¹; and by 1817, when Le Censeur européen first appeared, and L'Industrie was running into the second part of its first volume, it was clear that the Traité had made a great impact upon the liberal journalists. According to Charles Dunoyer, who, with Charles Comte, was co-editor of Le Censeur européen, there were "very few publicists whose writings must have contributed so powerfully to the progress of society and to the improvement of governments as those of M. Say".²

The explanation for the influence which Say exerted was due not only to the impressive intellectual stature of the Traité, but also to the climate of opinion in which it appeared. For the Traité provided a scientific base for the demands of the bourgeoisie in a society dominated by aristocratic values. Say had demonstrated that the manufacturing and commercial sectors of the economy were equally capable of producing values as was the agricultural

1. Vol. 7, Paris, 1815, pp. 43-47

2. Le Censeur européen, vol. 7, Paris, 1818, pp. 80-1.
The Traité was reviewed again by C. Comte in Le Censeur européen, vol. 1, 1817, pp. 159-227, and vol. 2, 1817, pp. 169-221

sector. By pointing out that the value of a commodity lay in its utility rather than in its material composition, and that utility could be conferred on a commodity by the manufacturer and the merchant no less than by the land-worker, Say finally shattered the intellectual standing of physiocracy. There had, of course, been previous attacks on the physiocratic position, notably by Roederer, whose efforts we have already examined. But the Traité, emerging as it did in an environment eager for instruction in the English discipline of political economy, became the immediate cause of the confident assertion by the liberal journalists that their point of view was impreguably scientific.

Say's influence was general and widespread, but it was especially great upon Saint-Simon and Thierry, the major contributors to L'Industrie. Saint-Simon was inspired to attempt to equate political economy with political science itself. Say himself had followed Adam Smith in distinguishing between political economy, the science of production, distribution and consumption, and political theory, or the study of the relations between governments and peoples on the one hand, and between governments on the other.¹ Saint-Simon, however, claimed that Say had implied, in his public lectures as well as in the Traité, that political economy was the only secure base for political theory; and he himself went on to predict the ultimate status of the discipline:

1. Traité, vol. 1, pp. v-viii. Also quoted in L'Industrie, vol. 1, part two, Paris, 1817, in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 183-5

Just a little more courage, a little more philosophy, and, soon, political economy will be carried to its true place. At its beginning, it rested on political theory: it will itself be the basis of political theory, or, rather, it will be, itself alone, the whole of political theory. The moment is not far off.¹

Saint-Simon clarified his meaning: when, a little later, he defined political theory as "the science of production; that is, the science whose object is the order of things most favourable to all types of production".² This was an eccentric use of the term "science"; the "science of production" would normally be taken to mean the explanation of economic phenomena, i.e., political economy. But Saint-Simon appeared to hold that political theory consisted in the discovery of techniques designed to achieve the goal of maximum production. He himself suggested seven such policies, which he called the seven "most general truths".³ These were: that respect for production and producers was to be encouraged at the expense of respect for property; that government should limit its role to protecting industry from interference; that the suffrage should be restricted to producers; that warfare should be abolished; that imperialism, also, should be abolished; that the principles of production and of respect for one's neighbour's products should be instilled through education; and that every man should consider himself as being engaged in a company of labourers. The rationality of these policies lay in their efficacy, demonstrable through political

1. Ibid., p. 186n

2. Ibid., p. 188

3. Ibid., pp. 186-8

economy, in raising the level of industrial activity. We should, however, observe that Saint-Simon was wrong in replacing his original proposition that political theory was based upon political economy with the proposition that the two disciplines were identical. For, if political theory is a set of policies designed to achieve a certain end, it must be logically distinct from political economy, the science of production. And even if political theory is taken to be "based" on political economy, knowledge of economic phenomena cannot directly entail knowledge of economic policies. Knowledge of economic facts will yield knowledge of techniques designed to maximise output; but for these techniques to be converted into policies, they must be justified by reference to some independently established goal, in this case the goal of maximum production. Take Saint-Simon's first policy, for instance:

That government always harms industry when it interferes with its affairs; that it harms it even when it makes efforts to encourage it. It follows from this that governments should limit their attentions to the protection of industry from every type of vexation and trouble.¹

The policy of non-interference by governments in economic matters "follows" from the fact that such interference reduces economic output only if the desirability of maximum production has been independently established. For in the absence of this additional premise, it would be open for the individual who believed in minimising economic output to infer the opposite policy, namely, the policy of

1. Ibid., p. 186

increasing government interference in the economy. In short, Say's discoveries were ethically neutral, for all that Say and his followers made use of them in advancing the cause of economic liberalism.

Saint-Simon's confidence in the ability of political economy to underpin the demands of the liberals was, perhaps, greater than his skill in actually employing the discipline in social analysis. It was his secretary, A. Thierry, who first attempted to apply Say's findings outside the discipline of political economy; and, in so doing, he used these findings as an element in an independent social theory rather than as proof of the desirability of liberal policies. Briefly, Thierry achieved this by reviving the concept of the nation and using it in such a way as to make it virtually synonymous with Say's industrieux - the industrial class. The concept of the nation, as we have seen, was central to the thought of some of the Revolutionary statesmen, and to that of Sieyès in particular. It was, moreover, an antecedent to the concept of the industrial class, since the use of it presupposed a wide unity of interest binding all the unprivileged strata of society, wealthy bourgeois and urban plebeian alike. But whereas Sieyès employed the concept as an impressionistic and ideological perception of a mass of underprivileged beings, systematically exploited by a parasitic ruling nobility, Thierry strove to employ it as a central tool of analysis in a theory of social phenomena.

Thierry began his analysis¹ by drawing a distinction

1. This was expounded in an article entitled "Politique", in L'Industrie, vol. 1, part 2, in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon 1, (1), pp. 119-126

between a society and a nation. A society was an institution designed to secure the shared interests of a group of individuals. In early times, so we imagine, societies came into being but passed away again when the shared interest, such as the need for protection against some external danger, itself vanished. Only where the interest was a permanent one, did societies persist; and such societies constituted nations. A nation, then, was a society formed for the safeguarding of a shared interest deemed to be permanent.¹

Thierry soon observed that the human race as such did not form a nation. Where the sentiment of patriotism was absent, there existed no nation; the absence of a world-wide patriotism indicated the absence of a world-wide nation. Yet a universal nation would eventually emerge when all men agreed upon the existence of a permanent and universal interest, namely the securing of the happiness of each individual:

Yet, the progress of human ideas tends to give more assurance and calmness to the judgements which men make in the search for their interests; national needs, which are better understood each day, must become (less) inimical to individual interests. The object of human association has long been something imaginary, vague, something metaphysical; it can be seen imperceptibly drawing towards its true nature, which is the good of each. As civilisation simplifies social interests, it extends them over a greater number of men; it increases the size of societies. On the day when the whole human race is convinced that the sole end of social unity, of assembled men, is the happiness of each taken

1. Ibid., pp. 19-23

singly, on that day, there will be only one nation; and this nation will be the whole human race.¹

Thierry's expectation that a universal nation would come into being was based both on the assumption that all men shared a vital interest and on the assumption that it was possible to devise the institutions necessary to protect that interest. The shared interest was, simply, the means to happiness; and the guide to the protection of that interest was political economy. The concept of happiness was a formal concept, so broad as to be acceptable to everyone. Although men might disagree as to where happiness was to be found, it was still possible to avoid conflict by making happiness the end of society; that is, by establishing social institutions that left everyone free to achieve as much happiness as was consistent with the equal right of everyone else to use that freedom. And political economy proved that a man could, through the institution of exchange, satisfy the needs of another man while pursuing the satisfaction of his own. Hence Thierry's sustained analogy between the nation and the economic enterprise. "A nation is nothing but a great industrial society. The social enterprise has for its end the satisfaction of the needs of each; wealth, which satisfies the needs of each, is produced, as in a private enterprise, by the combination of capital and public

1. Ibid., pp. 24-5. The word "less" in the sixth line of this quotation does not appear in the text. As the passage makes no sense without it, I have assumed that an involuntary omission must have occurred. Thierry also fails to see the contradiction involved in seeing something imperceptible.

industry."¹ The analogy extended into the field of distribution as well as production: "In every association formed for an industrial enterprise, of whatever kind, it is through the capital placed at the disposal of the enterprise and through the industry of the associates who labour on the capital, that profit, or wealth, is produced. The society receives the wealth, the values produced in proportion to its capital and its industry."² Thus, political economy joined with liberal politics. The longing for an international commercial order, designed to replace for ever the international warfare of the previous decades, was characteristic of post-Restoration liberal thought; and Say, by introducing political economy into the intellectual milieu of his time, provided a scientific base on which this hope could be built. If the entire world were regarded as an industrial enterprise, and the product distributed accordingly, then the rationality which governed the workshop would surely govern the human race as a whole and bind it in harmony.

It would be useful to point out here that Thierry went beyond the strict liberal position on this point. Instead of assuming that each individual should be left to choose his own means to happiness, he asserted that some means were more fruitful than others; that certain activities provided superior pleasures. All men, he said, were by nature active; and the development of capacities was pleasurable in itself. Moreover, activity could be

1. Ibid., pp. 68-9

2. Ibid., p. 68

"personal" or "social"; it could be limited to the immediate concerns of the individual, or it could be extended so as to involve other individuals. Of the two kinds, the latter provided the greater happiness. Since man was a social creature, he achieved his greatest happiness when participating in activities of the society to which he belonged.¹ Precisely why should this be the case? The answer is suggested in the following passage:

It is through the multiplication of needs and of different tasks that the brotherhood of men can become an object of practice. The true Christian society exists where each man produces something which others lack, who themselves produce what he lacks. The interest in the union, is the interest in the enjoyment of life; the means of the union is labour.²

This appears to mean that, inside society, a man's wants, and his potential for want-satisfaction, are greater than they would be if he were outside society; and society itself guarantees want-satisfaction. By thus asserting that it was possible to determine, without consulting him, the conditions in which a man would be happiest, Thierry effected a departure from the liberal position characteristic of the Restoration publicists. Now, there are two reasons why this departure was important. First, it emphasised that political economy was, in itself, ethically neutral. For political economy demonstrated, not only the possibility of a world-wide liberal order, and the means to run it, but also the possibility of a non-liberal community of labourers for whom society was not so much a means to the end of private want-satisfaction, but rather the end itself,

1. Ibid., pp. 120-22

2. Ibid., p. 50

the sphere in which man fully realised himself.¹ This emphasises a point made earlier, that political economy implied no specific political order; it was available as a pool of knowledge which could be turned to a variety of purposes.

Secondly, Thierry's movement away from strict liberalism is significant in that it entailed a view of the nation that was to become associated in a few years with Saint-Simon. In 1819, Saint-Simon rejected the liberal stance of his fellow-publicists, in a wholly conscious and deliberate manner; and, while retaining the concept of the industrial class, he produced a fresh social theory which involved the prescription of values by an intellectual elite. Saint-Simon's departure from the liberal camp involved a much deeper change of heart than anything experienced by Thierry; in fact, Thierry quit Saint-Simon's employ in 1817 on the grounds that his master's views were becoming too authoritarian.² For the time being, however, we may note that Thierry had, by joining political economy with political theory, linked Say's concept of les industriels - the industrial class - with the older, Revolutionary concept of the nation, and treated the two as identical. But we may also observe that he did not perceive the difficulties inherent in the concept of the nation, difficulties which the Revolutionary orators had revealed. Like Say, he appeared to assume that the lowest ranks of society were,

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1. It was only with J. S. Mill that "liberalism" came to denote, at least partly, the ideal of human self-development.
 2. According to A. Augustin-Thierry, Saint-Simon insisted that society required government of some sort, while Thierry insisted that society required liberty. Augustin Thierry d'après sa correspondance et ses papiers de famille, Paris, 1922, p. 36

in their capacity as labourers - ouvriers - or at least potential labourers, unequivocally members of the nation. Unlike Say, however, he did not raise the question of the exact status of the capitalists, i.e., those individuals who did not personally participate in the management of the capital which they invested in the national economy, and whom Say had allowed the status of producteur rather than industrieux. But it is possible that Thierry intended to exclude them from his nation, believing that his advocacy of the active, socially-useful life implicitly ruled out the idle life of the rentier. It was Saint-Simon who later insisted on ruling the idle capitalist out of the industrial class.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE STRUCTURE OF THE INDUSTRIAL CLASS

Between 1817 and 1819, the editors of L'Industrie and Le Censeur européen, and their occasional contributors, devoted themselves to the publication of articles and pamphlets supporting the cause of the industrial class. Some of these articles consisted of attempts to demonstrate that the industrial class was the subject of an historical movement which would end with the victory of that class over its enemies. Others contained treatments of the immediate political difficulties confronting the industrial class and of the ways it might grasp the opportunities open to it for advancement. But before examining these efforts, it would be useful to identify the specific problems involved in formulating a clear definition of the industrial class.

We have seen that the concept of the industrial class as it had emerged in the political thought of the Restoration period, drew very largely upon the concept of the nation which had dominated the thinking of the Revolutionary statesmen. The variety of terms which the old orators had used was still in existence; besides Thierry's nation, the phrase le tiers état was available as a synonym for les industriels.¹ We have also seen that the assumption lying behind the concept of the nation - the fact that it consisted of individuals bound by a common interest -

1. See anon., "Les trois époques", in L'Industrie, vol. 2, Paris, 1817, p. 290

was powerfully reinforced by the success of political economy. But there re-appeared as well some of the difficulties which lay at the heart of the Revolutionary concept of the nation, and, in particular, the difficulties surrounding the exact position of the propertyless and the destitute within the nation. Again, we have seen how Say's identification of labour as a distinct industrial function suggested that there was emerging a permanent class of labourers or potential labourers, for whom the prospect of a property-owning democracy could be little more than a dream, whatever the constitutional incentives to earn one's way into full citizenship. To this development must be added another. While the typical productive institutions remained the small workshop and the peasant smallholding, there had emerged a group of prosperous merchants, manufacturers and bankers who were not associated with the privileged orders of pre-Revolutionary times and had achieved their influence during the Napoleonic era. These men were bound to emerge as the spokesmen for mobile property as a whole, and, given their natural susceptibility to liberal views, it was to them, rather than to the industrial class as such, that the liberal publicists increasingly addressed themselves.¹ There is, moreover, evidence of popular disaffection of a more distinctly proletarian nature than that which accompanied the

1. See, for instance, Saint-Simon's attempts to form a society devoted to the advancement of industry. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 5-9; also his Entreprise des intérêts généraux de l'industrie ou Société de l'opinion industrielle, 1817 (?), B.N. MSS N.A.F. 24607

Revolution,¹ which undoubtedly reflected the incipient divergence of the industrial class into two groups with opposing interests: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. One of the major tasks facing the advocates of the cause of the industrial class was, therefore, the elaboration of fresh justifications for the wide disparity in the distribution of wealth within the industrial class.

These changes in the economic condition of the industrial class and the expectations of its supporters did not, however, detract from the usefulness of the straightforward, quasi-Revolutionary, polemical us-and-them approach. Some writers adopted this device in order to emphasise the morality of peaceful production, a morality which bound all members of the industrial class into a social movement. In this way, they returned to the idea of industrie as an ideological rallying-cry, as an ethical principle, as a movement through which all members of the industrial class acquired equal status whatever the precise function they performed within the economy. Charles Dunoyer, for instance, taking up the idea of the nation, asserted the existence of two such nations, or confédérations as he sometimes called them; and these nations were located in Europe as a whole, not simply in France. The one nation consisted of the recently reinforced aristocracy; the other was equivalent to the industrial class. The political life of Europe was characterised by the deadlock which existed between the two. The old Europe was locked

1. According to H. Sée, there were luddite-style attacks on machines in Lyons between 1819 and 1823. Histoire économique de la France, vol. 2: 1789-1914, Paris, 1942, p. 158

in combat with the new; "barbarism struggles with civilisation". On the one side were the old and the new aristocracies, placemen, professional soldiers, "ambitious idlers of all ranks and countries, who ask to be enriched and raised up at the expense of those who labour". Their aim was to exercise power for the sake of the profit they could derive from it, by warfare, licence and prohibitions, all the traditional means customarily employed by feudal nobility. On the other side were ranked farmers, merchants, manufacturers, "industrieux of all classes and countries". Their object was to rid Europe of "three great scourges: war, licence, and monopoly", and to set up cheap, efficient government devoted to guaranteeing the free expansion of liberty.¹

The echo of Revolutionary speech is unmistakeable. Dunoyer was bringing to the fore the impression of a society divided between the haves and the have-nots, the former plundering the latter of their rightfully-secured property. Even more evocative of Revolutionary polemics were two articles by Saint-Simon which appeared in Le Politique, a short-lived journal which succeeded L'Industrie in 1819. The title of one of the articles, "Sur la querelle des abeilles et des frélons"² ("On the quarrel between the bees and the drones") colourfully suggested the conflict between the producer and the idle consumer; but it was the other article, "Le parti national ou industriel

1. "Considérations sur l'état présent de l'Europe, sur les dangers de cet état, et sur les moyens d'en sortir", Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, Paris, 1817, pp. 73-4.

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 211-34

comparé au parti anti-national"¹ that contained the more detailed treatment of that conflict. The national party, according to Saint-Simon, consisted of several groups, all devoted in various ways to the production of wealth. First came those who tilled the soil and those who "directed the operations of agriculture".² Then came "those whose labour serves, directly or indirectly, the production or utilisation of commodities". This group included, apart from the artisans and the merchants, technicians who improved the techniques of production; barristers who defended the cause of the industrial class against the nobility; those few priests who preached the healthy ethic of labour; and, lastly, "all citizens (in whatever position chance of birth or of circumstance has placed them) who openly employ their talents and their means in relieving the producers of the unjust supremacy wielded over them by the idle consumers".³ The anti-national party, meanwhile, consisted of nobles plotting the return of the ancien régime; priests who identified morality with obedience to the decisions of the Pope and the clergy; idle landowners; judges and professional soldiers who supported privilege; in a word, "all those who resist the establishment of a regime most favourable to economy and liberty".⁴

In spite of this revolutionary tone, which must have been deliberately contrived, there was an important difference between the demands of the Revolutionary statesmen and those

1. Ibid., pp. 195-209

2. Ibid., p. 202

3. Ibid., p. 204

4. Ibid.

of the Restoration liberals, a difference which reflected the political changes ushered in with the Restoration. During the Revolution, the prime aim of the revolutionary leaders was to abolish the legal system whereby France was divided into orders enjoying uneven privileges; hence the straightforward demand for liberty and equality. It is true that Sieyès, in his What is the Third Estate?, revealed an acute awareness of the economic exploitation which the Third Estate suffered at the hands of the highest orders; and the sans-culottes were more concerned with levelling wealth and avoiding starvation than with the legal recognition of mobile property. But the main focus of the Revolutionaries' demands was directed on legal change; and the abolition of privilege was the one great success of the Revolution. With the Restoration, however, France acquired a constitution which embodied liberal principles. Although the franchise was limited, there did exist, at least on paper, the means to effect a peaceful evolution from an aristocratic, landowning society to a more typical bourgeois one. It was this which explained the emphasis which the Restoration liberals placed upon the morality of production rather than on the legal safeguards for property. The conflict was no longer over laws, but over rival ways of life. The enemies of industry were to be defined in terms of ideology rather than privilege. When Saint-Simon summed up the membership of the industrial class as "those who resist the establishment of the regime most favourable to economy and liberty", he might well have been intending to draw upon the polemical and quasi-

Revolutionary value of the term "liberty"; but it is clear that he was calling, not for the removal of a legal restraint, but for the extension of a facility: for the expansion of economic opportunity and hence for the means to become fully moral. Similarly, Saint-Simon's inclusion of the landowners "living nobly, that is, by doing nothing"¹ in the anti-national party involved a limitation on the term "noble". A term which had originally carried connotations of legal privilege was now to refer to the non-productive way of life; and by continuing to use it thus Saint-Simon was no doubt hoping to distil from it all its potential emotive value in a situation which demanded action. So, just as the industrial class had originated in the tiers état of the Revolutionary orators, so the enemies of industry, those who "lived nobly", had their origin in the privileged orders of the ancien régime. But whereas legal equality had been achieved, moral equality had yet to be won.

The liberal publicists thus sought to present and popularise the standpoint of the industrial class by way of presenting a simple image of a society divided between labouring producers and idle consumers. Everyone was invited to inspect his way of life and discover which of the two groups he belonged to; and the great majority of the population would find that they were members of the industrial class. Saint-Simon, for instance, writing of the condition of France as it was in 1789, produced a

1. Ibid.

rule-of-thumb definition of the nation as all those who were neither priests, nor nobles, nor public functionaries.¹ But the strict application of the more positive criterion of membership of the industrial class, namely, participation in productive enterprise, raised the question of the unemployed poor. This question was very similar to one which Sieyès had had to face. In 1788, Sieyès had asserted that the Third Estate comprised nineteen twentieths of the population, yet he admitted the need to exclude from full citizenship tramps, beggars, and those who had been directly dependent upon the privileged orders. It should be emphasised that the liberal publicists were not overconcerned with the lot of the very poor, and appeared to assume that their interests would be best served by the triumph of the industrial way of life. But a closer examination of the manner in which the liberals accounted for the poor does reveal that alongside the rhetorical assertion that the vast majority of the population was ranged against the elite of idle consumers, there existed a more complex conception of the industrial class, which in fact excluded the poor.

The writers who concerned themselves most with the poor were Saint-Simon and Charles Comte. They regarded the poor as the moral allies of the idle rich, since both groups lived off the products of the industrial class without offering any products in exchange for them. As Saint-Simon put it, the rich taxed the nation while the poor begged from it; and neither had any rightful claim

1. L'Industrie, vol. 1, part 2, Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), p. 146.

the proceeds.¹ Comte applied a Malthusian yardstick and claimed that the population of the idlers, rich and poor alike, increased in direct proportion to the produce they expropriated. This represented a serious threat to the industrial class, whose own growth was accordingly sacrificed.² The poor posed a political as well as an economic threat. Saint-Simon expressed a deep distrust of them in an account he gave of the political parties in Restoration France. The Liberal party, the true champions of the nation, were the original revolutionaries, since it was they who had attempted, during the Revolution, to throw off the last remains of feudalism and to liberate the industrial class. But the success of the nobility and the clergy in soliciting help from abroad had forced the Liberals to "impassion the populace in favour of the Revolution" in an attempt to retain their political gains. As a result, the Liberals "were defeated by the ignorant proletarians whom they had armed and who took over the government for themselves".³ Saint-Simon assumed, however, that the chances of another mass uprising were slim. "Today, when the national guard has been organised throughout France; when the militia is essentially liberal and composed mainly of property-owners; when the proletarians are everywhere disarmed, how can the return to the Jacobins be feared?"⁴ From this point of view, the

1. Ibid., pp. 129-30

2. "De la multiplication des pauvres, des gens à place, et des gens à pension", Le Censeur européen, vol. 7, Paris, 1818, p. 74

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 177-8

4. Ibid., p. 172n

industrial class seemed to shrink to something rather less than those of the population who were left after all nobles, priests, and public functionaries had been removed.

It is likely, however, that when Saint-Simon spoke of the "ignorant proletarians" he was referring, not so much to the unemployed poor, but to the poor who were always liable to suffer being unemployed. The lower limits of the concept of the industrial class were blurred by the nature of life at that level; since labourers were taken on by employers often on a day-to-day basis, and since opportunities for work in the country varied with the seasons, the proportion of the population that could claim strict membership of the industrial class was constantly changing. In an address to the General Assembly of the Society for Primary Education, Saint-Simon put forward a class analysis which cut across the analysis which divided society into the consuming and industrial classes; and he also revealed a relative lack of concern for the poorest elements of society:

I urge you also not to limit your attention to the education of the lowest class of society; it is easier and more useful to bring about an increase in the enlightenment of the middle class.....I consider the landowners (propriétaires) to be the upper class, those who possess an industry the middle class, and those who have only their bare hands, the lowest.¹

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1. Quelques idées soumises par M. de Saint-Simon à l'Assemblée générale de la Société d'Instruction primaire, Paris, 1816, p. 10. That the term ouvrier stood for something other than the destitute labourer is suggested by Saint-Simon's distinction, on page 8, between la classe la plus pauvre and the "ouvriers who enjoy a certain amount of leisure". This corroborates our finding that the distinction between the skilled and the unskilled worker was not as marked as it is today, the ouvrier often being taken as a man with a certain amount of skill.

A major clue as to the method whereby it was believed that the problem of unemployment would be solved is to be found in an unedited fragment by Saint-Simon. In it, Saint-Simon proposed that the French government abandon its colonies and transfer the funds thereby saved to the provision of jobs for all. The only point in colonising areas of the earth, said Saint-Simon, was to obtain land to which the population surplus of the mother-country could be dispatched. But since France's colonies had not been procured for that purpose, they had not been organised in such a way as to make the settling of surplus population there a viable policy to initiate. It was therefore more rational to solve the population problem by providing jobs than by providing space.¹ Saint-Simon believed that his proposals would solve the problem of the poor once and for all. Not only would social production be maximised, but the moral requirement that everyone become a productive member of society would be a meaningful proposition. It would be possible at last to distinguish those who wanted to work from those who preferred to live off the produce of others. No-one could rely on the excuse that work was impossible to find. But the implications of this policy were not at this time fully realised. The main obstacle to the achievement of full employment was that it was ultimately irreconcilable with the principles of laissez-faire economics, to which Saint-Simon and his liberal

1. Published in J. Dautry, Textes choisies de Saint-Simon, Paris, 1951, pp. 104-5. According to Dautry, the fragment was probably written in 1816. It belongs to the B.N., MSS N.A.F. 24607.

colleagues followed Say in subscribing. In later years, Saint-Simon was to become pre-occupied with the task of persuading the leading capitalists of the day to organise their business with sufficient philanthropy to ensure that no-one lacked the opportunity to work. But the comparative absence of attention given at this time to the question of unemployment was caused by the persistence of anti-industrial values, and would vanish automatically when the industrial class had achieved its political victory.

The liberals never doubted that the poor would be best advised to leave the protection of their interests in the hands of the leading industrialists. Indulging in revolutions was futile. As Dunoyer reminded them,

The effect of every revolution is to attract on to the roads to power a mass of new recruits, and especially the auxiliaries of despotism. When revolutions break out, who are the men to be seen hastening to take part in the movement? Are they farmers, merchants, manufacturers, enlightened and wealthy industrieux, men truly interested in resisting the excesses of power? No, they are almost always the idle, the ambitious, men with fortunes to make and who belong by their situation to every tyranny which would want to enrich them.¹

So, however useful the liberals found revolutionary rhetoric for the purposes of ranging the industrial class as a whole against the establishment, they nevertheless feared revolution itself, and pointed to the catastrophe of the 1790s as evidence of the reasonableness of that fear. Practical politics had to be left to the leaders of the

1. "Considérations sur l'état présent de l'Europe, etc.", Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, Paris, 1817, pp. 79-80.

industrial class. But, no doubt afraid that the poor were still under the spell of the Revolutionary cry for equality, Comte took care to distinguish the principles of industrial hierarchy from those of the feudal hierarchy of the ancien régime. Every society, said Comte, involved the subordination of some men to others, a subordination arising from men's needs: the weak sought the protection of the strong, the poor sought the aid of the rich.¹ This "natural aristocracy", which "sprang from the nature of men",² itself formed the basis of industrial society. But where the industrial class was oppressed by the feudal nobility, an "arbitrary subordination" existed, as evidenced by the fact that feudal society was held together only by force. Industrial hierarchy, then, being based on human nature, was essentially peaceful.³ And in this hierarchy, "he who possesses the greatest capacity and the most considerable sums of capital is the natural leader of the others".⁴ Moreover, industrial hierarchy was free from that abject dependence of the lower orders on the higher that characterised feudal society. The manager of an industrial enterprise would, on his death, leave behind the workshops; but feudal warriors were helpless without their leader.⁵ The humiliations of the ancien régime would not, therefore, re-appear in the industrial system.

1. "De l'organisation sociale considérée dans ses rapports avec les moyens de subsistence des peuples", Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, p. 57.

2. Ibid., p. 64n

3. Ibid., pp. 57-8

4. Ibid., p. 50

5. Ibid., p. 50n (51)

The transition to this system could be effected simply by replacing the existing establishment with the industrial leaders, i.e., a meritocracy consisting of the most powerful farmers, merchants, manufacturers and bankers.¹

The concept of the industrial class was, then, a concept of exceptional flexibility, and hence utility, in the hands of the liberal publicists. On the one hand, it could stand for the mass of repressed workers, managers, peasants, anyone willing to earn a living through hard work, united in their opposition to a wasteful bureaucracy of neo-nobles. On the other hand, it referred to a class of men, arranged in a certain organic order for the purposes of production. The advocates of the industrial way of life were thus able, by means of a single concept, to emphasise either the shared interest which bound all those who participated in industry, or the natural leadership of the most successful of them over the rest. Although one of these meanings would be emphasised on each occasion the concept was employed, according as the purpose of the writer dictated, the other meaning need not be allowed to fade out of sight. For instance, an appeal to the industrial class to strengthen its solidarity in its struggle against the establishment would not imply any diminution of the right of the natural leaders of that class to make the appropriate decisions; correspondingly, the demand that the leading positions in the government be filled by the industrial leaders implied no necessary drop in the status of the manual workers. But this is not to say

1. Ibid., p. 38

that there did not exist, at times, a tension between the two senses. We have already noted Saint-Simon's distrust of the "ignorant proletarians"; take the following passage by Charles Comte:

In fact, governments cannot maintain themselves, or do so for any length of time, without placing force, wealth and knowledge by their side, that is, by including the men who have the greatest influence on the masses (la classe nombreuse), who have the most considerable amounts of capital at their disposal, and who can best see how things should be arranged so that people are content and that the government has nothing to fear from them.¹

Here we can sense a fear on the part of Comte that the lower orders of the industrial class were liable to fail to internalise the values necessary for social peace; and the implication must be that they were liable not to internalise industrial values either. But only the discipline of the workshop could keep them off the streets, and only the leading members of the industrial class could guarantee that this discipline was maintained. The liberals were, naturally, convinced that the interests of the poor would be best secured by the industrial leaders, even if the poor themselves were too ignorant, as yet, to realise it. It never occurred to the liberals that the poor might in fact have an interest in radically changing the system of property-relations which their leaders believed to be "natural". But the lack of communication between the lower and the higher orders of the industrial class was

1. Ibid., p. 53

such as to make the concept of the industrial class ambiguous rather than flexible. Did it always refer to the great majority of the community, explicitly or implicitly, or did it in fact refer to the increasingly influential bourgeoisie, with the small artisans and manual workers being totally forgotten in the scheme of things? The answer is that it could be used in both these senses. But we need not write off the concept as an ideological attempt to justify the claims of an embryonic ruling class. The flexibility, and even the ambiguity, of the concept did not prevent its usefulness as an explanatory tool in, for instance, the historiography of the Restoration period; in fact, it even enhanced its usefulness in this direction.

CHAPTER NINE

THE FAILURE OF THE REVOLUTION

By no means all the supporters of the industrial cause regarded the Revolution and the events which had succeeded it as a setback for the industrial movement. Two contributors to L'Industrie, for instance, saw only industrial progress in the post-Revolutionary period. The Comte de Chaptal, in a lengthy article entitled "Des progrès de l'industrie agricole et manufacturière en France, depuis trente ans",¹ looked upon the Revolution as an event which had created the preconditions necessary for any expansion in industry. Before the Revolution, the landowning classes had taken no interest in improving the productivity of the soil; and those few who did were often too ignorant of agricultural science, or unable to raise sufficient funds, to achieve a great deal. But the break-up of the great estates into small units, which had taken place as a result of the Revolution, had created abundant opportunities for employment, land improvement, and a population increase upon which the expansion of industry as a whole relied.² The other contributor, the anonymous author of a piece entitled "Les trois époques", also saw the Revolution as a direct cause of the subsequent expansion in industry.³ Like Chaptal, he cited the break-up of the estates as one of the contributory factors, but

1. L'Industrie, vol. 2, Paris, 1817, pp. 155-271

2. Ibid., pp. 167-78

3. Ibid., pp. 275-341. It was "modesty" which forbade the author from giving his name; p. 333.

he also stressed the unification of the law throughout France and the destruction of prejudice against productive activity.¹ The Restoration was also seen as a great step forward for industry, being taken as the beginning of "the era of industry, of peace, of the ethics, of true liberty".² The enthusiasm of these writers for the course which history had taken resembled that of certain writers of the Revolution itself, like Barnave, who seemed to sense the immense importance of the events in which they were immediately involved, and believed that nothing but good could come from them.

We have seen how, to Comte and Saint-Simon, the Revolution represented a spectacular failure. In the pages of L'Industrie, Saint-Simon subjected the reasons for this to a detailed analysis, and attempted thereby to prove that the Revolution had failed because certain enemies of the industrial class, posing as its friends, had captured the initiative and exploited the general upheaval for its own ends. In the course of this analysis, Saint-Simon cast an interesting new light on the defining lines of the industrial class, even though this was done by way of distinguishing its political opponents. According to Saint-Simon, the Revolution failed to establish the industrial society because it fell prey to the designs of an immensely powerful group of men: the legal profession. A vast body of lawyers, who, with their

1. Ibid., pp. 319-20

2. Ibid., p. 333

apprentices and servants, numbered around four hundred thousand,¹ were engaged in defending, both in the civil tribunals and through their general influence on the nomination of parliamentary candidates, the interests of immobile property. As a group, they not only consumed without producing anything useful in exchange, but they also controlled seven-eighths of the nation's political life, insofar as seven-eighths of the nation's property was of the immobile kind.² This was the greatest single factor which prevented the mobilisation of landed property and the transfer of its control to the farmers.³ In sharp contrast to the civil tribunal operated as they were by lawyers, Saint-Simon pointed to the commercial tribunes, which dealt with disputes arising between the owners of mobile property. These were models of efficiency, pragmatism and expedition; in short, they embodied the virtues of the industrial way of life. "When landed property becomes industrial property, all cases of civil interest will naturally be referred to the commercial tribunals; as a result of which, as it is easy to deduce, all cases, instead of costing huge sums for being very poorly settled, will be excellently judged and at very little cost."⁴ Saint-Simon did admit, however, that the lawyers had, to their credit, rendered very important and useful services. They had framed a body of law which protected individual

1. L'Industrie, vol. 4, part 2, Paris, 1818; in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 115-16

2. Ibid., pp. 121-2

3. Ibid., p. 123

4. Ibid., p. 119

citizens from the arbitrary judgements of the military class; and this was a great improvement on the tradition of rough justice handed down from the Frankish lawyers to the defeated Gauls.¹ For that reason, Saint-Simon believed that it might yet be possible to persuade the lawyers to see the superiority of the principles of political economy over those of civil law.²

In an attempt to explain how the legal profession had gained its unseemly hold over public opinion, Saint-Simon sketched a comparative history of the civil and the commercial tribunals.³ The civil tribunals came into being in the Middle Ages, soon after the Frankish conquests. The Frank chieftains sometimes decided to settle their disputes concerning property-rights by lawsuits rather than the more customary warfare, and for this purpose they appointed individuals to act as judges. Since the fines levied on offenders accrued to the military class, the Franks regarded the distribution of justice as a useful source of income. With the growth of property and the discovery of the Justinian Code, law came to be an intellectual discipline in its own right, and there emerged a corps of professional lawyers. At first, the lawyers were trapped between the King and the nobility, who had been in conflict with one another ever since the conquest. But, after the Estates-General ceased to assemble, the civil tribunals acquired a certain independence by taking on the role of a permanent commission charged with the

1. Ibid., p. 124

2. Ibid., p. 126

3. Ibid., pp. 127-38

representation of the Estates-General. The French Revolution, however, had greatly diminished the scope of their political influence, and forced them into a reactionary posture. Hence their opposition to the development of mobile property and their keen defence of landed interests.

The commercial tribunals, meanwhile, came into being when the commons were enfranchised. Municipalities were formed and were charged with the administration of justice. As industry expanded, and brought into being fresh wants as well as the means to satisfy original wants, the nobility began to leave their rural castles and settle in the towns, the more easily to satisfy their expensive tastes. This resulted in a loss of certain rights by the commons, and the municipal authorities were left in control only of the police and of the administration of legal disputes concerning objects of industry. It was in order to carry out the latter function that the commercial tribunals were later established as distinct institutions. But the spirit of these tribunals had, ever since their beginning, reflected that which had typified the commons when they first won their internal liberty; they stood for fairness, openness and efficiency, and, in this respect, were the direct opposite of the civil tribunals.

Saint-Simon elucidated the true nature of the lawyers by submitting them to another unfavourable comparison. This time, their behaviour during the Revolution was compared to that of the industrial class.¹ The leaders of the Girondins were all lawyers, as was Robespierre, whose

1. Ibid., pp. 161-8

lust for power and domination led to the Reign of Terror and the unleashing of the anarchic forces of the masses. The hollowness of their professions of liberalism was laid bare when, on the accession of Napoleon to a position of supreme power, they were the first to grovel at his feet; and since the Restoration they had swiftly reverted to their earlier role as lackeys of royal power. The industrial class, however, played no part in the Revolution; on the contrary, they avoided power as something alien to their way of life. As a result they suffered the loss caused by the Law of the Maximum and by Napoleon's embargo on English merchandise. Ever since the commons were enfranchised, the aims of the industrial class had remained the same: to avoid political upheaval, and therefore to retain the form of government they found in existence; to limit power as much as possible; and to reduce the costs of government and the abuse of taxes.

By thus attacking the lawyer class, Saint-Simon no doubt intended to strengthen the solidarity of the industrial class as a whole and its resolve not to be misled again by phoney radicalism. The lawyers were revealed as the enemies of the industrial class, not merely in their activity during the Revolution, but also in their historical origins. By demonstrating, in the comparison between the civil and the commercial tribunals, that the political power of the lawyers arose in the first instance from their original role as agents of the Frankish conquerors, Saint-Simon was drawing upon the emotive value of the Frank-Gaul distinction, which emphasised the common heritage of the Third Estate as opposed

to that of the ruling orders. But his account of the behaviour of the lawyers as compared to that of the industriels during the Revolution could not have the same meaning for the entire industrial class. When he claimed that the industrial class had taken no part in the Revolution, he must have meant, by the term industriels, the middle class of substantial businessmen. He could not possibly have been referring to the small shopkeepers, craftsmen and day-labourers, who, in Paris, formed the group known as the sans-culottes and took a very active part indeed in the Revolution. Once again, the ambiguity of the concept of the industrial class was apparent. Saint-Simon might have been trying, through a kind of flattery, to retain the support of his businessmen friends who might otherwise have suspected him of radical tendencies.¹ On the other hand, he might have been attempting to show the poorer sections of the industrial class that, if they were faithful to their real interests, they would follow the moderating example of their natural leaders. Whatever the case, it is important to note that Saint-Simon found no difficulty in switching his emphasis quickly from the industrial class taken as a whole to the natural leaders of that class. The liberal viewpoint was so strongly convinced that the personal and the public interest could be reconciled through the operations of the free market that the possibility of

1. In a letter to the Minister of Police, dated October 30, 1817, a number of businessmen who had subscribed to a fund opened by Saint-Simon to help the publication of L'Industrie openly dissociated themselves from the sentiments expressed in the third volume. The letter is reproduced in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 8-9

real class antagonisms arising between the working poor and the working rich was never envisaged. Hence it was impossible for the liberals to admit that the passion for equality which had so inspired the poor during the Revolution could be anything other than the result of insidious indoctrination by evil men.

CHAPTER TEN

THE HISTORY AND THE DESTINY OF
THE INDUSTRIAL CLASS

One of the most characteristic features of the intellectual outlook of the eighteenth century was the belief that social phenomena were, in principle, susceptible to explanation in terms of scientific laws. The success of natural science had given rise to faith in the scientific method itself, and to the hope that once the human race had equipped itself with knowledge of the laws which governed its behaviour, it would be in a position to solve all its problems. The view of history implicit in this outlook was a simple one. It envisaged the historical progress from the age of superstition and ignorance to that of enlightenment and liberty.¹ When the light of reason had illuminated the true workings of social phenomena, then mankind would be in a position to devise new institutions guaranteed to produce universal happiness. The bondage of man to tradition and prejudice could be loosened only by this long-awaited enlightenment.

1. Henryk Grossman, in his "The Evolutionist Revolt against Classical Economics: 1. In France - Condorcet, Saint-Simon, Simonde de Sismondi", Journal of Political Economy, vol. 51, 1943, pp. 381-96, detects this view of history in the writings of the eighteenth century political economists. "Just as Rousseau in the Social Contract explained the origin of social institutions rationalistically, the classicists took a rationalistic rather than a genetic approach to the past. All previous societies were measured with the rational yardstick of free trade. That is why they knew of only two ideal states: the 'original state of things', occurring before the fall from grace, as it were, and the bourgeois state in their own days, of more or less free competition." Ibid., p. 385

This widespread faith in imminent perfection declined in the nineteenth century and was replaced by evolutionist theories of progress. The optimism inherent in the former doctrine was not rejected; rather, it was tempered by a realisation that progress was more than a matter of simple accumulation of knowledge. This change in outlook can be attributed very largely to the French Revolution. Although the idea of historical evolution was well established in European thought before the Revolution occurred, it was the sudden violence and chaos accompanying that event that drew the attention of many social theorists searching for an explanation towards history. This emphasis on historical studies involved a break with the assumption that social phenomena were a species of natural phenomena, albeit of a very complex kind. The evolutionists held that, whereas nature was unchanging and stationary, society changed over time; and while the former could be explained in terms of eternal laws, the latter could be explained only in terms of the laws of change itself.¹ From this point of view, the history of the preceding centuries began to lose its appearance as a gloomy catalogue of deeds inspired by ignorance and fear. Rather, it seemed to display a certain pattern suggesting that the Revolution was a culmination of a pre-determined process of change. The irrationality of individual actions were comprehensible in the context of a rational historical development to

1. Ibid., p. 386. Karl Popper has argued that the so-called law of evolution is in no sense scientific and should be understood only as a trend. The Poverty of Historicism, Routledge Paperback edition, London, 1961, pp. 105-20

which they unconsciously contributed. There arose, then, a fashion for philosophies of history which employed the concept of the historical stage, and purported to explain change in terms of the rational movement from one stage to the next.¹

In line with the general trend towards evolutionism, both Le Censeur européen and L'Industrie published accounts of the history of Western civilisation in terms of the rise of the industrial class from humble beginnings to the social hegemony it had come to acquire. The two accounts differed on certain points, and at times even contradicted each other; but they were agreed on essentials. The concept of the industrial class took on, as a result of these treatments, an historical dimension which it had lacked in Say's analysis but which was to become an integral aspect of the concept from then on. And in this context, which stressed the unifying experiences of the members of the industrial class as the harbingers of the rational way of life towards which mankind had always striven, the ambiguities inherent in the concept seemed to dissolve. In the eyes of the liberal historiographer, the history of Europe revealed how the industrial class had gradually come to occupy the dominant positions of social influence. This development was, moreover, an inevitable one; it was not merely a chance outcome of contingent events, but, on the contrary, represented the

1. Joseph Barnave was, as we have seen, one of the first thinkers to see the Revolution as the end of a historical development, which he understood in terms of the consummation of the democratic stage over the aristocratic. See above, pp. 53-9

gradual realisation by mankind of the rationality embodied in the industrial way of life. Each historical epoch involved a certain power-relationship between the industrial class and the other social classes to which it was opposed; and each succeeding epoch established a change in that relationship which worked to the advantage of the industrial class. History thus revealed the gradual emergence of mankind's self-consciousness; the industrial class, at first a lowly section of humanity, was becoming co-extensive with humanity as such.

Of these two accounts, that written by Charles Comte and published in Le Censeur européen made the greater use of the concept of the historical stage.¹ According to Comte, history was divisible into three epochs, each of which was to be defined in terms of the manner in which the essential commodities of life were procured. In the first epoch, the primitive or "savage", as Comte called it, men lived off such natural products as they could find. The second epoch, barbarism, consisted of the enslavement of certain classes by others and the systematic expropriation of the products of their labour. The third epoch, civilisation, involved the free expansion of industry, and the universal recognition of the natural right of each to the fruit of his own labour. Of these three epochs, only the last was based on an efficient mode of production, since, unlike the other two, it was guaranteed abundant

1. This account is contained mainly in Comte's article "Considérations sur l'état moral de la nation française, et sur les causes de l'instabilité de ses institutions", Le Censeur européen, vol. 1, Paris, 1817, pp. 1-92. It is summarised and to some extent developed in a second article, "De l'organisation sociale considérée dans ses rapports avec les moyens de subsistance des peuples", Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, 1817, pp. 1-66

means of satisfying wants. The scarcity of natural products rendered the efficiency of the primitive epoch very low; while barbarism, involving as it did virtually continuous armed conflict, diverted the efforts of the producing classes from their natural tasks. But, at any given point in history, all three productive modes were to be found in some measure. Thus, the savage developed his industry¹ to the extent that he was obliged to provide shelter and clothing for himself, and weapons with which to hunt wild animals. Likewise, the barbarian supplemented the proceeds of warfare by manufacturing weapons and by cultivating the soil in a rudimentary fashion. Even the civilised man sometimes appropriated natural products and took advantage of the opportunity to collect booty when he found himself by accident caught up in war. "What must alone be remarked upon is that one of these means of satisfying needs more or less predominated according as civilisation was more or less advanced."²

Comte offered no evidence for the existence of the "savage" epoch; he simply asserted it, and used it as a plausible base upon which to build his account of European history so as to reveal the inevitability of the "civilised", i.e., industrial, mode of production. His account of the transition from the primitive to the barbaric epoch was equally unsubstantiated. The transition began, according

1. This is an interesting example of the use of the term industrie in a way that reflected the influence of the narrow sense of that term.

2. Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, p. 3

to Comte, when men started to supplement their wealth, which consisted normally of natural products, by stealing the products of their "more industrious neighbours".¹ With warfare came prisoners, who were sometimes eaten by their captors. But with the emergence of basic agricultural skills, prisoners came to be used as a source of labour; in short, they were enslaved. At this point Comte brought his account into line with known history. The period known as antiquity clearly belonged to the epoch of barbarism, as defined by Comte; but so also did feudalism. For feudalism began when the people of central Europe were enslaved by Northern barbarians;² or, as Comte put it, when the Franks conquered the Gauls.³

With this conquest began an era of systematic warfare, in which the ruling classes, not content with what they managed to squeeze from their slaves, took to pillaging the churches; robbing civilised (i.e., industrial) communities, which, unlike slaves, were not under their direct and permanent control; preying on merchants passing through their territories; and even fighting amongst themselves for the produce of their own slaves.⁴ For these purposes, they hired gangs of thieves, who were later legalised in the form of armies.⁵ But the most effective weapon which the Franks employed to consolidate their domination over the enslaved Gauls was the ideological one. For not

1. Le Censeur européen, vol. 1, p. 9

2. Ibid., p. 11

3. Ibid., p. 9

4. Ibid., pp. 11-13

5. Ibid., p. 9

only did the ruling class despise industrial activity as morally degrading; they succeeded in inculcating the same attitude among their slaves. In what must have been a veiled reference to Rousseau, Comte placed the real blame for this on certain "most eloquent writers", who "persuaded men that the fruits of the earth belonged to all; that the earth belonged to no-one; and that all the crimes and misfortunes of the world had sprung from industry, the arts and the sciences, in a word, from the production of mankind's essential commodities, that is, property.... and the philosophes who attacked the prejudices of the nobility were themselves dominated by prejudices of the same kind".¹

The transition from barbarism to civilisation which had yet to be completed, began when "some individuals discovered the art of giving value to objects solely by exercising their faculties", i.e., when they discovered the true foundation of property.² Comte left the details of this event vague, but one may infer that he had in mind the beginnings of industrial activity in the medieval cities, which was carried on by individuals not bound by feudal relationships. These individuals were able to make a living from their industrial activity because the

1. Ibid., p. 35

2. Ibid., p. 48. Comte subscribed to the fundamental liberal tenet that property was a natural, not a legal, phenomenon. "In general, the word PROPERTY means, that which is appropriate; that which belongs; that which makes a part of; that which is so linked to a thing, that it cannot be separated from it without destroying the thing. Thus, the faculties of a man belong to him, they are an essential part of his existence, they are his property.... If a man's faculties belong to him, or make a part of him, the product of his faculties belong to him equally," Ibid., pp. 6-7

feudal lords saw in it an opportunity for extending the range of their consumption and were, therefore, willing to exchange their agricultural produce for industrial goods. Thus was born the industrial class; and the circumstances of its birth ensured that it would prosper. But the civilised members of the feudal system, i.e., the slaves, perished in the process. For as their masters used agricultural produce for the purpose of buying industrial goods, the slaves were correspondingly deprived of sustenance. "It is not, then, to the precepts of the Christian religion, to the will of governments, or to the generosity of the feudal lords that the abolition of slavery must be attributed. The slave-race was not enfranchised; it perished in degradation and poverty."¹ And as well as destroying the slaves, the rise of the industrial class eroded the power of the nobility. For it provided them with the means of consuming the value, not only of the produce of their lands, but of the land itself, and "it left most of them with nothing of their former greatness except an unbearable pride, laughable pretensions, insatiable greed and a total inability to do anything useful or good."² And so the industrial class came to control the true sources of wealth.

But the growing control by the industrial class of the sources of social power was not matched by a corresponding change in the political field. The industrial class remained dominated by the anti-industrial ethos

1. Ibid., p. 49

2. Ibid.

which the parasitic ruling class had elaborated in order to justify its idle way of life. Consequently, the French Revolution, which was essentially a conflict between the industrial and the ruling classes, was a lost opportunity. The leaders of the popular cause failed to understand that their true interests lay simply in the political emancipation of industry; and although they did manage to establish the freedom of industrial property, they were betrayed by their ignorance of the true basis of property and their misunderstanding of the principle of equality. The course of the Revolution was allowed to drift towards internal anarchy and external war.¹ The subsequent rise of Napoleon initiated what amounted, in political and ideological terms, to a counter-revolution. The beneficiaries of feudalism were allowed to return in the form of an army of bureaucrats and neo-nobles; millions of men were introduced through warfare to the life of parasitic idleness, and the traditional prejudice against the industrial way of life was greatly reinforced.²

Yet Comte was confident that the industrial class would eventually constitute itself in the political sphere and become the ruling class in the fullest sense. It was true that the Revolution had demonstrated the ideological immaturity of the industrial class, its failure to grasp the true nature of property and to elaborate a constitution which unequivocally guaranteed the natural right of property. It was true that no section of the industrial class had

1. Ibid., pp. 37-8

2. Ibid., pp. 43-4

succeeded in elaborating a lasting constitution with which to end the Revolution. But it was in this very fact that Comte saw grounds for optimism. For it suggested that the industrial class was, by its nature, incapable of forging a stable set of political institutions so long as these contained any vestige of feudal principles. Comte likened the constitutions which had rapidly succeeded one another during the Revolution to the medicine eagerly taken by a sick person but rejected when found to be ineffective. In this way he introduced the organic analogy in order to strengthen his belief in the ultimate victory of the industrial class. "The attacks which are made by some individuals on the human race can certainly slow down its progress; but it ends, sooner or later, by overcoming the obstacles which are opposed to it. In spite of mistakes and the false systems it adopts, it always operates according to the laws of its nature or its organisation."¹ Comte did not make any serious attempt to argue the existence of such "laws"; he was content to use the simple power of analogy to justify his faith in the eventual realisation by the industrial class of its true interests.

The year after Comte produced his sketch of the evolution of the industrial class, Saint-Simon published the second part of the fourth and final volume of L'Industrie. This was devoted to a detailed analysis of the political situation of the industrial class, and included a short

1. Ibid., pp. 45-6

account of the political history of that class.¹ Although there is no doubt that Saint-Simon was well acquainted with the writings of Comte,² the two accounts differed in certain respects. Unlike Comte, Saint-Simon made no reference to an historical period prior to that of antiquity; and he viewed the slaves of antiquity in a rather different light. Comte, as we have seen, treated the slave class as an abortive industrial class, which disappeared in proportion as the true industrial class grew up in the medieval cities. But Saint-Simon regarded the slaves as the direct ancestors of the industrial class of his day, and traced the gradual emancipation of that class through a series of crucial political events rather than through the succession of historical epochs.

The first step in the evolution of the industrial class from its position of complete bondage occurred when the Roman Empire collapsed and much of Europe passed into the hands of Northern warriors. The industrial class gained by this change of masters in two ways. First, the new ruling class settled into landed estates and left the urban industriels³ in charge of their own affairs, removing them from the close and continuous supervision to which they had been submitted in antiquity. Secondly, the industrial class as a whole obtained certain legal rights; it passed from slavery as such into serfdom (esclavage de la glèbe).⁴

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1. In Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 141-50
 2. See Saint-Simon's footnote complimenting Comte on his work; *ibid.*, p. 157
 3. This was the term regularly employed by Saint-Simon to refer to members of the industrial class.
 4. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), p. 142

The second step in the progress of the industrial class towards complete independence was the enfranchisement of the commons in the high Middle Ages. This was the most crucial step of all, since, by winning the right to administer their own internal political affairs, the industriels became a political force.¹ It was made possible by the steady enrichment of the urban industriels during the early medieval period. But the industrial class remained the political subordinates of the clergy, the nobility and the military, to whom they had to hand over great quantities of their wealth, and from whom they suffered frequent insults.

The third crucial event in the history of the industrial class occurred when the ruling orders decided to summon to parliament representatives from the commons and to require them to declare the quantity of wealth they had accumulated. This was found by the ruling orders to be an efficient means of raising taxes; but it benefited the industrial class in that it freed them from the haphazard and arbitrary levies which they had been obliged to pay previously. At first, the deputies from the commons had no rights in parliament, being required simply to make statements. But the industrial virtues of labour, patience and economy so increased the prestige of the commons that their deputies were granted a deliberative voice in parliament. In this way, the political principle

1. An event whose significance was emphasised by J. Barnave (Introduction à la Révolution française, p. 14) and by A. Thierry (L'Industrie, vol. 1, part 2, 1817, in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 38-9).

of industry, namely, the union between the particular and the public interest, began to supersede the political principle of feudalism, namely, the right of the strongest.¹

The fourth event in the political history of industry took place in England in 1688, when the House of Commons won the exclusive right to control taxation and government expenditure.² This event should have begun the process whereby the industrial class painlessly took over complete political control from the feudal orders. But two factors prevented this. First, the House of Commons was composed mainly of deputies who were not themselves members of the industrial class. Secondly, the industrial class was insufficiently conscious of its own interests and destiny; it felt more affinity with the English military class than with the French industriels, for whom was reserved "the glory of ending the great European revolution".³

Saint-Simon's analysis of the post-Revolutionary position of the industrial class was this. Whereas warfare was the officially recognised means of social enrichment, the actual wellspring of wealth was industry. In its quest for ever more efficient means of waging war, the military class had been compelled to rely upon the financial solvency and the productive capacity of the industrial class. Industry had provided it with taxes in the first instance, and, later, the actual materials of combat, such as weaponry and military clothing. The result of this situation, and the most telling evidence

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), p. 146

2. Saint-Simon tended to see the history of industry in joint Anglo-French terms.

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), p. 147

of the fact that even warfare was now controlled by the industrial class, was the general acceptance of the fact that the military strength of a country was measured in terms of its productive potential rather than the size of its army.¹

Saint-Simon and Comte were thus in agreement in concluding that the feudal appearance of society was nothing but a sham. All real power lay with the industrial class. The one remaining event in the history of the development of the industrial class had yet to take place: its coming into full self-consciousness. We have seen how Comte attributed the stubborn fascination of the French industrial class with the glamour of militarism to its systematic corruption by anti-industrial ideas and the opportunities offered it by the Napoleonic wars for tasting the benefits of the military way of life. Saint-Simon believed that the political advance of the English industrial class could also be attributed to the aftermath of the French Revolution. The English House of Commons, which was superior to its French counterpart in political skill and enthusiasm, was nevertheless afraid that parliamentary reform aimed at enfranchising the entire industrial class would set in motion an uncontrollable sequence of events amounting to a repetition of the chaos that France had endured in the final decade of the eighteenth century, and whose consequences would be so damaging for industry as to make it seem advisable to remain content with the existing feudal character of parliament.² But neither

1. Ibid., p. 149

2. Ibid., pp. 18-19

Comte nor Saint-Simon was prepared to predict that the industrial class would inevitably and of its own accord come to win political power. Their vision was of an historical process whose ultimate consummation waited upon the intervention of those who, standing outside the process itself, understood the true interests of the industrial class and of humanity.

The most powerful means which Comte and Saint-Simon adopted in their attempt to overcome the final bastion of feudalism and to establish the political hegemony of the industrial class was the ideological one. The act of publishing articles in Le Censeur européen and L'Industrie was itself an act of intervention in the course of history designed to steer it towards a desirable goal. But both writers proposed, in addition, institutional changes in order to hasten this process. It is significant that, in so doing, they emphasised that aspect of the concept of the industrial class which revealed the internal, functional distinctions within the industrial class. Comte, for instance, called upon the heads of state throughout Europe to summon to their aid those men "who have the greatest influence upon the masses",¹ i.e., the bourgeoisie, the leaders of industry. Saint-Simon stressed the importance of the electoral law as a lever with which to ensure that the natural leaders of the industrial class became predominant in the Chamber of Deputies. In a letter to the editor of the Journal général de France, dated 12 May, 1818,² he explained the strategic significance of the

1. Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, pp. 53

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 43-5

electoral law and how it could be altered to the advantage of all. It was this law, he wrote, which laid it down that full political rights were due only to those who paid taxes; so, if only those individuals who were personally responsible for increasing the value of property were liable to taxation, then an incentive would exist encouraging the owners of capital to become entrepreneurs as well. As Say would have put it, the capitalists would be encouraged to join the ranks of the industrieux by becoming entrepreneurs d'industrie. As a matter of fact, this state of affairs already existed in the manufacturing and commercial fields. But agriculture remained in a less advanced state; it was the landowner, rather than the farmer, who paid the taxes on agricultural income and enjoyed the political rights attaching to this function. So, if the electoral law were changed so as to allow the agricultural entrepreneur himself to pay taxes, this section of the industrial class would become enfranchised in full and, through the right to exercise the vote, would help to establish the industrial class as a whole as the leading political force. "Requiring the farmers to pay the land tax would complete the electoral law, and render the French constitution much superior to the English."¹

In a pamphlet written a few years later, Saint-Simon returned to the question of the electoral law,² and revealed that, like Comte, he had no intention of advocating

1. Ibid., p. 45

2. Sur la loi des elections, Paris, 1820. This was addressed "to all French managers of industrial operations."

full political rights for the entire industrial class. Since he was addressing the most influential members of the industrial class, he was at pains to draw a political distinction between the actual property-owners and the poor, while asserting that the interests of both groups were identical. He established, first of all, that the individuals most suited to control government expenditure and taxation were those who fulfilled three conditions. First, they must be the most personally interested in securing economy; secondly, they must be the most liable to loss in the event of a breakdown of law and order; and, thirdly, they must be the most competent administrators.¹ These conditions were admirably met by the industrial class. Being occupied in their private business concerns, they would have no time for lucrative public office financed out of heavy taxation. Their property, being mobile, was liable to theft or destruction in the event of public disorder. Finally, their administrative ability was high, since, unlike administrators in other classes, they handled capital rather than revenue. But having established the unsurpassed civic virtue of the industrial class, Saint-Simon was prepared to admit only the actual property-owning section of it to the full franchise. In answer to the question, which members of the industrial class should be admitted to the electorate, Saint-Simon replied:

It is clear that only the heads and managers of industrial enterprises, the owners of capital and the possessors of equipment employed in production, while not necessarily having administrative ability, have publicly shown evidence of

1. Ibid., p. 2

having it. As a result, they are the only industriels who should compose the electorate.¹

Likewise, Saint-Simon proposed that only the most wealthy industriel per thousand of population should be eligible for election to the Chamber of Deputies.²

These measures, designed to complete the transition from feudal to industrial society, seem distinctly anti-climactic in view of the dramatic, two-thousand-year sweep of history towards that end. Neither Comte nor Saint-Simon contemplated that cataclysmic outburst of pent-up historical forces which, so Marx was to prophecy later, would herald the end of pre-history. Yet this is only to be expected, given the nature of the industrial class. Marx was appealing, not to a combination of thrifty and energetic capitalists and their dependent workers, but to a systematically impoverished and increasingly embittered proletariat, whose mission was to effect a dialectical transformation of their own lives. But the Restoration liberals, so far from seeing in the emergence of capitalism a growing divergence between the needs of the masses on the one hand, and the appropriate form of social relations on the other, detected, rather, the gradual improvement in the lot of mankind, which could be completed by means of a clinical constitutional amendment. Moreover, to advocate a violent overthrow of the status quo would have alienated the natural leaders of the industrial class, who were already fearful enough of Revolution and of the anarchic tendencies of the urban masses. Yet it is evidence of the flexibility of the concept of the industrial class that the Restoration liberals,

1. Ibid., p. 4

2. Ibid., p. 5

while allaying the fears of the bourgeoisie, could also show that the Revolution was a genuine expression, albeit one that went astray, of the legitimate aspirations of the poor. By employing this concept, which implied the unity of interest between the bourgeoisie and the poor, they successfully harnessed, in theoretical terms at least, the drama of the Revolution to the moderate, reformist political demands being made on their behalf in the post-Restoration era. For the poor, the Revolution had represented real gains; they should now stand back and allow their natural leaders to complete the transition which that event had begun.

P A R T T H R E E

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE RETURN TO POSITIVISM

In 1819, the direction of Saint-Simon's political thought underwent a radical change. With the publication in that year of the first part of L'Organisateur, Saint-Simon began to move away from the intellectual climate of Restoration liberalism, and devoted himself instead to the elaboration of a revised vision of the kind of social order which was coming into existence: the industrial system. In this scheme, the industrial class were coming to appear, no longer as the representatives of practical liberal politics and economics, but as the embryo of a social hierarchy, organised so as to observe the quasi-religious principles of science and production. The immediate cause of this intellectual change of direction was the acquaintance Saint-Simon made with Auguste Comte. Comte became Saint-Simon's secretary in mid-1817, thereby filling the vacancy created by Augustin Thierry's departure.¹ For two years, Saint-Simon struggled against his secretary's attempts to persuade him to look beyond mere pamphleteering and agitating for constitutional reform. And the irony of his eventual yielding was that Comte was, in fact, reviving ideas which Saint-Simon had himself propagated in his pre-Restoration writings. Consequently, Saint-Simon's literary output in the last seven years of his life

1. For the details of the break between Saint-Simon and Thierry, see above, p.96n

constituted a synthesis of his earliest efforts and his Restoration pamphlets and articles. It is, therefore, essential that something be said of Saint-Simon's political thought as it existed before he encountered political economy and the concept of the industrial class.

During the years 1803-13, Saint-Simon's interests ranged widely over astronomy, physics, chemistry, and, above all, physiology; in short, over the disciplines which were then rapidly being developed and established on firm scientific foundations. His own achievements in this field were negligible, and are of interest only in so far as they throw light upon his social and political thought. One of his greatest ambitions was to organise all disciplines into a unitary conceptual scheme, and thereby to render philosophy, i.e., the sum total of knowledge, wholly scientific. In his attempt to elaborate a universal system of knowledge, Saint-Simon drew inspiration from Descartes, who, of all the founders of modern science, had been the most successful in systematising knowledge according to the principles of observation and demonstration. And, like Descartes, Saint-Simon proposed to place the universal system in the service of humanity; for it was only in the light of universal principles that it would be possible to place the study of mankind on a truly scientific basis, and to discover the perfect social order. Saint-Simon himself, on his death-bed, described the whole enterprise thus:

I wanted to try, like everyone else,
to systematise the philosophy of God.

I wanted to descend successively from the phenomenon of the universe to the phenomenon of the solar system; from there to the phenomenon of the earth; and, finally, to the study of the species considered as a dependency of the sub-lunar phenomenon, and to deduce from this study the laws of social organisation.

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The system of the universe was to be organised under "one positive co-ordinating law",² which turned out to be the law of gravity. Saint-Simon had shown an interest in the universal law of gravity in his early work Lettres d'un habitant de Genève, (1803), in which he had made it one of his duties of his proposed "Council of Newton" to make efforts "to understand the effects of universal gravity", since that was the law to which God had submitted the universe.³

The main concrete achievement to emerge from this grandiose design was a general theory of social change. This theory was based largely on certain ideas contained in the writings of one C. F. Dupuis, who, in the fifth volume of his Origine de tous les cultes, had asserted that the religious beliefs which prevailed at any given

1. Quoted in Fournel's "Notice historique", Oeuvres de Saint-Simon et d'Enfantin, vol. 1, ed. E. Dentu, Paris, 1865, p. 49. Saint-Simon went on to admit that it had been impossible to achieve the task he set for himself. But his debt to Descartes can be seen in the latter's Letter "to the Translator of the Principles of Philosophy": "...philosophy as a whole is like a tree whose roots are metaphysics, whose trunk is physics, and whose branches are all the other sciences. These reduce themselves to three principal ones, viz. medicine, mechanics and morals - I mean the highest and most perfect moral science which, presupposing a complete knowledge of the other sciences, is the last degree of wisdom." The Philosophical Works of Descartes, vol. 1, ed. Haldane and Ross, C.U.P., 1911, p. 211.

2. Ibid.

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), p. 55

period of history consisted of a simplified version of a philosophy whose inner meaning was understood only by a ruling elite of intellectuals.¹ Dupuis' conception of two levels of knowledge, each corresponding to a certain level of intellectual ability, was sympathetically received by Saint-Simon. In his Introduction aux travaux scientifiques du dix-neuvième siècle, which appeared in 1808, Saint-Simon defined religion as "the collection of applications of general science by means of which the enlightened individuals govern the ignorant".² He went on, however, to assert that historical change took place when the principles of the specialised knowledge shared by the intellectual elite became incapable of further deliberation, and, consequently, incapable of further simplification:

Each age has its character, each constitution its duration. Religion grows old in the same way as do other institutions. As with other institutions, it needs to be renewed at the end of a certain period of time. Each religion is a beneficial institution originally. Its priests abuse it when they are no longer restrained by the check of the opposition, when they have no more discoveries to make in the scientific direction which they have taken from their founder. Then it becomes oppressive. When religion has been oppressive, it falls into disrepute, and its ministers lose public regard and the fortune they have acquired.³

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1. Paris, 1795. On p. vii, Dupuis writes: "As philosophers rightly reject the supernatural causes which were conjured up by the sages of antiquity in order to accredit their opinions in the popular mind, they have to seek the source of those opinions in ancient science, and study the philosophical character of the Eastern wise men, in order to grasp the meaning of the holy mysteries of which the masses found themselves the depositary with no hope of ever understanding them."
 2. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 169
 3. Ibid.

Saint-Simon's account of the cause of change was, then, based on his perception of a dynamic, rather than a static, relationship between the pure, scientific level of knowledge and the popular, or religious, level, and of a corresponding element of conflict between the intellectuals and the people. Moreover, Saint-Simon developed Dupuis' theory into a general model of society, in which all social institutions were conceived of as applications, in various modes, of the governing ideas. Religious change, therefore, involved change in all aspects of society; as he wrote in his Mémoire sur la science de l'homme, (1813):

It is seen that systems of religion, of general politics, of morals, of public education, are nothing but applications of the system of ideas; or, if one prefers it, that it is the system of thought considered under different aspects. Thus, it is clear that, when the new scientific system has been constructed, there will take place a reorganisation of the systems of religion, general politics, morals, and public education; and that, consequently, the clergy will be reorganised.¹

Historical change, according to Saint-Simon, proceeded simultaneously through two dimensions: the cyclical and the linear. A complete historical cycle took place when one set of social ideas disappeared and was replaced by another. The transition from polytheism to monotheism, i.e., from the epoch in which men understood the world in terms of the existence and intervention of several deities to the epoch when a single God was held to be the cause of

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), p. 18

all phenomena, was the historical cycle most thoroughly examined by Saint-Simon. The cycle moved through three stages: the philosophical, the scientific, and the religious.¹ The precise difference between the philosophical and the scientific stages was not clearly explained, but the examples Saint-Simon gave of the beginnings of monotheism do provide some indication.² Moses was cited as one of the inventors of the idea of God,³ and Socrates,⁴ Plato and Aristotle⁵ as the individuals who gave this idea a scientific basis. The cycle moved into its religious phase with Jesus and St. Paul; the latter, in particular, was responsible for the foundation of the doctrine which was to become, through the Roman Empire, the basis of one of the most highly organised civilisations ever known: the Middle Ages.⁶ The medieval clergy reached the peak of its power under Hildebrand, after which the cycle began to turn down and monotheism began to lose ground to modern, "positive" science.⁷

The crucial difference between the philosophical and the scientific stages may be said to lie in the fact that, in the former stage, the idea of the one God remained purely speculative, but, in the latter stage, it became the basis for a school of thought which proceeded to re-organise human knowledge. The term "scientific" here

1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 156.

2. The term "monotheism" was used by Saint-Simon interchangeably with the terms "theism" and "deism".

3. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 145.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 156

6. Ibid., p. 163

7. Ibid., p. 164

implied not so much the techniques of thought but rather the systematisation of all disciplines into a universal scheme. Monotheism became scientific, therefore, only when the notion of a single God as the cause of all phenomena formed the basis of a new way of organising knowledge; and this required the co-operation of a school of thinkers. Much more important, however, was the distinction between the scientific and the religious stages.

I believe that a religion is necessary for the maintenance of the social order. I believe that deism is obsolete; I believe that physicism is not sufficiently firmly established to serve as a basis for a religion. I believe that the nature of things demands that there should be two distinct doctrines: Physicism for the educated class, and Deism for the ignorant. The human mind found itself in a similar situation at the time of its transition from Polytheism to Deism, a transition which lasted from SOCRATES to PAUL; that is, more than five centuries. During the whole of that time, there were two doctrines; the scientists (savants) were deists, the ignorant masses believed in several Gods.¹

The important implication in this quotation is that the religious phase of the cycle could come into being only when all knowledge had been thoroughly systematised according to the principles of the new science. Only then could the new elite begin to simplify its knowledge and elaborate a simple doctrine which, without contradicting the tenets of the new science, would serve as a general explanation of man's place and role in the scheme of things, and justify the authority of the elite. But, while the systematisation of knowledge was taking place, the new scientists, whose prestige and authority would be increasing as they gradually

1. Ibid., p. 170

learned to explain human experience, would be obliged to perpetuate the religion of the declining science in order to protect their embryonic control over the institutions of education and to maintain the public order which stemmed from religious uniformity.

Thus, in terms of the movement of the historical cycle, the scientific and the religious stages were distinct. But the peak of the cycle consisted of a co-existence between the purely scientific and the religious aspects of the new system of thought, during which time the elite successfully maintained a public doctrine which expressed in a simple form the principles of the new science. Once again, the example which most impressed Saint-Simon was the Middle Ages. But, in this instance, the gulf between the scientific and the religious levels of understanding remained very wide. The medieval laity, although Christian, was incapable of participation in the theological pursuits of the clergy. Instead, its experiences were explained by a simple account of the omnipotence and the omniscience of God, His purpose for mankind, the latter's fall and consequent inheritance of original sin. Such a simple account prescribed the moral precepts which men were to observe, and thus kept the masses under the general control of the clergy; but, in so far as the public doctrine was based upon the concept of the one God as the sole cause of all creation, the masses were not entirely deprived of scientific knowledge. Thus there existed a fundamental compatibility between the scientific and the religious levels of understanding.

The cycle moved into decline when phenomena no longer seemed to make sense in terms of the official system of ideas.¹ The growing break between the principles of the established science and the principles which were beginning to suggest themselves throughout society at large encouraged spontaneous and isolated attempts to formulate a totally new scientific system. In other words, another cycle was beginning to swing upwards and the previous cycle was beginning to swing downwards. Saint-Simon illuminated his theory by reference to the decline of medieval Europe. As the established ethical beliefs of society no longer appeared appropriate to human experience, so the attack gathered pace upon the purely scientific principles of the system of thought developed by the elite:

Great ideas and great scientific revolutions are the result of great moral upheavals. It is in the most serious moral crises that the greatest men emerge. The human mind was still wholly shaken by the sudden blow it had received from Luther, when Descartes organised his system. The storm of revolution had scarcely ended in England, when Locke and Newton appeared.²

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1. In his Travail sur la gravitation universelle, (1813), Saint-Simon mentioned a further stage, the "political" stage, which occurred after the religious stage but before the cycle began to decline. This was mentioned, however, only in connection with the Middle Ages; it began when Charlemagne gave the Pope sovereignty over Rome and extended papal power over the Saxons, and lasted until the Reformation. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), p. 274 and n.
 2. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 157. In his Mémoire sur la science de l'homme, however, Saint-Simon observed that political and religious revolutions alternated, and were both causes and effects of one another. Thus, the scientific revolutions effected by Copernicus, Bacon and Galileo, and Newton and Locke, alternated, respectively, with the political revolutions associated with Luther, Charles 1 of England, and

Once the elite began to lose its authority over human activity as a whole, an irreversible process was set in motion which sealed the doom of the social order and the scientific system, and pitched civilisation into a general crisis which only a new science and a new religion could solve.

Saint-Simon's theory of historical cycles emphasised his view of society as an organic unity. All social activities were linked by reference to the ideological uniformity which characterised the religious stage of each cycle. Authority in society, correspondingly, stemmed from the ability of the intellectual elite to create this uniformity by constantly elaborating and extending the scientific and religious categories through which the experience of their age was organised. As a general rule, however, these elites failed, ultimately, to preserve the credibility of their scientific systems, since men's experience eventually moved beyond the scope of those systems and brought about the need for scientific and religious change. But why had every religious system in the history of Western civilisation failed? According to what principle has human experience persistently broken through the ideological limits of the age? The unequal distribution of intellectual ability caused change to occur in a cyclical fashion; but why did change have to occur in the first place? These questions can be answered by an examination of the other dimension of Saint-Simon's

Louis XIV of France, and the French Revolution itself. According to Saint-Simon, this proved that the next revolution would be scientific, and would consist of the elaboration of a science of man. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), pp. 190-6.

philosophy of history: the linear dimension.

The principle which underlay the movement of Western civilisation through cycles of change was that of progress.¹ According to Saint-Simon, each cycle brought into being a new scientific system which approximated more closely than the last to the principles of "positive philosophy", i.e., the scientific system which was about to assert its supremacy over the remains of monotheism and to initiate a social revolution which would, in accordance with the demands of the historical cycle, usher in the positive religion. Now, as we have seen, the historical cycle moved into its scientific phase when there emerged a new way of organising knowledge and a new corps of intellectuals devoted to the extension of the new method to its furthest limits. Their goal was the scientific revolution; it would be achieved when all fields of study were related to the principles of the new science. But Saint-Simon considered that all such systems had been less than complete; and therein lay their downfall. For it was precisely those areas of experience that were not adequately explained by the official science which were seized upon by the intellectuals in the grass roots of society and which threw doubt upon the system as a whole. But why were these systems incomplete? Because the human mind had not yet arrived at the ultimate method, the "scientific" method in the strict sense, which, being based only upon observation and demonstration, really was capable of subsuming all phenomena under its sway. "Descartes had,

1. For the philosophical status of theories of progress, see above, pp. 123-5

with great precision, decided upon the end towards which all organisers of the new system should aim, when he said: Man should believe only those things acknowledged by reason and confirmed by experience."¹ The realisation of the positive scientific system would constitute the end of historical change in the sense that man's future history would consist of the indefinite extension of the principles of that system; and since these principles were perfect, they could not be undermined by new principles. From now on, true enlightenment would involve, not the smashing of obsolete systems, but the acquisition of the ability to handle the principles of positive science. But the positive system was not emerging out of thin air, as it were; rather, it had developed out of the scientific systems of the past, which from the standpoint of the positive system, had successively achieved higher levels of abstraction and, therefore, embraced more phenomena within their scope. The progress of the human mind, then, could be studied through an examination of the scientific systems which it had elaborated. Saint-Simon distinguished six such systems.²

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1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 27. It is important to observe that Saint-Simon usually used the terms science and scientific to refer to systematic thought as such, irrespective of its level of abstraction. He used the term positive to refer to what is generally known as scientific thought. Sometimes, however, he used the term scientific in this more normal sense.
 2. This account is drawn from the four main sketches which Saint-Simon drew in his pre-Restoration works, as follows: Esquisse d'une nouvelle encyclopédie, (1810), in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 93-4; Nouvelle encyclopédie, (1810), in Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), pp. 318-20; Mémoire sur la science de l'homme, (1813), in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), pp. 42-3; and Travail sur la gravitation universelle, (1813), in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), pp. 270-1.

The first epoch was beyond record. Men were scarcely superior to other animals, and such superiority as did exist resulted from the more complex organic structure of the human body. The second epoch, however, was recorded in the monuments of the Ancient Egyptian civilisation. At this stage, human intelligence had increased greatly through the development of language and through the ability of men to distinguish between cause and effect. The arts and crafts were developed, and the increasingly divided nature of social activity led men to distinguish various sources of causality. The cult of these causes was now known as "idolatry"; the forces of nature were attributed to stars and animals, all of which were visible and very significant in the lives of those who worshipped them.

The third epoch consisted of the civilisation of Ancient Greece and Rome. The growing ability of man to satisfy his physical wants encouraged concentration on moral questions and on the growth of the fine arts. Men raised their minds beyond visible objects and attributed invisible, albeit animated, causes to each sentiment. This system of science was known as "polytheism".

The fourth epoch, which straddled the Middle Ages, witnessed the further sophistication of human thought in the aggregation of the several moral divinities into the concept of God, or virtue as such. Simultaneously, all vices were feared in the idea of the Devil. The purely scientific notion of the single cause, however, which emerged in the transition from polytheism to monotheism, stimulated attempts to systematise all branches of knowledge

and to turn them towards promoting the physical and moral welfare of the human race. Thus, monotheism gave rise to the moral and political sciences.

The fifth epoch, which constituted the present epoch, was characterised by the conception of different laws governing different classes of phenomena.¹ Human thought had thus rejected the superstition surrounding the idea of God; but it had also rejected the systematic nature of monotheist science, and therefore the concept of the single cause. The sixth and last epoch was about to begin, however. This would correct the scientific fault in the present epoch by positing a single law - universal gravity - as the law which governed all phenomena. This would constitute an advance on monotheism, since, whereas the idea of God was an invention, that of universal gravity was demonstrable.

This account of the history of Western civilisation was intended to reveal the slow but logical advance of the level on which scientific research had been conducted. Each advance in the level of abstraction had involved the widening of the scope of research; and as more comprehensive scientific principles were elaborated, so the horizons of the corresponding principles of social activity widened. The crucial step in this process was the elaboration of the concept of God as the unique being, since it led to the concept of the single scientific principle, and thus made possible the foundation of the positive system. Modern history began precisely with the establishment of the unique scientific principle:

1. Saint-Simon referred to a fifth epoch only in the Mémoire sur la science de l'homme, Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), pp. 43 and 159

Socrates is the first known man who powerfully impressed on this idea its unitary character. He is the first who proclaimed that the idea of GOD should be considered as an instrument of scientific combination. He was the founder of general science Since, as I say, Socrates was the first man to raise himself to a general point of view, his work clearly marked the epoch which separates ancient history from modern history.¹

The great implications in Socrates' insight had yet to be realised. The monotheist system, which reached its height with the unification of Western Europe in the spiritual sphere, indicated the minimum general effect of a unitary scientific system, namely, social harmony and prosperity. The positive system, once completed, would recreate this harmony, and establish it on a scientific basis not susceptible to decay.

Saint-Simon's philosophy of history involved, finally, certain ideas concerning the intellectual mechanism which ensured the demise of scientific systems and their replacement, first, by general scientific experimentation and free enquiry, and, secondly, by new systems based on new principles. "Our eyes grow tired when we look at things over a long period from the same point of view. We then cease to discover new relations among them; we even cease to perceive clearly what we had at first perceived."² As a result of this general human tendency, "The human mind fixes its main attention alternately upon general science and upon the particular sciences";³ in fact, these two activities were "as necessary to intellectual life, as

1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 148

2. Ibid., p. 26

3. Ibid., p. 169

are those of systole and diastole to physical life".¹ Saint-Simon was here introducing a distinction which was to play a crucial role in his attempt to elaborate a positive philosophy: the distinction between "synthetic" and "analytic" thought, or, as he more often put it, between a priori and a posteriori thought:

The mind has two ways of operating in its enquiries; there exist two ways of treating any question whatever; two ways of envisaging a series of questions; two ways of organising theories; two ways of working towards the improvement of science. One of these two ways has been named SYNTHESIS; the other ANALYSIS. By analysis, one moves up from particular facts to the general fact; by synthesis, one descends from the general fact to particular facts. Sometimes, other expressions are employed to distinguish these two great functions of the understanding: they are revealed, in the case of the first, when one speaks of considering things a priori; in the case of the second, when one speaks of envisaging them a posteriori.²

The relevance of this distinction between the two methods of scientific investigation to Saint-Simon's philosophy of history lay in the fact that historical epochs were characterised alternately by analysis and synthesis. Periods of social disruption coincided with the widespread adoption of the analytic procedure; while the synthetic procedure was associated with periods of social harmony. The six historical epochs which Saint-Simon identified by way of demonstrating the progress of the human mind were not only high points of the historical

1. Ibid., p. 29

2. Ibid., p. 22. Saint-Simon attributed the distinction to Bacon (ibid., p. 23) but it was probably suggested to him initially by D'Alembert, who, in his Discours préliminaire de l'encyclopédie, (1763), Paris, 1919, p. 168, described synthesis and analysis in virtually the same way as Saint-Simon.

cycle; they were also periods in which synthetic reasoning was the order of the day, when scientific principles were taken as having been established and the intellectual elite concerned itself with demonstrating how all phenomena were governed by these principles.¹ The following passage restates Saint-Simon's earlier exposition of the rise and the fall of the monotheist system in terms of the synthesis-analysis distinction:

Socrates has been dead for about two thousand three hundred years. During the first eleven to twelve hundred years, PLATONIC philosophy, that is, the a priori procedure, was in the ascendant. For the following eleven to twelve hundred years, the works of ARISTOTLE, that is, a posteriori philosophy, were preferred. Thus, the human mind has travelled through one of the greatest philosophical periods; thus, present circumstances call upon the first man endowed with philosophical genius to place himself, intellectually, in a Socratic position.²

There is also implied in this passage Saint-Simon's belief in the need to proceed to the completion of the positivist revolution and hence to the establishment of the final historical epoch in which all knowledge would be organised according to the one supreme law of universal gravity. This would be achieved as soon as physiology and psychology had become fully subsumed under scientific method as had astronomy, chemistry and physics. And since the study of man was a branch of the discipline of physiology, then social studies would become truly scientific as soon as

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1. The fifth epoch, however, in which each discipline was governed by its own set of laws, was a period of analytic reasoning rather than synthetic.
 2. Travail sur la gravitation universelle, in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), p. 252

physiology achieved scientific status.¹ Man stood on the threshold of the realisation of the positivist system; and that event would coincide with his learning, through political science, to control his own destiny.

1. See Mémoire sur la science de l'homme, in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), especially pp. 17-18.

CHAPTER TWELVE

SAINT-SIMON AND AUGUSTE COMTE:
THE NEW SYNTHESIS

Saint-Simon's attempts to persuade the leading scientists of his day to take on the task of rendering philosophy wholly positive met with little success. He was aware of his own limitations in the field of general science, but had hoped that his writings on the subject would inspire some ambitious and public-spirited savant to add the finishing touches to the now almost complete positive system. By 1814, Saint-Simon had despaired. But it was in that year that he first met Augustin Thierry, and became interested in the renaissance of liberal ideas which accompanied the Restoration. The savants, whom Saint-Simon had regarded as the potential intellectual elite of the positive order, fell from his favour; they were replaced by the evidently more successful and enterprising leaders of the industrial class.

There is evidence, however, that Saint-Simon retained the concept of the general overseer of society, although this did not agree with the orthodox liberal view of society. In the second volume of L'Industrie, for instance, he identified a special class of producers, the political writers, whose task it was to "meditate on the general interests of society";¹ and when he called for an alliance between "commercial and manufacturing industry" and "literary

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 2, (1), p. 134

and scientific industry",¹ he clearly had in mind an alliance, not between the businessmen and the technicians, but between the businessmen and the pure scientists.² Again, in one passage he described the industrial movement in a manner no liberal could possibly approve of:

Industry is nothing but a single, huge body, all of whose members answer to one another and are jointly responsible, so to speak. The welfare or otherwise of each part affects all the other parts; there is throughout only one interest, one need, one life. But if the whole body experiences a feeling, it is the head alone which thinks for the body as a whole, it is there that revolutions are formed, that needs and wishes make themselves felt.³

This was very much an echo of the organic view of society which Saint-Simon had developed in his pre-Restoration writings.

In a letter to Chateaubriand, written in June 1817, in which the contents of the forthcoming third volume of L'Industrie were foreshadowed, Saint-Simon suggested that his ideas on social reform were moving beyond the mere tinkering with the constitution such as the liberals had advocated as a means to the establishment of the industrial class as the leading political power. Saint-Simon proposed

1. Ibid., p. 137

2. The term savant stood for both the industrial technician, whom Say had identified as one of the three constituent groups of the industrial class, and the pure scientist devoted to the advancement of scientific knowledge for its own sake. Charles Comte expressed a typical liberal's distrust of learned men: "... in general scientists and intellectuals are the least suitable people to govern well, since their ideas and their interests are directed towards a kind of speculation foreign to public affairs." Le Censeur européen, vol. 2, Paris, 1817, p. 60.

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 2, (1), p. 137n

that political writers should collaborate in the destruction of the remaining elements of the monotheist system and in the organisation of "terrestrial system of ethics".¹

"The philosophers of the nineteenth century will make felt the necessity of making all children study the same code of terrestrial ethics; since the uniformity of positive moral ideas is the only bond which can unite men in society, and since, in the end, the perfection of society is nothing but the perfection of the system of positive ethics."²

And, as if to emphasise his new conception of the industrial class as the embodiment of the positive order on which he had dwelt before the Restoration, Saint-Simon looked forward to the establishment of "a regime truly positive, industrial and liberal".³

The inspiration behind this trend in Saint-Simon's thinking was undoubtedly Auguste Comte. Comte wrote the whole of the third volume of L'Industrie, the first three parts of which appeared in September 1817.⁴ Here, Comte emphasised the need to bring together into a powerful combination all the forces representative of the new order, be they scientific or industrial, theoretical or practical. He revived one of Saint-Simon's favourite schemes from his

1. Ibid., p. 218

2. Ibid., p. 218n

3. Ibid., p. 219-20

4. The first three parts of the third volume of L'Industrie are most readily available in Revue occidentale, 1884, where they are reproduced by M. P. Laffitte under the title "Matériaux pour servir à la bibliographie d'Auguste Comte". Laffitte's introduction is in vol. 12, pp. 118-32; the text is spread over vol. 12, pp. 155-92 and 327-35, and vol. 13, pp. 167-82.

pre-Restoration days - the production of a new encyclopedia designed to synthesise the positive sciences - and in fact proposed that two encyclopedias be produced: one dealing with the theoretical sciences, the other with the practical.¹ The existing constitutional monarchy should, he believed, be regarded as a transitional arrangement; it was the most suitable form of government for the present, but would eventually be replaced when the new system of moral and political ideas had been completed and the appropriate institutions deduced from them.²

The fourth part of volume three of L'Industrie, which appeared in October, 1817, revealed how skilfully Comte had forged a synthesis between Saint-Simon's early historical writings and his more recent espousal of the liberal cause of the industrial class.³ The exercise entitled "Sur le passage du polytheisme au theisme"⁴ was important in that it indicated the lines on which Saint-Simon was to develop his conception of the industrial system in the early 1820s. Comte began by affirming the "important principle, indicated in advance by reason, without which nothing truly great or useful can be achieved in politics".⁵ This principle amounted to the conception of society as the embodiment, through social institutions, of universally shared ideas

1. Revue occidentale, vol. 12, p. 169

2. Ibid., pp. 331-3

3. The editors of Oeuvres de Saint-Simon assumed that this part of volume three of L'Industrie had been written by Saint-Simon; (vol. 3, (2), p. 8). M. P. Laffitte has established that it was, in fact, written by Auguste Comte; see Revue occidentale, vol. 12, pp. 121 and 127-8. But it is most easily available in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 13-42

4. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 22-9

5. Ibid., p. 23

and values, a conception which Saint-Simon had developed in his early writings. As Comte put it in L'Industrie:

.... every social regime is an application of a philosophical system; consequently, it is impossible to establish a new regime without previously having established the new philosophical system to which it must correspond.¹

Comte's subsequent examination of the transition through time from one social system to another involved a restatement of the historical schema which Saint-Simon had previously elaborated. Thus, the philosophical system of polytheism gave way to the system of theism over a long period of time, beginning with Socrates and ending with the Alexandrian school. The present time consisted of the transition from theism to the "terrestrial and positive system", a transition which had been gathering pace ever since the Arabs introduced the positive sciences into European culture in the ninth century A.D.² What was new in this account was Comte's insertion of the development of industry into the schema. At the moment when theism had become fully established on a philosophical level, a political revolution began which ended with the epoch of Charlemagne, who ensured the propagation of Christian, i.e., theist, ideas throughout the civilised parts of Europe. Likewise, the rise of positivism and the demise of theism had initiated a corresponding political revolution, which had started at the time of the Reformation, and had been the "principle" of the Thirty Years War, the English Revolutions of the seventeenth century, and the French Revolution; it was destined to end,

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., pp. 23-5

however, with the complete abolition of arbitrary government and the establishment of a "liberal and industrial regime".¹ The connection between the philosophical and the political aspects of the transition from polytheism to theism, and of that from theism to positivism, was precisely that which held between philosophy and political theory as such; between ideas and their institutional expression. Industrial society was, then, the embodiment in practical terms of the positive system. But, since the philosophical system of positivism had yet to be realised in full, it was futile to attempt to create a fully industrial regime in the immediate future. First, the philosophical revolution would have to be completed; but until that had occurred, the existing "representative monarchy" should be tolerated as a temporary form of government.²

Comte did not, however, leave the question of the political principles of the positive system completely open. In a section entitled "Sur la morale",³ he emphasised the importance of ethics in the quest for the political theory which would correspond to positive science. There existed, he claimed, a general relationship between ethical and political theory:

At all times, and among all peoples, there is found a constant correspondence between social institutions and ethical ideas, such that it cannot be doubted that there exists between them a causal link. In fact, politics is a consequence of ethics. The latter consists of knowledge of the rules which must govern the relations between individual and society, so that both may be as happy as possible. Now, politics is nothing but the science of those rules which are important enough to

1. Ibid., pp. 23-6

2. Ibid., p. 27

3. Ibid., pp. 30-42

be usefully organised, and, at the same time, sufficiently clear and universally adopted, for it to be possible to organise them. Thus politics flows from ethics, and the institutions of a people are but the consequences of these ideas.¹

Comte proceeded by referring first to the ethical system which the philosophical system of theism had brought into being: Christianity. The scientific concept of the one God as the sole source of causation was translated into an ethical system which united men in the belief in one God, and through the dogma of universal brotherhood. This ethical system was now moribund, because its philosophical foundations had been replaced by the positive sciences, based as they were on the superior methods of observation and demonstration. The new ethical system, which was now called for, would, Comte believed, have to provide a set of ethical precepts in two fields: between government and people, and between different peoples. In the former respect, there would have to be an improvement on the mere axiom that governments should seek to guarantee the happiness of their subjects; for every bureaucrat persuaded himself that that was what he always did, even when he failed to. Rather, the ethics of government would have to be built upon the assumption that government and society were on a morally equal footing. "What morality can there be between the man who commands and the man who is commanded? One must command, the other must obey, and that is all. Thus, it will be impossible to fill this gap in ethical theory until men come to regard government, not as the director of society, but as its agent, its

1. Ibid., p. 30

chargé d'affaires; until the limits of its functions are clearly recognised, and until it is established that governments should concern themselves solely with guaranteeing the labourers from the unproductive action of the idlers, and with maintaining security and liberty in production."¹ As for the relations between different peoples, the task of moral theory here was to demonstrate that all nations were bound through their shared interest in exchanging products; this aspect of ethics would be perfected by "the influence of industrial ideas, of true economic principles".² Comte summed up this exercise by stating that the epoch of positivism would give rise to a moral theory based on the "palpable, certain and present interests" of men.³ But the actual task of elaborating this moral theory would not be completed in a single day; rather, it would have to be realised that the institutions of Christian morality could not be removed until the present period of transition had ended. But as a means of hastening the transition, Comte proposed that the clergy be required by law to sit an examination in the positive sciences, i.e., pure and applied mathematics, physics, chemistry and physiology.⁴

Comte's stringent attack on orthodox Christianity created a minor scandal. In a letter to the Minister of Police, dated 30 October, 1817, several of the subscribers to L'Industrie publicly dissociated themselves from the

1. Ibid., pp. 35-6

2. Ibid., pp. 36-7

3. Ibid., p. 38

4. Ibid., pp. 38-41

contents of the fourth part of the third volume of the journal.¹ The effect of this rebuff was to drive a wedge, temporary but prophetic, between Comte and Saint-Simon. Although Saint-Simon must have approved of the sentiments expressed by Comte, he quickly returned to the task of encouraging the industrial class to organise itself politically.² In response to this change of direction, Comte wrote two letters to his master in early 1818, in which he attempted to bring him back on to the path of social philosophy which they had embarked upon in the third volume of L'Industrie.³ In the first letter, Comte expressed complete contempt for the political abilities of the industrial class, and told Saint-Simon that his efforts to weld them into an effective political force were a waste of time. The manufacturers and the merchants were, he said, too concerned with their private affairs to have any taste for political literature. They were not used to relating their particular interests to the public good; they felt only fear towards the government; and, as for corruption, they were more concerned to profit by it than to abolish it.⁴ The farmers were even worse.

1. Reprinted in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 8-9

2. See above, pp. 132-5

3. Reprinted by A. Péreire, in his "Des premiers rapports entre Saint-Simon et Auguste Comte d'après des documents originaux", Revue historique, vol. 91, 1906, pp. 57-98. E. Halévy believed that the letters were written for publication, with Saint-Simon's agreement, in order to prepare the public for a return to social philosophy. "La doctrine économique saint-simonienne", Revue du Mois, vol. 4, 1907; republished in translation in The Era of Tyrannies, London, 1967, p. 29.

4. Péreire, op. cit., p. 89

They were boorish, lethargic, and sought only to please their masters.¹ Nevertheless, Saint-Simon went ahead and ensured that the last essay ever published by L'Industrie was in the style of popular political agitation with which the whole enterprise had begun.

Comte's second letter to Saint-Simon raised much more fundamental, and, from our point of view, more significant, issues. While the first letter revealed a disagreement over tactics, the second suggested a disagreement over actual theory. Comte appeared to be accusing Saint-Simon of expressing beliefs which were not inspired by the desire to establish the positive order. Comte accused his master of attempting to found a system of positive ethics on the simple sentiment of fraternal love, a sentiment which, so Comte believed, was in itself useless, and needed to be guided by positive knowledge. Men were, by nature, sufficiently responsive to one another's needs to be philanthropic; the real task was not to instil moral principles but to underpin them with the scientific knowledge of human behaviour and thereby ensure that these natural sentiments were put to effective use. And the requisite knowledge of human behaviour was to be found in the discipline of political economy.² Finally, Comte accused Saint-Simon of having, in this respect, failed to push his own theories to their logical conclusion: "How interesting, to examine all these customs and moral dispositions, like, for instance, charity, considered from this point of view and consequently judged for the first

1. Ibid., p. 90

2. Ibid., p. 96

time without rhetoric and in a wholly positive manner! That is where your idea has led you; that is what you have scorned."¹

The issue which Comte raised in this second letter to Saint-Simon was crucial. It concerned the precise status which Saint-Simon attributed to moral theory in the complete system of positive science. Saint-Simon's own words on the subject had been clearly expressed in his Mémoire sur la science de l'homme, which, of all his pre-Restoration writings, set out most clearly his vision of a synthesis of the sciences based on positive principles. Take, for instance, the following passage:

.....the systems of religion, of general politics, of ethics, of public education, are nothing but applications of the system of ideas; or, if one prefers it, it is the system of thought, looked at from different points of view. Thus, it is clear that when the new scientific system has been completed, there will take place the reorganisation of the systems of religion, of general politics, of ethics, and of public education; and that, consequently, the clergy will be reorganised.²

This passage, which restates Saint-Simon's general understanding of society as the institutionalisation of values, makes it clear that, once the positive system had been completed, ethics would undergo a radical transformation in the same way as religion and politics. And yet Saint-Simon was never entirely certain that the morality of socially useful labour was not adequate as a moral precept in itself, to be applied even after the completion of the positive synthesis. Two of Saint-Simon's commentators

1. Ibid., p. 97

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 11, (5), p. 18.

have asserted that he had two logically independent conceptions of ethics.¹ On the one hand, he believed in the ability of positive science to demonstrate an objective set of moral precepts, forming part of a general science of man. On the other hand, he believed in the intrinsic moral value of socially useful labour, irrespective of the potential discoveries of positive science. There is certainly substantial evidence to support this view. For instance, in his Lettres d'un habitant de Genève à ses contemporains, (1803), he expressed most forcefully a belief in the universal duty of labour.² Again, in his Introduction aux travaux scientifiques du dix-neuvième siècle, (1808), he advanced the moral principle of universal labour as an alternative to the principle which prohibited man from doing to others what he would not want them to do to him; the latter principle was, he believed, negative and self-regarding, while the former provided the conditions for individual and communal happiness.³ He also tried to show that the moral principle of labour was as important in the field of ethics as was the law of gravity in the field of physics;⁴ this would suggest that he did indeed envisage the two disciplines as being logically unrelated, at least at the time of writing. But in his Projet d'Encyclopédie, (1809), he

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1. E. Faguet, "Le Comte de Saint-Simon, à l'occasion de publications récentes", Revue des Deux Mondes, vol. 123, 1894, pp. 856-82; G. Dumas, "L'Etat mental de Saint-Simon", Revue philosophique, vol. 53, 1902, pp. 57-84, and 381-404.
 2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), p. 55.
 3. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), pp. 176-7.
 4. Ibid., p. 178.

assumed that the savants devoted to the study of positive science would both establish the principles of ethics on a secure foundation and proclaim that the dominant ethical precept was that of labour.¹ Saint-Simon appeared to believe that positive science would bear out what he knew to be the case all along.

When Saint-Simon joined the liberal camp and took up the cause of the industrial class, his assumption of an ultimate moral duty of labour found a fruitful outlet. We have seen how the concept of the industrial class contained an opinion regarding the morality of labour as opposed to the aristocratic morality of idleness observed by the opponents of industry. And as Saint-Simon lost interest in the savants, so he became less concerned with the establishment of a moral theory on solid scientific foundations.² In this fact lay the root of his disagreement with Comte. Comte had taken to heart Saint-Simon's earlier claim that moral theory would be completely reorganised once the positive system had been perfected; and, as we have seen, he detected in the discipline of political economy the seeds of a science of human behaviour which would teach men how to employ their moral sentiments in the most fruitful manner.³ Thus, Comte wished to insert

1. Ibid., pp. 304-5

2. Dumas, (op. cit., p. 383), claims that Saint-Simon dropped the idea of a scientific morality as soon as he dropped the idea of gravity as the linch-pin of the new positive system. This is not entirely correct; Saint-Simon continued to refer occasionally to the imminence of a scientific morality.

3. "In effect the voice of Comte was attacking Saint-Simon the pamphleteer for the industrials of the Restoration in the name of Saint-Simon the universal positive philosopher of the Empire". F. Manuel, The New World of Henri Saint-Simon, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, p. 208.

political economy into the corpus of positive scientific achievement. But Saint-Simon was adamant. However helpful Comte had been in showing him how a synthesis was possible between his pre-Restoration philosophy of history and his later treatments of the origin and nature of the industrial class, he persisted in developing the morality of labour and philanthropy. This was, perhaps, all the more frustrating for Comte in view of Saint-Simon's own enthusiasm for political economy, which he had at one point gone so far as to equate with political science itself.¹ And not only did he place increasing emphasis on the subjective moral principle of socially-useful labour; he even claimed for it an overtly Christian authority. In two of his works written in 1819, he claimed that the principle of philanthropy came from Jesus Christ himself. In Le Politique, for instance, we read:

In politics as in religion, honest men, whether or not they are devout, recognise that the whole of moral theory flows from the great principle which was proclaimed by Jesus Christ:

Love thy neighbour as thyself; do for others what you wish them to do for you.²

Saint-Simon went on to claim that it was the industrial class alone which obeyed this command, "since they devote their time and their means to the production of that which can satisfy the basic needs of society and provide it with pleasure".³ But why did he wish to claim for the principle of philanthropy a religious authority, when it was quite

1. See above, pp. 88-9

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), p. 197. See also Naissance du Christianisme, in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 3, (2), pp. 174-87, especially the reference to the divine origin of philanthropy on p. 180.

3. Ibid., p. 197

capable of standing as an independent principle in its own right? One possible answer which might be put forward is that he was quite deliberately propagating monotheist ethics as soon as the positivist synthesis had been achieved; this would be wholly in line with the view he put forward in his Introduction aux travaux scientifiques du dix-neuvième siècle, to the effect that there existed a time-lag between the "scientific" and the "religious" phases of the historical cycle, during which time the rising elite would have to carry on teaching the religious principles of the declining system in order to protect their control over education and thence over society.¹ Yet if this was Saint-Simon's intention, he and Comte would have had no cause for disagreement; it would have been perfectly in order to endorse monotheist ethics in public, but to prepare in the meantime a new system of ethics based on the discipline of political economy. But the fact that the two writers were in disagreement suggests that Saint-Simon was prepared to employ Christian ethics, if not as a substitute for, at least as supplementary to, truly positive ethics. And this suspicion is corroborated by a short, unedited work that Saint-Simon wrote around the year 1818, entitled Des intérêts politiques de l'industrie,² whose contents suggest that Saint-Simon might have written it

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1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 170; see also above, pp. 148-50
 2. Bibliothèque nationale, MSS Nouv. Acq. fr. 24607; published by J. Dautry, in his Saint-Simon. Textes choisies, Paris, 1951, pp. 170-2. Dautry discusses the work in his "Le comte de Saint-Simon et Dieu", Revue Internationale de Philosophie, vol. 14, 1960, pp. 323-43

specifically as a reply to the accusations made against him in Comte's second letter.

Saint-Simon proceeded by restating the idea that the philosophical system based upon the concept of God could not be counted among the positive sciences, since the concept of God was not acceptable to the positive scientist. But he then went on to assert that the substance of Christian ethics, which involved the fear of heavenly punishments and the hope of heavenly rewards, should not be swept away when politics and ethics became established on positive foundations. Such beliefs had proved to be very useful, and could still be so. In order to make politics and ethics fully positive,

All that is needed..... is to take in reverse order established ideas and to present supernatural beliefs as the crown of the social edifice rather than its base. Theism prevented social science from becoming positive only because supernatural power was taken to be the source of all rights and duties and because revelation was the science of good and evil.¹

So long as the basic precepts of moral theory were elaborated on positive lines, then conventional Christian beliefs were harmless. On the contrary, they could reinforce the effectiveness of positive ethics:

Establish in an earthly manner the ideas of good and evil, of vice and virtue, etc., seek the conduct which can provide man with the greatest happiness on earth, and then add that God will reward this conduct in another life; this can only be advantageous and not inconvenient. In presenting the future life, not as the principle, but as the reward of the present life, you are bringing in supernatural ideas in only a useful manner.²

1. J. Dautry, Saint-Simon. Textes choisies, p. 171

2. Ibid., p. 172

This state of affairs would be greatly superior to that which obtained under the old order, in which the theologians themselves had the task of formulating moral theory. For this resulted in a tyranny of priests; no-one was in a position to challenge their orders, and had no option but to obey in ignorance.¹

Saint-Simon thus made clear his belief that Christianity should be allowed, even encouraged, so long as it did no harm to positivist moral theory. Those in charge of elaborating moral theory were to be positive scientists, of course, and not Christian theologians; but so long as the precepts of Christianity were compatible with the aims of positive ethics, then the new elite of positive savants should tolerate Christian beliefs for as long as there were individuals to whom such beliefs were important.

We are now in a position to summarise with some precision the intellectual relationship between Saint-Simon and Comte. Under the influence of Comte, Saint-Simon returned to his earlier notions of the desirability of a new social hierarchy, at the head of which the new elite of positivist savants would promulgate the official values of society. But the two writers disagreed on the exact nature of this system of values. To Comte, it was imperative that it be based entirely on the science of human behaviour, the beginnings of which were to be found in the discipline of political economy. Saint-Simon, on the other hand, was not so concerned that the value system be deduced from the positive science of man. Although he had often expressed

1. Ibid.

the need for just this logical relationship between the science of human behaviour and the value system, he also, as we have seen, believed that a shared morality of socially useful labour, independent of the findings of positive science, was desirable. He was encouraged in this belief by the fact that philanthropy seemed to be the principle of industrial activity, and he was prepared to employ the unscientific belief in God in so far as it aided the acceptability of the philanthropic ethic. What was important to Saint-Simon, then, was not that there should be a scientific system of values operative in society, but that there should be a successful and viable one. While Comte and Saint-Simon agreed on the essential fragility of society, and on the need for strong moral leadership by the elite, they disagreed on the exact status of the moral system which the elite should promulgate. Saint-Simon was satisfied with the industrial morality of socially-useful labour, whose functional success was obvious, while Comte would not rest until the official system of values was endorsed by positive science.

The two writers did, however, find themselves sufficiently in agreement on a sufficiently wide range of topics for continued collaboration to be possible. Yet the disagreement expressed in the letters of 1818 eventually came to a head in 1824, when Saint-Simon's persistent preference for the man of action, the industriel, over the man of theory, the savant, caused Comte to part company with him with a degree of ill-feeling. But Comte nevertheless had a profound influence on his master. He had resurrected the anti-liberalism

implicit in Saint-Simon's pre-Restoration works, and drew him away from the liberal coterie represented by Augustin Thierry and the editors of Le Censeur européen. And in the meantime, Saint-Simon's view of the industrial class had undergone a slow but radical transformation.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

FROM ECONOMICS TO SOCIOLOGY

Saint-Simon's return to the kind of social theory which he had explored in his pre-Restoration writings involved important changes in his conception of the industrial class. This was inevitable, given the radical distinction between the methodological foundations of, on the one hand, positivism, and, on the other, liberalism. Saint-Simon had first realised the significance of the industrial class when he encountered the work of J.-B. Say and other liberals later associated with Le Censeur européen and his own L'Industrie. And his transfer of the concept of the industrial class out of that context and into a tradition of social thought based on entirely different premises raises important methodological problems which must be examined before we turn to a detailed examination of Saint-Simon's conception of the industrial system.

The methodological gulf between positivism and liberalism was a fundamental one, which exists even today among social scientists. Positivism was based on what may be called the sociological method; while liberalism was founded on the economic method.¹ The economic method is based on a model of man according to which human actions are entirely rational. It does not deny the existence of emotions; on the contrary, unless men were motivated by desires and aversions, society itself would never have come into existence. What the

1. The use of the terms "sociological" and "economic" in this strict sense has been suggested by B. Barry in his Sociologists, Economists and Democracy, London, 1970, pp. 3-4.

economic method does stress is the role of reason in ensuring that men obtain, in the long run, the greatest quantity of want-satisfaction that their circumstances allow. In the real world, of course, men are often stupid and short-sighted, and let their emotions get the better of them. But the model of the profit-maximising individual approximates to reality sufficiently to enable us to explain social phenomena in terms of it. It is in principle possible to deduce from the model predictions concerning human behaviour in specified circumstances. Social phenomena are, then, nothing but the outcome of the decisions taken by a number of rationally calculating individuals. Now, it was the economic method which underlay the development of political economy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And the great achievement of that discipline, in its own eyes, was the demonstration that the individual and the public interest need never collide. Social conflict was the result, not of irrationality, but of ignorance. If only men could have sufficient knowledge to enable them to calculate correctly, they would realise that the collision of self-seeking individuals was unnecessary, and would cease forthwith.

The sociological method, on the other hand, stresses not man's rationality, but his susceptibility to socialisation, through non-rational means, into pre-existing modes of behaviour. His actions are not governed by a calculation of the likely profit and loss involved in a proposed action and a subsequent decision to follow the most profitable path. Rather, he acts according to the norms which the

community into which he has been born has taught him to accept, and which he has internalised. The sociologist attempts to predict social phenomena by acquainting himself with the norms which govern a particular society and assessing how these norms will guide the behaviour of individuals in given circumstances. It was this kind of social methodology which underlay the intellectual reaction to the French Revolution. In England, it gave rise to Burke's conservatism, while in France it produced the theocratic reaction of de Bonald and de Maistre. According to these theorists, social conflict was to be ended not by teaching men how to maximise their personal want-satisfaction; for had not such attempts led to the Revolution? Rather, social peace was the result of ideological conformity, the universal acceptance of a coherent set of social norms.

From this brief characterisation, we may trace Saint-Simon's intellectual career in terms of its methodological changes. His early social theory was based upon the sociological method; society was seen as the expression, through various institutional forms, of a unitary set of official values. But when he encountered the liberal school of thought which emerged at the time of the Restoration, he abandoned sociology and espoused the economic method with enthusiasm. The industrial class, the centre of his concerns, acted according to certain values, but these values - thrift, hard work, the belief in limited government - were the result, not of inculcation by society, but of rational calculation. And these values were not only rational; they were moral, for they resulted in the maximisation of the

public as well as the private, welfare. Finally, however, under the influence of Auguste Comte, Saint-Simon returned to the methodology of his earlier works. The central work of this last phase, L'Organisateur, and the works which followed it were devoted largely to the same issues as those which had concerned him in the immediate post-Restoration period; he was still keen to demonstrate that the industrial way of life was the only truly moral way of life, and that the industrial class had a mission to bring that way of life to all mankind. But the basic concept underlying this exercise was that of the system, the set of institutions reflecting and inter-related by a coherent set of values as promulgated by an elite of intellectuals. Consequently, Saint-Simon was now more concerned with the elaboration in some detail of the structure of the new, industrial, system, which, as he envisaged it, went far beyond anything which the Restoration constitution, however reformed, could bring into being. The new system was to be governed by an elite consisting partly of the positivist scientists whose attention Saint-Simon had attempted to attract by his early pamphlets; but they were to be joined by the leaders of industry and by a new group, the artists. The role of the artists would be one of generating mass enthusiasm for the industrial system by appealing to the senses, to the non-rational elements of human nature.

Saint-Simon's abandonment, in 1819, of the economic method and his wholehearted espousal of the sociological method has been observed by his commentators, but its importance has been neglected. E. Durkheim, for instance, believed that Saint-Simon was always a positivist, and that

his apparent desertion of philosophy in 1814 and subsequent devotion to purely social matters was a conscious decision to achieve what he had often stated to be the one task which remained in the completion of the positivist system: the application of positivist principles to the study of man.¹ Now there are two respects in which the dividing line between the sociological and the economic methods in Saint-Simon's post-Restoration works was blurred by the fact that they led to similar conclusions. First, Saint-Simon agreed with the political economists in believing that morality was founded on rationality; yet, on certain occasions, he stressed morality as if it were a faculty independent of reason. Adam Smith had suggested that each individual should concern himself with his self-interest only; the "guiding hand" would ensure that the public welfare was safeguarded in the meantime. But Saint-Simon continued to believe in the subjective morality of philanthropic labour which he had first expressed in his pre-Restoration writings; and love of one's neighbour was an ethic which was recommended as being good in itself, despite the fact that it also ultimately ensured the safeguarding of the individual's interest. Secondly, there was the acceptability to both economist and sociologist of the division of the industrial class into the entrepreneurs and the workers. To the liberal, this division was the natural outcome of the co-operation of rational, profit-maximising individuals; it was, as Charles Comte called it, a "natural" aristocracy, one which formed itself spontaneously

1. Socialism and Saint-Simon, Collier Books edition, New York, 1962, pp. 127-9 and 142-3

in industrial operations, rather than being imposed upon the masses by a privileged minority.¹ But Saint-Simon, who, as we have seen, was, even in his most liberal phase, afraid of the anarchic potential of the urban masses, saw in the hierarchy of industry not only a necessary and morally neutral feature of the industrial way of life, but also a useful device for maintaining social order.

But it is important that the methodological shifts in Saint-Simon's thought be elucidated, because they entailed certain significant changes in his underlying assumptions if not in his specific views and proposals. One such change consisted of his moving away from the materialist emphasis in his understanding of the rise of the industrial class. The Restoration liberals made great use of the popular distinction between military and civil societies; as we have seen, Charles Comte developed this distinction into one between two opposing modes of production: "barbarism" and "civilisation", i.e., industry.² Saint-Simon, in his account of the rise of industry, stressed the political events which had done most to advance the cause of the industrial class.³ But the economic method necessarily demanded that the material, economic aspect of history be emphasised at the expense of the role of ideas, and Saint-Simon's conscious decision to cease appealing to the savants and to write them out of history corroborates our view that he accepted the economic method advocated by the Restoration liberals. But when he returned to the sociological method, and espoused the concept of the system

1. See above, p. 111

2. See above, p. 126

3. See above, pp. 133-6

as the organising idea in his social theory, Saint-Simon was obliged to admit that ideas had played a crucial role in the historical development of industry. It would be unwise to attempt to force Saint-Simon into either a wholly idealist or a wholly materialist mould; yet it must be admitted that the concept of the social system should entail giving primacy to the influence of ideas, since it was by means of the inculcation of a unitary set of ideas that the system was understood to maintain its existence. Hence Saint-Simon's concern, constantly expressed throughout the works of his last six years, with the need to formulate a social ethic that was appropriate to the industrial age.

Another change which was involved in the move from the economic to the sociological method concerned the concept of the industrial class. Set in the new context of the industrial system, the concept began to lose much of the flexibility which had hitherto characterised it and which had made it so useful. It had been possible to employ the concept so as to refer either to the entire mass of individuals engaged on socially useful tasks or to those who took the leading roles in initiating those tasks. But, as part of a system based upon the hierarchical gulf between elite and mass, the wealthy industrial captains and their employees became correspondingly divided from one another in certain vital respects. Saint-Simon found it difficult to address the industrial class as a whole, and increasingly limited his appeals to the industrial captains and their colleagues in the elite. At the same time, Saint-Simon wrote more and more frequently of the prolétaires,

the poor masses, who, while technically members of the industrial class, were viewed with increasing anxiety as unassimilable and anarchic elements, in stark contrast with their leaders. The enemies of industry were still in control of the political life of the country and Saint-Simon frequently attacked them, stressing the fact that they represented the common enemy of all those who participated, at whatever level, in the new system. But the fresh distinctions which Saint-Simon had introduced into that system, based as they were on intellectual capacity rather than way of life, made it almost impossible for him to speak in the same language to both sections of the industrial class.

Yet Saint-Simon continued to employ the concept of the industrial class; and it would be appropriate, at this stage, to summarise the arguments which it is hoped to substantiate in the remainder of this work. Despite the introduction of a vast intellectual gulf between the two sections of that class, Saint-Simon continued to believe that their interests were identical. The only difference was that, whereas the leaders of the industrial class realised this, the masses did not; and it was because of their inability to act rationally, as Saint-Simon saw it, that artistic appeals to their irrational side were necessary. It was the responsibility of the elite to ensure that what the masses desired was in fact in accordance with their interests. Saint-Simon considered it was legitimate to continue regarding the industriels as a class, since their interests were identical; although, as will be seen, the

industrial class was not, strictly speaking, a class in relation to other social groups, and should be understood as a capacity-group. But the fact that most members of the industrial class were regarded as unable to achieve a steady conception of their interest, or to pursue it intelligently, led Saint-Simon into contradictory positions. On the one hand, he hoped that the new system would represent an advance on the old by establishing a relationship between elite and mass based not on coercion and deceit but on consent. He wanted to combine non-liberal social arrangements with liberal principles of government. But consent obtained through appeal to the irrational instead of, or, at least, as well as, the rational, was hardly consistent with the liberal viewpoint. And eventually Saint-Simon fell back on an overtly non-scientific, neo-Christian doctrine in his attempt to maintain ideological cohesion. In the process, the industrial class all but vanished; the concept remained operative but was beginning to obscure rather than illuminate the social changes that were occurring.

PART FOUR

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE DECLINE OF THE OLD SYSTEM

It was in L'Organisateur that Saint-Simon presented his most coherent account of the emergence of the scientific-industrial system from the ruins of the theological-feudal system. And early on in that work, he indicated that he had retained the basic historiographical assumptions which he had elaborated in his pre-Restoration writings:

The experience of all known generations has proved that the human race has always striven to improve its lot, and, consequently, to bring its social organisation to a state of perfection. It follows from this that it is in its nature to improve indefinitely its political system, by successively replacing institutions set up to maintain public order with new institutions which have the same purpose, but which are so combined as to render them more convenient for the governed and less burdensome to them than those which preceded them.

The experience of generations has proved equally that each of the improvements which have taken place in social organisation have created a crisis; or, rather, that they have resulted from great political crises. It has proved that each crisis, which has lasted the longer according as the people are less enlightened, has endured until the means to effect the improvement has been found and put into practice.¹

Saint-Simon was, then, clearly committed to the conception of historical change as a phenomenon which proceeds on two dimensions: the linear and the cyclical. As the human race became more enlightened, and, therefore, more capable of successfully governing itself, it moved through alternate periods of harmony and disruption, during which time the

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), pp. 31-2

institutional framework of society became compatible or incompatible with the prevailing level of knowledge. On questions of detail, however, Saint-Simon considerably revised his earlier opinions. He virtually ignored the history of mankind before the period of antiquity; while antiquity itself, which he had originally treated as a long period of disruption, brought about by the decline of polytheism and the rise of monotheism, was now regarded as an harmonious system in its own right. These changes were not, however, particularly significant; Saint-Simon's fundamental conception of the system, the organised harmony between social theory and social practice in terms of which alone history could be understood, remained the same.¹

Saint-Simon's purpose in L'Organisateur was to demonstrate how the new system, which had been born in the Middle Ages and at the very height of the power of the old system, had arrived at a position where it was almost complete and capable of taking over society as a whole. Saint-Simon's method consisted of arranging his observations in two series: the first dealing with the demise of the old system, the second with the rise of the new. He was at pains to distinguish his approach from that which historians had normally hitherto adopted. Up to the mid-eighteenth century, he said, historians had presented events as a mere

1. W. M. Simon is, I think, mistaken in regarding the inaccuracy of Saint-Simon's historical sketches as a weakness in his social philosophy as such. The categories which a philosopher of history employs are based on some a priori conceptual scheme, which is not itself susceptible to historical verification or refutation. See "Saint-Simon and the Idea of Progress", Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. 17, 1956, pp. 311-31; and "Ignorance is bliss: Saint-Simon and the Writing of History", Revue Internationale de Philosophie, vol. 14, 1960, pp. 357-83.

"biography of power, in which nations figured only as instruments and victims".¹ During the latter part of the eighteenth century, great advances were made; historians rejected the shallow accounts given by their predecessors, and introduced into their studies the notion of progress around which to structure their discoveries and make them more intelligible. But, in accordance with the spirit of the century, they remained analysers rather than synthesisers, critics rather than organisers; and instead of inventing a truly scientific basis on which to co-ordinate historical events, they accepted the traditional categories of dynasties and reigns.² The most important omission of the Enlightenment historians was their failure to rehabilitate the Middle Ages; rather than leaving it in its traditional disrepute, they should have seen that "it made progress of the first order, the most important until the present, which fact should make us regard the Middle Ages as the true cradle of our modern civilisation, and as the epoch during which that civilisation received a character distinct from that of the peoples of antiquity".³

Thus Saint-Simon stressed the organisational character of "science" as he understood it. Scientific method must, of course, be adopted in the ascertaining of historical facts; but Saint-Simon did not differ from the Enlightenment

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), p. 70

2. Ibid., p. 72. Saint-Simon gave Condorcet credit for having attempted a truly scientific history in his Esquisse d'un Tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain, but denied that he had succeeded. Ibid., p. 172m

3. Ibid., pp. 73-4

historians in this respect - what age was more devoted to the principle of scientific method? Rather, he emphasised the positivist aspect of modern science, its ability to comprehend the whole of reality according to basic principles. Thus, his concern was to organise historical data into some meaningful whole; and in this aspiration Saint-Simon foreshadowed the elaborate philosophies of history typical of nineteenth-century intellectual endeavour. His concern was always with the "real" in history; with the true sources of social change to be found deep in the practical life of mankind and not in the surface brilliance of clashing wills of national leaders. His aim was to demonstrate that events themselves were less important than the effects they had on the social system, and that the changes thus brought about followed intelligible patterns of inevitability.

Both of the series of observation presented by Saint-Simon began in the Middle Ages; and before embarking on them he briefly sketched the origins of that great epoch. All systems were, in his view, governed by two kinds of authority: the spiritual and the temporal. The old system had its spiritual origin in the establishment of Christianity, during the third and fourth centuries, as the official religion of Europe. The temporal origins occurred a little later, when the Roman Empire was invaded by Northern tribes. It was not until the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, that each kind of authority became unchallengeably established in its particular field. By this time, the feudal system had become universal; and the authority of the Pope had

extended throughout Europe.¹ Saint-Simon noted how easily the old system had emerged from antiquity, and how quickly and naturally the two kinds of authority had coalesced. There had been a period of seven or eight centuries between the origins and the establishment of the old system, during which time the necessary foundations of the system were solidly and carefully laid. In the temporal sphere, an ordered system of international relations was constructed, as a result, first, of Charlemagne's wars against the Saxons and the Saracens, and, secondly, of the Crusades. Spiritual authority, meanwhile, was created by the clergy, who patiently spread the word of the Gospels throughout Europe. When, at the end of the tenth century, Pope Hildebrand proclaimed the ascendancy of papal over national power throughout Europe, he was simply giving official recognition to what was already an established fact.

Saint-Simon's introduction of the distinction between the spiritual and the temporal realms was a major event; from now on it was to remain one of the primary distinctions in his social philosophy. He had employed the idea in his earliest pamphlets, and again in the works of 1813 and 1814;² but throughout his earlier writings, he had been concerned almost entirely with spiritual authority, and defined historical epochs in terms of the rise and fall of philosophical syntheses only.³ But the temporal sphere was now to be given some autonomy; its origin and dynamic could be

1. Ibid., p. 78

2. E.g., Lettres d'un habitant de Genève à ses contemporains, (1803), Travail sur la gravitation universelle, (1813), and De la réorganisation de la société européenne, (1814).

3. This probably explains why Saint-Simon had originally viewed antiquity as a period of disharmony.

studied independently of those of the spiritual realm. But Saint-Simon always insisted on the close relationship that existed between the two spheres. The precise nature of this relationship was not always clear; but at the very least, it was one of compatibility. "The temporal power could not be replaced by a power of a different nature without an identical replacement in the spiritual sphere; and vice versa."¹ But the distinction between the two realms was, in fact, only a manner of expressing the distinction between theory and practice which was analytically necessary to the understanding of the nature of the social system. The official body of doctrine represented the spiritual aspect of the system, while the manner in which that doctrine was embodied in practical life represented the temporal aspect.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the old system was challenged simultaneously in its spiritual and temporal spheres. The feudal principle of warfare, by means of which the system sought to preserve itself materially, was challenged by the principle which governed the life of the newly-emancipated commons: peaceful production and exchange. In the cities, a new type of property, mobile property, was gradually being accumulated; and it was based upon human labour and industry, and not, as in the case of the real estate of the nobility, on conquest. Meanwhile, the spiritual authority of the clergy, based as it was on "conjecture" and "metaphysics",² was brought into question by the growth of the positive sciences which had

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), p. 80

2. Ibid., p. 83

originally been introduced into European civilisation by the Arabs. From then on, the principles of observation and demonstration had become powerful forces for change; and this movement was enhanced in the thirteenth century, when the efforts of Roger Bacon greatly encouraged the ordinary scientific curiosity of men.¹

At this point, Saint-Simon launched into his first series of observations, which dealt with the gradual erosion of the foundations of the old system by disruptive elements contained within it.² The fundamental incompatibility between, on the one hand, militarism and industry, and, on the other, between theology and positive science, remained hidden until the Reformation, when Luther challenged the political supremacy of the Pope and the spiritual bond of blind belief by means of which he maintained that supremacy. Yet, although the Reformation swept Christendom, certain nations remained bound to Rome because the church placed itself under the rule of the temporal powers and thereby retained some political influence. But, after a century of religious wars, medieval temporal authority was itself challenged. The commons of France and England allied themselves to sections of the ruling order. In France, Richelieu and Louis XIV won the support of the commons in their efforts to diminish the political influence of the nobility; while in England, the nobility and the commons combined to weaken royal power, and their success was crowned by the Revolution of 1688.

1. Ibid., p. 84

2. Ibid., pp. 89ff.

Saint-Simon thus attributed the responsibility for undermining the old system to the commons, that is, to the artists, the savants, and the artisans - this last term being applied throughout L'Organisateur to the groups normally referred to as the industriels. Historians had traditionally spoken of wars between nobility and royalty, and between royalty and papacy. But, in fact, the struggle was between two social systems. The commons always allied themselves to the more liberal section of the temporal authorities, not by chance, or according to mere whim, but because of their nature. Since their position was based upon peaceful industry, the commons had no interest in the accumulation of power for its own sake; and by acting upon principles other than those observed by the ruling orders, they were challenging the very basis of feudalism. Into this image of the two systems locked in battle, Saint-Simon inserted certain momentous events which gravely weakened the old system. The discovery of America and the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope were triumphs of combined industrial and scientific endeavour. The invention of the printing press and Galileo's founding of positive astronomy also weakened the hold of the old system, the latter in particular, because it shattered the theological assumption that the earth was the centre of God's creation.

Saint-Simon now turned to the problem of explaining why it was that these early blows against the theological-feudal system did not destroy it completely. He suggested two reasons for this failure. First, the attacks on the spiritual power were not co-ordinated with those directed against the temporal power. Secondly, the attacks were insufficiently vigorous

and were, in fact, directed at the wrong targets. In the spiritual sphere, Luther's principle of free examination was carried to extreme lengths, and, by throwing the theological system into disrepute, it gave rise to a moral vacuum which was particularly damaging among the masses. In the temporal sphere, Louis XIV broke off his association with the commons and formed an alliance with the nobility; and the subsequent expansion of royal power made a revolution inevitable. But, when it did come, the Revolution made the fatal mistake of overthrowing the monarchy. The royal power was, in Saint-Simon's words, the "head and the heart" of the old system. And, since it was a general rule that "a system cannot disappear unless another exists fully formed, ready to replace it immediately", the Restoration of royal power was inevitable.¹

This explanation for the failure of the Revolution was considerably more sophisticated than that which Saint-Simon had put forward a few years earlier in L'Industrie.² In the earlier work, Saint-Simon had attributed the blame for the catastrophe into which the Revolution developed to the faulty political leadership of the industrial class. But in L'Organisateur, he was offering what could be taken as an explanation for the failure of the industrial class to organise itself under the appropriate leadership. According to Saint-Simon, whereas almost all the elements of the new system had, taken separately, come into existence by the time of the Revolution, these elements had not been integrated into a systematic unity. Although positive

1. Ibid., pp. 105-6

2. See above, pp. 115-22

science had become firmly established, it had not yet produced a positive moral theory around which the elements of the new system could come together; instead, it remained stuck in the negative, anti-theological stance which it had of necessity taken up at its beginning. Saint-Simon therefore proclaimed the need for a new moral theory:

It is clear that the unlimited liberty of conscience and religious indifference are the same thing in terms of political consequences. In the one case and the other, religious beliefs can no longer serve as a basis for ethics..... it proves that it is necessary to constitute an ethical theory on different principles: on positive principles (that is to say, deduced from observation); a theory of ethics which is the base, or, rather, the general link of the social organisation.¹

Saint-Simon was nevertheless optimistic. The Restoration constitution, which established a chamber of deputies representative of public opinion, provided an opportunity whereby the new system could be peacefully completed and its establishment successfully effected. Once again, the essential purpose of the Revolution, namely, the overthrow of the old order and the institution of the new, was to be accomplished under the most peaceful of conditions; and in the process, the natural leaders of the industrial class could be assured that their control would not be vitiated by moral vacuum.

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), pp. 106-7n

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE RISE OF THE NEW SYSTEM

Saint-Simon provided several accounts of the rise of the new, scientific-industrial system. The account which formed the second "series of observations" in L'Organisateur was, by comparison with later accounts, somewhat brief; but it concentrated on the general features of the historical movement, and on the superior nature of the new system compared with that of the old.¹ In detail, it was similar to the account Saint-Simon gave in L'Industrie², but it was accompanied by a corresponding account of the rise of positive science, the ally of industry in the spiritual sphere.

The beginnings of the emergence of the new system were to be found in the emancipation of the commons during the high Middle Ages. Since that event, the commons had devoted themselves to the exploitation of nature to the benefit of mankind. Both the scientific and the industrial "capacities", as Saint-Simon called them, had followed this principle of directing human force away from man and against nature. The emancipation of the commons had produced this result in two ways. First, it released individual members of the commons from direct dependence on the nobility, who observed the opposite principle of warfare. Secondly, it retained the dependence of the commons taken as a whole on the nobility; by being denied a voice in the political life of

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1. The second series is in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), pp. 112ff. The comparison between the old and the new systems is examined in the following chapter.
 2. See above, pp. 133-5

society, the commons were saved from petty and wasteful intrigue and thus encouraged to direct their entire energies towards the only goal open to them: the accumulation of wealth. Thus, the commons observed the principles of the new system as soon as they were emancipated. Not only did human labour cease to be a degrading imposition; the tendency to dominate became a useful human attribute.¹

The progress of industry since the Middle Ages had been spectacular. It had captured control of the real forces of society to the extent that warfare, the traditional feudal means of self-enrichment, was dependent upon the availability of a developed industrial base. No nation could wage war unless its industrial class could provide the requisite military hardware and technology. The recognition which the English commons gained through the English Revolution was in reality an acknowledgement in political terms of their long-established social power. The scientific capacity had made great headway too.² Saint-Simon returned to one of his earliest ideas: the progress of the scientific disciplines from the conjectural to the positive stage. Astronomy, physics, chemistry and physiology were all now fully-fledged positive sciences. But philosophy, ethics and politics had yet to be brought to a comparable level of advancement.

Saint-Simon was impressed by the trans-European nature of the new system: a feature it shared with the old. This was especially true of the spiritual sphere. The savants of Europe were closely allied and had lost all traces of

1. Ibid., p. 126n (127)

2. Ibid., pp. 135ff.

national sentiment. In the temporal sphere, however, national rivalry persisted; and, as a result, it was inevitable that the new system would be perfected initially in its spiritual aspect. But the collaboration between the spiritual and the temporal was intensifying all the time; and the solidarity between the two was being cemented by the emergence of the engineer, whose skill embodied perfectly the combination of theory and practice.¹

In L'Organisateur, as in L'Industrie, Saint-Simon took the emancipation of the commons as the beginning of the political emergence of the new system. In a later work, Du Système industriel, part 1, (1821),² he examined the reasons behind the emancipation itself. The fundamental cause consisted, quite simply, in the natural tendency of the human species to increase its means of satisfying wants, and in the consequent spiral of ever-increasing needs. The feudal class began to enjoy the products of the industrial class and recognised that, if the production of new commodities was to match the demand for them, then the members of the industrial class would have to be left to organise their own lives and to dispose freely of their persons and products. Freedom was therefore granted; and, as a result, the industrial class not only increased its productivity but also bought increasing amounts of land and mobile property offered them by the nobility. Hence their eventual acquisition of by far the greatest share of the national wealth.³

1. Ibid., p. 142

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), pp. 3-240

3. Ibid., p. 74

Saint-Simon took up the same theme, in even more detail, in his Catéchisme des industriels, part 1, (1823).¹ In this work, he returned to the Frank-Gaul distinction by way of explaining the emancipation of the commons. During the period which elapsed between the Frankish conquest of Gaul and the occurrence of the first Crusade, the Franks and Gauls came together and formed the French nation.² But industrial activity was almost entirely under Frankish control in the meantime. The Franks owned all the land and almost all the agricultural capital, in which they included their Gallic serfs. They supervised the production of implements, and were provided with clothing by their wives and daughters who lived and worked in the castles. The artisan class, feeble and small though it was in this subordinate condition, nevertheless managed to hoard a little capital. But the real change came with the first Crusade. This event left the Franks penniless, and they were obliged to sell the Gauls their freedom, both in the towns and in the countryside. Moreover, their expeditions to the East had brought them into contact with a way of life based on luxury goods; and on their return they expected the commons to satisfy these newly-found expensive tastes. Yet another stimulus to industrial activity attributable to the Crusade was the encouragement which that event gave to chivalry among Frankish males and coquetry among the women; for the effect of these new fashions was to create a demand for weapons and for Eastern clothing and finery. Enriched by these outlets for industrial products, the industrial class

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), pp. 3-71

2. Ibid., pp. 16-17

detached itself from the military class and formed three distinct groups: the Gallic landowners, who were also farmers; the artisans; and the merchants, who thrived on the expanding external trade and internal circulation of commodities.¹ The commercial freedom of the industrial class was further enhanced in the reign of Louis XI, who, recognising the weakness of the monarchy in the face of the combined Frankish nobility, initiated the dismantling of the feudal system by forming an alliance with the commons and re-asserting royal authority. Since then there had always existed an essential unity of interest between King and commons.²

Thus, in his later writings, Saint-Simon substantiated with historical detail the account of the rise of the new system which he had given in L'Organisateur. In doing so, he brought out very clearly the dialectical nature of the transition from the one system to the other; each event which strengthened the position of the industrial class and its allies was intended to benefit the nobility, yet could only contribute to its eventual demise. The control of the real power in society gradually moved, unperceived, into the hands of the industrial class; but the corresponding political power remained firmly in the hands of the monarchy, however closely the interests of the King and the commons coincided. In 1825, however, Saint-Simon produced yet another account of the rise of the new system, one which involved a substantial revision of his earlier sketches. This appeared in his Quelques opinions philosophiques à

1. Ibid., pp. 18-19

2. Ibid., pp. 20-2

l'usage du xixe. siècle.¹

Saint-Simon began by dividing the previous one thousand years of history into three periods: from the ninth century to the mid-thirteenth; from there to the fifteenth century; and from there to the present day. During the first period, the medieval political system was consolidated. The main figures responsible for this achievement were Charlemagne, Alfred and Gregory VII (whom Saint-Simon used to refer to as Hildebrand). Among their most admirable tasks was that of facilitating the progress of the human mind by preparing scientific and industrial effort.² Saint-Simon made no mention of the Arabs or of the emancipated commons; the credit for the foundation of the new system was attributed solely to the founders of the old system. The effect was to emphasise the supremely coherent and stable aspects of the Middle Ages, and to play down the struggle between the establishment and the rising industrial class.

It was, in fact, only in the second of Saint-Simon's historical periods that the new system began to emerge in its own right. Between the mid-thirteenth century and the fifteenth century, the energies of the Europeans were diverted from external affairs - they had by then achieved a lasting security from foreign invasion - into the development of general welfare. This took two forms. Some of the non-privileged orders developed industrial enterprises; others, members of the clergy, began studying the physical and the mathematic sciences. The discovery of the compass and the advances in navigational techniques

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), pp. 51-106

2. Ibid., pp. 72-4

accomplished during this period resulted in the discovery of America; the progress in astronomy and mathematics enabled Copernicus to discover the structure of the solar system; and the printing press was born. By the fifteenth century, "men possessed all the intellectual instruments necessary for combining their forces and their capacities in every peaceful direction".¹

By placing the origin of the new system in the fifteenth century, Saint-Simon seemed to be reverting to the historical pattern which he had elaborated in his earlier, pre-Restoration writings. As then, his main concern was the spiritual forces of society; the development of temporal forces was, by comparison, played down, in contrast with the earlier sketch in L'Organisateur. And, as in the earlier writings, the Reformation was taken to be the crucial turning-point. This event had, of course, been part of the "series of observations" compiled in L'Organisateur, but now, in Quelques opinions philosophiques à l'usage du xixe. siècle, it was the actual beginning of a series. Saint-Simon praised Luther for his attack on papal authority, but condemned him for failing to replace it with a moral theory upon which a new social order could be constructed. Luther's fundamentalism was misplaced; the original goal of the Christian religion, the abolition of slavery, had been achieved, and the new goal which he should have set for it was "to establish a social organisation which assures labour, without interruption, to all proletarians; a positive education for all members of society; and enjoyments such

1. Ibid., p. 82

as to develop their intellect".¹ Meanwhile, Copernicus demoted man from the centre of God's creation; and this, along with Luther's onslaught, shattered the spiritual foundations of the old system. During the eighteenth century, criticism was directed largely at temporal power; and the great figures of the Enlightenment demonstrated how beneficial had been the great upsurge in royal power since the Reformation in destroying the political influence of the nobility. And while the old order was being dismantled thus, the masses were becoming ever more extensively engaged in scientific and industrial enterprises. The industrial class lent its support to the King in return for royal protection, and thereby acquired a "social force" superior to that of the military class; and it provided itself with internal assistance through the banking system, which directed the movement of capital between the various branches of industrial activity. The savants and the artists, meanwhile, also supported the King, and were rewarded by the institution of independent academies of science and art in return for their attacks on the papal power.²

This account of the rise of the new system differed considerably from the earlier account in L'Organisateur; but there is no need to assume that either of them was his definitive version. Saint-Simon was at all times careless of detail, and was always prepared to arrange facts in such a way as to emphasise specific points and elucidate trends. In 1825, the year in which the second account was published, Saint-Simon was becoming concerned at the failure

1. Ibid., pp. 85-6n

2. Ibid., pp. 87-91

of the rich and the poor sections of the industrial class to collaborate and establish the new system in the way he prescribed; and it seems probable that, by presenting the history of the previous thousand years in the way he did, he was hoping to point out the virtues of highly coherent social orders. Hence the ambiguous attitude towards Luther and the relative lack of emphasis on the conflict between the old and the new systems which had begun in the high Middle Ages. If this interpretation is correct, it at least allows us to take seriously the original account in L'Organisateur, which is, of the two, the more rigorous and the more related to a substantial sociological hypothesis concerning the nature of the social system and the laws governing the transition from one to another. But the concept of the social system remained the central organising idea in both accounts, the concept around which it was possible to present history in a meaningful way.

At the end of chapter ten, we observed that the means which the Restoration liberals proposed for completing the transition from feudal to industrial society were much less dramatic and revolutionary than those proposed by Marx for the ending of bourgeois society and the initiation of socialism.¹ We may end the present chapter by drawing attention to some further interesting points of comparison between Saint-Simon and Marx. We must admit, of course, that the two writers employed radically distinct methods. Although Saint-Simon was not very precise in his treatment of the relationship between the spiritual and the temporal

1. See above, p. 140.

realms, he certainly gave priority to, and assumed the independence of, the spiritual; and he cannot, therefore, be classified as a materialist in the Marxist sense. But, in some ways, he and Marx shared a common historical perspective of the demise of feudalism and the emergence of the industrial mode of production. True, where Saint-Simon saw the rise of a single class, the industrial class, Marx saw two classes, bourgeoisie and proletariat, increasingly divided by irreconcilable interests. Yet both perceived in the commercial activity which sprang up in the medieval cities the beginning of the end of feudalism; and both understood, each in his own way, the significance of certain key events such as the discovery of America. Above all, both writers saw in the development of industry the development of a single mode of production. Saint-Simon had always regarded class struggle as, essentially, conflict between distinct modes of production; the nineteenth century would, he believed, see the final disappearance of the feudal, military and parasitic mode and the triumph of the industrial, peaceful and productive mode. Marx, likewise, viewed all class conflict prior to that between bourgeoisie and proletariat as conflict between rival modes of production. Thus, Saint-Simon and Marx were agreed that the bourgeoisie and the proletariat were engaged in mutually necessary operations; where they differed was in their estimation of the future of that co-operation. Marx believed that the property-relations to which the industrial mode of production had given rise were such as to become ultimately unworkable; the development of industry had intensified the conflict between the two

classes involved; and, if industry were to continue to develop, that conflict would have to be resolved. Saint-Simon, on the other hand, accepted the relations of production that had accompanied the rise of industry on the grounds that they were "natural" - i.e., the unplanned outcome of millions of individuals acting free from government restraint. There was, therefore, no incompatibility between the needs of industry as a mode of production and the existing relations of production. Yet despite this difference between Saint-Simon and Marx, both viewed the industrial mode of production and the institutions which accompanied its emergence as a system - a functioning, integrated whole; and although Marx believed that this system was ultimately doomed because of its internal contradictions, both he and Saint-Simon saw the relationship between bourgeoisie and proletariat as a systemic one; whereas the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the feudal class spanned two distinct modes of production. And, as will be seen, it was Saint-Simon's lack of interest in the relations of production appropriate to industry that was largely responsible for his continuing to employ the concept of the industrial class at a time when the development of industry demanded to be analysed in different terms.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE SYSTEMS COMPARED

Given Saint-Simon's eagerness to point out the good aspects of the old system, and his conviction that it was admirably appropriate to the level of knowledge prevailing at the time, it seems legitimate to question his belief that its eventual demise was to be welcomed. Would he have preferred, had he the choice, history to end at the point when the old system reached its zenith? In what sense did the development of the new system constitute progress? Saint-Simon could quite consistently have argued that the decline of the old system was a misfortune, but that the new system should be brought to maturity so that order could be re-established and the benefits of the old system realised in different forms. But, in fact, Saint-Simon believed that the new system was, in an absolute sense, superior to the old. There did exist external, independent criteria according to which the two systems could be compared, and the old system found wanting. Ironically, his clearest expression of these criteria appeared in the form of a comparison between the medieval and the ancient systems, which formed part of Quelques opinions philosophiques à l'usage du xixe. siècle.¹ But, in so far as Saint-Simon erected this standard in order to compare one system with another, we may assume that the same criteria may be employed in a comparison between the old, medieval system and the new system.

1. Ibid., pp. 53-72

The first criterion whereby the ancient and the medieval systems were compared concerned the level of security and standard of living. In this respect, the Middle Ages was far superior to antiquity. Under their Greek and Roman masters, the slaves of antiquity were wholly subject, having no legal redress whatever. During the middle ages, however, the masses were legally protected against assault by a complicated scale of compensation. Moreover, the Christian ethic of fraternal love and the Christian doctrine of the equality of men in the sight of God, encouraged an attitude of mutual accommodation which removed the threat of sudden arbitrary violence from the lives of the majority of the population. Again, the ancient rulers lived in fortified towns and left their slaves labouring in the countryside, thereby removing themselves from the possibility of assassination and uprising. But in medieval times, the feudal lords were surrounded by their servants, and were, therefore, obliged to take into account the latter's needs in order to avoid rebellion.

The second comparison revolved around the level of relative reward which the two systems granted to natural merit. Once again, the middle ages were found to be superior. The masses, in antiquity, were kept in a position of social and political obscurity. The Roman patricians retained all the main political offices in their own hands, and the only advantage enjoyed by the plebeians over the slave class was their freedom to choose their own masters and to obtain legal redress against assault. Antiquity was, broadly speaking, governed by a gerontocracy which maintained itself

through inheritance and the absolute jurisdiction which fathers exercised over their children. The latter practice ensured that radical youths, whatever their ability, were despatched. The Middle Ages, however, observed less ferocious practices. The spiritual sphere dominated the temporal, and reduced it to merely local authority. The clergy was composed of plebeians, and between the time of Hildebrand and the sixteenth century they brought in great reforms. They brought into cultivation vast quantities of land in France, Germany and Northern Europe. They founded schools throughout Europe and promoted literacy. They preserved such of the science, the literature and the art of antiquity that had survived the ravages of the barbarians. They facilitated communications by building roads and bridges; and, until the time of Luther, they were alone in cultivating the sciences and intellectual pursuits generally.

The next criterion which Saint-Simon applied by way of comparing the two systems was that of the ability to absorb population. The Roman Empire, like the Greek city-states of early antiquity, was "anti-philanthropic"; it regarded all non-Roman peoples as barbarian and fit only for enslavement or elimination. It was, therefore, unable to withstand the combined might of its neighbours, and was eventually destroyed by them. The Middle Ages, on the other hand, were guided by the Christian ethic of fraternal love, and achieved a population level of sixty million. When attacked by the Saxons, the medieval system first repulsed them, then converted them. When attacked by the Saracens, its numbers ensured victory and a lasting security from Moslem aggression.

Finally, Saint-Simon compared the two systems in respect of their scientific achievement. He allowed antiquity some superiority, in that language, letters and numbers, the basic tools of thought, were all invented during that period. But in the natural sciences, and in ethical and political theory, they were most definitely inferior. They foolishly believed that the sun was no larger than the Peloponnese. They had no conception of the universal good, and each people sought only to dominate the others. The military class was in control; industrial life was held in contempt, and a large number of slaves was necessary in order that the ruling class could indulge in public affairs. Ancient social organisation never moved beyond the crude boundaries of hereditary aristocracy. Spiritual power was subordinate to the temporal, with the result that an independent science of general ethics never had a chance to emerge. During the Middle Ages, however, a very great deal of attention was paid to ethics and politics, and the fine arts were wisely left in the advanced state to which they had been brought by the Greeks and the Romans. Saint-Simon did credit the ancients with the original formulation of the fraternal ethic, but he observed that they were incapable of operating it as a political principle.

This series of comparisons, designed as it was to restore the prestige of the Middle Ages and to reduce that of antiquity, nevertheless informs us of Saint-Simon's ideas concerning the nature of the new, scientific-industrial system. For that system was one where the four criteria of

excellence were realised. By not prescribing actual forms of human enjoyment, but by pursuing human happiness as such; by not excluding men of certain racial, national or religious types, but by offering itself to humanity as such, the new system represented perfection in social organisation and principles. It was based on the concept of the ideal, universal man, who, in the search for his own satisfaction, lost his self-centredness and understood that his personal happiness was bound to that of the human race itself. On this basis alone could a lasting social system, free from internal conflict, be secured. Wherever a system was based on ruse or force, it was incapable of survival; for such a system was fundamentally immoral. Only where each individual understood the principles of the social system and accepted them as authoritative, could men live in a common, shared world; but unless such ideological conformity were based on scientifically sound knowledge of the principles of social organisation, it would eventually collapse.

The superiority of the principles of social organisation observed by the new system over those observed by the old was explored in some detail in L'Organisateur.¹ The second "series of observations" which he presented in that work was not concerned only with the external relations of the developing scientific-industrial system. Saint-Simon was also intent on demonstrating how the commons, in their struggle for the control of their own destiny, had developed, in both the spiritual and the temporal spheres, entirely new principles of internal organisation. It was in the course

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), pp. 143-59

of this exercise that Saint-Simon revealed explicitly his preference for the new system over the old in absolute terms; and he also revealed how his conception of the internal differentiation within the industrial class was evolving. He assumed from the start the distinction between the "masses" and their "chiefs". In L'Industrie, as we have seen, Saint-Simon tended either to treat the industrial class as the great majority of the community, a homogeneous mass of men united in their opposition to the reactionary, unproductive ruling groups which preyed upon it; or to regard it as being composed of the substantial middle class of prosperous traders and manufacturers, with their employees coming into the picture only in so far as they were actually engaged in productive work. Simultaneously, Saint-Simon expressed fear and mistrust of the urban masses, believing them to be potentially anti-industrial in their values, and useful fodder for revolutionary self-seekers. But, in L'Organisateur, he employed a more matured conception of the industrial class; one which accepted the internal distinctions between employer and employee, but which treated the latter as an integral component of the industrial class. It was, in fact, only because the lower ranks of the commons had acquired industrial and scientific skills that the new system had developed at all. Since their emancipation, the commons had acquired the habits of orderliness, economy, and hard work; and, at the same time, they had learned to use their faculties of reason and foresight. The end of servitude had made everyone a property-owner; since then, "there have no longer existed any real proletarians, in the strict sense of the word".¹ Saint-Simon

1. Ibid., p. 146

clearly had in mind the idea, which we have already seen, to have become established during the eighteenth century, that labour represented a form of property; and men freed for useful labour were capable of realising the value of their skills. And although he did not explain exactly what he understood the "strict sense" of the term prolétaire to be, he probably meant by it the individual whose labour did not result in the creation of a net value, of any utility for the human race.¹ Thus, Saint-Simon was not necessarily contradicting his earlier assertion, in L'Industrie, that the "ignorant proletarians" were instrumental in destroying the success of the Revolution.² In that context, he was employing the term in a loose sense, in order to refer to the urban, plebeian mass of unemployed, day-labourers and small shopkeepers. But so keen was he to demonstrate the essential unity of interest between the various sections of the industrial class as a whole, and to draw attention to the more responsible side of their nature, that the account he gave in L'Organisateur of the behaviour of the masses during the Revolution was considerably revised:

During the frightful famine of 1794, when the lowest class of the people was all-powerful, this same class died of hunger by the thousand without disturbing the public peace for a moment. It can well be said that the French people know how to respect property.³

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1. In Roman times, the lowest class were known as "proletarians" because they served the state only by providing their offspring (proles).
 2. See above, p.107
 3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), p. 146n

This account differs fundamentally from that in L'Industrie, where the role of the masses during the Revolution was regarded as disastrous. Once again, Saint-Simon's view of history can be seen to have shifted according to the particular purpose he set himself on different occasions.

Since the new system was organised around wholly different principles from those which informed the old system, the relations between the mass of the commons and their leaders was of an equally distinct nature. Since the emancipation of the commons, the masses had gradually transferred their allegiance from their feudal lords to their industrial captains. This process was completed with the institution, under Charles VII, of the standing army; for this released the majority of the people from military obligations, and left them free to pursue purely industrial ends. At the present time, Saint-Simon claimed, the daily life of the worker brought him in contact with, and subordination to, the leaders of agriculture, manufacture and commerce, rather than with the great landowner or "idle capitalist who owns, partly or wholly, the workshop or the house of commerce".¹ In other words, the control of the representatives of the old system over the population at large had gone, and had been replaced by that of the representatives of the new system. And the old command-obedience relationship which had characterised the old system had given way to a relationship based on collaboration. Moreover, each member of the association of industry was rewarded, not according to his rank, but according to his contribution.

1. Ibid., pp. 149-50. Note that Saint-Simon's class divisions here are identical to those Say employed in his Traité. The industrial captain was the entrepreneur, who was distinct from the owner.

We may quote here Saint-Simon's concluding remarks concerning the superiority of the temporal sphere of the new system over that of the old:

Each obtains a degree of importance and of benefits according to his capacity and his stake; this constitutes the highest degree of equality which is possible and desirable. Such is the basic character of industrial societies, and there you have what the people have won by organising themselves under their industrial captains. There is no longer any command exercised over them by their new leaders, except that which is strictly necessary for the maintenance of good order during work, which amounts to very little... Finally, let us note that the progress of industry, science and the fine arts has multiplied the means of subsistence, has reduced the numbers of unemployed, has enlightened minds and refined habits; it has therefore tended to banish the three great causes of disorder: poverty, idleness, and ignorance.¹

Industry, as Saint-Simon understood it, could succeed only in so far as every member of the enterprise understood the real nature of his role in the process and saw the correctness of the hierarchy of rewards and initiative which that process demanded. The structure of feudalism, however, had not been understood by the medieval serf; it had been imposed upon him by force, and explained only in terms of theological doctrine. The feudal lord and his serf were unable to share a common world in the manner of the industrial captain and his employees.

The relationship between the masses and their spiritual authorities had changed in a similar manner. The blind, unquestioning and unlimited confidence which the masses had had in the theologians of the old system had slowly given way to the intellectual compulsion of positive science.

1. Ibid., pp. 151-2

As they became more accustomed to the industrial way of life, they realised that the clergy had little of any relevance to say to them, and they recognised in the savants of positivism their natural spiritual leaders. And just as the authority of the industrial captains sprang from the consensus around the legitimacy of the industrial hierarchy, so the authority of the savants sprang from the ability of each individual to understand the basic rules of scientific method. "It is the assent given to propositions concerning matters susceptible to verification; propositions admitted unanimously by men who have acquired and proven the necessary capacity to judge."¹ Thus, whereas medieval theology was rooted in mystery, and maintained its powerful position by insisting that the masses were unable to understand the inner nature and justification of the doctrines which it taught, positive science was, on the contrary, open for all to judge. Just as in the workshop the command-obedience relationship had given way to that of the spontaneous collaboration of men with different talents, so, in the spiritual sphere, the old clergy-laity dichotomy with its unbridgeable divide gave way to an open relationship between savant and layman, in which the former could actually demonstrate to the latter the validity of his discoveries.

The improvement which the new system constituted over the old may best be summarised by the fact that, under the old system, the leadership were charged with determining the end which society should pursue, while under the new, they were concerned only with establishing the means of

1. Ibid., p. 156

attaining the end which society determined for itself. The enlightenment which positive science and industry imparted upon the masses enabled them to establish their own goals, based on a general appreciation of the fact that industry was such that individual goals need not conflict but were capable of peaceful reconciliation: such was the improvement over warfare which industry represented. And in order to illustrate the emancipation which was implicit in the new system, Saint-Simon invited us to imagine two caravans, in one of which the guides established the destination as well as the route, while in the other they established the route only, having been instructed by the caravan as a whole to lead them to a specified destination:

Imagine a populous caravan, saying to its leaders: Lead us where it will be best for us. From this moment on, the guides are everything, the caravan nothing. It marches henceforth blindly; for, in order that a journey of this sort may take place, even if only for twenty-four hours, the caravan must give its guides unlimited confidence, a completely passive obedience. It is, then, entirely at the mercy of their bad faith and their ignorance. It can no longer reserve for itself any right other than that of declaring that the desert to which it is led does not suit it, and that it must be guided to another. But this right can scarcely provide anything but a series of useless experiences, at the caravan's expense, such that it will leave the determination of the end of the journey to the guides. Imagine, on the other hand, that the caravan says to its guides: you know the way to Mecca, lead us there. In this new state of affairs, the conductors are no longer chiefs; they are merely guides. Their functions, although very important, are only secondary: the principal action is in the hands of the caravan. Each member

reserves the right, at any time when he considers it convenient, to make critical observations on the route which is being taken, and to propose, according to his knowledge, modifications which he considers useful. As the question can never concern anything but a very positive and easily-judged question (Are we moving away from, or approaching, Mecca?) it is no longer the will of the guides that the caravan obeys, assuming it to have some intelligence; it obeys its own conviction, which results from the demonstrations presented to it.¹

1. Ibid., pp. 195-7

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW SYSTEM

Saint-Simon did not confine his analysis of the new system to the general principles of its organisation. On the contrary, he gave a considerable amount of thought to the question of the constitution which would best ensure the successful operation of the system. Characteristically, he produced several constitutional schemes, each emphasising the idea uppermost in his mind at the time. But before examining them in detail, it would be useful to inquire into exactly what Saint-Simon understood by the concept of social capacity, and how his elevation of the concept to a position of central importance brought him into conflict with orthodox liberal theory.

We have seen how Saint-Simon began to diverge from liberalism not long after encountering it at the time of the Restoration; the departure of Thierry in 1817 from his post as Saint-Simon's secretary being one of the results. And, as we shall see in a later chapter, he was to become overtly hostile to liberalism, accusing its adherents of helping to perpetuate a semi-feudal political structure and thus preventing the scientific-industrial system from gaining the full political control to which it could rightfully lay claim. Saint-Simon's precise reasons for rejecting liberalism were given in Du Système industriel (part 1). Liberals made the mistake of assuming that liberty could ever be a substantial political goal. A social system had to be

organised around an end; the old system was designed for warfare, while the new system was so framed as to enable production of goods and services to be maximised in peaceful conditions. Individual liberty had been constantly invaded under the old system, and it was natural that the first serious intellectual attack on that system should advance the theory that society should be organised so as to protect liberty. But liberty was implicit in the organisation of the new system; and it was unnecessary, therefore, consciously to attempt to protect it and treat it as an end in itself. "Liberty, regarded in its true light, is a consequence of civilisation, and as progressive as is civilisation; but it cannot be its end."¹ The organisation of society around the principle of liberty would, therefore, constitute a misguided attempt to remedy the faults of the old system.

As an example of the confusion wrought by liberal ideas, Saint-Simon cited the belief that all men were entitled by nature to participate in public affairs. In order to demonstrate the absurdity of this belief, Saint-Simon extended it hypothetically into the sphere of science. It would be universally agreed that any claim that all men had a natural right to practice chemistry would be nonsense; what we should look for would be, not the right to practice it, but the ability to do so. And it was evidence of the continuing unscientific basis of political theory that the right to participate in politics was widely espoused. Saint-Simon was, however, confident that political theory would soon

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), p. 15n

become a positive science; and, as soon as the criteria of political ability had been established, politics would be the concern solely of "a special class of savants who will impose silence on the chatter".¹ Capacity was, then, central to Saint-Simon's conception of the constitution of the new system. If liberty came into the picture at all, it would consist of "the development without hindrance and with all possible extension, of a temporal or spiritual capacity which is useful to the association".² While we find this an eccentric use of the term liberty, Saint-Simon's meaning is clear: the best way to deal with the problem of liberty is to forget it.

A more serious effect of the idea of liberty on the development of the new system was its tendency to emphasise the individual at the expense of society; whereas the development of the new system required the recognition that the individual must become more and more dependent upon his society. As civilisation progresses, "the division of labour, regarded spiritually and temporally, and from the most general point of view, grows in the same proportion. It necessarily results from this that men depend less upon one another individually, but that each of them depends more on the mass, according to the same principle exactly".³ To Saint-Simon, the system was prior to its parts; to the liberal, the reverse was the case.⁴ Thus, liberalism tended to hamper the internal, organic development of society and

1. Ibid., p. 17n

2. Ibid., p. 16n

3.. Ibid.

4. This is another example of the different methodologies employed by "sociologists" and "economists". See above, pp. 180-2

and to divert society from its true end, production. The division of labour, the separation and refinement of capacities, had intensified as the true end of society became clear, and this process must be allowed to continue at all costs. Yet it is worth noting that the process, as Saint-Simon described it, did engender a kind of liberty, using the term in its normal sense. For the tendency of individuals to depend less upon one another and more upon the society as a whole did remove the individual from the arbitrary domination by other specific individuals. This was the nature of the freedom which Rousseau believed was embodied in the constitution he proposed in the Social Contract.

Saint-Simon's constitutional scheme for the new system consisted of the careful separation of capacities and the allocation of the correct functions to them. And he believed he was acting on the latest findings of the human make-up that physiology had produced. "An immortal physiologist, Bichat, has established as a law of human organisation that the different capacities to which the human mind is susceptible are mutually exclusive."¹ Saint-Simon explicitly attributed to Bichat only the simple distinction between the practical and the theoretical abilities. But, in fact, we find in Bichat's main work a considerably more elaborate differentiation of capacities which corresponds very closely with the distinctions Saint-Simon drew between the artists, the savants and the artisans, the three groups which together constituted the commons. In his Physiological Researches.

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), p. 56

on Life and Death,¹ Xavier Bichat asserted that the human species possessed three main capacities, but that, in each individual, only one of the three was at all developed and capable of useful cultivation. There existed, therefore, three classes of men. First, there were those whose senses were highly developed; painters, musicians, sculptors, artists in general, belonged to this group. Secondly, some men had highly developed intellects, and employed their memories; scientists and poets came under this rubric. Finally, there were those with well-developed muscular strength.² Bichat's distinction between the artists and the savants entered into almost all of Saint-Simon's proposed constitutions from L'Organisateur onwards; together, the two groups constituted the spiritual sphere, while the temporal sphere was in the hands of the industriels, i.e., those with the greatest capacity for labour. It should be emphasised, however, that this division of labour according to physiological constitution was not of the kind that Saint-Simon claimed to have developed as civilisation had developed. For this latter variety consisted of the division of tasks within the overall distinction between the spiritual and the temporal, which was a permanent distinction and not susceptible to improvement; the only difference between the old and the new systems in this respect being the addition of the artists to the spiritual sphere of the latter. Rather, the kind of divided labour which was susceptible to intensification was that which existed, say, within the workshop, and which could always be improved in the interests

1. 1800; translated by T. Watkins, Philadelphia, 1809

2. Ibid., p. 207

of efficiency. This had no direct relation to capacity, the arrangement of individuals in respect of distinct tasks being based on grounds other than physiological make-up.

The first, and the most elaborate, sketch of the constitution of the new system appeared in L'Organisateur.¹ The constitution would prescribe three administrative chambers and the functions which should be entrusted to each of them. The first chamber was named the Chamber of Invention. It consisted of three hundred members: two hundred civil engineers, fifty poets or other literary figures, twenty-five artists, fifteen sculptors or architects, and ten musicians. Each year this chamber presented a plan for public enterprises designed to improve the public welfare. Such enterprises included the digging of canals, the construction of roads, and the cultivation of virgin lands. At all times the aesthetic possibilities provided by these operations would be given due regard. Saint-Simon devoted a footnote to describing the pleasure gardens which he proposed should be provided where canals and roads intersected; and it gives a vivid impression of the euphoric affluence which he believed the industrial system would create:

These areas of land are to be given over to providing resting places for travellers and pleasure-abodes for the local inhabitants.

Each of these gardens will contain a museum of natural products from the vicinity. They will also provide houses for artists who wish to stay there, and there will always be maintained there a certain number of musicians, whose task it will be to inflame

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), pp. 50-61

the inhabitants of the canton with the passion which circumstances require to be developed for the greatest good of the nation.

The entire French soil should become a superb English park, decorated with all that the fine arts can add to the beauties of nature.¹

The Chamber of Invention also planned public festivals of hope and remembrance. Festivals of Hope would involve the haranguing of the masses with exhortations to strive to fulfil the national plan; while during Festivals of Remembrance they would be regaled with gloomy accounts of the miseries of the old system. Saint-Simon proposed to set up a guiding committee which would gradually transform itself into the Chamber of Invention itself. Once again, Saint-Simon emerged as the reformer by stealth. The members of the Chamber were elected for five year periods, but in a manner determined by themselves. The Chamber also contained a consultative body of one hundred Frenchmen and fifty foreigners.

It is important to note in this account of the proposed Chamber of Invention that the artists were elevated to the highest ranks in the hierarchy. Saint-Simon evidently assumed that the great majority of the population would require some kind of external encouragement to hard work that played on their senses rather than their intellects. This emphasis on the leading role of the artists was not, however, the result of some haphazard ordering of the three groups constituting the commons. On the contrary, Saint-Simon had decided that the industriels were not sufficiently enthusiastic about the establishment of the new system to be entrusted

1. Ibid., p. 52n

with the highest offices. In his Lettres de Henri de Saint-Simon à messieurs les jurés (1820),¹ he attributed the failure of L'Industrie to generate a powerful movement for social reform to the fact that he had addressed the journal primarily to the industriels. This, interestingly enough, was the precise criticism which Auguste Comte had made of the journal in the first of the two famous letters he sent to Saint-Simon in 1818.² Saint-Simon declared that his decision to arrange the commons with the artists at the head, the savants following them, and the industriels last, had already met with success. "...I have already had the satisfaction of seeing several of our most distinguished artists, as well as our most prestigious savants, approve of my work and declare themselves supporters of my system."³

In accordance with this plan, Saint-Simon proposed that the second chamber, the Chamber of Examination, be staffed by savants, namely: one hundred physicians of organic bodies, one hundred physicians of inorganic bodies, and one hundred mathematicians. The Chamber of Examination scrutinised and passed judgement on the proposals for the national plan submitted to it by the Chamber of Invention. It controlled public education by producing three syllabi corresponding to three levels of ability; but they would have the common aim of instilling the inventive, the directive and the executive capacities. The question of religious education was left to the parents to decide.

1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), pp. 399-433

2. See above, p. 169

3. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 422

The educational plan was submitted to the Chamber of Invention and to the third chamber, that of Execution; and, after ratification from them it was administered by the Chamber of Examination itself. The third function of the Chamber of Examination was the organisation of public festivals in honour of various social groups: women, fathers, workers, etc. Orators were appointed with the task of reassuring the group in question of the vital social role it played. The Chamber was allocated 25 million francs to meet the cost of education and scientific research. As in the case of the Chamber of Invention, a small nucleus of individuals should be appointed with a view to becoming the Chamber of Examination; and, again like the Chamber of Invention, it included a consultative body of one hundred Frenchmen and fifty foreigners.

Following the institution of the two higher chambers, the House of Commons reconstituted itself into the Chamber of Execution. Each branch of industry was represented in it, the strength of its representation being in proportion to its importance. The deputies were not paid for their services, since they were wealthy enough in their capacity as industrial captains. Their tasks were, firstly, to administer the operation of the national plan, and secondly, to control taxation. The three chambers taken together constituted the parliament of the new system. Each chamber had the right to summon a plenary session of parliament; and official channels of communication existed between the three in order to prevent any breakdown in communication.

The following year, Saint-Simon proposed a more modest constitution,¹ no doubt hoping that it had more chance of being taken seriously than the ambitious scheme elaborated in L'Organisateur. And whereas he had addressed himself in that work to his fellow-countrymen as a whole, he now limited his appeal to the King and "the farmers, merchants, manufacturers and other industriels who are members of the Chamber of Deputies".² In this scheme, a more important role was attributed to the industriels, and the artists played no part at all. There were to be three assemblies: the Chamber of Industry, the Council of the Interior, and the Marine Council. The Chamber of Industry consisted of twenty-five industriels. The four most important farmers, the two leading merchants, the two manufacturers employing the largest number of workers, and the four leading bankers would be appointed in the first instance. They nominated, in turn, twelve further members: six farmers, two merchants, two manufacturers and two bankers. The twenty-fifth member was the Minister of Finance, who presided over the Chamber and submitted to it the annual budget for scrutiny and approval. Article IV of the proposed constitution required that the principle aim of the budget must be "to ensure the existence of the proletarians, by providing labour for the capable, and aid for the incapacitated".³ That the supreme power was invested in the Chamber of Industry was evident from the fact that it nominated the membership

1. Du Système industriel, part 1; in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), pp. 106-9

2. *Ibid.*, p. 105

3. *Ibid.*, p. 107

of the Council of the Interior, with the exception of its president, the Minister of the Interior. This assembly, like the higher assembly, was composed of twenty-five members. From the industriels were selected seven farmers, three merchants, and three manufacturers; from the savants, two physicists, three chemists and three physiologists; and, finally, three civil engineers were nominated. The Council met biannually in order to approve, in the first session, the budget of the Minister of the Interior, and, in the second session, the proportion of the general budget assigned to the Minister of the Interior. Finally, the Marine Council consisted of thirteen deputies, elected from the ship-owners in the major ports; it also met biannually, and carried out budgetary duties similar to those undertaken by the Council of the Interior.

In the last of his detailed proposals for a constitution suitable for the new system, Saint-Simon restored the artists to high office. In Catéchisme des industriels, part 4, (1824),¹ he employed the distinction between the capacities of theory and of sentiment. The former capacity consisted of the conception, production and elaboration of ideas; the latter, of sentiments. Two academies were instituted, each corresponding to one of the two capacities. The Academy of Interest, which grew out of the academy of physical and mathematical sciences founded by Louis XIV, was devoted to the cultivation of the sciences, including political economy, and was charged with the task of drawing up a "code of interests". The Academy of Sentiment consisted

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), pp. 26-39

of individuals devoted to the fine arts: poets, artists, sculptors, and musicians; and also moral theorists, theologians, and lawyers. The lawyers, whom Saint-Simon normally attacked for their reactionary motivation, were admitted to the academy in order to apply their regulative skills in drawing up the results of the research of their colleagues and formulating a "code of sentiments". The activities of the two academies were regulated and coordinated by a Supreme College which elaborated out of the two codes a general doctrine providing the basis for universal education. It also drew up a legal code, and, like the Academy of Sentiments, it employed lawyers for the purpose of ensuring that this code was correctly formulated. It regularly consulted practicing politicians and members of all branches of public administration.

At the centre of this constitutional scheme was the King. On his one side were the three scientific colleges described above, dealing with the intellectual and ethical requirements of the new system. On his other side was the supreme administrative council, which was staffed by the leading industriels. Administrative projects were conceived by the Supreme College, and passed on to the two Academies for comment. From there they were referred to the administrative council, which prepared the annual budget and scrutinised the conduct of ministers over the previous year. Finally, the Council of Ministers proceeded to execute the duly ratified national plan.

This third constitutional outline was, in essence, identical to that provided in L'Organisateur. The King

had been added, and the artists and the savants brought under a supreme assembly. But the division of the natural faculties into the sensual, the intellectual and the practical, and the assignment of each to a specific social function, remained unchanged. There are, however, four problems connected with this arrangement which must be examined further. The first concerns the relationship between, on the one hand, the spiritual-temporal distinction and, on the other, the tripartite division of the commons according to capacity. In his early writings, Saint-Simon had regarded the savants as having the sole claim to the spiritual authority of the positivist system; and, in L'Organisateur, as we have seen, he treated them as the natural successors, in this respect, to the medieval clergy. But, even in L'Organisateur, the artists were in a position at least of equality to the savants in the proposed constitutional arrangement. This suggests that Saint-Simon was becoming aware of a formal difference between the role of the clergy in the old order and that of the savants in the new. Spiritual authority derived from the possession of general knowledge, reaching beyond the comprehension of the masses but which was formulated in simple terms for purposes of education and ethical guidance. Thus, in his early writings, Saint-Simon modelled his savant very closely on the priest; he was a "general" scientist, familiar with all the main branches of knowledge: astronomy, chemistry, physics, and, above all, physiology, the discipline which included the science of man. And the intellectual gulf between him and the mass of men was as great as that which had existed

between the priesthood and the laity in medieval times. Yet, in L'Organisateur, Saint-Simon looked forward to the disappearance of the customary political relationships, based as they were on fraud and force, and their replacement by relationships mediated through a shared appreciation of the end which society should pursue. The medieval clergy determined both the ends of society and the means it should adopt for achieving them; whereas the spiritual authorities in the new system were concerned only with determining the means for achieving a commonly-determined goal. Hence there must be a great difference between the nature of the relationship between the priest and the laity, on the one hand, and that of the relationship between the savants and the masses on the other. But unable to contemplate a society in which the spiritual authorities were little more than technicians, Saint-Simon quietly introduced the artists to act as the colleagues of the savants. And the real inheritors of the role of the medieval clergy were the artists. It was they who were to take on the task of studying the most general and long-term requirements of society. The savants themselves were to devote themselves to solving the practical problems connected with the national plan; in other words, their special concern was the means rather than the end. In a brief discussion on the nature of the roles of the three social capacities, which he included in his De l'organisation sociale (1825),¹ Saint-Simon emphasised this split within the spiritual sphere. The artists were to impassion

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), pp. 137-9

society with a vision of its own future; the golden age was to be removed from its customary situation in the past, and projected as the goal to which humanity should strive. Affluence would be within the reach of all rather than just the few. And in order to achieve their end, the artists would set in motion "all the potentialities of the fine arts, eloquence, poetry, art, music; in a word, they will develop the poetic side of the new system".¹

The savants were to demonstrate that the great increase in the public welfare promised by the artists could be shared by all, rich and poor alike. They were to demonstrate the most efficient methods for ensuring full employment; they would elaborate the foundations of a system of public education; "they will establish the laws of hygiene relating to the body social, and, in their hands, political theory will be the complement to the science of man."² The leading industriels, meanwhile, would judge which of the "projects of public utility" elaborated by the artists and the savants were the most immediately practicable; and they would combine their efforts under the general direction of the bankers.³

The second problem involved in Saint-Simon's arrangement of society according to capacity concerns the precise membership of the industrial class. In the writings of the post-Restoration liberals, the industrial class contained virtually the whole of society, with the exception

1. Ibid., p. 138

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 138-9

of the bureaucrats, neo-nobles, idle capitalists and such unproductive groups who were favoured by the status quo. But now that Saint-Simon had introduced the concept of the social capacity and arranged society into three groups corresponding to three distinct and mutually exclusive capacities, the industrial class was, by implication, deprived of certain of its members. J.-B.-Say had, in his Traité d'économie politique, divided his industrieux into three groups: savants, entrepreneurs and workers. Saint-Simon was obliged to remove the savants from this arrangement by virtue of the fact that they possessed a specific capacity, high intelligence, not shared by the other two groups. It is true that Say had himself observed distinct capacities underlying the functional distinction between technique, management and labour; but, unlike Saint-Simon, he allowed for the possibility, even admitted the frequency, of finding the first capacity combined with the other two in the single industrieux. Under the industrial system, the industrial class was to be understood to consist of entrepreneurs and the employees only.

The third problem springing from this arrangement according to capacity concerns the assumption that the entrepreneurs and their labourers, between whom there was, presumably, a considerable gulf of ability, were nevertheless allocated to the same, "executive", capacity. But Saint-Simon was always careful to distinguish between the two groups when this was necessary. He achieved this normally by reserving certain terms to refer to the entire class, and others to refer only to sections of it. In L'Organisateur

he employed the term artisans when referring to the industrial class as one of the three groups which together made up the commons; and, in that context, the term was intended to stand for the entire class:

Usually, one means by the term artisan only simple labourers; to avoid confusion, we mean by this expression all those who are concerned with material products, namely, farmers, manufacturers, merchants, bankers, and all the assistants and workers they employ.¹

But, in the same work, when referring to the individuals who were to staff the Chamber of Deputies, he spoke of the "principle captains (chefs) of houses of industry".² And in Du Systeme industriel, part 2, (1821), Saint-Simon explained exactly what he meant by the term chef:

I mean here by chefs of different tasks, all the industriels who are not purely workers (ouvriers) who take a greater or lesser part in the direction of works.³

In this way, some of the ambiguity which we have observed to have existed in the concept of the industrial class was removed.

The final problem, and most important from our viewpoint, to which the concept of capacity gave rise concerned the relationship between the social class and what may be called the capacity group. The concept of the social class involves the identification of an interest shared by all those belonging to the class specified and which is in conflict (not necessarily irreconcilably) with the interests

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), p. 19n

2. Ibid., p. 58

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), p. 218n

of other classes. If the industrial class, as Saint-Simon understood it in the context of the theory of the social system, consisted only of the farmers, the manufacturers, the merchants, and the employees of all three, then we should, presumably, expect to be informed of the interest shared by all these groups and which was opposed to the interests of the savants and of the artists. But the notion of any such conflict would, of course, have been absurd. For one of the most significant differences between the old system and the new was that the latter did not contain within its structure any conflicting interests at all. The industrial class could never enter into political conflict with the spiritual authorities, whether the savants or the artists; there may be disagreements, but these would be the result either of misunderstandings and mistakes, or of the continuing influence of the old order, in the form of remnants of the old order still trying to achieve a counter-revolution. The new system was, by definition, not only internally harmonious but also equipped with the knowledge of itself whereby that harmony could be maintained indefinitely. Was there not, then, some problem in the continued use of the concept of the industrial class? What difference of interest could there possibly be between the industrial class and the savants? At what point in the administration of the national plan could political, as opposed to technical, disputes arise? If there were no conflicting interests, would it not be nonsense to think at all in terms of social classes?

These questions are answered by the fact that Saint-

Simon had, implicitly at least, simply changed the meaning of the term class. In the liberal era which followed the Restoration, the industrial class, which J.-B. Say had stipulated to contain the savants as well as the entrepreneurs and their employees, was indeed conceived of as a social class in the more normal sense of being bound by a shared interest distinct from those of other such groups. It stood opposed to another class whose interest conflicted with its own, namely, the reactionary groups which observed anti-industrial values and maintained the political control which the Restoration had given them. In this sense, the concept of the industrial class drew upon a number of concepts which had emerged during the eighteenth century in recognition of the conflict of interests which divided the great majority of the population from the ruling orders: concepts such as nation, peuple, and tiers état. But when Saint-Simon turned away from liberalism and developed a social theory based upon the conception of the social system, the term which expressed the same idea as those earlier terms was not industriels or artisans but rather communes: i.e., the commons, those who were unprivileged and whose interests conflicted with those of the ruling orders. The artists, the savants and the artisans were the three groups which constituted the commons, just as, in Say's analysis, the savants, the entrepreneurs and the workers were the groups which constituted les industriels. In the context of Saint-Simon's post-liberal social theory, then, the industriels were not, strictly speaking, a social class, but rather a capacity group within the social class known

as the communes. The more normal term we should use to refer to this kind of grouping would be order, or estate; and the artists, the savants, and the artisans formed three estates making up an entire, self-sufficient, social system, within which no conflict of interest existed.

Saint-Simon did not always preserve the harmony of interests between the three estates of the new system. As we shall see, he was to revert, at one stage, to the polemical, quasi-revolutionary tone of his immediate post-Restoration writings, and treat the industriels as a distinct social class at loggerheads with the savants. But this outburst of impatience at the lack of social responsibility displayed by the savants does not affect the logic of the fact that the true inheritor of the original industrial class was, in Saint-Simon's later social theory, not the industriels or the artisans but the commons as a whole.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THINGS

One of the most fundamental distinctions in liberal political theory was that between the public and the private spheres. As a private person, the individual entered into contractual relations with other individuals, and in the pursuit of his wants he would freely subordinate himself to the economic hegemony of the capitalist; or, if he were a capitalist himself, he would freely take on the obligation to pay wages to those contracted to work for him. Such private differences in wealth and influence were, however, resolved in the public sphere, where each individual was treated equally in respect of his rights. From the point of view of the state, all citizens were equally entitled to legal protection. But the public servant, the government official, presented a special kind of problem. It could only be assumed that all those directly involved in legislation, government and adjudication would be always tempted to turn their public office to private advantage. Hence the need for checks and balances and watchdog bodies. Liberals were pessimistic of human nature, but optimistic of the possibilities of creating good government in spite of human nature. Society was able to submit itself to the limited control of the state and therefore able to save itself from its own stupidity. The kind of government of which the liberal approved was distinct from that which characterised non-liberal societies. The latter kind was

arbitrary, in that it was not responsible to society but motivated by the personal whims of the governors. The kind of government which characterised the liberal society was, on the contrary, designed to promote the general welfare but only in the spheres where society itself was unable to organise itself spontaneously: defence and internal security being the most important of these spheres. And at all times legislation must be legitimated through the consent of the governed.

Saint-Simon's conception of government had much in common with liberal thought. We have examined the influence which the Restoration liberals had on him; he associated the old system with arbitrary government and looked upon the commons as a society capable of self-government through responsible government. But he differed profoundly from liberalism on the distinction between the public and the private spheres, between state and society. For the liberal, arbitrary government was converted into legitimate government through the establishment of equal rights and representative institutions, and it was protected through public restraints on governmental personnel. But for Saint-Simon, government would be legitimated only by the extension of the administrative functions of private industrial captains into the public sphere (using here liberal terminology). The liberal may well approve of the analogy between society and the workshop; but he would not approve of the actual assimilation of society to the workshop. For he would insist on the distinct role of the state as the sphere where all individuals met on equal terms and with equal rights.

Saint-Simon, however, wished to extend the scope of industrial organisation, based as it was on exclusive capacities, so that government itself was so organised. The liberal distinction between the public and the private spheres had no meaning for him. From his point of view, only good could come from allowing the industrial captains to assert themselves in the field of public administration, and it was perfectly rational to endow them with public office. The industrial way of life so united the individual with his fellow-men in a common productive enterprise that the liberal's acquisitive individual who was always eager to turn public trust to his own selfish ends presented Saint-Simon with a problem only of education. So long as a man was an industriel, then the greater his fortune, the greater his claim to be allowed to participate in public administration.¹

Faced with an industrial class sympathetic to the misleading rhetoric of liberalism, Saint-Simon decided to espouse the principle of equality but to define it in such a way as to make it compatible with his own social theory. Just as he dismissed the liberal definition of liberty, as we saw in the previous chapter, so he rejected the liberals' notion of equality as amounting to the "equal admissability to the exercise of arbitrary power".² The criteria of legitimacy lay not in any belief in the rights of man but in the ability to govern competently; and only

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1. Du Système industriel, part 1; Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), p. 49. Saint-Simon made it clear that inherited wealth was to be regarded in this respect as no different from personally-accumulated wealth, though he offered no justification for this.
 2. Du Système industriel, part 1; Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), p. 17

and only in a community which observed this principle could true equality be realised. Writing of the liberal concept of equality, Saint-Simon stated:

It is the exact opposite of true equality, of industrial equality, which consists in this: that each takes from society benefits exactly proportional to his social stake, that is, to his positive capacity, to the useful employment he gives to his means, among which must be understood, of course, his capital. One cannot conceive anything more opposed to this true equality, the natural foundation of industrial society, than the anti-industrial system by virtue of which each enjoys by turn arbitrary power; since, in that case, social advantages are accorded without any condition or in any proportion to the value produced.¹

The equality which Saint-Simon advocated was based on the recognition of the natural inequality of men in their ability to contribute to the general welfare. He advocated the equality of opportunity to contribute to the general welfare, and therefore to consume from the national product as much as one's nature allowed and in the direction one's nature dictated. This was the principle of distribution of duties and rewards to be observed in the industrial system. Even the purely formal equality before the law demanded by liberalism was not to be allowed to interfere with the natural division of mankind into capacity groups.

The precise institutional point at which the liberal distinction between state and society, public and private, was violated by industrial principles lay in the right of the captains of industry to draw up the annual budget. This they were to do because of, and not in spite of, their great social influence. In Du Système industriel, part 1,

1. Ibid., n

Saint-Simon held a conversation with an imaginary observateur who was, of course, eventually overwhelmed by the reformer's brilliant schemes.¹ But in the course of this conversation Saint-Simon explained more clearly than anywhere else in his writings why he believed that budgetary control should reside with the captains of industry. In his various constitutional schemes, he had prescribed that the industriels should take over the administration and execution of the national plan after its ratification by the artists and the savants. He now devoted himself to a detailed justification of this prescription, and was especially concerned to allay the fears which the average liberal would naturally have concerning such a lack of impartiality in the running of the nation's affairs. Saint-Simon's friend raised a powerful objection to Saint-Simon's belief that "the budget should be drawn up by those who have an interest in economy and in the good management of public funds".² He doubted whether, in practice, the industriels would be able "to keep the tasks relating to their own enterprises abreast with those connected with public services";³ they would tend to abandon their own businesses, become unconcerned with public economy, and tend to be corrupted by the opportunities for using their offices for personal advantage. Saint-Simon's friend was voicing the liberal's fear of bureaucracy; he was suspicious on principle of administrative personnel, and assumed that only the most rigorous control over their activities by the public at large could prevent their becoming

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), pp. 130-55

2. Ibid., p. 142

3. Ibid., p. 143

a separate class in their own right, opposed to the very interest which they claimed to be protecting.

Saint-Simon's reply was not a detailed one, but he nevertheless succeeded in making clear his meaning. He pointed out that the thirty-odd industriels in the Chamber of Deputies, representing as they did all branches of industry, had not renounced their enterprises in order to devote themselves to political life. The same state of affairs obtained in the case of the numerous chambers of commerce and councils of manufacture, and the Council of the Bank of France. As for freedom from personal affairs, this was the hallmark of the existing bureaucracy: and the individuals composing that were not by any means adherents of the industrial way of life. Saint-Simon clearly regarded the executive offices of the industrial constitution as being identical, in terms of content, with the equivalent offices of the existing associations of industrialists: their councils, chambers, even the national bank. The industrial system would become totally integrated at the moment when the existing associations, which had hitherto acted only as pressure-groups and fora for discussion, were invited to prepare the budget and thereby control the economy. Such power would not be dangerous to society, since in seeking to expand and improve their own enterprises the industrialists would ensure the maximisation of the industrial activity of the system as a whole. The executive power of the industrial system should consist of no more than the organised combination of the discrete powers exercised independently by the captains of industry. Hence the public

and the private aspects of the activity of the industrialists were one and the same. Administration, in its day-to-day operation, would consist of each industrial captain carrying out in his particular field the decisions taken by the assembled industrial captains: the same individual participating in both the legislative and the executive spheres. Ultimate responsibility for drafting the national plan lay in the spiritual assemblies of artists and savants; but the industrialists in the lower chamber were responsible for the short-term decisions relating to the operation of the national plan and for administering such decisions. Nothing could be further from an administration consisting of an independent bureaucracy, whether of the neo-feudal kind established by the Restoration and bent upon the wasteful taxation of the nation and the creation of sinecures, or of the liberal, neutral kind, hemmed in by an elaborate system of controls designed to ensure that public offices were not abused. Saint-Simon's conception of administration thus went beyond the liberal concept of the state as the agent of society; in his eyes, the distinction between state and society was a liberal fiction; and instead of a separate body of impartial administrators he proposed a body of men whose private activity was identical with social activity. And the ultimate proof of the desirability of his scheme lay in the fact that it would result in the full employment of labour:

The best method (for supplying the people with the greatest possible amount of labour) is to entrust the captains of industrial enterprises with the duty of preparing the budget, and, consequently, of directing

the public administration. For, according to the nature of things, the leaders of industrial enterprises (who are the true leaders of the people, since it is they who command them in their daily labours) will always tend directly, and in their own interests, to give the greatest possible extension to their enterprises. There will result from their efforts in this respect the greatest possible expansion in the mass of tasks which are carried out by the people.¹

Saint-Simon greatly enhanced the persuasiveness of his argument that the control of the economy should be placed in the hands of the leading industrialists by drawing attention to the existence of a very special group of industrialists who already exercised a kind of hegemony over the economy: the bankers. In Catéchisme des industriels, part 2, (1824), he claimed that the industrial class was "completely organised by means of the Bank, which links all the branches of industry to one another; by means of the bankers who link all kinds of industriels to one another. As a result, the efforts of the industriels can be easily co-ordinated, so as to achieve the goal which is common to them".² Saint-Simon explained that it was only following the reign of Louis XIV that the various branches of industry had become financially united, with great and important consequences for both their political and their economic standing. The protection which Louis offered manufacture and commerce prompted the rise of the credit system; for the expansion which these branches of industry enjoyed under royal protection led to an increasing need for credit

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), pp. 82-3

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), pp. 136-7

to finance both the production and the transport of industrial goods. The emergence of the bankers not only settled the immediate financial problems of industry; it also added a new dimension to the social influence of the industrial class. Not only did the production of commodities expand, as a result of an efficient credit system, so as to satisfy the expanding demand, but the industrial class came to possess a greater financial power than that of all other classes combined, and even of government itself.¹ Saint-Simon was here implying that government financial dealings would never be established on a sound basis until the King invited the leading industrialists, including the bankers, to prepare the budget; and he recalled how, during the financial crisis of 1817, the government, consisting as it did of incompetent bureaucrats, had been obliged to place the control of the nation's finances in the hands of the banks.² An additional advantage which the credit system had brought consisted of the discipline it exerted over the behaviour of the captains of industry. The effect of credit was to triple the quantity of capital which the average industrial captain managed over that which he actually owned; so that faulty management would involve loss, not only of personal property, but also of credit. The industrialists were therefore compelled to adopt the strictest criteria of economy in their administration of the nation's finances.

By introducing the bankers into his argument, Saint-Simon had greatly strengthened his claim that only the most

1. Catéchisme des industriels, part 1, (1823), pp. 29-30

2. Ibid., pp. 30-1

successful of industrialists were competent to administer the day-to-day execution of the national plan. The bankers were industriels par excellence; for they were concerned, not with any specific branch of industry, but with the entire industrial system. Like the leading manufacturers, merchants and farmers, their activity was the expression of the unity of personal and public interest; for in the search for the most profitable fields in which the capital entrusted to them could be invested, they automatically generated the greatest possible industrial activity and extended labour to the entire working population. This process was a mutually re-inforcing one as between the bankers on the one hand, and the leaders of the various branches of industry on the other. The bankers were obliged to invest the sums deposited with them by the leaders of industry in the most lucrative manner; while the leaders of industry themselves, in their capacity as borrowers, had to prove themselves worthy of credit through commercial success. Thus the industrialists competed with one another for the credit available from the bankers. Elie Halévy has depicted this process thus:

At the top of the administrative hierarchy stand the bankers. According to Saint-Simon, an industriel succeeds, not exactly to the extent to which he satisfies the needs of consumers, better than his rivals, but to the extent to which he knows better than others how to obtain the confidence, the 'credit' of the bankers. The sums they agree to advance to him are both the reward for his aptitudes and the means by which he renders them productive in the interests of mankind.¹

1. "The Economic Doctrine of Saint-Simon", in The Era of Tyrannies, 1938; Penguin Press, London, 1967, p. 44

Saint-Simon believed that by handing over the administration of the industrial system to the leading industrialists he had provided a superior means of reconciling the individual interest with the public interest than that recommended by orthodox liberal theory. Since the public interest could be expressed as the combined interests of the leaders of the various branches of industry, then the public interest would be secured by giving those leaders official control of the economy. Saint-Simon saw no political problem in converting private economic management into public economic control; the evolution of the one out of the other involved a change of degree rather than of kind. But how convincing an alternative to the liberal solution was this? One of Saint-Simon's lesser-known commentators, Bernard Lavergne, has pointed out that, if each industrial group can gain an insight into the public interest by virtue of its professional skill, then it can also detect where the public interest conflicts with its professional interest.¹ And there is something very optimistic in Saint-Simon's assumption that the industrial leaders would not take advantage of their official positions to enrich themselves at the expense of the public. It is true that Saint-Simon envisaged that supreme authority would lay with the spiritual powers, and that the entire community would be carefully socialised into giving support to the scientific-industrial system. But he did not envisage that the spiritual powers would concern themselves with the day-to-day management of the economy. And it was precisely

1. Le Gouvernement des Démocraties Modernes, Paris, 1933, vol. 1, p. 122.

in the light of the risk of corruption in government that the liberal demand for an administration staffed by impartial, disinterested civil servants arose.

We may perhaps gain some insight into the problems implicit in Saint-Simon's theory of industrial administration by comparing his conception of the differentiated but harmonious society with that of Rousseau. Like Saint-Simon, Rousseau believed in the need carefully to socialise the individual; and, again like Saint-Simon, he wished to go beyond the contrived harmony of interests sought by the liberal, and to create a real, spontaneous harmony of individuals divided by no conflicting interests at all. But, unlike Saint-Simon, he was aware that each individual does have a particular interest in the first instance; and that only under certain social conditions was it reasonable to expect men to suppress their personal interests simultaneously and agree upon the public interest, the "general will". And these conditions were wholly different from those which Saint-Simon's new system envisaged. Rousseau advocated small, egalitarian communities precisely so as to avoid the uneven sacrifices which Saint-Simon's industrial system would have demanded; for large, complex societies involved such wide differences in circumstances between men that it was almost impossible to achieve the voluntary and enthusiastic espousal of the public interest which Rousseau so valued. Moreover, the representative institutions which were necessary in such societies swiftly developed corporate interests and introduced factions into the community. And it was, in the end, the failure of the

industrial system to embody a true harmony of interests that brought about the disintegration of the concept of the industrial class.

P A R T F I V E

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE PROBLEM OF THE WORKING CLASS

In the first section of this work we saw that the idea of the proletarian, i.e., using the term in the strictest sense, the individual who was wholly property-less and was in a position only to offer crude labour-power to the highest bidder, had scarcely emerged at the time of the French Revolution. Rather, the typical representative of the lower orders was the artisan or the small shopkeeper, who, however limited his economic power, was a property-owner. We later saw that J.-B. Say's class analysis of society, which emphasised the distinction between the entrepreneur and the ouvrier, suggested that the development of the economy in early nineteenth century France was not in the direction of the egalitarian community of small proprietors which the statesmen of the Revolution had envisaged. The champions of the Restoration, on the contrary, looked forward to the establishment of a new hierarchy, founded on industrial rather than feudal principles, in which the organisation of the workshop would become the standard for the organisation of society as a whole. In the course of their advocacy of reform along these lines, writers like Charles Comte and Saint-Simon distinguished the industrious middle classes from both the highest and the lowest groups, the idle rich and the idle poor, who flouted the principles of industry and consumed the products of the labour of others. But they were also

prepared, when it suited their purposes, to harness the rhetoric of the Revolution to their demands, and to call upon the nation, the great mass of underprivileged, to stamp out the ruling class of nobles which had retrenched itself under the cloak of a liberal constitution. They thereby revealed a certain ambivalence in their attitude to the poorer sections of the community, an ambivalence which mirrored that which lay at the heart of the concept of the industrial class itself.

By 1821, however, Saint-Simon, who had by this time broken with Restoration liberalism and begun to elaborate his theory of the scientific-industrial system, had become reconciled to the existence of "the class which has no other means of existence than the labour of its hands"; moreover, this class "forms the majority, in a greater or lesser proportion, in all the nations of the earth".¹ By referring to the proletariat as a "class", Saint-Simon was not marking them out as having distinct class interests opposed to those of other groups; he always regarded them as members of the industrial class, and as sharing with other members of that class the interests which belonged to the industrial class as such and marked it off from the neo-feudal groups which had gained political control in 1814. But by using the term classe he did suggest that he regarded the proletariat as posing special problems; and the fact that they were always liable to become unemployed, and that their continuity of employment depended upon, not their own activity, but that of their natural leaders, i.e.,

1. Du Système industriel, part 1; in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), p. 81

their employers, meant that there was little to say to them directly apart from asking them to observe the rules governing the industrial principles of hierarchy. But Saint-Simon was nevertheless certain that their welfare would be secured when the industrial system had come fully into being. The extension of employment opportunities to every able-bodied member of society would be the first priority of the administrators of the new system;¹ and, as he pointed out in a late work, De l'organisation sociale, (1825), the improvement of the position of the masses would serve to improve the welfare of all classes.²

But the attainment of full employment would not only maximise the national product. It would also remove the masses from the influence of harmful agitators. "Today, the proletarian class can become a threat to public peace only if the administrators of the national interests are so inept and selfish as to allow them to become unemployed."³ Moreover, the moral principles upon which the industrial system was based demanded that the opportunity to labour be available to all. Unless each individual produced the means of subsistence which he required, he was condemned to be a parasite on the produce of others. The idle rich were in a position personally to become fully moral beings; all they had to do was to participate in the management of their businesses and become entitled to the returns due to the entrepreneur d'industrie. But the idle poor were at the mercy of the administration; and only if they continued to lead an unproductive existence despite the availability

1. Ibid., p. 82

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), p. 134

3. Ibid., p. 135

of labour could they be regarded as morally blameworthy. Without full employment, therefore, or rather the universal opportunity of labour, the moral requirements of the industrial system would be beyond fulfilment; society would simultaneously make moral demands on its members and deny some of those members the opportunity for fulfilling them.

Given the central importance of the universal availability of work, it is not surprising that Saint-Simon became increasingly concerned at the failure of the economy to bring it about. The second part of Du Système industriel, (1821), contains a letter addressed "A messieurs les ouvriers"¹ in which Saint-Simon considered the problem of seasonal unemployment. Roughly six million labourers were out of work between harvests, leaving fewer than one million labourers employed. The solution to this problem, Saint-Simon believed, consisted of the transfer of funds presently wasted by bureaucratic inefficiency into a project to expand non-seasonal occupations for the rural proletariat. In a short work, La Classe des Proletaires,² which was also composed in 1821, Saint-Simon again blamed the quasi-aristocratic structure of government for the continuing unemployment. Noting that the working class "feel that their lot has not been improved in the proportion which should naturally result from the progress which has been made in positive ideas",³ he called for the suppression of expenditure on the standing army, and the transfer of funds thereby saved to the provision of work for all. Expenditure of this kind, he claimed, would increase the

1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), pp. 437-44

2. Ibid., pp. 455-7

3. Ibid., p. 455

national product rather than diminish it, since it would entail the creation of fresh utilities rather than their consumption in administrative expenses. "The whole of the money spent by the minister of war is lost irrevocably to the nation, while that employed in putting the poor to work will increase the national revenue."¹ The persistence of unemployment could, then, be attributed to the fact that the industrial system had not yet been fully realised; as soon as the remnants of the old system, in the form of the neo-feudal establishment of ex-officers and ennobled bureaucrats, had been removed, then the subsequent allocation of resources on strictly industrial lines would ensure that the money hitherto squandered would be spent in such a way as to provide work for all who wanted it.

Yet Saint-Simon was also concerned at the absence of dedication to the industrial cause on the part of the leading industrial employers. In his letter "A messieurs les ouvriers", for instance, he referred to the "lack of confidence among the directors of the houses of industry in their capacity to administer public affairs".² And in La Classe des prolétaires he accused the employers of succumbing to the temptation to adopt the aristocratic life-style of the establishment:

There is a feeling of unity, perhaps camaraderie, which binds all members of the industrial class in such a way that the humblest workers in the factories of MM. Perrin, Ternaux and Gros d'Avilliers regard themselves as the partners of their employers in the same way as the soldiers of the armies of Turenne and of Condé called themselves comrades-in-arms of their generals. Now, the condition of the employers has improved

1. Ibid., p. 457n

2. Ibid., pp. 443-4

very greatly; they have acquired more prestige than they had before the Revolution. Their property, that is, their mobile property, has been ennobled by the electoral law, and the members of the industrial class who have so far achieved nothing naturally look on with anger when they see their employers becoming counts or barons and thus passing into the feudal class.¹

It was probably in order to improve the image of the workers in the eyes of their employers that Saint-Simon devoted a section of his De l'organisation sociale to the history of the French proletariat since the Revolution in which he sought to demonstrate how competent the working class was in industrial administration.² During the Revolution, many of the rural workers became small landowners; and, in the cities, it was the workers who saved manufacture and commerce from ruin, and even managed to increase production in the face of administrative chaos. Saint-Simon's message was that if the new system was ever to come into being the employers would have to cease viewing the workers through feudal eyes and to begin treating them with due respect.

Saint-Simon had thus noted that a lack of solidarity existed between the upper and the lower sections of the industrial class. But what is surprising is the mildness of his critique of the state of relations between employers and employees. Whereas he might have begun to question the

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1. Ibid., pp. 455-6. In the "Notes" which Saint-Simon appended to Dr. E.-M. Bailly's De la physiologie appliquée à l'amélioration des institutions sociales, he observed that the ambition of the industrial class (travailleurs) was to see their children enter the establishment (oisifs). Opinions littéraires, philosophiques et industrielles, Paris, 1825, p. 248.
 2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (10), pp. 116-25

value of the concept of the industrial class in the light of the persistent absence of a class sentiment corresponding to it, he merely called upon the employers to behave more decently towards their dependent workers. The picture which emerges from his writings is one in which the workers were rational, respectful and loyal to their natural leaders, but upset by the lack of reciprocal loyalty. But how realistic a picture is this? One of Saint-Simon's commentators, H. Marcuse, suggests that he ignored the bitterness and violence which existed between the working class and the bourgeoisie in early nineteenth-century France. "France experienced not only the industrial and commercial growth which Saint-Simon's early writings extol, but the reverse as well. Costly strikes shook the entire system in 1816-1817 and in 1825-7. Workers banded together to destroy the machines that caused them so much misery and unemployment."¹ Now, it is possible that Saint-Simon was simply unaware of the seriousness of the conflict between the wealthy large-scale employers and their employees, and that his aristocratic style of living prevented contact between himself and the masses. But it could be equally plausibly claimed that Saint-Simon was perfectly aware of the intensity of the fear and anger of the masses at the gradual transformation of their working conditions, but persisted in believing that such emotions were a response, not so much to the development of the economy as such, but to the distortions

1. Reason and Revolution, London, 1954, p. 335. H. Sée also refers to luddite-style activities among the workers of Lyons in 1819; according to him, attacks against machinery were widespread until 1823. Histoire économique de la France: Vol. 2: Les temps modernes (1789-1914), Paris, 1942, p. 158.

to that development caused by the wasteful habits of the feudal establishment and the lack of commitment to the industrial cause on the part of the employers. In other words, he saw no essential clash of interest between the employers and the masses, and saw the problem purely in political terms. The solution lay in convincing the king and the leading industriels that their interests lay in the ousting of the establishment and the institution of a purely industrial administration.

If this interpretation is correct, it raises the question of Saint-Simon's assumptions concerning economic theory; and in order to understand his refusal to admit real differences of interest between the upper and the lower sections of the industrial class, it will be necessary to examine his implied faith in the compatibility of the prevailing bourgeois property-relations with the workings of the industrial system.

Saint-Simon's knowledge of political economy was derived mainly, perhaps even wholly, from Say's Traité d'économie politique. Say's name is best known nowadays for his "Say's Law", according to which the supply of goods and services generates an exactly equal demand for them. Every commodity which enters the market leaves behind it a monetary expression of its value in the form of wages, profits and interests, i.e., in the form of the returns to the productive factors which have combined to produce it. The cash flow returns to the commodity in order to purchase it. Production, therefore, secures its own consumption. Although certain goods may turn out to fail on the market and to remain unsold, thus causing their monetary equivalents to appear

as excess demand for other products, there exists a long-term equilibrium between supply and demand. Overproduction as a general feature of the economy is impossible, and producers may rest assured that their efforts to expand production will not be frustrated by deficient demand. If crises of overproduction do occur, the fault must lie in some artificial blockage to the cash flow. Now, Saint-Simon's vision of continuously expanding industrial activity planned by the administrators of the industrial system was based implicitly on the validity of Say's Law.¹ Hence his frequent attacks on the wasteful taxation and expenditure by the government: items which formed blockages to the cash flow and caused unemployment. His appeals to the employers to show due respect to the working classes could also be justified by reference to Say's Law, for the improvement in the lot of the masses was perfectly consistent with, in fact could only be the result of, economic growth. Saint-Simon's subscription to the liberal belief in the identity of the personal interest and the public interest was, in short, reinforced by an economic theory which demonstrated that unemployment arose neither in the pursuit of profits nor as a consequence of their maximisation.

There were, however, two aspects of contemporary political economy which served to cast doubt on the optimistic conclusions which Saint-Simon derived from the Traité. The first of these was the problem of the scarcity of resources

1. M. Palyi observes the importance of Say's Law in underwriting Saint-Simon's optimism concerning economic growth. See his "Introduction of Adam Smith on the Continent", in Adam Smith, 1776-1926, Chicago, 1928, p. 207.

and the consequent physical limitations to economic growth. Adam Smith, for example, drew attention to the possibility of a stagnant wage-fund; in this event, the increasing population would create an excess supply of labour, which would, in its turn, cause wages to fall.¹ But even if every able-bodied individual was prepared to accept a very low level of remuneration, and thus prevent a rise in unemployment, the result would nevertheless be widespread poverty. This state of affairs had been reached in China; and in Bengal conditions were even more wretched, since the wage-fund was falling in the teeth of an expanding population.² Similarly, Malthus, in his Essay on Population, regarded the masses as condemned to a life of poverty; for even if economic growth were achieved, the expansion of population which resulted from it ensured that the per capita income remained at subsistence level. English political economy was not so optimistic as its French counterpart, and its findings were such as to encourage the belief that poverty was an inevitable condition of the masses, rather than a social problem which could be eliminated with the application of appropriate economic policies. But, although Saint-Simon did not address himself directly to this problem, we may infer from his writings that he believed in the ability of technology to widen the horizons of human endeavour indefinitely. Just as Say had included the savants among the groups which constituted les industriels, so Saint-Simon assured them of a place in the administration

1. Wealth of Nations, (Everyman edition), vol. 1, London, 1905, p. 63

2. Ibid.

of the industrial system. Saint-Simon always assumed that abundance was within the grasp of the human race; every major scientific advance could be swiftly harnessed to industrial activity, so as to improve the productivity of labour and thus release further industrial potential to be put to use in yet further industrial activity. And this faith in the panacea-like qualities of science was surely a reflection of the eighteenth-century movement known as the Enlightenment. The power of the human mind endowed with science was virtually limitless; any problem could be brought under its sway by the correct application of reason. The economic problem was not so much one of ensuring that sufficient resources existed to allow for indefinite economic expansion; rather, it was one of ensuring that the ingenuity of the savants had access to the industrial processes which stood to benefit from it. A contemporary of Saint-Simon, the Comte de Chaptal, may be quoted as an example of how, in France, the industrial revolution appeared to some as the realisation of the ideals of the Enlightenment:

It is not so long ago that the manufacturer distrusted the advice of the savant, and this distrust was only too well founded. For, at that time, chemistry was in a state of imperfection, could not give an account of any phenomenon; and the application of a false doctrine led the entrepreneur astray rather than directing him towards his goal. But, since the moment that chemistry became a positive science, and since, above all, chemists have been seen at the head of the greatest enterprises and making all branches of industry prosper in their control, the wall separating them has fallen, workshops have opened their doors to them, and their knowledge has been called upon. Theory and practice have enlightened each other reciprocally, and great steps have been made towards perfection.¹

1. De l'Industrie française, Paris, 1819, vol. 2, pp. 38-9

The second aspect of political economy which calls Saint-Simon's optimism into question is the principle of distribution which was to operate under the industrial system. This principle, as we have seen, was that of equal rewards for equal work; each individual received a return according to his stake in the system. But Saint-Simon never elucidated exactly how he believed this distributive principle would work in practice, and it seems reasonable to assume that he was content with the system of distribution which already operated within the economy; i.e., that system which allowed the market to allocate the returns to the productive factors. Now, Saint-Simon seems to have taken virtually no account of one particular view of the distributive process which had been popularised in England in 1817, when Ricardo published his Principles of Political Economy and Taxation, and in France in 1819, when Sismondi published his Nouveaux principes d'économie politique. Ricardo viewed distribution as the point at which society became divided into three classes - landlords, capitalists, and labourers - who entered into a class struggle over the national product. But whereas he regarded this state of affairs as an unfortunate but natural result of population expansion, Sismondi regarded it as the consequence of an unjust social arrangement, whereby, in spite of the great increases in production which the industrial mode of production made possible, the masses were systematically exploited, and their purchasing power so diminished as to create a chronic crisis of overproduction throughout the economy. But Saint-Simon made no explicit attempt to deal with these objections. In particular, he made no mention

of the possibility that technological advance designed to improve the productivity of labour could leave the individual labourer in a worse position than before; as Marx was to demonstrate later, an increase in productivity caused the price of subsistence to fall, and allowed the employers to reduce wages. But, here as in the previous question of the availability of resources to permit unlimited industrial expansion, we may infer from Saint-Simon's remarks something which approaches a solution. Saint-Simon, as we have seen, envisaged close administrative control over the economy by the central planning agency; and such control would enable the industrial system to provide employment to counteract the tendency of technology to create unemployment. In his letter "A messieurs les ouvriers", he proposed that seasonal unemployment in the countryside be eliminated through large-scale works such as the opening up of virgin lands and the construction of roads; and his justification for such schemes were couched in remarkably Keynesian language:

Those of you ... who are devoted to agriculture will enjoy directly the advantages resulting from this operation; those who are devoted to the manufacture of commodities and to commerce will not be worse treated, although the advantages will reach them only indirectly. For the rural workers, being all of them employed throughout the year, will consequently receive between 120 and 150 millions more in their monthly pay, and will consume, as a result, between 1500 and 1800 millions more each year. This will increase the activity of manufacture and commerce to an extent which has nowhere yet existed, even in England.¹

Saint-Simon would, then, have been able to muster some arguments in defending his conception of the industrial system

1. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 440

against the attacks of the orthodox political economists. But how well-founded would his arguments have been? The first argument, concerning the role of technology in overcoming the shortage of resources required for economic expansion, would have been vindicated; the productivity of labour has expanded enormously since the early nineteenth century, and has neutralised the tendency of population expansion to absorb the entire annual increment of the national product. Only in the mid-twentieth century have the ecological limits of economic expansion been fully appreciated. But the argument against the claim that the distributive principle of capitalism was incompatible with the goal of full employment would have met with less success. It has become clear in the present century that the action taken by governments to maintain full employment has been largely successful, but often only at the expense of the free market allocation of capital. Saint-Simon imagined that the project he proposed for opening up uncultivated lands in the interest of free enterprise could be financed by the employers so long as the state allowed them to retain their profits free of tax.¹ But experience has shown that the state has to intervene to a greater extent than Saint-Simon envisaged. Long-term projects of the kind he proposed require capital that can often be provided only by the state itself; and very often this capital is allocated in directions which the free market, if allowed to operate, would not follow. There may well arise conflicts between economic efficiency and full employment, and where this occurs the

1. Ibid., p. 439

state may have to sacrifice one for the other. And where it does decide in favour of full employment, it is obliged to tax the nation and invest the proceeds accordingly where no private capitalist could do so without going out of business.¹ So the market allocation of rewards and the goal of full employment do not always agree; and however much the achievement of full employment has increased the general level of prosperity - as Saint-Simon demonstrated it would - the allocation of capital in particular instances often results in a sacrifice of efficiency. In such cases, the allocation of rewards according to the distributive principle which Saint-Simon stipulated would operate under the industrial system would create unemployment.

It is not clear to what extent, if any, Saint-Simon realised in the end that full employment might not be possible within the confines of normal economic operations. P. Ansart claims that Saint-Simon was obliged to stress the moral requirement of full employment because industry was failing to fulfil its promise as an activity which automatically resolved social conflict.² But, although it is true that Saint-Simon became increasingly concerned in his last years with the need for "philanthropy" and a full appreciation of the problems of the poor, and even elevated it to the status of a religion, he never attacked the principles of capitalist property-relations. For him, the economics of the workshop remained the standard for the economics of society as a whole. And it must be stressed that, as soon as a clash of interest is admitted to exist

1. E.g., state investment in shipyards.

2. "Les cadres sociaux de la morale de Saint-Simon", Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, vol. 34, 1963, pp. 35-6.

between the employer and his employees, then the value of the concept of the industrial class is at once questioned. Perhaps that fact explains Saint-Simon's unwillingness to deal directly with the growing body of economic theory which emphasised the conflict between labour and capital as the key to the understanding of industrial society.

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE CALL TO ACTION

Saint-Simon's awareness of the failure of the industrial class to exhibit the degree of class solidarity which would be necessary if it were to achieve its essential goal - the institution of the industrial system - had placed him in a difficult position. He could scarcely cast aside the concept of the industrial class, for to do so would have entailed the rejection of almost his entire social theory. The only course of action left open to him, therefore, was to continue to agitate for unity among the industriels. This he did by resorting to a variety of means. Apart from direct appeals to the employers to treat their labourers with the consideration they deserved, he returned to the quasi-revolutionary rhetoric in which he had first indulged in the immediate post-Restoration period, and attempted to revive the image of the industrial class as the oppressed mass of society, preyed upon by the feudal establishment. Moreover, he devoted a great deal of attention to the origin and composition of this ruling establishment, with a view to demonstrating its essentially corrupt and immoral nature and the fraudulence of its claim to govern. Finally, he called for the institution of a new religion - New Christianity - whose priesthood would strive to create a social harmony based upon common sentiment rather than common interest. The remaining chapters of the present section are devoted to an examination of these attempts to preserve the unity of

the industrial class at a time when the ongoing development of the economy was destroying the conditions of such unity.

Saint-Simon believed, as we have seen, that the transition to the industrial system need not be especially dramatic or turbulent. At the spiritual level, the savants of positive science would be required to elaborate a moral theory based on positive principles; while at the temporal level, the natural leaders of the commons could, under the appropriate electoral law reform, emerge as the dominant parliamentary group. The new system would then be constituted along the lines which we have already examined.¹ The relative smoothness of the transition as Saint-Simon envisaged it would be assured by the fact that the industrial way of life had become fully established at the grass roots of society. All social wealth was now based on production rather than warfare, and the position of the ruling establishment was extremely weak as a consequence. The problem was to persuade the industriels of the truth of this fact, and also of the simplicity of the final move in the transition to the new system; but its very simplicity added to Saint-Simon's frustrations at the failure of the leading sections of the interested parties to carry it through.

In the first part of Catéchisme des industriels (1823), Saint-Simon attempted to revive class solidarity among the industriels by simply reminding them of the definition of an industriel and thus emphasising the fact that they were a distinct social class:

1. See above pp. 228-34

An industriel is a man who labours to produce, or to place at the disposal of the different members of society, one or several means of satisfying their needs or physical tastes. Thus, a cultivator who sows corn, who breeds poultry and cattle, is an industriel; a wheelwright, a blacksmith, a locksmith, a cabinetmaker is an industriel; a merchant, a carrier, a sailor employed on merchant ships is an industriel. All industriels as a whole labour to produce or to place at the disposal of all members of society all material means of satisfying their needs and physical tastes, and they form three great classes, namely, the farmers, the manufacturers, and the merchants.¹

Thus Saint-Simon hoped to demonstrate to the great majority of the population, rich and poor, and throughout the whole spectrum of occupations, that they had in common the fact that they produced wealth. And he went on at once to question their political standing. Justice demanded that the industrial class should be the leading social class, since it was the only class that was self-sufficient, all other classes depending upon it for survival. "In a word, since everything exists through industry, everything should exist for industry."² Now, it will be seen from the above-quoted definition of an industriel that the artists and the savants were not included in the industriel rubric. This was perfectly in order, to the extent that, in the course of elaborating his theory of the new system, Saint-Simon had always regarded the industriels, the savants and the artists as three distinct capacity-groups together constituting the commons; and, as we have seen, in this context, it was the commons which formed the social class, since the industriels, the savants and the artists as a whole shared

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), pp. 3-4

2. Ibid., p. 4

interests opposed to those of the ruling establishment. But now Saint-Simon appeared to have lost sight of the class allies of the industriels, and by implication included them among the classes which depended upon the industriels for their existence. And in part four of Catéchisme des industriels (1824), Saint-Simon did address the savants in such a way as to confirm his view of them as forming an interest-group quite distinct from the industrial class. He did not go so far as to assert that the savants' interests were opposed to those of the industrial class, but he certainly did not see them as their political equals:

The savants render very important services to the industrial class, but they receive from it even more important services: they receive their existence. It is the industrial class which satisfies their first needs, as well as their physical tastes, whatever they happen to be. The industrial class provides them with all the instruments which can be of use to them in the execution of their tasks. The industrial class is the fundamental class, the foster-class of society, without which none other could exist. Thus, it has the right to say to the savants, and, with even more justification, to all other non-industriels; we do not wish to feed you, clothe you, or, to satisfy your physical tastes in general except on such-and-such conditions.¹

This version of the relationship between the savants and the industriels was quite distinct from that which Saint-Simon had assumed when elaborating his constitutional frameworks for the new system. Then, he had stressed the interdependence of the theoretical and the practical capacities; the savants needed the artisans as much as the artisans needed the savants, and, according to the moral principles of the industrial system, each individual had an obligation to develop for the

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), p. 25

common good that particular aspect of his make-up which was most susceptible to development. What, then, can be made of this strange and unconvincing attempt to demonstrate the superiority of brute physical labour over technical expertise? Surely, Saint-Simon was trying to encourage class-consciousness among the industriels by emphasising as sharply as possible the lines of division between them and all other groups, whether socially necessary (like the savants) or socially harmful (like the feudal ruling classes). Once again, the Revolutionary rhetoric which glorified the unappreciated toilers and condemned their ungrateful and exploitative masters proved to be of use in mobilising mass consciousness, however far removed Saint-Simon's conception of the new society was from that of the actual orators of the Revolution.

And it was not long before Saint-Simon restored the savants to their rightful position alongside the leading industriels. In De l'organisation sociale (1825), he resorted to the simple imagery of the social pyramid in order to bring home to the commons the injustices of the status quo:

The base of the pyramid of the nation as it exists today consists of workers occupied in annual labour. The first places above them are occupied by the heads of industrial enterprises, the savants who improve the processes of manufacture and extend its application, and the artists who set the seal of good taste to all its products. The higher layers, which, I say, consist of nothing but plaster, easily perceived in spite of the gilt covering, are occupied by, in general, the nobility, whether ancient or modern, the idle rich, the governing class from the prime minister to the humblest clerk. The monarchy is the magnificent diamond which crowns the pyramid.¹

1. Ibid., p. 132

The obvious message of the pyramid metaphor was that the commons were the support and the prey of the ruling orders; a point which those wealthy industriels who aspired to enter the ruling orders should not forget. Moreover, the remedy to this injustice was also clearly implied. The commons had only to shrug their shoulders, so to speak, and the whole corrupt structure of the establishment would collapse. But the king himself could be caught as he fell, and allowed to remain as the titular head of the new system. For, as Saint-Simon had claimed in L'Organisateur, the king had been the ally of the industrial class ever since the eleventh century, and had always been opposed to the Roman Catholic clergy and the feudal nobility.¹

In another effort to dramatise the historic unity of the industrial class and its essential opposition to the ruling orders, Saint-Simon returned in the first part of the Catéchisme des industriels to the theme of the ethnic distinction between the Franks and the Gauls and the continuing relevance of that distinction in nineteenth-century France. We have already examined this particular exercise as one of Saint-Simon's several versions of the rise of the new system;² but its underlying significance was that it presented yet another point of identity around which the industrial class could rally in opposition to its class enemies. Saint-Simon attempted to sum up "in a few words"³ the political situation by drawing a sharp contrast between the behaviour

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 4, (2), pp. 231-2

2. See above, pp. 203-4

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), p. 32

of the descendants of the Gauls and that of the descendants of the Franks. The former, i.e., the industriels, had freed themselves from personal slavery and had devoted themselves to peaceful and productive activity; they had maintained military preparations sufficient only to repel foreign invaders and to secure internal order. They had become the predominant economic power; for "not only are there more crowns in their coffers than in those of the descendants of the Franks, but they can, by means of credit, dispose of almost all the money in France".¹ But while the descendants of the Gauls had gained control of the real forces of society, the government remained in the hands of the descendants of the Franks. It was they who controlled public expenditure, with the result that "society today presents an extraordinary phenomenon: a nation which is essentially industrial, but whose government is essentially feudal".²

Thus, in order to consolidate the social power of the industrial class and transform it into political power, Saint-Simon was prepared to adopt any plausible argument that highlighted the injustice of the existing political arrangements. His hope was that he would thereby produce a unity of sentiment that would forge the industriels as a whole into a class for itself, willing to effect the final transitional move in the long, historical drama of the emergence of the industrial system. His descriptions of the contemporary political situation, designed as they were to elicit from the industrial class the required political action, did not actually contradict his earlier,

1. Ibid., p. 33

2. Ibid.

more sober analysis of the nature of the industrial system; but he stressed certain aspects of that analysis in order to serve his immediate goal of spurring the industrial class to action. Thus, when examining the internal structure of the industrial class, he carefully distinguished the manual workers from their natural leaders, and gave the latter the unchallenged right to administer the system in the public interest virtually as they saw fit. But when he wanted to stress the aspects which united all members of the industrial class on an equal basis, such distinctions were put aside, and the fraternal bond linking all those engaged in productive activity was illuminated and transformed into a vital point of self-consciousness. Thus, both the narrow and the extended senses of the term industrie, which were examined in the first section of this work, continued to serve Saint-Simon's purposes well. Industry was not only a certain method of self-enrichment; it was also a social movement. And when Saint-Simon stated, as late as the year 1823, that the industriels "compose more than twenty-four twenty-fifths of the nation",¹ he was betraying his debt to the orators of the Revolution, for all his contempt for that particular class of men.

But Saint-Simon's vision of the actual, final transfer of political power to the industrial class was anything but revolutionary. In De l'organisation sociale, he stressed the relative ease with which that change could be brought about; he pointed out that the final transition from polytheism to monotheism had taken place brusquement, as had

1. Ibid., p. 13

the abolition of slavery and its replacement by serfdom.¹ More significantly, he pointed to the Revolution as an example of the inevitable failure of half-measures; for instead of substituting for the old system a radically new one, the revolutionaries simply created a social vacuum which was eventually filled by a bastard form of feudalism.² Yet the only practical measure which Saint-Simon proposed for accomplishing the essential goal of the Revolution was the oft-repeated call upon the king to summon the leading industriels and command them to draw up the national budget. Once again, revolutionary rhetoric was accompanied by the most innocuous of tactical proposals. It is odd that such a momentous event in the history of mankind should have to rely for its achievement on the enlightened mind of a monarch. The reason for this incongruity, however, is not difficult to discover. In the first part of Catéchisme des industriels, in which Saint-Simon held an imaginary conversation with a friend, he replied to the objection that the existing political powers would not willingly surrender office, and that only armed insurrection would remove them by stressing the dangers of violent measures:

Far from preaching insurrection and revolt, we shall present the sole means of preventing the acts of violence by which society could be threatened, and from which it would have difficulty in escaping, if the power of the industriels continued to remain passive in the midst of factions quarrelling over office. The public peace will not be secured so long as the most important industriels are not empowered to direct the administration of public funds.³

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1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), pp. 151-2
 2. Ibid., pp. 152-5. The next chapter deals in greater detail with Saint-Simon's analysis of the consequences of the Revolution.
 3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), pp. 6-7

But, although violent means might have led to chaos and terror similar to that which France experienced during the Revolution, there was no guarantee that the decision of a monarch to hand over budgetary control to the industrial class would have been an automatic success. Saint-Simon had good personal reasons for shrinking from violence - he himself was imprisoned during the Terror, and only narrowly escaped execution - but this does not explain his apparent naivety in assuming that the ruling orders would accept the king's decision to strip them of governmental office and replace them with leading industrialists. It might well have been the case that there existed a radical injustice in the fact that the industrial masses were deprived of the political power to which their social and economic power entitled them; but those actually in control of political power were not necessarily so weakly placed as Saint-Simon liked to think they were, and the recourse to violent means might always become necessary if the ruling orders suddenly resisted their expulsion from office. What, for instance, if the ruling classes attempted to depose a king who was attempting to strip them of their influence? What if they called in the army, one of the avenues of neo-noble influence, in order to maintain themselves in power? And, given such a possibility, why should the king risk offending the very class that could throw him out of office? Saint-Simon seemed to be peculiarly blind to such considerations. In spite of his espousal of historical realism, his emphasis on the need to understand the limits of political action, he remained a utopian in his optimism concerning the possibilities of

change along the lines he desired. His direct opposite in this respect was, of course, Marx, who expected the ruling bourgeoisie to resist to the utmost during the proletarian revolution, and did not shrink from advocating violence on the part of the proletariat should no other means be available.

Given the failure of the industrial class to be moved to political action, Saint-Simon was obliged to find a scapegoat by means of which the purity of his theory might remain intact. So, for all his vilification of the classes which had assumed political control at the time of the Restoration, he nevertheless managed to offer an explanation of the fact that they had swept aside the course of history and denied the industrial class their rightful inheritance. In the next chapter, this explanation is examined as a separate exercise, but is included in an examination of Saint-Simon's account of the course of events since the Revolution.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE INTERMEDIATE CLASSES

In the course of his exposition of the origins and nature of the new system, Saint-Simon devoted considerable mental energy to explaining how it was that the French Revolution had failed in its essential purpose of establishing the commons in positions of political power. To some extent, he repeated the explanation which he had offered earlier in the pages of L'Industrie; but he now attacked not only the lawyer class but also their allies in the spiritual field, the "metaphysicians", who had captured the ideological initiative during the Revolution and instilled the leaders of the commons with the empty and, in effect, counter-revolutionary doctrine of liberalism. Saint-Simon also carefully examined the structure of society which had emerged since the Restoration, and concluded that the real beneficiaries of the status quo were not the ancient nobility but a new nobility consisting of bureaucrats and military officers. In both cases, an intermediate class had inserted itself by guile into the historical hiatus between the demise of the old system and the emergence in full of the new system, and were largely responsible for the continuing failure of the new system to become established.

In the first part of Du Système industriel (1821), Saint-Simon asserted that the metaphysicians and the lawyers had prepared the spiritual and the temporal sphere of society for their incorporation into the new system; it was they,

in fact, who, during the Reformation, made the first sustained attacks upon the old system. They had now outlived their usefulness, however, and were acting as fetters on historical progress. Saint-Simon thus maintained a careful ambiguity in his attitude to the "intermediate classes". Their historical role was of undeniable value; so great was the grip of the old system that the only individuals who could undertake the task of initiating reform were members of

... particular classes drawn from the old system, but distinct from it, and, to a certain extent, independent of it, and which were consequently obliged, by the sheer fact of their political existence, to constitute, in the heart of society, what I call an intermediate and transitional system. These classes are, on the temporal side, the lawyers, and, on the spiritual, the metaphysicians; and they have become as closely allied in their political action as feudalism and theology, and as industry and the sciences of observation.¹

Since the emergence of the intermediate classes, the establishment of liberal jurisprudence had greatly strengthened the commons' legal position vis-a-vis the nobility. The metaphysicians, meanwhile, had brought about the Reformation and the establishment of the legal right to freedom of conscience. The French Revolution, however, marked the end of the utility of the intermediate classes. Whereas 1789 should have witnessed the foundation of the new system, by means of the self-conscious activity of the commons, the lawyers and the metaphysicians came to the fore and perpetrated their infamous crimes in the name of the metaphysical doctrine of liberalism. Since then, they had dominated the

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), p. 7

political life of the nation, and continued to mislead the industrial class with talk of "liberty", the maintenance of which they wrongly took to be the purpose of politics. Hence the need to disillusion the industrial class and to demonstrate that society must have a positive end - conquest or production - so that the industrial system can at last emerge from the clutches of the old.¹ The metaphysical outlook must be shown to be essentially transitional, negative, capable of preparing reform but not actually accomplishing it. Yet Saint-Simon did not refrain from attributing the chief blame for their being misled to the industriels themselves. Their mistake lay in their failure to respond to the king's advice that they should choose their leaders from among their own ranks.²

This analysis was clearly derived to some extent from that which Saint-Simon had expounded earlier in the pages of L'Industrie; but now that Saint-Simon had developed his conception of the spiritual realm, he was in a position to distinguish the metaphysicians as a separate group from the lawyers and thereby incorporate into the framework of his philosophy of history the phenomenon of the intermediate system. The outcome of the Revolution could now be understood more clearly. It was an abortive attempt to abolish the old system, a failure because it was guided by negative ideas. Saint-Simon did not attribute the failure to insufficiently developed industrial forces in society; on the contrary, industry had already taken over control of all real social forces. The problem was, therefore, purely one of ideas.

1. Ibid., pp. 10-19

2. Ibid., p. 84

But in his second analysis of the middle classes, which is to be found in the pages of both Du Système industriel and Catéchisme des industriels, Saint-Simon provided a more sociological explanation for the continuing hold of non-industrial groups on society.

Reference has often been made in this work to the existence of certain groups in French society in the early nineteenth century, groups distinct from those which constituted the old system, but which were nevertheless hostile to the representatives of the new system. In Saint-Simon's contributions to Le Censeur around the time of the Restoration,¹ he supported the claims of the owners of the national lands against both the remnants of the old nobility and the class of nobles of non-noble origin (de roture). In L'Industrie, Saint-Simon had opposed the industrial class to groups such as idle landowners and capitalists, rentiers, etc., to whom he sometimes collectively referred as les oisifs - the idle ones. In his later works, however, Saint-Simon devoted a great deal more attention to these various groups, and produced a coherent and original account of the origin and the role of the new middle class. In part two of Du Système industriel (1821), he revised his class analysis of the old system and produced neither a simple distinction between the nobility and the commons, nor a tripartite distinction including the "intermediate" class of lawyers and metaphysicians. Rather, he presented a tripartite division which allocated to the middle class, not only the lawyers, but any group which was neither noble in the strict sense nor allied to the commons:

1. See above, pp. 71-3

Under the ancien régime, society, or, if you prefer, the Nation, was divided into three great classes. The first of these classes was composed of the clergy and the nobility. The second included idle, non-noble property-owners, as well as military officers of non-noble origin; it included also all citizens attached to the judiciary, and all those who followed other reputedly honourable professions. The third class contained all those who followed degrading professions, such as the manufacturers, merchants, bankers, etc.; in a word, the whole of industry, those who directed and those who executed productive operations.¹

It was, according to Saint-Simon, the middle class as here defined which provoked the Revolution and which directed virtually unchecked the course of events up to the Restoration. It relied upon the support of the Third Estate until it had expelled the old nobility from power; whereupon it simply took over full control and proceeded to exploit the industrial class for its own purposes. Since the Restoration, the ancient nobility had succeeded in regaining some of its former power, so that the industrial class, which before the Revolution had been faced with only one enemy class, was now confronted by two. But, once again, Saint-Simon did not allow the industrial class to escape its share of the blame, and accused it of having failed to support the monarchy against the stratagems of the middle class.²

Saint-Simon provided two, virtually identical, accounts of the origins of the middle class: one in the second part of Du Système industriel, the other in the first part of Catéchisme des industriels. The purpose of these exercises was to demonstrate that the middle class was bound by its

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), p. 18

2. Ibid., pp. 19-24

historical origins to the old system, and was to be regarded as the enemy of the industrial class whatever its pretensions to progressive politics. The leading group within the middle class, the lawyers, had been created by the Frankish nobility in order to take over the increasingly tiresome burden of legal activities. The second group, the military officers of non-noble origin, came into being when the invention of gunpowder rendered traditional methods of warfare obsolete and prompted the Frankish warriors to appoint from among the native Gallic population a class of subordinate officers skilled in applying the devastating potentialities of gunpowder. The third group, the neo-nobility, were also the creatures of the Franks, who, finding themselves impoverished by the Crusades, were obliged to sell portions of their estates; by so doing, they weakened their own authority, for the new landowners, finding the land "imbued with feudalism", became nobles à petit pied.¹ Thus Saint-Simon established in no uncertain terms the essentially reactionary nature of the middle class; since it had been created by the old order, it could not but attempt to create a shadow ancien régime out of the chaos of the Revolution. The Revolution was ultimately a grotesque misadventure; instead of ushering in the new system, it merely replaced the old system with a kind of pseudo-system, a collection of essentially feudal elements in revolt against, but ultimately tied to, their masters.

The term which Saint-Simon employed to refer to the middle-class as a whole was bourgeois. "The nation stands in three ranks. The nobility composes the first, the

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), pp. 66-9; and 8, (4), pp. 36-9.

bourgeois the second, and the industriels the third."¹

The use of this term constituted a remarkable change from the usage which it had hitherto had in Saint-Simon's writings; just a few years earlier, in Les Communes (1818), he had employed the term as a synonym with communes (commons), the class to which the middle-class was politically opposed.² But by so altering the meaning of the term Saint-Simon endowed it with pejorative overtones which it has always retained thereafter. Now, it will be observed that Saint-Simon did not include among the bourgeois that powerful group of individuals who had risen to power under Napoleon, been rewarded with gifts of landed estates, and had their positions secured with the Restoration.³ Nevertheless, he was well aware of the existence of this group and of its political importance. In his Lettres de Henri Saint-Simon à messieurs les jurés (1820), he wrote of the "two aristocracies", one of them the "new aristocracy, the aristocracy created by Bonaparte", which had come into existence during the absence of the Bourbons and which the king on his return believed he had a duty to protect.⁴ This new nobility was distinct from the nobles à petit pied, as Saint-Simon called them,⁵ which must have been the equivalent of that section of the aristocracy which was "of the robe" rather than "of the sword", and could lay claim to only a

1. Du Système industriel, part 2; in Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), p. 93.

2. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 384

3. See above, p. 63

4. Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), pp. 415-16

5. Catéchisme des industriels, part 1; Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), p. 37.

relatively brief lineage;¹ and which Saint-Simon included under the bourgeois rubric. But this apparently simple distinction between the bourgeois, whose origins lay in the Middle Ages, and the new aristocracy, who were a recent product of the Revolution, seemed to break down in the second part of Du Système industriel. Here, he claimed that the middle class (i.e., the bourgeois) had made Napoleon their leader in return for the feudal titles he bestowed upon them;² and he twice referred to Napoleon himself as a bourgeois.³ This suggested that the new aristocracy was formed out of the elements which had hitherto constituted the bourgeois ever since their creation in the Middle Ages; in which case, there was no distinction in terms of personnel between the two. But later, in the first part of Catéchisme des industriels, Saint-Simon indicated that the two were, in fact, distinct classes. In a discussion of the groups which were opposed to the establishment of an "industrial monarchy" in France, he distinguished, first of all, the ancien noblesse; secondly, the nouvelle noblesse; and then the bourgeois. His comments on the new nobility revealed that he regarded them as an even more abortive group than the bourgeois:

As for the new nobility, it is neither liked nor respected by the nation; it has neither partisans nor friends, whether within or without; it is a still-born institution, whose existence began yesterday and will cease tomorrow; it has no means of opposing the establishment of an industrial monarchy.

The bourgeois, i.e., non-noble lawyers, the military officers of non-noble origin, and the landowners who are not industriels,

1. See above, p. 10

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), p. 79

3. Ibid., pp. 24 and 80.

have much more power than the new nobility; but they have no real power except when combined with the old nobility of which they are an emanation. They have no political character of their own; they are, in reality, a noblesse à petit pied; their existence as a political body cannot be prolonged beyond that of the true nobility.¹

There is no doubt, then, that Saint-Simon distinguished the Napoleonic nobility from the bourgeois as a class; but the only real point of distinction lay in its origin. It was a recent creation, whereas the bourgeois were a long-standing sub-division of the ruling establishment of the ancien régime. In every respect other than their origin, the new nobility and the bourgeois were identical. Both were a kind of pseudo-class, and they had a shared interest in maintaining the Restoration settlement, which had given them political influence greater than that of either the old nobility or the industrial class. And when Saint-Simon appeared to confuse them by claiming that the bourgeois had brought Napoleon to power, he was, in all likelihood, simply implying that many of Napoleon's henchmen were originally members of the bourgeois, and thus qualified for membership of the new nobility also.

These two analyses of the middle or "intermediate" classes in early nineteenth-century France need not be regarded as mutually exclusive; rather, each was designed to serve a different purpose. The earlier account, which examined the role of the metaphysicians and the lawyers and the "intermediate" system which they established was intended to be incorporated within the framework of Saint-Simon's philosophy of history; since historical change occurred

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 8, (4), pp. 128-9

through the rise and fall of social systems, the phenomenon of the intermediate classes was comprehensible only as a necessary lull between the demise of the old system and the rise of the new, a lull in which the remnants of the old system were finally destroyed and the ground cleared for the emergence of the scientific-industrial system. The second account, on the other hand, concentrating as it did on the minutiae of the class situation immediately confronting the industrial classes, was intended as a straightforward stimulus to class-consciousness among the masses. Neither in Du Système industriel nor in Catéchisme des industriels was the examination of the bourgeois and the new nobility supplemented with any consideration of the corresponding forces in the spritual sphere. Saint-Simon was content, in this context, simply to reveal the corrupt origins of the groups which were exercising such a great attraction among the leaders of the industrial class, with a view to bringing them back to their senses and an awareness that their real interests lay in the total abolition of feudal ideas and the institution in toto of the industrial way of life. And in order to stress that the most important changes had yet to come, Saint-Simon deliberately played down the importance of the French Revolution and dampened any hope that the 1820s might be a period of stability and consolidation:

That epoch (the Revolution) was no more than the last period in the decline of the old social system, the decline which had been in operation for five or six centuries, and which was at that time almost complete. The overturning of that system was not the effect of the Revolution, still less its object; it

was, on the contrary, its true cause. The real object of the Revolution, that which the march of civilisation had assigned to it, was the formation of the new political system. It is because this object has not yet been achieved that the Revolution has not yet been completed.¹

1. Du Système industriel, part 1: Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), p. 89.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE APPEAL TO THE PHILANTHROPISTS

In those of his addresses to the industrial class which we have so far examined, Saint-Simon was appealing directly to the self-interest of the various constituent groups. The prolétaires were to benefit from the establishment of full employment, while the chefs d'industrie, for their part, had much more to gain from uniting with their employees in an effort to assume their rightful positions of political power than in seeking to emulate the life-style of the anti-industrial and historically-doomed groups which at present held those positions. The tone of Saint-Simon's appeals, especially in the case of his presentation, in Catéchisme des industriels, of the industriels as the vast mass of producers, entitled thereby to sole political control,¹ was strongly reminiscent of the tone which he had adopted in L'Industrie, while in the full flush of his enthusiasm for Restoration liberalism and for the elevation of the concept of interest to a central position in political theory. But, in the meantime, as we have seen, Saint-Simon's earlier concern with the need for a new ethical doctrine, based upon the principles of positive science, had been revived under the influence of Auguste Comte; and from then on Saint-Simon was as mindful of the spiritual aspect of the new system as the temporal. In the first part of Du Système industriel, he compared the superiority, in this respect, of the new system over the old:

1. See above, pp. 274-7

The (European) bond will be more complete, in that it will be at once temporal and spiritual; whereas, under the old system there existed only a spiritual bond between the different states of Europe: they were, in the temporal sense, in direct opposition. But it should not be believed that the very positive and very precious temporal bond, which exists, to a certain extent, among them today because of the development of industry, and which tends increasingly to bind them together, can do without the spiritual bond.¹

The problems concerning the nature of a "positive" ethical doctrine, and the relationship between such a doctrine and the simple ethic of fraternal love which Saint-Simon had also begun to espouse, have already been examined and need not detain us here.² Suffice it to state that Saint-Simon continued to develop his ideas concerning the simple Christian doctrine of philanthropy, and that he came to see it as the equivalent, on the doctrinal level, of the positive sciences on the philosophical level. In the first part of Du Système industriel, which he prefaced with the words "God said: love and help one another", he emphasised the closeness and interdependency of these doctrinal and philosophical developments:

Ideas and sentiments contain one another and necessarily correspond to one another. Every great movement in ideas calls for a similar movement in sentiments. In this respect, philanthropy is the analogy and indispensable auxiliary of philosophy. In order to bring about the great philosophical movement which must aim at recasting general ideas, it is essential that philanthropic activity is developed among all men who are subject to elevated and generous sentiments. The decline of the doctrines of the old system has allowed selfishness (egoisme) to develop, which invades society daily and which eminently

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), pp. 53-4n

2. See above, pp. 170-8

opposes the formation of new doctrines.
It is necessary, then, to bring philanthropy
into play in order to fight it and lay it
low.¹

Saint-Simon went on to announce that he had fulfilled his intention, expressed in the last sentence of the above quotation, by composing an "Adresse aux philanthropes", to appear later in Du Système industriel. It would appeal, he wrote, to all philanthropists, "whatever their social position: whether they belong to the old system, to the new system, or to the transitional system".² This "Adresse" was the spiritual equivalent of the appeals which we examined in the previous chapter; it was an attempt to engender mass enthusiasm for the scientific-industrial system by appealing not to self-interest but to moral sentiment.³

Saint-Simon did not specify at once exactly whom he understood to fall within the philanthrope category. He characterised them in general terms as "the first rank of Christians";⁴ and he regarded them as the true successors to the first Christians, who had founded an ethical doctrine by proclaiming the divine principle: all men should regard one another as brothers, and should love and help one another. The early Christians, however, had left this doctrine in a speculative state only; it was now the task of the philanthropists to organise temporal power around Christian principles. "You have been destined by the whole of eternity to demonstrate to the princes that it is in their interest,

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), p. 21

2. Ibid., pp. 21-2

3. The "Adresse" is included in the first part of Du Système industriel, Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 6, (3), pp. 85-134.

4. Ibid., p. 85

and their duty, to give their subjects the constitution which tends the most directly to improve the social existence of the most numerous class."¹ The philanthropists were to be defined as those who practiced the Christian morality of fraternal aid, and they were to be distinguished from the official Christian hierarchy, i.e., the clergy, the royalty and the judges, who had failed to put their professed beliefs into practice.² The need for a revival of fundamental Christian ethics was very great, since the spirit of conquest had fostered selfishness, and the people had allowed the government to fall into the hands of the metaphysicians, a group whose conception of rights had been derived from a pre-Christian civilisation.³ Now, we may observe that this diagnosis of Europe's ills, written especially for the philanthropists, was identical in content to that which Saint-Simon had prepared for the various groups which represented the elite of the scientific-industrial system: only the immediate conclusions had changed. The decay of the spiritual and the temporal powers of the old system; the prevalence of the spirit of conquest rather than of production; and the misleading and negative doctrines of the Revolutionary orators, were three features of the transition from the old system to the new. And when Saint-Simon proceeded to elaborate a sketch of the history of the Christians, it soon became clear that the philanthropes were, in fact, the personnel of the new system - the savants, the artists, and the industriels - united in the fact that their

1. Ibid., pp. 85-6

2. Ibid., pp. 87-8

3. Ibid., pp. 97-8

practices embodied Christian ethics.

During the first epoch of Christianity, according to Saint-Simon, the philanthropists found themselves unable to organise temporal authority around Christian principles, since the depths of ignorance in which the masses existed made it impossible to abolish slavery. But while temporary power remained arbitrary, it was possible to act upon the spiritual realm, and eventually the Roman Emperor Constantine was converted to the faith.¹ This event marked the beginning of the second epoch of Christianity, which lasted until the final crusade in the thirteenth century. During this time, Christendom came under frequent external attack, and the philanthropists were obliged to undertake the defence of Christianity. They had no opportunity therefore, to re-organise temporal authority on Christian lines, and had to leave the internal organisation of Christendom to an illiberal clergy. The third epoch, however, which lasted from the thirteenth century to 1789, witnessed the beginnings of Christian temporal authority. After the defeat of the Saracens, the Normans and the Saxons, Christendom had no more need for the military arts; and temporal authority should have been reformed so as to embody the principle that "all nations and all men should contribute to the general welfare of the human race".² The spiritual authorities, meanwhile, should have turned to the study of positive science in order to aid the development of peaceful arts. But each authority turned itself into an interest-group, intent on retaining the power it had gained in the early

1. Ibid., pp. 106-7

2. Ibid., p. 110

Middle Ages, and became a burden upon society as a whole. It was the philanthropists, the true Christians, who proceeded to construct the Christian order; and Saint-Simon's description, at this point, of the activities to which the philanthropists devoted themselves, leave us in no doubt that the philanthropes were the founders of the scientific-industrial system:

... from the end of the thirteenth century they devoted themselves partly to the study of the laws which govern phenomena and partly to industrial tasks by means of which the products of nature are modified so as to satisfy human needs.¹

The fact that the antagonists of the philanthropists, i.e., the nobility and the clergy, were unable to prevent their power from diminishing in spite of their strenuous efforts and the resources at their disposal, was proof that "God condemns to destruction those social institutions which are harmful to the human species".²

The fourth epoch of Christianity, which had begun in 1789, was to be the final epoch. Saint-Simon proceeded to describe the emerging era of practical Christianity by resorting to a favourite device: answering the questions posed by an imaginary colleague. The first question concerned the main political changes which would occur during the fourth epoch of Christianity. Saint-Simon's reply was virtually a description of the emerging scientific-industrial system, but in its new guise as the true Christian society. Each detail of the unfolding system, as Saint-Simon announced it, was preceded by a solemn Je crois, as if Saint-Simon was formulating a new Creed so as to increase the emotional

1. Ibid., p. 111

2. Ibid., p. 112

appeal of the new system. All the scientific academies in Europe would combine to form a new spiritual authority, which would enjoy exclusive control over education. "The pure ethics of the Evangelist"¹ would serve as the basis of public education, which would otherwise consist mainly of instruction in the positive sciences; and the religious, Christian nature of spiritual authority would be manifest in the systematic "inflaming" of the people with passion for the public good.² Temporal authority would be entrusted to the employers of the largest number of labourers. The new arrangement would be justified as the political consequences of the divine moral doctrine of fraternal aid; and it was also inevitable, given the destruction of slavery and of metaphysics, and the gradual transfer of social power into the hands of the savants and the industriels.³

The second question which Saint-Simon agreed to answer concerned the force which would bring about the desired changes. Saint-Simon placed his faith in the force of moral sentiment, which would be motivated by "the belief that all political principles should be deduced from the general principle which God has given to men".⁴ The philanthropists would direct this moral force, and aim at converting, first, the temporal powers, and, secondly, the nobility and the theologians. Saint-Simon observed that men were divided into two general types: those whose ideas were dominated by sentiment, and those whose emotions were

1. Ibid., p. 115

2. Ibid., p. 116

3. Ibid., pp. 116-18

4. Ibid., p. 118

dominated by "combinations of the mind".¹ The former sought only to abolish injustice, the latter to profit by it. This distinction, which applied to the savants and the industriels as much as to other social groups, allowed him to classify men as either philanthropes or egoistes. The latter were tending to increase in number, but the former were becoming more energetic and organised. Philanthropists, again, were to be found mainly among those who worked in close contact with others; while egoists tended to work alone or to be in contact with the wealthy. These facts convinced Saint-Simon that the philanthropists were capable of persuading the nobility and the clergy to accept the divine principle of ethics.

The final question which Saint-Simon's imagined colleague put to him concerned the means which the philanthropists intended to adopt in their efforts to reorganise society. Once again, Saint-Simon insisted upon peaceful tactics. The philanthropists would propagate the new Christianity and attempt to persuade the king to act in accordance with both his Christian duty and his personal interest by placing the responsibility for public education in the hands of the savants, and that for temporal affairs in the hands of "those industriels most capable of administration".² They would also preach to the people and persuade them to support any action taken by the authorities in the movement to establish Christian society. Such preaching would go on for as long as was necessary; all other tactics, especially those involving the use of force, were to be eschewed. We may again query Saint-Simon's impractical

1. Ibid., p. 121

2. Ibid., p. 123

fear of violence, and his optimism in expecting the king to transfer his real powers to the savants and the leading industriels. But he was able to justify this approach by claiming that it was in the best traditions of Christianity; the earliest Christians had adopted pacifist means with great success. Moreover, public opinion would not tolerate the overthrow of the hereditary monarchy; this Saint-Simon claimed to have discovered through close contact with the savants and the industriels, the main beneficiaries of the proposed changes. The resort to strictly peaceful methods, then, not only appeased Saint-Simon's personal abhorrence of violence, but also took into account the pacific tendencies of the philanthropists and their need to retain the non-violent traditions of Christian politics. Saint-Simon concluded his "Adresse" by suggesting to the philanthropists that they read his L'Organisateur.¹

The appeal to the philanthropists was, quite clearly, an appeal to the savants and the industriels in terms of Christian ethics rather than of self-interest and of the essential harmony between the individual and the general interest which the new system ensured. Saint-Simon had apparently decided that it was insufficient to rely only upon simple self-interest to produce the degree of self-awareness necessary for the final transition to the new system; it was essential to appeal also to the emotional aspect of human nature. Ironically, such an appeal involved a condemnation of the egoisme which, at other times, Saint-Simon was quite willing to play upon in order to bring about his ends; the dividing-line between selfishness and enlightened

1. Ibid., p. 133

self-interest was very slim indeed. But, given that men were endowed, as Bichat had demonstrated,¹ with emotive, rational and physical capacities, it seemed sensible to appeal to them in as many ways as might be successful. And there existed an effective compatibility between moral sentiment and rational assessment. If we observe the manner in which Saint-Simon depicted the process whereby the divine morality of philanthropy was to become a practical possibility, we may note that he did not contradict the basic historical outline which he had presented earlier in L'Organisateur. Rather, it was the manner and style of that presentation that was different. The earlier account was explicitly an attempt to apply a scientific historical method; hence the emphasis on the "series of observations" which related the epochs of harmony to one another of periods of time. But the account of the history of Christianity in the "Adresse aux philanthropes" made no explicit claim to scientific validity. Its style was highly rhetorical - so much so, that its credibility suffered through the ill-disguised assimilation of the savants and the industriels to the philanthropes. It depicted the history of Europe since the death of Christ as a moral story in which the true Christians gradually overcame the objective limitations to the practice of their philanthropic convictions and now stood on the threshold of the final realisation of those convictions in the form of scientific industry, which employed the resources of mass production in securing the welfare of the poorest and most numerous class. The psychological centre of understanding to which

1. See above, pp. 226-7

this story was intended to appeal was the emotional faculty rather than the rational; and even if Saint-Simon could not enter the subjective experience which the philanthropists themselves were expected to undergo, he was perfectly aware of the value of such experience in terms of the achievement of the new system. Most men were Christians, if only nominally, and were, to that extent at least, open to the appeal embodied in the "Adresse"; and many men were no doubt considerably more susceptible to this kind of appeal than to the more intellectual presentation in L'Organisateur of the possibilities inherent in the present for establishing the scientific-industrial system. Men were open, then, to appeals of different kinds, according to the constitutional make-up; and, so long as the dictates of conscience were compatible with the rational appreciation of scientific truth, there was no reason why both should not be employed in the movement to hasten and facilitate the establishment of the new system. As rational creatures, men could understand the advantages of the new system and see it as the truly scientific system itself, incapable of further improvement by virtue of its being founded upon principles whose truth could be scientifically demonstrated. As emotional creatures, men could appreciate the new system as the realisation of the moral values which God Himself has required men to observe. And even if men became incapable of believing in God any longer, as a result of their being trained in the positive sciences, the social effect would be negligible, since such men would remain convinced of the correctness of the new system on purely rational grounds. The "Adresse"

may be seen, then, as the proof of the point which Saint-Simon had made, three years earlier, in Des intérêts politiques de l'industrie, that Christian ideas could be useful in the achievement and maintenance of the scientific-industrial system.¹

1. See above, pp. 175-7

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

THE NEW CHRISTIANITY

In his "Adresse aux philanthropes", then, Saint-Simon invoked the Christian ethic of fraternal aid in order to demonstrate that the savants and the industriels had inherited a unique duty of rendering Christianity a practical way of life by fulfilling the goal for which they had been prepared by history, namely, the establishment of the new system. Saint-Simon himself almost certainly did not believe in God; his purpose, however, was to create a common sentiment among the industrial class (as well as the savants) as a means towards helping them achieve their goal. But by the time he came to compose, four years later, his last work, Nouveau christianisme, he had clearly come to regard in a somewhat different light both the doctrinal aspect of the new system in general, and its Christian aspect in particular. He never altered his opinion concerning the desirability of the new system, nor did he cease considering that the only legitimate form of government in the existing circumstances was one in which the leaders of science and of industry were in sole charge of the administration. But he seemed to have concluded that his efforts to generate a strong class-consciousness among the industrial class, efforts which had particularly absorbed his energies between 1823 and 1825, could not ultimately succeed; and that only a powerful and direct appeal to the ethical and religious sentiments of the people, and to their Christian

consciences in particular, would inspire a movement with sufficient impetus to complete the transition to the new system. But Saint-Simon had also concluded that such an appeal to religious feeling must not be allowed to fade away once the new system had become established; on the contrary, it would have to be written into the constitution and become a permanent feature of life. We have seen how Saint-Simon had, in his early writings, placed great importance on the ideological aspect of the social system; and here, in his last work, he decided that the social fabric of the new system could not, in the end, be held together except through systematic indoctrination. The elite of the new system was, consequently, to be enlarged with the addition of a full-blown clergy.

Saint-Simon set out his purpose in composing Nouveau Christianisme thus:

To recall peoples and kings to the true spirit of Christianity, at a time when they have departed entirely from that spirit; at a time when laws on sacrilege are introduced and when Protestants and Catholics, in England, seek the means whereby to end their long and painful struggle; to try to define that part which religious sentiment plays in society, when all men are conscious of it, or at least, feel the need to respect it in others; when the most distinguished writers are engaged in finding its origin, manifestations and progress; when, on the other hand, theology seeks to stifle it under the weight of superstition.¹

Saint-Simon thus made it clear from the outset that he was, at least for the purposes of the work, assuming the validity of the Christian ethic. He took care to distinguish his attitude from that of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment,

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), pp. 101-2

whose "Voltarian smirk",¹ for all its emphasis on rationality, had not discovered a principle of greater generality than that of the Christian principle. Saint-Simon thus extended his criticism of the philosophical emptiness of the rationalists to cover their destruction of orthodox religion. Since he was now advocating a Christian principle, Saint-Simon was obliged to declare his belief in God; but, in so doing, he was insistent that it was with God's literal command rather than with that of the Church that he was concerned. Since he was taking God's command to be the universal duty of fraternal aid, he found Christians only among the laity, and only heretics of various kinds in the established Churches. By the phrase "New Christianity" he intended to convey the idea that the individuals to be understood as "Christians" were only those who observed the true Christian ethic, and whose practice did not involve the institutionalised gulf between clergy and laity which characterised the established so-called "Christian" churches.

But Saint-Simon also made it clear that the New Christianity would have its own institutions and even its own hierarchy, dogma, clergy, and form of worship. The essential difference between the traditional and the New Christianity in this respect would lie in the priority which the latter would give to the content as opposed to the form of the religion. "Moral doctrine will be regarded as the most important thing by the New Christians; the cult and the dogma will be regarded as supplementary, and as being intended to fix the attention of the faithful of

1. Ibid., p. 104

all classes upon morality."¹ The worldly aspects of Christianity were to be stressed at the expense of the spiritual, thus bringing out the utility of the Christian ethic in its relation to the new system rather than its inner meaning as a divine command. The ethical doctrine was to be derived from the principle that "All men should behave as brothers to one another";² and it would quickly pass into day-to-day life by being formulated thus: "Religion should direct society towards the great end of improving as rapidly as possible the condition of the poorest class".³ The founders of the New Christianity, who were also to become the leaders of the new church, were to be those most skilled in applying the doctrine. They would confine their activities to the perfection and teaching of the Christian doctrine.

Saint-Simon thus hoped to persuade men to exert themselves in the interests of the poor by endowing such activity with the sanction of Christianity. He was far less concerned with the validity or otherwise of Christian beliefs than with the practical benefits which the widespread subscription to those beliefs would yield. But, once having claimed a Christian authority for his ideas, he was obliged to follow this with a careful differentiation between the New Christianity and the various "heresies" upon which the established churches, both Catholic and Protestant, were based. The industrial system could have no place for the orthodox Christians and their unworldliness. New Christianity was to be, quite simply, the only true form of Christianity,

1. Ibid., pp. 116-17

2. Ibid., p. 117

3. Ibid.

since it alone would observe the divine morality of fraternal love by demanding a system of scientific industry as the means whereby to observe that morality. Saint-Simon proceeded to demonstrate how all other forms of Christianity failed to embody Christian ethics, and thereby to justify his claim that they were heretical.

The object of Saint-Simon's first attack was the Roman Catholic church. He made his point by means of a simple device whereby he measured the behaviour of the Catholic clergy against the yardstick of true Christian ethics. Needless to say, the Catholic hierarchy was found wanting. First, they failed to provide a doctrine which entailed improving the position of the poor. The corpus of papal decrees was, in fact, designed to persuade the masses that they were unable to govern their own affairs, and should accept, without question, the intellectual superiority of the clergy. Secondly, the Pope and his cardinals had acquired no real Christian knowledge. Since the accession of Leo X, the clergy had studied nothing but theology, and had lost their intellectual hegemony from which the masses had truly derived benefit. Thenceforth, they had concentrated on the finer points of dogma and forms of worship. Thirdly, the Pope's own temporal sphere was administered in an anti-Christian manner, i.e., in such a way that the condition of the poor was actually worsened. The papal states were industrially underdeveloped, thus rendering the masses poverty-stricken and dependant upon the meagre charity of the government. Fourthly, all popes since the fifteenth century had allowed the Jesuits

and the Inquisition to pursue anti-Christian activities such as the infliction of ferocious punishments for so-called offences associated with dogma and cult rather than with true Christian morality.

Saint-Simon then turned on the Protestants. He reserved some praise for Luther's successful attack upon the Roman Catholic church, but he condemned his reforms as heretical. First, the Lutherans were accused of having adopted "a morality which is much inferior to that which is appropriate to Christians in the present stage of their civilisation".¹ This Saint-Simon attempted to demonstrate by posing four questions and answering them. First, he asked which form of social organisation Jesus had charged his apostles with constructing. He concluded that Christian morality demanded a form of social organisation quite unlike that which existed at present, based as it was upon ignorance and correspondingly narrow attitudes towards humanity. Secondly, Saint-Simon examined the social organisation in existence at the time when Luther's reforms were enacted. He found that it was based upon Christian ethics; spiritual power was no longer dominated by temporal power, science and industry were progressing, and the philanthropic ethic had been officially accepted; "if not all men acted towards one another as brothers, at least they admitted that they should all regard one another as children of the same father".² Thirdly, Saint-Simon speculated on the reforms which the Christian religion actually required in Luther's time. Luther, he wrote, should have called upon the Pope

1. Ibid., p. 142

2. Ibid., p. 147

to recognise the historical opportunities inherent in contemporary civilisation and to set about translating the spiritual principle of Christian morality into practical terms; in short, to establish the scientific-industrial system as the means whereby men could accept philanthropy as a way of life rather than merely paying it lip service. At this point, Saint-Simon emphasised again that by following their Christian duty men would also be securing their own interests; for, by planning and effecting massive industrial expansion, the rich could have improved the position of the poor much more effectively than by dispensing charity, and, "so far from impoverishing themselves with sacrifices of money, will enrich themselves as well as the poor".¹ Thus, Saint-Simon emphasised the secular nature of the New Christianity: "Certainly, all Christians aspire to eternal life, but the only means of attaining it consists in labouring in this life for the increase in the welfare of the human species".² Fourthly, Saint-Simon examined the actual reforms which Luther effected. He concluded that, by removing the religious sphere of men's lives from political and social considerations, Luther had taken a retrograde step, and, by abandoning earthly affairs to the military classes, had made the realisation of the Christian ethic even more difficult.

Saint-Simon brought a second charge of heresy against the Protestants: they had adopted a faulty form of worship. He began his prosecution with a remarkable passage, which demonstrated how seriously Saint-Simon had come to regard

1. Ibid., pp. 152-3

2. Ibid., p. 154

the need for ideological conformity in industrial society:

The more society develops morally and physically, the more subdivision occurs in intellectual and manual labour. Thus, in their working lives, the attention of men becomes fixed upon objects of increasingly specialised interest, according as the fine arts, science and industry progress. The result is that, the more society progresses, the more necessary it is that its religion be improved; for the form of worship is intended to bring the attention of men regularly assembled on rest days to the interests which are common to all members of society, to the general interests of the human species.¹

The class solidarity which bound all those engaged in production in the workshop would, it seemed, collapse as the scale of production increased, and generate the need for ritualistic and formal processes of re-integration of the individual with his society. Saint-Simon proposed that this be effected "by combining all the means and resources which the fine arts can offer"² in such a way as to depict terrible punishments which await those who break the Christian moral code and the pleasures which await those who observe it. This was a development of an idea which Saint-Simon had elaborated in L'Organisateur, where he proposed that the artists should periodically recollect the gloomy days under the ancien régime and allow the new system to appear paradisaical by comparison.³ But in Nouveau christianisme it was the priests who were to assume the major responsibility for official indoctrination. By means of eloquence, "the highest of the fine arts",⁴ they would depict the punishments

1. Ibid., p. 159

2. Ibid., p. 160

3. See above, p. 229

4. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), p. 160

which God had reserved for those whose sentiments were not inspired by philanthropy, and would persuade the masses that public esteem was the highest form of happiness. The artists themselves were to aid the priests by providing poems to be recited to mass audiences, penetrating musical harmonies, paintings and sculptures depicting acts of Christianity, and temples for gatherings of the faithful. Luther's reforms seemed dull indeed compared with what was obviously appropriate. He banned ornaments, sculpture, in fact all examples of fine art from the churches, and rendered Christian sentiment "as prosaic as possible".¹

Saint-Simon's final charge against the Protestants was that they had adopted a false creed. They assumed that Christianity had degenerated since its foundation, and that only a close study of the Bible would yield a sound knowledge of the true Christian ideal. Saint-Simon had attacked the study of the Bible on four counts. First, it made men lose sight of their present needs and encouraged metaphysical thinking. Secondly, it "soiled the imagination"² with its references to certain vices which had disappeared with the progress of civilisation. Thirdly, it tended to increase support for a political equality which was quite impractical, and which hindered the establishment of the industrial order. Fourthly, study of the Bible quickly convinced the student that such study was more important than any other, and encouraged the formation of Bible societies which gave "a false direction to philanthropic feelings".³ Thus Saint-Simon substantiated his final

1. Ibid., p. 162

2. Ibid., p. 169

3. Ibid., p. 170-1

charge against the Protestants.

In the course of his attacks upon the two main forms of established Christianity, Saint-Simon expounded in some detail the proposed institutions and activities of New Christianity. The idea of philanthropy was, as in the "Adresse aux philanthropes", a way of looking at the operations of the new system; the consequence of the establishment of the new system would be the provision of welfare for the poorest class, which would thus fulfil the ideal of philanthropy. But in Nouveau christianisme, philanthropy was also to be the self-consciously religious ideal of the entire community. On the one hand, such a religious ideal was necessary in a society becoming ever more complex as a result of industrial progress; on the other philanthropy was the only religious ideal which was compatible with the operations of the new system. Saint-Simon had become sceptical of the possibility of ever succeeding in persuading men to action through simple appeals to reason. "The intellectual powers of man are very small; it is by making them come together towards a single end and by directing them towards the same point that one can succeed in producing a great effect and obtaining a significant result."¹

But there was a further sense in which New Christianity was to create social harmony. In the final section of Nouveau christianisme, Saint-Simon stated:

But I do not aim only at proving that
Catholocism and Protestantism are heresies;
it is not sufficient, in order to rejuvenate
Christianity entirely, to make it triumph

1. Ibid., p. 175

over all the old religious philosophies.
I must still establish its scientific
superiority over all philosophical doctrines
which have rejected religion.¹

In fulfilment of this aim, Saint-Simon revived a notion which he had originally elaborated in his earlier writings: the notion of the alternating rhythm of analytic and synthetic historical periods, in which the search for knowledge took the form, in the one case, of widespread experimentation and accumulation of data, and, in the other, of the attempt to arrange such data under general principles.² During the Middle Ages, which was the archetype of synthetic, or organic, periods, the concept of God was the accepted general fact to which all other facts were to be related if they were to be understood. "From the establishment of Christianity to the fifteenth century, the human race was mainly preoccupied with co-ordinating its general sentiments, with the establishment of a unique and universal principle, and with the foundation of a universal institution designed to impose an aristocracy of talent upon that of birth, and thus submitting all particular interests to the universal interest."³ The intellectual temper of the age demanded that secondary principles should be deduced from a universal principle; but - and here Saint-Simon revealed how his views on the possibility of ever achieving a total synthesis of knowledge around a single principle had changed since the early 1800s - this was an "opinion of purely speculative validity, since human intelligence does not have the means to establish generalities sufficiently precise to enable all particular

1. Ibid., p. 181

2. See above, pp. 157-9

3. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), p. 182

facts to be derived from them".¹ The neglect of particular scientific disciplines, however, was made good after the Reformation. General principles were discarded in favour of disciplinary distinctions and the various sets of principles upon which they rested. Along with this went a tendency to abandon the study of the general interests of society and to concentrate instead on private, individual interest; i.e., the exact reverse of the medieval tendency. But the neglect of universal interests had encouraged individual selfishness, with grave consequences. Temporal forces had regained much of their former power, and were the cause of the "political malady of our time".² The solution lay in the revival of the study of general facts, general principles, and general interests, so that it achieved a standing equal to that of the study of individual disciplines. And the adoption of New Christianity would effect that solution:

We are certainly quite superior to our ancestors in the sciences of positive and special utility. It is only since the fifteenth century, and especially since the beginning of the last century, that we have made great progress in mathematics, physics, chemistry and physiology. But there is a science much more important to society than mathematical and physical science; namely, the science which constitutes society, which serves as its base: ethics. Now, ethics has followed a path utterly opposed to that of the physical and mathematical sciences. It is more than eighteen centuries since its fundamental principle was produced, and, since that time, none of the research of even the greatest geniuses has been able to discover a principle superior in its universality to that formulated by the founder of Christianity. I say, further, that when society has lost sight of this principle, and when it has ceased to take it as a

1. Ibid., pp. 182-3

2. Ibid., p. 184

general guide to conduct, it has promptly fallen under the domination of Caesar; that is, under the reign of physical force, which this principle had subordinated to intellectual force.¹

How are we to assess Nouveau christianisme in the context of Saint-Simon's total conception of the scientific-industrial system? In the "Adresse aux philanthropes"; Saint-Simon had introduced the idea of philanthropy as a justification for his proposed new system, in the hope that he could thereby persuade the savants and the industriels to organise themselves politically and bring that system into being. But by making, in his last work, philanthropy the abiding religious principle of the new system, and institutionalising it in the form of a clergy with supreme authority, he had greatly affected the nature of the system itself. His emphasis on ideology as such, and on the increasing urgency of ideological conformity as industrial society became more intricate, did not in itself constitute a theoretical change; for in L'Organisateur he had prescribed that artists should employ their talents so as to inspire the people with the spirit of industry.² Rather, the spirit of industry itself had been transformed into the religious principle of philanthropy, with a consequent sharp division between the clergy devoted to the teaching of this principle and the masses who were to be instructed. And this change brings into question the relationship between, on the one hand, Saint-Simon's conception of society as governed by New Christianity, and, on the other, his conception of the scientific-industrial

1. Ibid., pp. 187-8

2. See above, p. 229

system as the embodiment of human liberation. In L'Organisateur, he had illustrated the essential difference between the old system and the new by means of a metaphor depicting two caravans.¹ In the one case, the caravan left the decision as to destination and route to its guides; in the other, the caravan chose its own destination, and instructed its guides to decide upon the appropriate route. The new system was akin to the latter caravan; all forms of domination, intellectual and physical, had been eliminated. In the temporal sphere, industry enabled men to satisfy their wants without depriving others of the means for so doing; while in the spiritual sphere, the discoveries of positive science were intelligible to all through reason, and not shrouded in the mystery of the occult as were all previous doctrine. The division of men into caravan and guide remained, but was justifiable to all men in terms of the naturally unequal distribution of capacity; and so long as social ends could be universally agreed upon, it was only rational to allow decisions relating to the choice of means to be taken by those most proficient at doing so. But in Nouveau christianisme, had not Saint-Simon reverted to the kind of intellectual gulf between elite and mass such as had existed in all previous epochs? If philanthropy was a religious principle whose general acceptability was to be achieved through systematic indoctrination, then was Saint-Simon not advocating a form of intellectual repression? And, if so, what became of the alleged superiority of the new system over the old?

1. See above, pp. 221-2

One commentator has claimed that a contradiction of this kind persists throughout Saint-Simon's work as a whole. According to G. Gurvitch, Saint-Simon wished, simultaneously, to establish a system which involved the participation of all in the decision-making process, and to establish a system whose structure was hierarchical, bureaucratic and authoritarian:

This ambiguity is aggravated, on the one hand, by the recognition that "the poorest and most numerous class", i.e., the proletarians, "are capable of administration" (De l'organisation sociale, 1825), and, on the other hand, by the unlimited trust accorded to the "captains of industry" in order to crown the "industrial pyramid" (Du Système industriel, 1821, and Le Catéchisme des industriels, 1823-1824).¹

Gurvitch attributes this wavering between "a new form of democracy" and a "technocratic regime" to Saint-Simon's scorn for the problems of government, a point similar to one which he makes in an earlier work, where he asserts that Saint-Simon had failed to incorporate into his new system the abolition of government and its replacement with the "administration of things" because that system was itself "statist" and hierarchical.² But whereas it may be true that Saint-Simon did take too little account of the possibility of political conflict within the administrative institutions of the new system,³ the analytic distinctions between "government" and "administration" was successfully preserved up to Nouveau christianisme. However dubious we may consider a system in which social inequalities based on capacity never give rise to inequalities of power, Saint-

1. La physiologie sociale. Oeuvres choisies de Saint-Simon, Paris, 1965, pp. 28-9

2. L'Idée du droit social, Paris, 1932, p. 313

3. See above, pp. 253-4

Simon nevertheless always insisted that the principles upon which the new system was based, including the principle according to which social inequalities were justified, were intelligible to all men, however necessary it might be to socialise them initially into accepting the new system through the non-rational faculties. The contradiction which Gurvitch observes stems from the fact that Saint-Simon, in the bulk of his writings, put forward a consistent, if optimistic, scheme for the ending of human conflict and repression, of whatever kind; whereas in Nouveau christianisme, he recreated the great divide between the erudite clergy and the simple-minded masses such as had existed in medieval times. For, in this last work, he had deprived the masses of virtually any rational appreciation of the principles of the social system in which they lived, and allowed them only an oblique and simplified understanding in terms of a facile religious doctrine of philanthropy. Only the elite were to comprehend the exact manner in which industry and science could together form the foundations of a social order.

Is there any way in which the introduction of the religious principle of philanthropy can be justified on Saint-Simon's own terms? Is there a sense in which the kind of intellectual gulf which was to separate the clergy from the masses did not entail the intellectual repression such as had characterised the relationship between the medieval clergy and laity? Saint-Simon had, in his earlier writings, explained that each scientific system eventually entered a "religious" phase, when the intellectual achievements

of the elite were translated into a simple version which was propagated to the masses in order to allow them to understand their place in the world.¹ But all scientific systems which had preceded the positivist system were more or less flawed through unavoidable ignorance. For instance, the scientists of the Middle Ages (i.e., the theologians), while correct in their ambition to bring all their knowledge under the explanatory power of a single general law, were unable to formulate that general law in any other than the hypothetical terms of a single deity. The religious doctrine to which medieval theology gave birth, involving as it did the simple story of man's Fall and the possibility of his redemption, was a more or less conscious deception on the part of the clergy, however necessary and progressive that doctrine was at the time. But the positivist system represented the perfection of human intellectual endeavour; not only did it systematise all knowledge in terms of a single law, but that law, the law of gravity, was itself demonstrable beyond doubt. To what extent, then, may we regard the moral doctrine of philanthropy as the result of the movement of the positivist system into its religious phase? Émile Durkheim, perhaps the most important of all Saint-Simon's commentators, sees a close relationship between, on the one hand, the scientific law of gravity and, on the other, the religious principle of philanthropy. He does not claim that the latter principle is a logical derivation from the former. "To influence individuals to aid one another, to have as their objective something other than themselves, it is not enough

1. See above, pp. 149-50

to give them a purely speculative picture of the logical unity of things. An abstract theory of universal gravity would not support the moral dogma of human fraternity."¹ What he does claim is that the principle of philanthropy is the practical expression of the idea of unity which finds its theoretical expression in the law of gravity. And, as such, he goes on, it represents the fulfilment of Saint-Simon's life-long ambition to formulate a doctrine appropriate to the age of positive science:

As can be seen, religion did not occupy in this system the position of an added fragment, hastily joined, which could not be compatible with the rest. Quite the contrary - one can now discern that Saint-Simon's doctrine is profoundly consistent. One might even say that what characterises it best is this sentiment of universal unity, which is its main point of departure and arrival. For Saint-Simon's thinking developed in one direction. It stems from the principle that it is necessary to find - through the synthesis of sciences - the unity of the world in order to make it the foundation of a body of common beliefs. Then, to complete this synthesis, to establish the sciences that are missing: psychology, and especially what will later be called sociology. But after these special studies, he returns to his initial project, and, with the results obtained in the course of his research, undertakes to construct this unitarian synthesis that he never lost sight of. Thus his system opens and closes on the same question and remains in its entire compass inspired by the same thought.²

There is much to support this view of Saint-Simon's work as a whole and of the connection between his sociological

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1. Socialism and Saint-Simon, Paris, 1928; Collier Books edition, New York, 1962, pp. 227-8. J. Plamenatz points out that modern scientific philosophy cannot strengthen a moral code, since one of the main presuppositions of modern scientific method is the logical divorce between facts and values. Man and Society, London, 1963, vol. 2, pp. 116-17.
 2. Socialism and Saint-Simon, p. 228

and his doctrinal writings in particular. And although Durkheim ignores the fact that, in the pages of Nouveau christianisme itself, Saint-Simon explicitly rejected the concept of the universal scientific principle, it is still the case that Saint-Simon intended that the philanthropic principle should provide mankind with a universal ethical perspective in order to compensate for the narrow specialisation and disciplinary distinctions which scientific progress had entailed.¹ But the suspicion remains that Durkheim is being too kind to Saint-Simon in seeing his career as a writer as the gradual unfolding of a single, coherent doctrine. Not only was Saint-Simon careless and unsystematic in his style; we have also seen how easily he was influenced by contemporary intellectual movements. Indeed, he changed his perspective so often that it is difficult to see how his career could ever have been so organised as to be guided by a single idea. And if he had wished to give the impression of coherence, he would surely have allowed L'Organisateur to stand as the final statement of his social theory; for it was in that work that he propounded his most comprehensive account of the scientific-industrial system, complete with an ethic which demanded a universal, direct appreciation of the fact that industry was the sole mode of production which united the particular with the general interest. The fact that Saint-Simon went on to emphasise the persistence of poverty and of feudal values, to revert to quasi-revolutionary rhetoric in an effort to inspire the industriels with class solidarity, and, finally, to claim that the scientific-industrial system

1. See above, p. 314

was the only opportunity that Christians had for salvation, can only be explained by the continuing lack of enthusiasm among the industriels and their allies for political action and by Saint-Simon's decision to use almost any device at hand to change that state of affairs. One is forced to conclude that Nouveau christianisme was, in fact, the "added fragment, hastily joined" which Durkheim insisted it was not.¹

But even if we do conclude that Nouveau christianisme was more in the nature of an expedient than the final and most coherent statement of Saint-Simon's doctrine, there remains the problem of the conceptual relationship between the version of the new system as set out in Nouveau christianisme and that elaborated a few years earlier in L'Organisateur. In particular, we need to decide whether the reintroduction of the intellectual gulf between elite and mass vitiated Saint-Simon's conception of the new system as the liberation of mankind. Now, there is a sense in which the principles of the new system so differed from those of the old that, despite the similarities of structure between the two, the new system must nevertheless involve human liberation. The old system, for all the progress it represented over previous systems, was repressive in that

1. J. Plamenatz believes that Saint-Simon revived Christian morality so as to counteract the tendencies of science, and thus discarded his previous notions concerning the close relationship between morality and philosophy. Man and Society, London, 1963, vol. 2, pp. 115-16. P. Ansart sees the emphasis on philanthropy as having been necessitated by the failure of industry to live up to its original promise as the solvent of social conflict. "Les cadres sociaux de la moral de Saint-Simon", Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, vol. 34, 1963, p. 35.

the mode of production upon which it was based, conquest, achieved the liberation of only a minority of the human race, and at the expense of the great majority. Similarly, theology, which was faulted by the non-positive concept of God at its core, could form the basis of only a very limited kind of explanation of man's place in the world. The new system, as depicted by Saint-Simon in Nouveau christianisme, was, on the contrary, based on industry and science, which together ensured the liberation of the entire human race. And even if this fact could be appreciated subjectively only through the religious doctrine of philanthropy, men were, objectively, released from the bondage of scarcity and ignorance. The problem, then, is whether the fact that the great majority of men were to appreciate the spirit of science and of industry only through the vicarious means of religion - emotively rather than rationally - made nonsense of any claim that such a way of life represented the pinnacle of human achievement, the end of progress.

If we give a sick child medicine in the form of a sweet, telling him simultaneously that it is indeed a sweet he is being given, then we are looking after his interests by "liberating" him from illness. The child will not appreciate the truth of what is happening to him; he will be cured, but without knowing how; he will enjoy being freed from pain, but will not understand the true means whereby his cure was effected. And if we were to encourage the child by telling him that eating the prescribed sweet happened to make him better, we should not normally be accused of lying. Although we should not be telling the child the

real truth about the sweet, namely, that it was in fact a form of medicine, our action would be justified by its consequences for the child's well-being. So it was to be with the new system as organised around the religious principle of philanthropy. The great majority of mankind, unable to understand the principles of industry and science, would nevertheless live their lives free from the miseries of physical bondage, and this would represent a great advance on previous epochs. Thus the new system guaranteed liberation in the temporal sphere. But what of the individual whose study of the positive sciences led him to reject the conception of God and of the divine command as the basis of morality? The answer is that such a liberation in the spiritual sphere would have no harmful consequences. For by coming to reject the divine origins of the industrial morality one would have realised the true basis of morality, namely, the fact that the industrial way of life alone succeeded in satisfying the wants of the individual without thereby depriving any other individuals of want-satisfaction. Hence, the enlightened individual would accept the maintenance of the industrial way of life even if this required the employment of religious means. New Christianity, then, would provide universal liberation in the temporal sphere, but would keep men in a spiritual bondage only in their own interests. And as long as the opportunity existed for individuals to become spiritually enlightened through the study of the positive sciences, then the new system could scarcely be accused of being repressive.

But Nouveau Christianisme did represent a considerable

disappointment for Saint-Simon. For he had abandoned his optimistic belief that men were capable of acting according to their true interests once these interests had been made clear to them. He had been obliged by the failure of the industrial class and its allies to mobilise for political action to introduce into the age of positive science the vast intellectual divide between elite and mass which the spirit of positive science itself required to be reduced to a publicly-recognised difference of capacity. But he might have drawn some comfort from the fact that there had existed at the turn of the century a movement known as "Theophilanthropy" which advocated the full exploitation of religious sentiment as a means to the propagation of the spirit of science. In his work Le Théophilanthropie et le culte décadaire, 1796-1801,¹ A. Mathiez included lengthy quotations from the writings of members of the theophilanthropic movement, which suggest that the influence of Dupuis' Origine de tous les cultes, which had appeared in 1795, was widespread.² In a work entitled "Projet d'un culte social. Principes fondamentaux de ce culte", which appeared in 1796 in the tenth issue of L'Observateur de l'Yonne, Benoist-Lamothe asserted that all religions were good, because they were all based essentially on the existence of God and on the love for one's neighbour. It was necessary to extract these religious principles from the superstition in which they were immersed,³ and thereby elaborate a form of worship that was "appropriate

1. Paris, 1903

2. See above, pp. 145-6

3. Mathiez, op. cit., p. 61

to reason, to the present government and to the public service".¹ Another member of the theophilanthropic movement, Bressy, dealt in some detail with the institutions of his proposed "Cult of Nature". Bressy took as his model paganisme, which he believed to be "the most ingenious of all cults".² As in the case of earlier religions, it was necessary to organise a cult which would be appreciated rationally by the intellectuals, but emotionally by the masses. The intellectuals were to popularise scientific knowledge. "Our new and extensive discoveries concerning the laws which govern nature put us in the fortunate position of being able to address sense and reason. Well-performed and dazzling experiments will elicit the admiration of the most stupid individuals; by means of a homely explanation, their intelligence will open up to receive the truth."³ Even before the instruction began, the masses "will find, in the apparatus of the experiments and in the ceremony with which the laws of nature will be announced, food for their curiosity and their admiration".⁴ Gradually, however, the masses would, through receiving the truth via their emotions, "extend the domain of reason".⁵ The position of the people on the intellectual scale would therefore rise, although Bressy did not make it clear whether they would ever reach the level of the intellectuals proper. Bressy went on to propose that a "temple of nature" be constructed, within

1. Ibid., p. 58

2. Ibid., p. 69

3. Ibid., pp. 69-70

4. Ibid., p. 70

5. Ibid.

which there would take place the healing of all religious and political quarrels by means of a shared spiritual experience provided by the savants in the form of experiments demonstrating the laws of nature. Thus, "the incredulous, the savant, the deist, even the atheist, royalist or republican" would be mutually reconciled.¹

One of Saint-Simon's earlier works, Lettres d'un habitant de Genève à ses contemporains, (1803), strongly reflected the influence of the theophilanthropists; in it, he proposed the institution of a Council of Newton, one of whose tasks was to build temples in honour of Newton and to display in them pictures of the eternal abode awaiting those who hindered the progress of the arts and sciences.²

Saint-Simon could therefore claim that Nouveau christianisme and, by implication, his life's work, belonged to a respectable tradition of thought which, for all its emphasis on religion, was nevertheless devoted to the advancement of science and the liberation of the human mind. But, in coming to terms with the limitations of human nature, he had been obliged to allow his favourite social group, the industrial class, to become dissipated throughout the vast range of intellectual ability which was to characterise the new system; in other words, the concept of the industrial class had had to be abandoned. The renewed emphasis on hierarchy in Nouveau christianisme had broken the bond of sympathy between the chefs d'industrie and their ouvriers, the bond which Saint-Simon had hitherto envisaged would be maintained under the new system and which he had vainly

1. Ibid.

2. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 1, (1), pp. 51-2

attempted to intensify. For the social hierarchy was now necessary, not because of publicly-recognised differences of capacity, but because of the different levels of understanding. In L'Organisateur, Saint-Simon had treated the industriels, not so much as a class, strictly speaking, but as a capacity-group concerned with the executive functions of the new system. As such they shared, with the savants and the artists, membership of the communes, the class which stood opposed to the feudal establishment. The distinction between industrial captain and worker was purely one of ability within the capacity-group, a distinction which was openly accepted by all because the community as a whole determined the social goals which it was to pursue, leaving the means to be decided by the experts. But, in Nouveau christianisme, the gulf between the elite and the masses was such as to make the common membership of both industrial captains and their employees in the artisan capacity-group purely formal. For the elite was now to determine the ends which the community was to pursue, as well as the means; and the common bond of understanding among the industriels had been consequently broken. Under the system envisaged in L'Organisateur, they could have shared the esprit de corps of the capacity-group. But now the mass of workers was as distant from the industrial captains as from the savants, artists and clergy; a spiritual as well as a temporal division had appeared between the two groups. Saint-Simon revealed in Nouveau christianisme, albeit obliquely, that he was aware of the tendency of the artists, the savants and the

industrial captains to form a social group consciously distinct from the masses. But he hoped to overcome this by emphasising the common interests of all those who belonged to the communes, or, as he called them here, the travailleurs:

I had to impress upon the artists, the savants, and the industrial captains that their interests were essentially the same as those of the masses; that they belonged to the class of workers (travailleurs) at the same time as being their natural leaders; that the approval of the masses for the services which they rendered them was the sole reward worthy of their glorious tasks.¹

But this attempt to inspire the commons with a shared spirit, derived from the fact that they all worked, could have meaning only in a situation in which there existed an opposing class of idlers. With the expected demise of the feudal establishment, when everyone would be a travailleur, the whole idea of a "class" of workers would become redundant.

Saint-Simon's final version of the new system involved the creation, in effect, of two capacity-groups: on the one hand, the elite of clergy, savants, artists, and industrial captains, and, on the other hand, the mass of workers. Such was the institutionalised gulf of understanding between the two groups that the new system resembled neither the commons in general nor the industrial class in particular as these social groups had appeared in Saint-Simon's original attempts to elaborate the theory of the new system. There was no place now for the industrial class in any sense. The distinctions of rank within the industrial class had at last

1. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 7, (3), p. 180

become so great as to render the concept of the industrial class itself redundant. The group to which Saint-Simon had looked to provide the final thrust towards the establishment of the new system had disintegrated in the process.

C O N C L U S I O N

CONCLUSION

The decline of the concept of the industrial class in the writings of the social theorist who is associated more than any other with that concept was a response to the fact that it was beginning to lose its explanatory power in the context of the continuing development of industry in French society. Saint-Simon's first response to the failure of the industriels to exhibit the degree of class-consciousness which would be necessary if they were to accomplish their historical mission was to treat it as a temporary difficulty, brought about by the persistence of anti-industrial values emanating from the feudal establishment. But in Nouveau christianisme he attempted to come to terms with what he now believed to be the severe limitations on the ability of the majority of the industrial class to act in accordance with their true interests. And in so doing, he so diluted the industrial class in the intellectual hierarchy which he now believed to be necessary as to make the term industriel signify little of importance. For what was of interest in Saint-Simon's final version of the new system was, not whether or not one was engaged in the direct process of production, but whether one belonged to the administrative elite or the benighted masses. In an effort to produce a version of the scientific-industrial system which took account of individual human weaknesses, Saint-Simon had been obliged to play down the role of the industrial class in the organisation of the system. Hence, the theoretical dis-

solution of the industriels as a class was the necessary concomitant to the contingent failure of the industriels to behave as a class in practice. But although Saint-Simon allowed the concept of the industrial class to decline, he remained convinced that the interests of the captains of industry and their employees were the same. The problem was purely one of enlightenment. Although in Nouveau christianisme, Saint-Simon looked forward to a possibly indefinite reign of the enlightened, he did not rule out the possibility of the eventual emergence of universal enlightenment leading to the kind of scientific-industrial system he had envisaged in L'Organisateur. The major theoretical underpinning of the concept of the industrial class - the unity of interest between all those engaged in industry - was preserved intact. Saint-Simon never questioned - in fact, he always took for granted - the property-relations which had accompanied the rise of industry ever since its inception as an independent mode of production in the Middle Ages.

After Saint-Simon's death in 1825, the concept of the industrial class finally disappeared; and so did the unquestioning optimism concerning the ability of capitalist property-relations to abolish all conflict of interest. We have already noted that political economy - the discipline in which, with J.-B. Say's Traité d'économie politique, the concept of the industrial class received its first formulation - had begun to perceive in capitalism, not the resolution, but the creation, of class-conflict.¹ The year 1830 witnessed

1. See above, pp. 268-9

the beginning of a period of class warfare on the bourgeois-proletarian lines which were to become so familiar during the remainder of the nineteenth century; and with it arose doctrines calling for revolutionary action in the name of socialism. Most significantly of all, Saint-Simon's immediate heirs, the Saint-Simonians, were quick to realise that the principles of the industrial system were incompatible with the laissez-faire economic doctrine which their master had left untouched. They went on to develop a theory of government suitable for the industrial system; but they found no use for the concept of the industrial class. On the contrary, they attributed the prevailing poverty among the workers, not to the refusal of the captains of industry to act in accordance with their true interests, but to the existing property-relations. In the Doctrine de Saint-Simon. Exposition. Première Année. 1828-1829, they claimed that, despite the widespread acceptance of the liberal dogma that a man's rewards should not be determined by the circumstances of his birth, privilege persisted through the institution of inheritance. Consequently, the owners of property exploited both the managers and the workers, and the managers in their turn "participate in the privileges of exploitation, which bears down with all its weight upon the labouring classes, which is to say, on the majority of the workers".¹ And the Saint-Simonians' view of the plight of the worker seemed a great deal more informed than had Saint-Simon's:

1. Trans. G. Iggers, Boston, 1958, pp. 82-3

A glance at what is happening around us will be sufficient to make us recognise that the worker is exploited materially, intellectually, and morally in the same way as the slave was, only less intensely so. It is indeed evident that he can hardly provide for his own wants by his work, and whether or not he wishes to work is not up to him ... Can the worker, who is restricted by the misery to which he has been reduced, have the time to develop his intellectual faculties and his moral desires? ... No-one cares for him. Physical misery reduces him to brutishness, and brutishness to a depravity which the source of new misery.¹

The Saint-Simonians, so far from seeing in the development of industry the spontaneous formation of the social relations which were to become universal in the industrial system, detected a form of exploitation which would have to be eradicated in the process of instituting the industrial system. The principle of equality which Saint-Simon favoured, and which he believed to be observed by the existing capitalist relations of production, in fact remained to be secured; it was only through transferring

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1. Ibid., p. 83. Social historians tend to confirm this version of the lot of the average working man at this time. A. L. Dunham stresses the lack of organisation among the working population, divided as it was among several distinct kinds of work-situation, with the result that "the bourgeoisie paid little attention to workers and continued to regard them as animated tools to be taken up or cast down according to the dictates of profit and loss". The Industrial Revolution in France, 1815-1848, New York, 1955, pp. 210-11. C. Morazé makes a similar point in his The Triumph of the Middle Classes, London, 1966, pp. 124-5, where he points out that the merchants used the cheapness of rural labour as an excuse to force down wage-levels in the factories. According to J. H. Clapham (The Economic Development of France and Germany, 1815-1914, Cambridge, 1961, pp. 75-6) there existed a wage-earner's mentality among the entire working population, including the master-craftsmen - a mentality quite distinct from the petit-bourgeois outlook which we have seen to exist among the Parisian sans-culotterie during the Revolution. (See above, pp. 45-8.)

the right of inheritance from the family to the state that it would be possible for all men to be rewarded in accordance with their contribution to the community.¹ Thus, those factors which Saint-Simon believed to have come into existence already and which made for class unity among the industriels, seemed to the Saint-Simonians to await creation.

It is ironic that the Saint-Simonians, of all social thinkers, should have so dispensed with the concept of the industrial class. But, by so doing, they liberated the vision of the industrial system which Saint-Simon had imparted to them from the limitations imposed upon it by eighteenth-century thought, and, in particular, by the legacy of the French Revolution. For the concept of the industrial class, for all its promise as a major analytic tool in the hands of the Restoration liberals, was in many ways an intellectual echo of the language of the Revolution, and, for that reason, was inappropriate in the context of the increasingly obvious division of the productive elements of society into two classes with distinct interests. The concept of the industrial class was at the heart of the attempt by the Restoration liberals to demonstrate that the Restoration symbolised the fulfilment of the best of the Revolutionary demands. They wished to combine, on the one hand, the abolition of privilege and the emancipation of mobile property, and, on the other, freedom from mob anarchy and terror. They wanted to revive the spirit of the Constitution of 1791. Hence their emphasis on the need to beware the emergence of agitators with their misleading

1. Ibid., pp. 92-3

rhetoric of "liberty" and ultra-legalistic frame of mind. Hence, too, their more or less conscious return to the language of the Revolution. They were dominated by categories which had become universal during the Revolution, and attempted to see in the industrieux the same nation, tiers état and peuple which had demanded emancipation during the Revolution. But all these concepts had been conditioned by the existence of an aristocracy which had imbued them with pejorative overtones; and, to that extent, they were bound to that period in which the bourgeoisie were openly struggling against the aristocracy for political equality. The aristocracy had divided the community into estates, and established itself in leading positions: why should not the Third Estate now take its rightful place as the sovereign Estate? The aristocracy had claimed sole right to govern on the basis of its inheritance of the Frankish right of conquest over the Gauls: why should not the Gauls now throw off the Frankish yoke? The aristocracy had despised productive activity as fit only for slaves, and had cultivated lives of cultured leisure: why should not the despised labourers now claim the fruit of their own labour? It was this outlook, which sought to confront the aristocracy with its own arguments and to refute them by turning them inside out, as it were, that persisted in the minds of the Restoration liberals; and, married to the scientific analysis of industrie provided by political economy, it produced the rich and suggestive concept of the industrial class as the culmination of several lines of thought which had developed throughout the Revolution.

When Saint-Simon broke with Restoration liberalism and proceeded to elaborate his theory of the scientific-industrial system, he introduced into the concept of the industrial class yet another line of thought from the eighteenth century: the Enlightenment. Industrial activity seemed to him to embody the application of science in the service of mankind; and to the industriels he added the savants, their technological allies, foreseeing as a result of this alliance the realisation not only of the demands of the Revolution but also of the human mind. The nineteenth century would witness the perfection longed for by the eighteenth century. And Saint-Simon had a fine appreciation of the abundance which industrial society was capable of producing, an appreciation more perceptive than that of the political economists (with the exception of Say) and their less than optimistic expectation of continuing scarcity as a consequence of population growth. He also understood the extent to which the principles of hierarchy which dominated the workshop would have to be observed in the creation of social institutions compatible with the total industrialisation of society. But his optimism, and his insistence on seeing a single set of interests shared by all those engaged in industrial activity - an assumption at the very heart of the concept of the industrial class - blinded him to the social changes which the industrial revolution was slowly bringing about. The absence of real class conflict among those opposed to the aristocracy during the Revolution could no longer be taken as proof that conflict among the industriels was the result of a misunderstanding; the gradual rise of

the factory-system and the increasing influence and intensity of the trade-cycle were bringing into the open conflicts of interest within the industrial class. Industry might be the most fertile mode of production known to man; but abundance in itself was no guarantee against the existence of poverty and conflict. And so, when the concept of the industrial class died with its most enthusiastic advocate, there died as well the vision built up during the eighteenth century of what the abolition of privilege would entail in terms of human happiness.

A P P E N D I X

SAINT-SIMON'S ADDITIONS TO
DR. E.-M. BAILLY'S
"DE LA PHYSIOLOGIE SOCIALE"

In 1825, there appeared in Paris a collection of articles entitled Opinions littéraires, philosophiques et industrielles. The contributors were, for the most part, members of the small group of intellectuals who befriended Saint-Simon in his last years. E. Dentu, editor of the Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, included in volume ten of the Oeuvres two of Saint-Simon's own contributions: Quelques opinions philosophiques à l'usage du dix-neuvième siècle and De l'organisation sociale: fragments d'un ouvrage inédit. Dentu also reprinted an article from the Opinions collection by O. Rodrigues, L'artiste, le savant et l'industriel, as well as Dr. Etienne-Marin Bailly's De la physiologie appliquée à l'amélioration des institutions sociales (often shortened for convenience to De la physiologie sociale). However, he decided, without stating his reasons, not to reprint the bulk of the second section of De la physiologie sociale, which Saint-Simon had drawn up for publication from Bailly's notes. The existence of the greater part of this section has, consequently, remained virtually unknown.¹

This appendix is devoted to translation of the section as it appears in its original form on pp. 246-72 of the Opinions collection. Saint-Simon made it clear in the introductory passage that he intended to treat Bailly's

1. For a full account of the confusion surrounding Bailly's article and Saint-Simon's additions to it, see my research note "A Bibliographical Mistake in the Study of Henri de Saint-Simon", Political Studies, vol. 20, no. 2, 1972, pp. 202-5

notes with considerable licence, and it is impossible to say how much of the original survived. We may safely assume that Saint-Simon had seized an opportunity to exploit the prestige of the medical profession in order to facilitate the propagation of his theory of the scientific-industrial system. As we have seen, Saint-Simon was at this stage pessimistic of ever convincing a significant number of individuals of the validity of his theory, and had resorted to a fundamentalist secular Christianity in the hope of thereby winning over the French people to his cause. Since his espousal of Christian ethics was only a tactical manoeuvre, so to speak, it was quite consistent on his part to attempt to demonstrate that his ideas were physiologically as well as religiously sound. The more convincingly he could present them as medical prescriptions as well as divine commands, the more authoritative and attractive they would appear.

In the original version, the several notes are separated only by pauses in the text. In this translation, however, I have numbered them. I have also re-arranged the paragraph structure where the context renders this desirable.

M.***,¹ doctor of medicine, who had undertaken the physiological part of our task, has been called away to a distant department by the illness of one of his parents. He has not finished his article, and has left us only the introduction. In order to fill this gap, as far as we can, we shall state in popular language the observations which he had counted on presenting by employing the formulae of physiology and hygiene. We shall not endeavour to link up these observations; we shall limit ourselves to presenting them successively.

1. The idler is a liability to himself, and at the same time is a burden to society. Idleness is the father of all the vices; it renders a man ill. Thus, in accordance with the principles of politics and of ethics, as well as those of physiology and hygiene, the legislator should so arrange the organisation of society as to encourage, as far as possible, all classes to work and particularly to work in the manner the most useful to society.

The existing organisation of society, which attributes the greatest prestige to idleness and to the activities which are the least useful to society, is, then, essentially and radically vicious. The nobility first, and, after them, the bourgeoisie, are the two most prestigious classes; it is their activities which are the least socially-useful, and it is among them that the greatest number of idlers are to be found. It is, principally, to the nobility and, following them, the wealthy bourgeoisie that the administration of the public interest is entrusted. This political arrangement is monstrous, since the nobles and the bourgeoisie are precisely those classes which contribute the least to the national wealth. Moreover, these classes must necessarily spurn the means which should be employed for increasing the welfare of society, since, in the last analysis, they have an interest in opposing the rapid development of industry,

1. E. Dentu reproduces this introduction in an abridged form, and indicates that the "doctor of medicine" to whom reference is made is Dr. Bailly. Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 10, (5), p. 193

a development which tends to enhance the prestige of those who work, and diminish the prestige of those who do not. The existing organisation of society is that much more vicious in that, to join, or to make their children join, the ranks of the idle. It follows that the entire present population is being encouraged to progress as vigorously as possible towards an idle condition, to a condition, that is, in which man suffers from a disease which necessarily renders him immoral.

2. The existing organisation of society is not one that was conceived in primitive times. In the era of their greatest ignorance, and when they held the most laughably superstitious beliefs, men never pushed absurdity so far as to institute a comparable state of affairs. Our present social set-up should be looked upon as being in a state of complete decay and as the death agony of the theological-feudal system. When that system began, the nobility and the clergy, unlike today, were neither idle nor incapable. At that time, war was continuous, and the nobility, who alone constituted the military class, were, as a result, continually active. At the same time, the nobility managed agricultural operations, the sole industrial operations of importance. The clergy were, at that time, the sole corps of intellectuals; they had exclusive control over public education; and they enjoyed the trust of all classes of society. Those of them who possessed some ability were continually active, some as advisors to governments, others as advisors to the governed. There was no public or private question that was not submitted first to their spiritual scrutiny.

3. It has been established on the basis of physiological discoveries that societies, like individuals, are subject to two moral forces of equal intensity and which operate alternately. One is the force of habit; the other results from the desire to experience new sensations. After a certain period of time, habits inevitably become harmful, since they have been acquired in the context of a situation which no longer corresponds to the needs of society. It is

then that the need for new things makes itself felt. This need, which constitutes a genuine revolutionary situation, inevitably endures until society has been reconstituted in a manner that corresponds to its level of civilisation. As soon as society has been appropriately reconstituted, new habits are acquired, and the force of habit predominates.

The population of Europe has been dominated by a revolutionary force since the fifteenth century. This force will not cease to be dominant until the theological-feudal system has been replaced by a social system which is radically distinct from it. The first task necessary for halting the revolutionary action consists of the conception and clear presentation of the social system appropriate to the existing level of knowledge. This first task has been completed. It is clear that, in the system whose establishment will suppress the revolutionary force, the greatest influence should be exercised by those whose occupations and habits are peaceful. The most capable of them should administer the public interest. Now, the most capable, in view of the fact that it is their efforts which contribute the most to the national wealth, are the artists, the savants and the industriels.

In establishing the social institutions of their choice, our ancestors were guided by instinct much more than by reason. This is nothing extraordinary, since, until nowadays, fundamental temporal and political rights have been based on the law of the strongest. In the present stage of the development of the human understanding, the physiologist recognises that, in order to end the predominance of revolutionary activity, it is necessary to establish temporal power on the arrangement which most favours the interest of the greatest number of citizens.

4. When a man or a society is moved in a harmful direction, he must be brought back to the straight and narrow by means of the language of passion rather than that of reason. It is impossible to move from a state of exaltation to a state of repose, except in two cases: one, where the object of the

passion is attained; the other, where the impossibility of attaining the object is realised. But it is easy enough to move from a misguided to a useful passion.

During the Revolution, the French nation was very often led astray, although it had originally been impassioned directly on behalf of the public good. It performed a great number of actions which were diametrically opposed to ethics, to physiology, to public hygiene, and which did considerable damage to its interests. As a result of the Revolution, the French nation has acquired the taste for powerful sensations. Thus, in attempting to make the nation act reasonably, without paying attention to the object of its passion, the government is acting in an entirely anti-physiological manner. It is necessary, not to try to subject the French nation to apathy, but to encourage all members of society to work as passionately as possible for the progress and for the application of the sciences and the fine arts. And it is not under the guidance of the nobility, placed as they are at the top of the social scale, and entrusted almost exclusively with the administration of the public interest, that the fine arts, the sciences and industry can achieve the greatest development of which they are capable. For no-one feels enthusiastic about reaching a subordinate position.

Physiologists have observed that there exists an action and reaction between the mental and the physical forces of society. Thus, when a nation experienced a great physical upheaval, there always followed great mental deeds; reciprocally, great mental turmoil always produced great physical efforts. Indeed, it was after the physical crisis of the Fronde that there appeared the great men who marked the age of Louis XIV. Soon after the English Revolution, Milton, Newton and Locke published their immortal works. The eighteenth-century philosophers underwent and produced a great turmoil, a concoction into which they introduced all the spirits which caused the Revolution and which activated all the physical forces of the French nation. The physical activity of the French nation has lost its turbulent character; it has assumed an orderly direction, i.e., that of industrial operations.

After such prodigious physical efforts as those expended by the French nation over the last forty years, it is possible, it is necessary to expect mental feats of the greatest importance. One should not wonder, then, at the appearance of a new system of social organisation; of a system which respects religion but rejects superstition; which consolidates the royalty while, however, destroying all the rights founded originally on conquest, i.e., on the law of the strongest.

5. According to the discoveries of physiologists, people experience two kinds of political needs which are quite distinct. They also possess two kinds of means for satisfying these needs. Some of these needs, and the corresponding means, which are common to all peoples, stem directly from the organisation of the human race and its general tendency to perfect its social system. In order to satisfy these general and shared needs, different peoples are able to employ only the same means. They can attain their goal through mental exaltation and through reason; the ability of the artists, combined with that of the savants, should produce new principles, demonstrate their superiority over those adopted by previous generations, and ensure their adoption by the present generation. The other needs, which are of a secondary nature, and the equally secondary means, are peculiar to each people. They are caused, and based upon, the nature of the soil and the climate they live in, their geographical situation, as well as their acquired habits. We shall limit ourselves for the present to applying this observation to the two peoples who are, unquestionably, the most enlightened and advanced in practical civilisation: that is, we shall speak of the English and the French nations together and separately.

Since the fifteenth century, the epoch in which the human mind awoke and turned towards things of a direct and positive utility, the English and the French were the two peoples who worked the most coherently and energetically for the improvement of their social existence, and for the establishment of a social system which had the public good as its direct object. We shall look at the political

behaviour of these two peoples; we shall examine separately their personal efforts, and we shall then indicate what their political deeds had in common. Let us speak first of the particular efforts made by the English nation to rid itself of the yoke of theology and feudalism. In order to throw off the theological yoke, the English made their King head of the English clergy. In order to render the feudal yoke, which they continued to bear, less oppressive and harsh, the English compelled their lords to join in parliament with the commons for the exercise of governmental activity.

The people of France, in order to achieve the same end in the theological respect, sided with the royal against the papal power. Since the fifteenth century, they have had no wish to recognise papal bulls apart from those enjoying royal sanction. So as to diminish the feudal power and to prepare for the total annihilation of the nobility, the French people became royalist, i.e., they supported all the efforts of the kings to abolish all rights of sovereignty residing in the hands of the nobility.

Independently of these efforts by the French and the English nations to ride themselves of theological and feudal supremacy, the philosophers of the two nations undertook common efforts directed towards the same end. These efforts consisted of the scientific research designed to establish a new political theory quite distinct from theological theory, and which performed as well as possible the function of directing the labours of the people towards the improvement of their mental and physical condition. These theoretical efforts have not yet produced any clear, positive and satisfactory results. The debate concerning the constitution of the spiritual power and its function began in the fifteenth century; philosophers have not yet succeeded in establishing agreement between Protestants and Catholics. They have limited themselves to establishing between them a truce which might last until principles are discovered by means of which the two Christian sects may adopt the same doctrine.

The debate concerning the constitution of the spiritual power and its functions has continued vigorously and ceaselessly since the English Revolution, which gave it a positive

character. In that country, one of the two parties is known as the Whigs, the other as the Tories. In France, the two parties are known as the Constitutional Royalists and the Theological and Feudal Royalists. In France, the first of these wants to king to entrust the administration of the national interest to those individuals who have demonstrated the greatest ability for positive activity, while the other maintains that the nation should be governed essentially by the clergy and the nobility.

The slowness of scientific effort to take effect on political theory has wearied society. As a result, society has adopted as a principle the wholly false notion that political theory is, of its nature, a wholly practical branch of knowledge; so that, as far as politics is concerned, theoretical considerations should be looked on as only more or less ingenious fantasies. This mistake, which is committed generally by the mass of the governed, and adopted in particular by governments, who have an interest in propagating it, should not cause any surprise to philosophers. It should not provide them with an excuse to work any less enthusiastically for the fulfilment of their task. The truth is that three centuries of preliminary and preparatory work were needed to bring the human mind to a position where it might clearly conceive of a new social system. Two great revolutions, the English and the French, were needed to clear the political horizon of theological beliefs and feudal principles before the eye of the philosopher could discover the system of public welfare. Now that these two conditions have at last been fulfilled, philosophy may speak in a clear, firm and satisfactory language on the social organisation appropriate to the enlightened peoples who live in the nineteenth century. English and French philosophers will join forces to see that in England and in France the social system of public welfare will be adopted in its fundamental principles. These philosophers will impress upon the doers of the two nations that, in politics as in the other sciences, theory and practice should lend each other mutual support. They will point out to them that the experience gained in England

and France, in the revolutions which these two nations underwent, has adequately demonstrated that the most exalted doers, the most energetic revolutionaries, were unable to succeed in effecting a radical change in social institutions without the intervention and the co-operation of the thinkers.

Their doctrine will differ essentially from that professed in the eighteenth century by Voltaire, by Diderot, by d'Alembert, and by all the other encyclopedists. They will not have the same end in view; they will not employ the same means. The encyclopedists of the eighteenth century worked to overthrow the old system; these philosophers will work to establish a new system which will be in accordance with the needs of society, in the present state of knowledge and civilisation. Instead of agitating the masses against their governments, they will show them that it is possible and even easy to have public affairs directed by individuals whose interests are identical with those of the masses. Far from regarding religion as an obstacle to the progress of civilisation, as was done in the eighteenth century, they will look upon Christianity as providing the best weapons for combatting, in the minds of the masses, the prejudices implanted there by the Catholic and the Anglican clergy. They will remind the faithful that it is principally to the Christian religion that men are indebted for the destruction of slavery; and that the spirit of Christianity nowadays impels society towards the establishment of the regime which can most swiftly improve the mental and physical condition of the poorest class. Finally, they will prove that the lay scientists are today, by virtue of their sentiments and their knowledge, superior Christians to the professional theologians; and that, consequently, the clergies of the various Christian sects should be subject to the direction of the body of lay scientists. The philosophers of the eighteenth century disparaged the royalty by representing it as inevitably allied to theology and feudalism; those of the nineteenth century will be essentially royalist, and will represent the royalty as needing for support and as close advisors, in the spiritual sphere the

the most distinguished savants and artists, and in the temporal sphere the most important industriels.

The battle which has been joined between those who are working to establish a new system of social organisation and those who are seeking to prolong the life of the theological-feudal system is not over; and no-one has yet demonstrated clearly the means which should be employed to end it. It is easy to solve this question by considering it from a physiological point of view; we shall give some idea of the manner in which it should be treated. What obstacles still stand in the way of total victory to the innovators? What have they done? What remains for them to do?

The spiritual innovators have succeeded in rendering the language of science and of the fine arts completely distinct from the language of theology and feudalism. They have deprived the clergy of all the moral influence it exercised on the intellectual relations between private individuals. The temporal innovators have rendered industrial arrangements and financial transactions between farmers, manufacturers and merchants entirely independent of feudal principles. As a result, the nation today communicates and behaves according to principles toally distinct from theological and feudal principles; and society today presents this most extraordinary political phenomenon: the mode of activity observed by the governed is not the same as that observed by the government; the political system of the governed differs essentially in the spiritual and the temporal spheres from that of the government.

Why have the innovators not yet succeeded in making governments adopt the scientific-industrial system? What should they do to achieve this end? The physiologist replies thus to the first question: the clergy and the nobility have remained united, but the artists, the savants and the industriels have not yet combined their forces. He replies thus to the second: the clergy and the nobility will cease to exercise their preponderant influence on society as soon as the artists, the savants and the industriels have joined

forces. The fact of the disunity which exists between the artists, the savants and the industriels is easy to establish; it is complete. It exists, first, in the fact that each of them has separately sought the protection of the clergy and the nobility, instead of thinking of lending one another mutual support. It exists also in the more subtle sense, namely, that the artists do not have in view a goal which is set ahead of them, but nullify their powers by always envisaging as models the virtues of our ancestors rather than working to enthuse men with the establishment of the scientific and industrial system. The savants waste their powers by making mathematicians their leaders; whereas the first of all the sciences, that which should direct all the others, is the science of man. The most distinguished geometers are generally less skilled in the science of man than are the most mediocre theologians; and the clergy, who always concern themselves with this science, albeit harmfully, will retain a real preponderance over the great majority of mankind while the co-ordination of the savants remains as it is. Finally, the bankers, who should exercise their influence over the industriels so as to get them to join forces with the savants and the artists and to improve their social condition, concern themselves essentially with deriving in person the greatest possible portion of the last squanderings of feudalism. The physiologist concludes by stating that the artists, through an effort of the imagination, should remove the golden age from the past and enrich the future with it; that the physiologists should take over the leadership of the body of lay savants; that the bankers should unite their political forces with those of the savants and the artists. The men of the theological and feudal system would soon figure only in the memory, like the augurs and Consuls of Rome.

6. Why is it that, nowadays, doctors lead such a mean and subordinate existence, whereas among the Greeks this class of savants enjoyed great prestige and exercised great political influence on governments? What means should doctors employ to recover their ancient glory? Here are two questions whose answers will make for an immeasurable

advance in our civilisation. We shall limit ourselves for the time being to making a first summary of our opinion on this subject.

First: the establishment of Christianity resulted in a division of the science of man into two parts. The priests undertook the special study of the spiritual aspects of man and the direction of social behaviour in the emotional sense. Since that time, doctors have been principally concerned with the physical aspects of man; they have directed their studies essentially towards the preservation of man's material health.

The religions which preceded Christianity were in essence applications of the fine arts. The study of the science of man was not divided; doctors pursued this science in its entirety, in all its generality. Hippocrates gave prescriptions for moral and for physical illnesses; he gave them to peoples as well as to individuals.

Now that these facts have been stated, and our opinion has been thereby solidly justified, we shall reply to the first question: Hippocrates cultivated among the Greeks the science of man in its entire generality; that is what secured for him the great prestige he enjoyed, and which gave him the great influence he exercised over the governments of his day. Modern doctors concern themselves essentially with the study of physical man alone; and the moral subordination of their social existence is the inevitable result of the subordination of the functions they exercise on society. As one can see, the second question is answered along with the first; indeed, it is evident that, in order to recover their ancient importance, doctors should bring back into their field observations on the spiritual or moral aspects of man, and satisfy society's greatest present need by giving it, in the form of a prescription of hygiene, the system of social organisation which best corresponds to the present stage of civilisation and knowledge.

N.B.¹ It is for the development of this last summary that

1. These three observations are almost certainly not based upon Bailly's notes, but consist of Saint-Simon's personal comments.

we shall work with great enthusiasm and care in our further physiological work. It is also to this last sketch in particular that we draw the reader's attention. Equally, and for the same reason, we recommend the three following observations.

First observation. We do not maintain that the division of the science of man into two separate sciences has hindered the progress of civilisation. On the contrary, we consider that the Christian religion has powerfully contributed to the progress of positive ethics. But what we do say is this: in view of the fact that the human mind improves its knowledge only by examining the observed facts alternately in their entirety and in detail, and that the study of physical man and of moral man have been separated for nineteen centuries, the moment seems to us to have arrived when it would be useful to establish a theory of the science of man, based on the observation of facts concerning equally man's moral needs and his physical needs. Moreover, given that physiologists recognise all that is truly ethical and of positive utility in theology, and that theologians are not versed in knowledge acquired about physical man, it is clearly the physiologists who should undertake the recasting of the ethical and political system. Without this recasting, society cannot recover its self-possession, since the principles of the governed are no longer the same as those of governments. We add to what we have just said: the laity are today better Christians than the clergy, in the basic sense that they generally regard all men as their brothers, while the clergy look upon the laity as their subjects.

Second observation. The difference between general physiology and philosophy is very small. These two sciences should have the general and common objects of seeking the best social regime. The difference is that, in this quest, the physiologist should concern himself essentially with determining the relations which do exist between different classes of worker, while the philosopher should seek principally to determine the political relations which should exist between these classes.

Third observation. There exists nowadays doctors in all places of some importance for the population. They have inherited in very great measure the trust which the clergy generally enjoyed at the time when they were the most knowledgeable body of men. The medical profession finds itself, then, precisely in a position to exercise a great influence on public opinion.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

A. NOTE ON REFERENCES TO WORKS BY SAINT-SIMON

Most of Saint-Simon's works are to be found in the Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, which constitute eleven of the forty-seven volumes of the Oeuvres de Saint-Simon et d'Enfantin, Paris, ed. E. Dentu (1865-76) and E. Leroux (1877-8). The Oeuvres de Saint-Simon are most readily available in the first five volumes of the photographic reproduction entitled Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, Éditions Anthropos, Paris, 1966. Each of these volumes contains copies of at least two volumes of the Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, each with its own pagination. The final volumes consists partly of a reprint of the Oeuvres choisies de C.-H. de Saint-Simon, ed. Lemonnier, Brussels, 1859, (three volumes) and partly of a selection by Jean Dautry of certain inaccessible and/or hitherto unpublished works.

Footnotes referring to works which appear in the Oeuvres de Saint-Simon state: (i) Oeuvres de Saint-Simon; (ii) the volumes number; (iii) the Éditions Anthropos volumes number in brackets; (iv) the page number(s). For instance, a reference to the preface to part one of Du Système industriel would appear thus: Oeuvres de Saint-Simon, 5, (3), pp. 3-22. Where the work concerned appears in the final volumes of Éditions Anthropos, the footnote states: (i) Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon; (ii) the volume number (6) in brackets; (iii) the page number(s). Thus, a footnote referring to the opening of Projet d'Encyclopédie would appear: Oeuvres de Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, (6), p. 289. References to works which appear in none of the above collections are given in the normal way.

In the bibliography, entries of works appearing in the Oeuvres de Saint-Simon state: (i) the title of the work; (ii) its year of publication; (iii) the appropriate Oeuvres de Saint-Simon volume number; (iv) the Éditions Anthropos volume number in brackets; (v) the page numbers. Thus: L'Organisateur, 1819-20, 4, (2), pp. 15-240. Where

the work appears in the final volume of Éditions Anthropos, the entry states: (i) the title of the work; (ii) its year of publication or composition; (iii) the volume number (6) in brackets; (iv) the page numbers. Thus: La Classe des prolétaires, 1821, (6), pp. 455-7. All other entries are given in the normal way.

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