

UNION OF CATHOLIC WORKS FOR WORKERS

CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION

OF THE FACTORY

BY AN INDUSTRIALIST

It is once again for the Church to remake today,
in other forms and with that
variety of ways that her overflowing
action allows, what she did so happily
and so usefully in the past.

(The Bishop of Poitiers.)

REPORTS PRESENTED TO THE CONGRESS OF NANTES AND OF LYON
1873-1874

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THIS EDITION

This is an English translation of the original French text, made for the website leonharmel.com in 2026. It follows the original sentence by sentence, without cuts or additions.

The text is given in full, translated from the 1873-1874 edition. It has been typeset in the spirit of the original: title pages and headings follow the layout of the book; the illustrations have been cut out of the digitised document and restored.

The numbered notes are those of the original work; here they are numbered continuously from beginning to end.

Léon Harmel, le Bon Père du Val-des-Bois

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A NEW FACT
IN THE
LABOUR QUESTION

“Assuredly, when a truth makes its
appearance in the world, it counts
few supporters there at first, and that number
then grows from day to day.”

(The newspaper *la République française*, of

17 October 1874.)



PARIS 1874

SPECIAL EDITION
FOR
THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC WORKERS' CIRCLES

As this writing is a work of propaganda, the readers into whose hands it comes are kindly asked to spread it around them, and to further its circulation more and more by a special offering intended to cover its costs.

These offerings will be received, and orders filled, at the General Secretariat of the Association of Catholic Workers' Circles, through the good offices of Mr Dinoir, cashier, 17, quai Voltaire.

Paris, November 1874.

INTRODUCTION



“Vidi Christum resurgentem!” (Easter hymn.)

We are here introducing the reader into a world that is entirely new to him, unless he has already understood the nascent effort that is embodied today chiefly in the Association of Catholic Workers’ Circles, or unless, as a Christian learned in the things of the past, he has followed, from the catacombs and through all the centuries of the Middle Ages, that supernatural labour by which the Church replaced the slavery of the pagan world, and the barbarian flood that avenged a dishonoured humanity, with Christian civilisation.

Without belonging to those infinitely small or infinitely rare numbers, it is easy to see that in our day the work of the Church has given way to that of the Revolution in all its forms, from the liberalism that seduces refined minds to the socialism that inflames popular instincts and the materialism in which doomed races and societies go to rot in a tomb without hope.

If, then, the ancient leprosy of the human race has once again been inoculated into our modern societies, and if the evil keeps growing despite all the efforts of politicians, is it senseless to turn with a moved heart towards the Catholic Church, who was our mother, and to ask this society of the faithful, governed by its lawful pastors under the infallible authority of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, to take up again the instrument it used through the ages to shape, quicken and support its marvellous work, an instrument which is none other than *Catholic association*?

An Association was founded in France on the morrow of our national disasters to carry this principle of Catholic association into the ranks of the ruling class as well as into those of the working class, and for two years it has been growing in the struggle, often misunderstood even by those who serve it, but fruitful wherever it is understood. — It is the Association of Catholic Workers' Circles. Among its devoted servants, a man has been raised up from on high to provide, by his example, the most striking confirmation of its benefits, and to give in that example the widest and most victorious application to the principle of Catholic association.

This Christian industrialist was presenting at the congresses of the Catholic Works at Nantes and at Lyon admirable reports, not only of doctrine but of facts, when, at the very moment he had received from them the mission to undertake a true apostolate on behalf of the working class throughout France, a fire came and devoured the vast mill that he had transformed into an incomparable Christian community.

At once, in all the Catholic Workers' Circles, a unanimous subscription was opened for the relief fund of the burnt-out Circle of *Val-des-Bois*, and Catholic association thus asserted itself for the first time as a united national body.

By the providential light of this fire, and above all by the flame of the charity it has kindled, we publish today, for our fellow members of the Association of Catholic Workers' Circles, the series of reports of "the Apostle of the Factory".

The first of these reports presents a picture, taken from life, of a Christian organisation of the factory; the second insists on the principle of this organisation, the necessity of Catholic associations in the factory; the third shows how the Works of the factory are applied in the towns; the fourth, finally, deals with the means of making the Works of the factory popular and of multiplying their applications without delay.

The series, as can be seen, is complete; all that remains is to set to work.

By publishing a few appended documents, we recall here how we set about it, and what steps have been taken since 25 August of this year, the day on which the signal for action was given to us.

Thus we reproduce the article in the Association's bulletin that followed the congress of Lyon, the account of a visit to Val-des-Bois on the day after the fire, and finally the appeal we addressed to the worker members of our circles, and the way in which it was answered.

May these *living* testimonies of the designs of Providence enlighten our minds, set our hearts on fire, and increase our strength tenfold in the service of the Church and of France!

Paris, 25 October 1874.

CONGRESS OF NANTES.

ELEVENTH QUESTION.

ON THE CHRISTIAN ORGANISATION OF THE FACTORY

The great Work of our time is the Work of the salvation of our brothers the Workers.

The great factories have turned the world upside down, by destroying the family and by profoundly altering the relations between employers and Workers. Despite far greater earnings, they have brought material miseries unknown to previous centuries. They have produced moral miseries greater still.

These evils, which arouse the concern of all men who care for the happiness of their brothers, have in reality only one cause: the absence of God.

Many generous souls have undertaken to cure these evils by all the most ingenious and apparently most effective economic means. But these men have achieved nothing serious, because they have left standing the only true cause of the disorder. There is only one remedy: to bring back the reign of God into the factory, and through it the family, and through it relations of trust between employers and their Workers.

As your programme so rightly says, we must *organise the factory in a Christian way, transform it into a Work of faith and moral improvement*. To this end we shall no doubt use every human means:

everything that can improve the material lot of the workers, all the attractions of permitted pleasures; but the means will never make us lose sight of the goal towards which we must strive with all the energy of our hearts: to give God back to the Workers, and through God to give them back the family, and in this way to ensure them, better than by any economic arrangement, true and solid happiness. With God and the family, they will have the salvation of their souls and, over and above, health, too often destroyed by misconduct; comfort, lost through dissipation. They will find again security, the daughter of foresight; joy, the fruit of union in the family; consolation in the inevitable sorrows of this life through Christian resignation.

We shall divide our work into five parts:

Part One: The head of the factory must accept towards his Workers all the responsibilities of a father of a family, and fulfil its duties with the energy and, above all, the love of a father.

Part Two: The factory must be organised *internally* so as to avoid as much evil as possible.

Part Three: The factory must be organised *externally* so as to make the moral improvement of the Workers as easy as possible.

Part Four: We must strive to create in the factory firmly established *Associations*, and to draw the Worker to them freely by the attraction of what is useful and pleasant, without turning aside from the goal, which is to bring back the reign of God into the factory. These Associations must include the girls, the necessary basis of all moral improvement; the mothers, in order to have the support of the families; and finally the boys and the men.

Part Five: Example of the application of these principles in a factory in the East.

Part One

The head of the factory must accept towards his Workers all the responsibilities of a father of a family, and fulfil its duties with the energy and, above all, the love of a father.

Chapter I. Responsibility of the employer towards God and society.

— II. He can fulfil his duties only by being a Christian, not only in his private life, but also in his life as an employer;

— III. Relations of the Christian employer with his workers.

— IV. What he must do himself and what he must do through others in the Works for Workers.

— V. The Christian employer must seek to become well informed about Labour Questions.

— VI. Possibility of the Works in town and in the country.

CHAPTER I.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE EMPLOYER TOWARDS GOD AND SOCIETY.

Towards God. — As Mgr Mermillod says so rightly, and as the Rev. Fr de Varax has shown so eloquently in his excellent pamphlet on the *Apostolat des classes dirigeantes*: “A Christian has no right to be indifferent to the salvation of his brothers and of society.” But if this duty is laid upon all who have any influence whatever over other men, how much stricter is it not for the industrialist whom God has placed at the head of numerous Workers, over whom he has a necessary and considerable influence? It is a duty of strict justice for the Employer to feed his Workers by a fair wage. Anyone who violated this duty would be guilty of a crime that the Church places among the four sins that cry out to heaven.

Who would dare to maintain that the employer’s duties towards the souls of his Workers are less binding than those he is obliged to fulfil towards their bodies? Does he not owe them, in strict justice, care to prevent their souls from dying as a direct result of work in the factory? and also care to secure the daily bread of those souls? Who

would deny that this too is part of the fair wage strictly owed by the employer? Could this part seem less important than the material part?

If, then, as the very word *patron* indicates, the head of the factory must be a father of a family, God lays on him the obligation to fulfil all its duties from the spiritual point of view as well as from the moral and material points of view.

Towards society. — Is the employer's responsibility any less grave towards society?

The creation of the great metalworking and textile factories dates back sixty years. Before that time, all these industries were carried on within the family itself. The trade was handed down from father to son, and the apprentice began to practise his craft at home, under his father's eye.

Machines and workshops came and destroyed this harmony. The Employer has taken the child into the factory and removed him from his father's protection; must he not take charge of him? Towards society, is not the Employer of a factory bound to repair, by every fitting means, the disorders the factory has engendered? Is he not responsible for the immense demoralisation brought about by these vast concentrations of people that are necessary for the success of his industry?

Society too, therefore, demands of industrialists the fulfilment of their duties towards their Workers. It does not allow them to be indifferent to a question that endangers its very existence, and to which the Employer alone can bring an effective solution.

The report we submit to you is, in short, no more than a series of notes on the duties of the factory Employer. Whoever knows all its details well will easily deduce from it the acts of justice that God and charity impose on those who, without being employers, have any influence whatever over their brothers. He will also deduce from it the

simplest means of arriving at a prompt Christian solution of the labour question in the factory.

CHAPTER II.

THE EMPLOYER CAN FULFIL HIS DUTIES ONLY BY BEING A CHRISTIAN, NOT ONLY IN HIS PRIVATE LIFE, BUT ALSO IN HIS LIFE AS AN EMPLOYER.

And first of all, to take up Works for Workers with success, one must do so as a Christian. Some have sought to arouse the zeal of the ruling classes by pointing to the imminent danger to society, ready to collapse beneath the smoking ruins piled up by pillage and fire. This danger is only too real; but men guided by this fear alone would have little chance of persevering.

To save society, to bring about the salvation of our brothers, we need men guided by supernatural motives, who do not ask of the success of their labour a reward they would wait for in vain. One must be a Christian, that is to say, an imitator of Jesus Christ, who founded the salvation of his adopted brothers on his own sufferings and on his death. Men of this character exist, thank God. We have glorious examples to follow on this path, and wherever the Eucharistic heart of Jesus Christ beats, there are generous breasts able to understand true devotedness, able to give their lives for the Workers, seeking no other reward than the salvation of their brothers and the glory of God.

Let us hasten to say that God has never asked supreme sacrifices of any but those glorious apostles of the poor, of whom we have illustrious representatives among us¹. As for industrialists, we do not believe that God has so far asked anything more of them than an effective and disinterested good will. To show this good will, it is not

1. An allusion to Father Planchat, apostle of the Workers, shot during the Commune, May 1871. Father Planchat belonged to the Institute of the Brothers of St Vincent de Paul. This Institute, devoted to Works for Workers, has its headquarters in Paris, 1, chemin du Moulin, Vaugirard. Its Vicar General and several of its Members took part in the Congress of Nantes.

enough for the Christian employer to fulfil his duties in the privacy of his own home, nor even to give his great family the example of all the private virtues; his Christianity must also show itself:

1. In his relations with his Workers;
2. In the internal organisation of his establishment;
3. In its external organisation;
4. Finally, in the establishment of the Associations needed to combat the immense plague of the factories, human respect, which reigns as a tyrant over all the workers.

This is not the work of a day; it takes time and perseverance; and when one seems to be near the goal, much perseverance and devotedness are still needed to reach it. But life is a continual struggle, and the Works progress only amid difficulties that constantly arise anew.

CHAPTER III.

RELATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN EMPLOYER WITH HIS WORKERS.

Allow us to quote an extract from the report of the fifteenth Meeting of the German Evangelical Church, and of the Congress held at Stuttgart from 31 August to 3 September 1869. You will learn the opinion of Mr Diterlin, of Rothau, in the Vosges, on the question that concerns us.

“For me the worker is not a particular social element that needs to be treated in a particular way: for me he is a man like myself, like all others. The worker, too, holds to this equality. He does not want to be regarded as a number in philanthropic institutions; he wants to feel another’s hand in his own; he wants his neighbour’s heart to beat in unison with his own in everything that befalls him. In the factories of the towns, much is often done for the workers without their showing the slightest gratitude, because the manufacturers make of their benefits a kind of wall between themselves and their Workers, and do not give themselves. In another place, the same charitable institutions

will have a great effect, because the workers feel the heart of their chief in everything.

For institutions to do real good to the Workers, they must see friendly persons at their head.

In this way the question of the workers is brought back to the ground of the Gospel. The Saviour was a brother to all who surrounded him; he shared in, he felt compassion for, all that befell them. He was very severe, he rejected all that was evil, and yet he drew everyone to himself. He did good himself, and not through theories and organisations. What effect his gentle presence would produce in the midst of our working populations! How he would raise up every soul! How he would win every heart! His presence alone would awaken a new and divine life everywhere. He is no longer here below, it is true; but we have the mission of representing him among the workers. Let each one be filled with the same sentiments as Jesus Christ, and the solution of the labour question will be easy.

We have tried it, within the very incomplete measure of our weakness, and although our efforts are very imperfect, we can nevertheless say that it has succeeded. We live among a population that is two-thirds Catholic and one-third Protestant. Twenty years ago, its moral state was very sad. At that time my partner began a Sunday school, which he still runs, and which made him known and loved by all the Protestant families. We have a library, schools, relief funds. We visit people in their homes, and now we see Catholics as well as Protestants calling us to their sick, asking us for advice, confiding their most intimate thoughts to us, behaving with us without constraint, as is right between man and man. When I come, the women ask me how my wife is, and when I leave, they give me greetings for her. This cordiality in daily relations does no harm whatever to the discipline of the factory. Everyone knows that social life is possible only when someone directs and the others follow. Those who follow

do not envy those who direct; on the contrary, they pity them. You have more trouble than we do, they say.

This improvement in ideas has spread to the townsfolk, to the middle class living in the neighbourhood, which until then had scrupulously kept its distance from the Workers and from the director of the factory. The whole population now, from top to bottom, forms one single whole; there is still much evil, and yet the power of good makes itself felt. A light from on high shines upon the village: it is the light of heavenly love. When one family suffers, all the others share in its suffering.”

Forgive me the length of this quotation; it expresses my whole thought, and it seemed to me that its source gave it the greatest authority.

At the same Assembly, having to speak of the relations of the Employer with the Workers inside the factory, Mr Charles Sarazin, of Basel, expressed himself thus:

“Having shown you the futility of the *Trade unions* of England and of all economic organisations, I declare, for my part, that only Christianity, faith in the Crucified, in his love, in his purity, can untie the manifold knot that surrounds us. Love will be inventive in finding means; I shall insist on one alone. The manufacturer must continually mingle in person with the workers; he must not be regarded as an invisible power, but as a man as frail as they are, who rejoices and suffers with them. Unfortunately, this is not so in many cases. The master and the workers do not know each other, and communicate only through heartless intermediaries, who have understanding only for the material side of business. The result is very regrettable situations, which certain demagogues, enemies of the happiness and peace of their fellow men, exploit to widen the split between those whom God nevertheless created for one another. The Workers must feel friendly persons at their head.”

What could we add to this portrait of the Employer, except that he must take advantage of every circumstance in his power to instil into the heart of the Worker the Christian sentiments with which his own heart will be imbued?

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT THE CHRISTIAN EMPLOYER MUST DO HIMSELF; WHAT HE MUST DO THROUGH OTHERS IN THE WORKS FOR WORKERS.

We shall speak in Part Two of the *internal* organisation of the factory, and in Part Three of its *external* organisation. Here we wish to deal especially with the action of the Employer in the Works for Workers, with what he must do in them himself, and with what he must do in them through others.

It is materially impossible for him to do everything in them, and even if it were possible, there would be real dangers in it.

The Christian Employer must call to his aid:

1. Religious helpers;
2. Helpers in his own factory;
3. The sense of freedom.

Religious helpers. — We have said that the source of all success in the salvation of souls is supernatural devotedness. The industrialist, absorbed in the conduct of his business, can in practice have nothing more than an effective and disinterested good will. He must therefore take on Sisters for his girls and Brothers for his men, with a zealous Chaplain of prudent activity. These generous souls, by their devoted labour, will soon have made the working population feel the beneficent influences of religion.

The Employer will make it his study to place at their disposal all the attractions of what is useful and of permitted pleasures, in order to make their action easy and to bring home this great truth, which the ungodly seek to stifle in the worker's mind: namely, that if religion is concerned above all with the true fatherland, it is at the same time the most powerful source of every good and every joy in our

exile. These attractions will make it possible to found the Works on true freedom, as hostile to that false independence (a real slavery to the passions) as to the servility so opposed to every solid good.

Helpers in the factory. — The Christian Employer must seek helpers in his own factory, and thereby interest the Workers in the Works, make them understand their salutary influence, and make them love them. But he will remember that he is a father of a family, and that as such he must never give up his beneficent influence. He must be the head of all the works of the factory, and while leaving all the details to his helpers, he must never lose interest in their general direction.

The sense of freedom. — Finally, the third helper, the most important, is the sense of freedom. It is not enough for the Catholic Works to be based on freedom; the Worker must understand it, must feel it. For this, more devotedness than authority is needed.

Souls must be touched as the Sister of charity touches a wound, that is to say, with an affectionate delicacy that fears to hurt while relieving. This very important point, too long to develop here, will guide the Employer in choosing what he must do himself and what he must do through others, carefully avoiding being carried away by the pursuit of a vain popularity.

What the Employer must do. — He should attend, as far as possible, all the general meetings, and there, simply, like a father of a family among his children, set out his ideas, open his heart, make all his listeners understand the benefits of the Catholic Works for Workers, urge the fathers of families to support him, and show them that, in the end, it is their good he is seeking. In these private conversations he will take care to refute the objections, the treacherous arguments of the enemies of the Worker, who under attractive appearances easily manage to convince simple minds that are easily led astray by specious reasons. The spoken word reaches the heart and mind far more quickly than the book, and the kindly word of the Em-

ployer at a meeting of Workers will bear more fruit than the distribution of the best pamphlets.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHRISTIAN EMPLOYER MUST SEEK TO BECOME WELL INFORMED ABOUT LABOUR QUESTIONS.

No doubt, to achieve a result, it is enough to be a Christian and to have deep in one's heart a true love, such as the Gospel teaches us. But it cannot be denied that, in practice, experience makes things much easier. In this as in everything, man acquires far greater power through knowledge; and here I do not mean purely theoretical knowledge, but above all knowledge gained by experience.

What means can be taken to spread this knowledge? The Employer who attends to his factory, and he alone will be our helper, has no time to devote himself to studies that he calls foreign to his business. On the other hand, the specialised works are voluminous and incomplete. There is nothing that is concise and at the same time thoroughly practical. Everything we have bears more or less the marks of the haste and groping of the first hour. The labour question has existed only since the Revolution stripped the Worker of God and of the family. And since for a long time people refused to recognise the true causes of such an evil, the knowledge we are speaking of is still in its infancy. Finally, it must be admitted, people read very little, so little that it would be better to say not at all.

To come to know labour questions, it would therefore be desirable to have regional meetings, where Christian industrialists would pool their experience, and where specialists such as the Rev. Fr de Varax, Mr Henry Jouin and so many others present here would bring the fruit of their studies; and since the torch of their knowledge is lit by the charity of Christ, their teachings would carry conviction and, in time, would lead to action.

There are so many meetings for the improvement of all sorts of things; why should there not be some for the improvement of human-

ity as a whole?

We say humanity, because the ruling classes would gain even more from these meetings than the ruled classes. There is no doubt that the Association of Christian Employers (who are very numerous today) would rouse many from their apathy, and would call forth much devotedness that remains idle through isolation, inexperience and fear of failure.

CHAPTER VI.

POSSIBILITY OF THE WORKS IN TOWN AND IN THE COUNTRY.

In town. — In town, the Works of the factory will be easy from the financial point of view, because of the great number of benefactors to be found there. The main difficulties come from the thousand obstacles met with in the camp of respectable people, who find it hard to agree on doing good. A committee of Christian industrialists would smooth away many obstacles. But let this committee attempt nothing outside the Catholic Church; without her, it would be building on sand and would achieve no serious result.

In the country. — In the country, the Works are more costly, but easier. The isolated industrialist has to bear all the expenses alone, but at least he meets with no obstacles.

Besides, are the expenses so frightening? A Daughter of Charity is content with five hundred francs, a Brother of the Christian Schools with six hundred francs. So three Sisters cost the price of a very ordinary clerk, and three Brothers the price of a passable schoolmaster. Moreover, the industrialist in the country must begin modestly, with entirely provisional premises, and take what he has to hand. Too often nothing is done because people want to do things too well. What matters is not to have magnificent buildings, but to save souls, even if only in a hovel. As we shall see in Part Five, the beginnings of works established modestly cost very little. One is more willing to make, each year, improvements that do not seem too heavy for

the factory's budget, and in this way, after a certain time, one arrives at installations from which one would always have shrunk.

Whoever believes that almsgiving does not impoverish, and that God repays a hundredfold, even on this earth, everything one does for one's brothers, may begin without fear. Let him be assured that he will be given the means to do better. We have known industrialists who made great sacrifices for the good of their workers; we have known none whose interests suffered from it. But this truth, simple as it is, will be understood only by Christian employers, over whom supernatural motives hold sway. They alone see clearly; the others are blind with an incurable blindness that the most evident facts cannot enlighten.

Note well that in speaking of the obstacles met with in establishing the Works of the factory, we lay none of them at the door of the worker. These poor forsaken people are slandered, and behind these slanders shelters the selfishness of the ruling classes.

Part Two

The factory must be organised internally so as to avoid as much evil as possible.

Division of the work.

It is indispensable to see to the separation of the sexes in the work-rooms and, if possible, on the stairs, in the corridors, entrances, etc.

The Sunday rest must be respected, the day of God and of the family, the day of honest joys, of thrift, of cleanliness and, it may be said, of human dignity. Sunday cleaning must be prevented: it is worse than work because of the disorders inseparable from tidying up without supervision. Sunday repairs must be avoided: they are a source of abuses of every kind, in which the employer's interests are trampled underfoot as much as morality. Repairs that would bring a whole workshop to a standstill are the only ones that should be done on Sunday.

“The workshop closes at the hour of debauchery and crime; it grants freedom for the orgy, it does not grant it for Christian instruction and for public prayer; at that hour it opens, it claims and keeps its prey; there is cruel oppression of that freedom of conscience which is proclaimed elsewhere. For, to remain a Christian, one would have to give up the bread that sustains life. Entire populations are thus violently torn away from all teaching, from all religious practice. What can you expect from them, if not vices and degraded morals?” (De Ravignan.)

The Christian employer must take care to pay wages as high as those of the industrialists of his region; it is the only condition on which he can choose his staff. He must have regulations suited to ensuring the good order of his establishment: preventing oaths, blasphemies, indecent talk, etc., there, and seeing to the strict application of the articles that concern morality. In this way the worker will learn to respect the workshop.

The employer must see to a fair distribution of work. In all circumstances he must make himself the defender of the weak against the strong.

We do not develop the points indicated above any further, since they concern only principles accepted by all Catholic employers.

CHAPTER I.

CLERKS. — RECRUITMENT OF STAFF.

The employer will take every care to form a staff of Christian clerks and Workers. A Christian clerk, with the employer's help, will gradually rid the workshop of blasphemies, indecent talk, brutality towards the apprentice, and the countless petty annoyances to which the Workers who belong to the Catholic Works are exposed. He will discipline the workshop and bring a good spirit into it, by removing the workers who are dangerous to the faith or the morals of their comrades. He will help the employer to find Workers who are Christian or capable of becoming so, so as to obtain, in time, a staff made up of honest and moral families. Such a staff is a precious treasure, which he will gather by persistence and maintain by devotedness.

On the other hand, with clerks who have a bad spirit, all the efforts of the employer and his helpers will founder against an opposition that is elusive and invincible.

CHAPTER II.

WORK.

§ I. Work of the whole family in the same factory. — § II. The mother of the family at home. — § III. Night work.

§ 1. *Work of the whole family in the same factory.* — We have said that the first aim of the Christian Employer must be the rebuilding of the working-class family. What could be more contrary to this aim than the scattering of children and parents among several factories, sometimes situated at opposite ends of a large town? What could be sadder than such a home? These poor people part at half past four in the morning, barely awake, and meet again only at seven or eight in the evening (when there have been no disorders to make the hour later), worn out with fatigue and asking only for rest.

The day has gone by: the father, the mother and the children have spent the greater part of their earnings at the canteen, where they have been badly fed; husband and wife become strangers to each other; the children, used to living apart, lose all love, all respect, all submission. Who does not see in this a cause of utter ruin, for souls as well as for bodies? a source of incalculable miseries? The Christian Employer must make it his concern:

1. To employ the whole family, especially the children, in the same factory;
2. Never to dismiss one member of the family alone, but rather the whole family, if he cannot correct the faults of which he has to complain. By this means he will compel the father to help him in his work of moral improvement.

§ 2. *The mother of the family at home.* — As far as possible, the mother of the family must remain to look after her household and her little children, a care that is sadly neglected when she works in the workshop.

§ 3. *Night work.* — It is greatly to be desired that this work be entirely abolished wherever it is possible to do so.

CHAPTER III.

PAY AND EVERYTHING CONNECTED WITH IT.

§ I. Pay handed only to the head of the family, and with a pay slip (by head of the family we mean the member most capable of fulfilling its duties). — § II. Direct payment, by the office, of the piecers and other helpers, usually paid by the adult workers with whom they work. — § III. Pay at the office by the employer, if possible, and not by the clerks of the workrooms. — § IV. Fines to be checked each week by the employer, and paid into a relief fund. — § V. Drawbacks of paying on Sunday morning.

§ 1. *Pay to the head of the family, with a slip.* — There is another kind of division that is also very harmful to the family: the division of pay, with or without slips. The child, and even the young man, who

draws his own pay soon grows used to forgetting what he has cost and still costs his family. He quickly shapes his conscience so as to justify to himself the concealment of part of his earnings, which he believes to be his absolute property. These pilferings soon lead him into deplorable habits that age only strengthens.

The second evil of this division is the lowering of paternal authority in the child's mind. As long as his earnings are not enough for him to live apart from his parents, he still tolerates an appearance of authority; but if his earnings grow larger, if he must help the family, the young man becomes a tyrant who makes his mother tremble and completely cancels paternal authority.

Would this be so if the earnings of the child, and then of the young man, were received by the parents?

We add that it is necessary never to hand over money without a pay slip². It may be said that the Worker's wife is the defender and the best guarantee of the morality, the thrift and the union of the family. It is impossible for the mother to fulfil her duties if she does not have in her hands a detailed and explanatory statement of the earnings of her husband and of each of the children.

2. *Specimen of a pay slip.*

No. 110.

Henry family.

Week of 7 September 1873.

		Bonuses*.	Earnings.
Owed (Advances): 5 fr.	1. father		15.00
Rent	2.00 2. Marie		10.45
Relief fund	0.70 3. Amélie	1.00	12.00
Advance	1.00 4. Jean		12.00
Suppliers	2.00 5. Nicolas	0.60	6.00
Piecers	0.00 6. Mélanie		9.00
	7.		
	Total pay		64.45
	5.70 To be deducted		5.70
	Net to be received		58.75

* The bonuses shown here are an encouragement given to the Worker, and not a true wage. They are mentioned on the pay slip only to let the parents judge the bonuses earned by their children during the week.

§ 2. *Direct payment of the piecers, etc.* — Nowhere is the abuse of strength more glaring than among Workers. Some work by the piece and must pay out of their earnings the children who help them. The Christian Employer should never let them make these payments. In the factory he is the defender of the weak, and he will take care to fix the child's earnings and to pay them directly to the parents, as we said above.

§ 3. *Pay by the Employer.* — The Employer, by paying the wages himself, gains a clear view of the earnings and work of each person. It is therefore in his interest, so as to spur on those who do not work enough. It is also in the interest of the Worker, whose situation is thus regularly known to a friendly authority that has the power to raise his earnings when that is just. In this way, complaints that are often tiresome for both parties are avoided.

§ 4. *Fines to be checked each week by the Employer and paid into a relief fund.* — This point calls for no details.

§ 5. *Sunday pay.* — Pay given out on Sunday never reaches the mother of the family in full. There are even tyrannical customs from which the honest Worker cannot escape, and which oblige him, on pay day, to spend part of it with his comrades at the nearby café. It would be quite otherwise if pay were given on a weekday, in the morning, so that the Worker would not have time to go to the café before handing his money over to his wife. — A market day could be chosen and, as far as possible, the middle of the week.

CHAPTER IV.

COMBATING INSTABILITY BY SEEKING OUT GRIEVANCES IN A FRIENDLY WAY.

The nomadic life of the Worker is another great cause of the disorganisation of the family.

It must be remedied by all the means indicated in these notes, and by any others that can be discovered. Here we wish to speak only of what concerns the internal organisation of the factory. Departures have three principal causes that the Employer can remedy. These three causes are:

1. Earnings lower than those of neighbouring workshops;
2. Contact with ill-disposed minds who try to discourage their comrades;
3. Personal vexations that may have some justification.

The Christian Employer will inquire in a friendly way whether these causes exist and, if he can remedy them, he will do so in a fatherly manner, without keeping to a dry harshness that more than one employer mistakes for dignity.

CHAPTER V.

THAT THE CHRISTIAN EMPLOYER MUST NOT SHOW HIMSELF INDIFFERENT TO THE CONDUCT OF HIS WORKERS OUTSIDE THE FACTORY, AND TO WHAT

EXTENT.

Many have held this maxim in honour: that the Employer has no right to concern himself with the conduct of his Workers outside the workshop. This maxim is the natural consequence of the revolutionary idea, which regards the Worker as a machine for producing. But just as the revolutionary idea is insulting to the Worker, so this maxim is contrary to the feelings of Christian affection that must unite the Employer and the Worker. No doubt private conduct within the intimacy of the family must be left entirely unknown; but everything that gives scandal, everything that is dangerous to others, must be the object of affectionate remonstrances and, if need be, of vigorous measures on the part of the Employer. To know the limit within which this action must be exercised, let the Employer remember that he is a father, and he will know how to make his influence felt on the conduct of the Workers outside the workshop, while respecting the legitimate freedom and the legitimate sensitivities of the families that God has entrusted to him.

Part Three

The factory must be organised externally so as to make the moral improvement of the workers as easy as possible.

Division of the work.

Necessity of Schools. Brothers and Sisters. Checks on punctuality. Incentives. Tests. Competitions. Weekly tickets. The Employer's visits. Adult classes.

Rented housing. Cleanliness. Visits. Publications. Newspapers. Library. General meetings. Talks on the Works and on subjects of interest to the Workers. Institutions suited to increasing the Worker's well-being. Relief fund. Doctor. Funerals. Life and accident insurance. Savings bank. Economic societies.

These various questions, understood by all men of goodwill, did not seem to us to call for development.

CHAPTER I.

CHAPEL, PARISH.

Should the Works of the factory be carried on in the parish church, or should they have a chapel of their own? This question is of capital importance.

To settle it, there is a very simple rule. It is the rule of all Works of faith and zeal: namely, the salvation of souls, the return of sinners and of the indifferent to the practice of Religion, the perseverance and sanctification of the good. “We must do everything for God,” says St Vincent de Paul, “without seeking the esteem of men, and without counting on their approval.”

In the Works for Workers of the factory, as in all others, nothing must be sought but the glory of God. If, therefore, owing to particular circumstances, the parish church is enough to achieve this end, nothing else should be desired; it is the common law, and there is no reason to depart from it. If, on the contrary, as happens all too often, the parish church is morally inaccessible to the Workers of the factory, whether because of distance, or because of special hours, or above all because of human respect, there must be no hesitation: a special chapel is indispensable; and to this chapel must be attached a chaplain who will become the apostle of these workers. Before everything, the salvation of the Workers.

CHAPTER II.

HOUSING; OWNERSHIP OF THE FAMILY HOME.

A serious danger, by which the constitution of the working-class family is more and more threatened, is the complete lack of stability, in the sense that ownership of the family home is tending more and more to become an exception. We can only point out here the advantages of owning a little house surrounded by a little field. There, all saving has a definite aim, and all the leisure of young and old finds an employment at once useful and pleasant. It must be said plainly: French laws, born of the Revolution, enemies of the worker like the Revolution itself, these laws have made such ownership almost impossible.

The laws of succession are even more pernicious for small owners than for large ones. When the parents die, none of the heirs is generally in a position to pay the others what is due to them, as their share, in the value of the father's estate. They cannot agree; the property is sold at auction, and very cheaply, to some small capitalist, who then lets it at a high price to one of the children.

The legal costs swallow up the greater part of the price.

The little money that comes to each of the heirs, having no immediate use, disappears into the household, and soon nothing remains of the fruit of the saving and the cares of the parents' whole life. A change in this legislation would be a great benefit for the working class, and we should be very glad if the Congress could express the wish for it in the name of the Workers. The works of Messrs Le Play, Brame, Coquille, etc., are well enough known and widely enough spread for everyone today to understand the grave drawbacks of the law on compulsory division: 1. For paternal authority, which it weakens; 2. for small property, which it makes impossible to hand down; 3. for the constitution of the family as a social force (and that is what the legislator meant to strike by bringing division into the family

through this law); 4. lastly, the influence of this law is real on the sterility of marriages, that wound which would annihilate France were it not for a permanent and considerable immigration.

Part Four

On Associations.

One must endeavour to create firmly established Associations in the factory, to draw the Worker to them freely by the attractions of the useful and the pleasant, without turning aside from the one aim, which is to bring God back into the factory. These Associations must include: the girls, the necessary basis of all moral improvement; the mothers, so as to have the support of the families; and lastly, the boys and the men.

Chapter I. Necessity of association, which forms a concentration of good to drive back the evil produced by concentration without direction.

Human respect and its all-powerful sway.

— II. That all ages must enjoy the benefits of Christian association.

That the worker is easier to convert than the middle-class man and the farmer. Generous instincts of factory workers unknown to rural populations.

Chapter III. Meetings of girls: § I. St Philomena, from seven years to First Communion. — § II. Holy Angels up to fifteen years. — § III.

Children of Mary over fifteen years. — Difference between these three Meetings, which include all the girls of goodwill and whose aim is to serve God by avoiding evil; and the three Associations contained within them, which require a period of probation and greater piety. — § IV.

Life of the Associations, premises, administration, corporate spirit.

— IV. Christian Mothers, special Work for widows.

— V. Associations of men: § I. St Aloysius Gonzaga, from seven years to First Communion. — § II. Little Circle from First Communion up to sixteen or seventeen years. — § III. Great Circle over sixteen or seventeen years. — § IV. Life, premises, meetings, administration, corporate spirit.

— VI. On the attractions of the Works. Vocal and instrumental music, Dramatic evenings, Feasts, Walks, Outings.

— VII. On the useful in the Works. Additional instruction. Sewing rooms. On the Recruitment of clerks from among the workers who belong to the Works. Advantages at the Savings bank for the members of the Circles. Thrift. Small conferences of St Vincent de Paul. Visiting the sick.

— VIII. Freedom necessary to the Works with regard to the employer, with regard to the parish and the chaplain, with regard to the other Works of the same factory. That this freedom is the only basis of a beneficial hierarchy and of a fruitful union.

As with most of the questions raised in Part Three, we are only indicating here the work to be done. It would take a volume to deal with these questions. Let us hope that a more experienced hand will complete these notes for the next Congress. Besides, we shall find most of these questions put into practice in Part Five.

Part Five

Example of the application of these principles in a factory in the East.

Chapter I. § I. What the population was before the establishment of the Works. — § II. What it is today. — § III. What it could be.

— II. History of the Works and of their progress.

— III. Their situation and their working.

CHAPTER I.

§ 1. *What the population was before the establishment of the Works.*

— This factory, founded in 1840, is today directed by the founder's sons. And the Christian Employer, a venerable old man, in the midst of his large family, sees with joy the growth of the tree he planted.

The factory is situated near a large town, in districts, alas! all too common today, where God is completely forgotten. The Employer who built it told us of the deep pang of heart he felt when attending

the parish Mass on Sunday. There were barely a few men and very few women or girls. For twenty years the Employer never ceased to give the example of all the Christian virtues. He was a father of a family in the midst of his Workers; he was esteemed by them, and had acquired a great influence over them. He often spoke to them in private, and let no opportunity slip of making God known and loved. His efforts were not without result. Many faults were avoided, many disorders were repaired. Attendance at Mass on Sunday became less rare, and the working population was known throughout the neighbourhood as being of exceptional morality.

But, alas! how far all these poor people still were from the model they had before their eyes! A few women or girls received Communion barely once a year. As for the small number of men who fulfilled their Easter duty, they took care to do so far from home, on a journey, so that no one could suspect them. Allow me to tell a characteristic incident. When Lent was drawing to its close, the excellent Employer never failed to urge those he thought he could convince to prepare for their Easter Communion. One week, he managed to obtain from four men that they would go to the neighbouring town to confess to a priest who was a friend of the family, and receive Communion very early in the morning. Of course, each of the four did not know that he was not alone. The Employer rejoiced at his success and, on the Monday, all impatient to learn the result of his scheme, he goes to see one of these men. Do you know what he heard? — “Sir, it is the first time, but it is the last. — Why, my friend? — You made me believe I would be alone. — And then? — When we went to confession, all was well; we had not seen each other; but at Communion, I saw the three others, and they saw me too! Now I am done for in the workshop, they will pester us about it for six months! I will never go back!” And he kept his word. The following year, not one of the four could be persuaded. This incident is enough to tell you what the factory was like, a model one nevertheless, in the midst of others far

more advanced in evil. There is no need to recount to you all that goes on among populations that practise no more than this. The Employer grieved over all these disorders and over the small success of his efforts.

§ 2. *What it is today.* — Let us now see what the same population has become under the influence of the Works. The Catholic Works for Workers were begun there in 1861. And, after twelve years of development, the following result has been reached:

In the factory chapel, there are more than six thousand Communion each year; in addition, in the parish church, there are from two thousand five hundred to three thousand Communions made by Workers, that is, a total of nearly nine thousand Communions for an adult population of seven hundred people. Barely a tenth of the population abstains from Easter Communion. Out of six hundred and ninety-four people over twelve years old who are eligible to belong to the Works, four hundred and fifty-seven belong to them and regularly attend Mass on Sunday. — Only two hundred and thirty-seven are outside the Works; which does not prevent a large part of the latter, thanks to the example of the others, from fulfilling their religious duties.

Since 1865, three girls have become Sisters of the Child Jesus and of the Assumption; three others are Daughters of Charity; several are at this moment on the point of leaving for the Seminary of the latter congregation.

Two young men are priests, two died at the Major Seminary.

A great number of deaths have been preceded by very edifying illnesses. It may be said, in an absolute way, that illnesses of some length infallibly become the source of the most touching graces.

It is so good to die in such surroundings that the Workers who have left the factory cannot bring themselves to die far from it.

Only recently, a young man who had greatly grieved the Employer by his bad conduct had ended by leaving the establishment to find

easier masters. A few years later, he fell ill, and he felt that he would not recover. He remembers the great family he has left. He sets off, and comes to the Employer: “Give me a little corner, I feel I am going to die, and if I am ill here, I shall be happy.”

How could such a prayer be resisted? His illness lasted several months. He came back to God, as a Worker comes back, frankly, wholly, with his heart in his hand; he died in admirable sentiments of simplicity and trust in God.

§ 3. *What it could be.* — Although the results obtained are real, those that are aimed at are greater still.

The full flowering of the Works dates back only a few years. When a generation has been raised in this Catholic home, not only will the factory be Christian, but it will carry the divine seed beyond its walls.

Whatever has been done and whatever may be done, there have always been, and there will always be, changes. The good grain will bear fruit elsewhere. And this result has already been obtained for a Work that began with Workers who had emigrated from this establishment. Lastly, it is intended to transform this bundle of Associations into a true Work of reparation, for all the evil that is done in the great workshops where God is not known. This idea has already been communicated, and it has been welcomed with the generosity that is characteristic of Workers. They have understood that this would be the best means of obtaining the salvation of their brothers, alas! so forsaken, and that the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ would let himself be moved and would raise up apostles of the factory. That is the beginning of its realisation, since this entirely new question, which seemed for ever barred from your Congresses, has crossed their threshold. And, as we know, when a Work has entered here, it does not die here.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF THE WORKS AND OF THEIR PROGRESS.

As we have said, the Christian Employer had obtained by himself only negative results. He had prevented much evil, which is certainly something; but good was not being done, and much evil still remained that was being done every day.

He therefore decided to establish Catholic Works, and on 2 February 1861 three Daughters of Charity were solemnly installed in a poor little dwelling. The daughters of St Vincent are not hard to please. An old house with a shed in which the infant school was installed, and two rooms in which two classes were improvised: that was the whole expense; it came in all to 200 francs in rent. To begin the Work, a great mission was organised in the parish. Two Jesuit Fathers devoted a whole month to it, with instructions every day; one day for the factory, the next for the farming population. Every Sunday of the mission, processions full of life; and as its crowning, the planting of a cross in the presence of the Bishop.

God blessed the efforts of all, and the mission stirred souls deeply. Very many returns to the faith and magnificent general Communion were its consoling result, in the farming population as well as in that of the factory. That was the starting point, the shaking needed to bring the dead man out of the tomb. Soon a little chapel was needed, which was blessed on 4 September 1862. It was modest; it did not cost 2,000 fr.

I insist on the very small expenses of these beginnings of Works, because more often than not the initial expense brings everything to a halt. It is true that this little chapel of 2,000 francs was enlarged successively on one side, then on another, then painted with much taste; and finally, after a fairly considerable sum had been spent on this oratory, it had to be abandoned as too small, and a much larger

chapel built. But if the Employer had had to spend 10,000 francs at the start, he would have done nothing.

The Sisters must direct the first Work of the factory, because the moral improvement of woman is the basis of all morality in the family. It was therefore with the Sisters that the employer had begun.

Immediately after their installation, they took charge of the girls on Sundays; and after two years, on 15 August 1863, they were able to inaugurate the Association of the *Children of Mary*, with a core of tried girls and the help of a fourth Sister. The house was enlarged and given a vast garden.

A fifth Sister arrived in 1864 to begin an Orphanage, on 26 October, with eight children.

Three Brothers of the Christian Schools had been installed on 10 November 1863.

On 28 April 1867, a Catholic Circle for men was opened, prepared by the efforts of the Brothers over three years. They had managed to gather a small number of faithful young men; this was the first Council of the Circle.

The chapel founded in 1862 at first had only one Mass a week; then the Employer was able to have a priest to teach his children, and from then on there was a Mass every day, in 1864.

In 1867, when the Works were beginning to develop, a service of regular missions was established with the help of the Lazarists. At first every three months, then every two months, then every month. A Lazarist spent several days at the establishment to hear confessions, hold the meetings, etc. Finally a Lazarist became resident Chaplain, solely for the factory, and he is very busy.

As you see, the Works grew rapidly and called for fairly considerable expenditure. But the Christian Employer has been led to the practical conclusion, whose accuracy all the industrialists in the world will be able to verify: namely, that Catholic Works for Workers, un-

dertaken and conducted with prudence and generosity, never reduce the profits of a firm. God takes it upon himself to make them pay.

CHAPTER III.

SITUATION AND WORKING OF THE WORKS.

The Establishment of which we are speaking employs a total population of one thousand people, including the women and children.

We shall not speak of the internal organisation, which has been described in enough detail in the preceding pages. We shall speak of the *external organisation* and of the Associations.

External organisation of the factory.

§ I. Chapel. — Parish. — Chaplaincy. — Catechism. — Visiting the sick. — Conferences of St Vincent de Paul. — Care to be given to widows and orphans. — Orphanage.

§ II. Schools. — Brothers. — Sisters. — Checks on punctuality. — Incentives. — Attendance at services. — Tests. — Competitions. — Weekly tickets. — Monthly tickets. — Visits to the classes. — Feasts. — Adult classes.

§ III. Publications. — Newspapers. — Libraries.

§ IV. General meetings. — Talks on the Works and on subjects of interest to the Workers.

§ V. Institutions suited to increasing the Worker's well-being.

§ I. Chapel. — Parish. — Chaplaincy. — Catechism. — Visiting the sick. — Care to be given to widows and orphans. — Orphanage.

Chapel. — Parish. — In a district like the one where the factory we are speaking of is situated, it was impossible to do anything without a chapel. The men above all were not strong enough to brave human respect at the parish church, in front of a hostile population.

Even today, the Workers meet in the commune, and in the surrounding communes, all the petty persecutions that beset the Christian in the worst places. The love that guides men engaged in good

works makes them very compassionate towards the weakness, a very excusable one, of human respect.

It was in this spirit that the chapel was built. Soon and in succession, it received from the venerable Bishops of the diocese all the privileges of the parish church, including Easter Communion. These concessions were confirmed by a Brief of our beloved Pius IX, the true father of the Workers. These privileges, necessary from the foundation of the Works, are still necessary today, especially for the men. General Communion of men would still be very difficult in the parish Church. The factory does not represent even half the population of the village; and as, apart from the Workers of the factory, the men do not practise, the Communion would give rise to annoyances of every kind.

The first chapel, built in 1862, became too small. A much larger one was built; from the impetus it has given to all the Works for Workers, it has been easy to see how necessary this new building was.

Its position in the factory yard makes the fulfilment of religious duties remarkably easy for everyone.

The daily Mass is attended by the Employer's whole family, the Brothers, the Sisters, the children who do not work in the workshop, and a certain number of mothers of families. On Sundays, the services are set at different times from those of the parish. A men's choir and a girls' choir take turns to bring life to the ceremonies.

Chaplaincy. — A House of Lazarists, established next to the chapel, provides a Chaplain for all the Works and, when needed, a very necessary assistant. Evening prayer is said every day in the chapel. Confessions are very numerous, as may be judged from the number of Communion given above. Each month, the Chaplain attends the council of each of the three meetings of girls, of each of the three meetings of men, and of the Association of Christian Mothers.

Each month too, he gathers each of these Associations in the chapel, and gives them special religious instructions.

Each year, he gives a retreat to each of the adult Associations, as well as an Easter retreat which is general for the whole establishment.

Besides these occupations and all those he shares with priests who have the care of souls, the Chaplain has particular ones in the Works for men.

Every Sunday he looks after the Little Circle. In winter, three times a week, he teaches the higher adult class of the Great Circle. He prepares the monthly recreational evenings, consisting of talks, singing, plays, etc., etc.

Some people less familiar with the Works will perhaps be surprised to see the Chaplain involved in so many things that seem foreign (to say no more) to the dignity of his holy ministry. Let them think again. The most frequent possible contact between the priest and the Worker is eminently salutary; let the priest bring to it all his heart, all his zeal, and above all the humility of his divine Model, and the Worker will always bring to it Christian respect, trusting docility and the warmest sympathy. — In this respect, the experiment no longer needs to be made.

Catechism. — Every week, catechism in each of the four classes of girls and also in each of the four classes of boys. On Sunday, catechism of perseverance, in the chapel, freely attended by those who wish to learn.

Visiting the sick. — All the sick of the establishment are visited: 1. by a Sister of St Vincent de Paul specially entrusted with this service; 2. by the conference spoken of further on; 3. by the councillors, men or women, of the Association, for those who belong to an Association. — The sick person is provided with everything that is useful to his body, his soul and his family. Under the influence of these af-

fectionate visits, murmuring turns into acceptance; bitterness and impatience melt into gentleness, and, with peace, God enters souls.

As we have said, long illnesses produce touching examples of compassionate charity on the part of the visitors, and of admirable resignation on the part of the sick. Generous hearts, chosen souls, are then revealed, and the deaths that end such illnesses are full of consolation.

Conference of St Vincent de Paul. — There is also a meeting of a conference of St Vincent de Paul every Monday, under the chairmanship of the Chaplain. The Sisters and the Employer's family, down to the smallest children, belong to it. Each has his visits. No doubt it is a conference that is not under the usual conditions, but it does great good by initiating into the Works the children who will probably succeed their fathers, and by accustoming the Workers' children to receive the kindnesses of the Employer's children.

Care of widows and orphans. — Widows are the object of particular care, both in the arrangements to be made after the husband's death and in the upbringing of the children.

Children who have lost both father and mother are placed by the employer; several have become clerks, so that their very misfortune has been the cause of their success. This care is given so simply that it seems quite natural to the Workers; they ask for it without hesitation. And if the Employer does not come at the very first hour of the blow that strikes the family, the Worker is surprised and does not fear to complain of it to the Employer himself. The Worker is right. Is not the Employer a father, and can a father be too eager to attend to the troubles of his children?

Orphanage. — An Orphanage for girls, founded in 1864 with eight children, today holds fifty-two. Above the age of thirteen, they work in the workshop nine hours a day; three hours are devoted to the sewing room and to school. Those who leave at twenty-one have a dowry made up of a trousseau and a sum of money formed from the

annual rewards. The rewards, based on work in the workshop and on good conduct, are money vouchers to be cashed at twenty-one. — They may also receive the dowry of one hundred francs that is given to the Children of Mary.

The Sisters are always with them, in the workshop as at home; but care has been taken to keep to a system of freedom that has given the happiest results. Freedom guided by prudence and sustained by supernatural devotedness bears the fruit of great frankness and of ideas more in keeping with reality. — Thus the orphans of this house are in frequent contact with the girls from outside who belong to the Associations; they go on walks together, and they attend their companions' weddings. Moreover, although he holds an undertaking from the guardian or the persons entitled, to keep the children until they are twenty-one, the Employer nevertheless leaves the children over thirteen absolute freedom to leave the Orphanage whenever they wish.

All too often, elsewhere, girls long to hasten the moment of their departure; here they dread nothing so much as leaving the house.

Several have asked to stay after the age of twenty-one; this has been accepted. — They are then paid like the women workers from outside; the Sisters ask them for a modest board, and in this way they make real savings each year.

§ II. Schools. — Brothers. — Sisters. — Attendance checks. — Attendance at services under sixteen. — Incentives: tests, competitions. — Weekly tickets. — Monthly tickets. — Visits. — Feasts. — Adult classes.

Brothers. — Three Brothers of the Christian Schools direct four classes, namely: all day long, two classes of children under twelve (fifty-five pupils), and for one hour a day the children from twelve to sixteen who work in the workshop (fifty-seven pupils). No one is admitted to the workshop under the age of twelve.

Sisters. — Three Sisters, Daughters of Charity, direct an infant school with eighty children, two classes of girls under twelve (sixty-

six pupils) and two classes of girls from twelve to sixteen (fifty-four pupils).

Total number of children attending the schools: three hundred and twelve.

Attendance checks. — School is compulsory and free up to the age of sixteen completed. — Punctuality is strictly insisted upon. — For the children who do not work in the workshop, the attendance books are submitted every fortnight to the commissioners of the relief fund, who ascertain at home the causes of absence. The parents are admonished, and the list of absentees is posted up in the establishment twice a year and read out at the general meetings. For the children who work in the workshop, the master gives the child, at the end of each class, a card bearing his name. The foreman of each workroom collects the cards the next day, before eight in the morning. A child who has no card is sent away from the workshop until he brings one back. The offender is thus at the discretion of the master, who sets whatever condition he thinks fit for handing over the card.

Attendance at services. — The same system is used for the Sunday services, which, like school, are compulsory up to the age of sixteen completed.

Tests. — Every week, a test, the result of which remains posted up in the class until the end of the month.

Competitions. — Every term, in the employer's offices, a competition between the best pupils of each class and in each subject, based on the tests taken during the term. — These competitions give rise to special rewards.

Weekly tickets. — Every week, each pupil receives tickets: *pink*, very good; *white*, good, etc., following the models of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

Monthly tickets. — Every month, tickets of honour, the result of the weekly tickets, are given by the Employer himself, in the presence of all the children. This distribution, quickly carried out, takes the

Employer only half an hour a month, and is enough to spur the pupils on a great deal.

Visits, prize-giving. — A few visits to the schools and, at the end of the year, a public prize-giving complete the means of emulation employed.

Feasts. — Each year little feasts are organised for the schools: we shall describe only one feast of the infant school: Christmas. — On Christmas Eve, when night has fully fallen, all the little children who have been regular at the infant school are brought into a room transformed into a resplendent crib. There, some thirty little boys and little girls, dressed up with a taste whose secret the Sisters alone possess, act out little scenes suited to the occasion. Then comes a grand children's feast, from which each guest carries away a toy, cakes and an indescribable joy. These feasts leave indelible memories in the children's minds. — Christmas often appears to them in dreams as an enchanting fairy tale in the midst of the dark nights of December. The mothers are particularly touched by these little feasts, which win their hearts to the happy influence of the Sisters.

Adult classes. — These classes are held in winter, three times a week, for the members of the Circles and of the Association of the Children of Mary.

§ III. Publications. — Newspapers. — Libraries.

Three Catholic daily newspapers and six weekly publications circulate among readers organised in series. The Workers who wish to can thus satisfy the need for a newspaper, so widespread today, without losing their faith. — Each Association has its library, open every Sunday. Books are taken to the sick to relieve their boredom and to make their enforced rest as useful as possible.

§ IV. General meetings. — Talks on the Works and on subjects of interest to the Workers.

Each year, in winter, two or three times, there are large meetings to which the whole working population is invited.

A theatrical evening and instrumental music are attraction enough to draw eight hundred spectators, that is, the whole population of the establishment of an age to come.

At these meetings, talks are given on the Works. Care is taken to show that comfort, thrift, peace in families, the happiness of parents and children, all flow from religion.

The usefulness of foresight, of life insurance, of the Savings bank, of the schools, etc., is shown. In short, nothing is dealt with there but subjects that are *practical, useful*, and that go to the Worker's heart through the affection that prevails in all these familiar talks.

§ V. Institutions suited to increasing the Worker's well-being.

Relief fund. — Since 1846, there has been a Relief fund to which all the Workers are obliged to belong, and which gives the following benefits: the doctor's care, medicines, the midwife's care at childbirth, half wages during illness, and finally a decent funeral.

This Fund is administered by six commissioners, appointed each year by all the Workers over twenty-one. These commissioners hold their meeting every fortnight at the office, with the assistance of a clerk who acts as secretary-treasurer. The commissioners alone dispose of the Fund's money, according to the regulations posted up in all the workrooms of the establishment. At each meeting, the cashier gives the state of the Fund; every three months, it is posted up in the workrooms; every year, at the election meeting, a very detailed report is made on it.

Accident insurance. — An insurance against accidents provides an indemnity that makes up the wages of those who are injured in the workshop.

Savings bank. — A Savings bank, founded in 1842, offers all who wish to save every facility for doing so. Quite recently, it has been established in the Associations of men, with special incentives of which we shall speak further on.

Economic societies. — The greatest efforts are made to struggle against the ever-rising cost of food, a worrying evil for the Workers, who wonder when it will come to an end.

ASSOCIATIONS.

1. Spirit of the Associations, their administration, their life.
2. Associations of girls.
3. Associations of Christian mothers, of widows.
4. Associations of men.

1. *Spirit of the Associations, their administration, their life.*

We said, in Part One of this little work, that the sense of freedom is one of the indispensable helpers of the Works of the factory. This sense establishes the good spirit of the Associations; care has been taken to develop it by several means:

In the workshop, in the distribution of work, no privilege for those who belong to the Works, no indiscreet urging of those who do not. — There are a fair number of Workers who are outside them, too many no doubt! but the Employer is anxious that there should be some, so that freedom may be as visible as it is real.

Thus, out of 482 girls or women, 337 belong to the Works, and 145 are outside them. Out of 335 children or men, 227 belong to the Works, and 108 are outside them.

The second means of establishing the good spirit lies in the creation of councils, drawn from the members of each Association.

These councils meet frequently, always with the Director or the Directress present, and each councillor is associated with the Director's zeal by an active role given to him in the games, in the recruitment or expulsion of members and in the whole material administra-

tion of the Society. Several of these councillors are true apostles who have taken the success of the Works to heart.

These councils are appointed each year, from a list put forward by the Director or the Directress. Each member strikes out the names that do not suit him.

These councils are the life of the meetings; they give them liveliness, ingenious ways of varying the recreations, and a manner full of frankness and simplicity. Everyone feels *at home*, and it may be said that the charm of being *at home* is worth more by itself than all the other attractions put together.

We do not dwell on the spirit of piety, because we are addressing men who are convinced by experience as well as by faith that without this spirit one would be building on sand.

All the Associations of which we shall speak here have this essential foundation. The games and the material advantages never make anyone lose sight of the aim, which is the salvation of souls.

Besides the general Communions of each Association, many frequent the Sacraments, the only true source of all perseverance and of all solid virtue.

2. Associations of girls.

1. Association of St Philomena, before First Communion, 52 members.
2. Association of the Holy Angels, from First Communion to fifteen years, 49 members.
3. Association of the Children of Mary, over fifteen years, 109 members.

Most Meetings of girls are only Sodalties or Confraternities that are exclusively religious. Here, they are Meetings with games, walks, and everything that can be pleasant or useful to the different ages being cared for. In each Meeting, there are the Associations, into which only the best-behaved are admitted, and after fairly long periods of probation. The girls of the Associations wear ribbons of vari-

ous colours³. This ribbon, which they never take off, even in the workshop, is a powerful safeguard for the girls who wish to remain virtuous. — This ribbon is today perfectly respected in the workshops. The girls who first began to wear it have made it so honourable by their courage and their virtue that they have silenced for good the mockery by which foolishness and malice everywhere seek to stifle the superiority that offends them.

All the girls who belong to the meetings share in the *religious*, *pleasant* and *useful* advantages.

Religious. — Solemn ceremony of reception.

Special meetings and instructions on Sundays and feast days.

Monthly confessions and Communions.

Annual retreat of five days.

Individual guidance of the girls by the Sisters, in whom they find all the solicitude of truly Christian mothers.

Frequent visits in the workshops.

Singing choir for the chapel.

Library.

As far as possible, the general Communions of the girls take place in the parish church.

On every day of meeting, in the evening, there are common prayers and a farewell hymn: in summer, in a large garden, at the feet of the statue of the Most Holy Virgin; in winter, in the great hall.

Relaxation, recreation. — On Sundays and feast days, for as long as the girls are able without failing in their family duties, they meet at the Sisters' house until a quarter to nine in the evening.

Each Association has its own games room.

Two large gardens, one outside and the other inside, with swings, etc., provide a suitable space for active games, which are strongly en-

3. These ribbons are: *violet*, for the aspirants of the Holy Angels; *red*, members of the Association of the Holy Angels; *green*, aspirants of the Children of Mary; *blue*, members of the Association of the Children of Mary.

couraged there.

A vast common hall, with a stage, makes it possible to hold evening entertainments every month in winter (only the girls of the Associations and their mothers are admitted).

When the weather allows, there are frequent walks with the Sisters. On the day after the village feast, a great excursion by carriage or by railway.

On the feast days of the neighbouring villages, all temptation is avoided by long walks, with meals in the countryside.

A great banquet brings all the girls together on the evening of 8 December.

Each month, a small raffle is drawn for those who hold Sunday attendance tokens.

A recreational choir enlivens all the evenings.

Practical advantages. — An additional class on Sunday allows those who wish to learn to complete their elementary schooling.

Three times a week, in winter, in the evening, there is a very well attended adult class.

On Thursdays, a sewing room, for which the Employer gives up half an hour of work in the workshop, and the girls half an hour of their rest time, which gives the latter an hour of sewing each week.

The sick are visited every week by the councillors, who bring them useful things or a few comforts.

The members of the Associations have, as a privilege, free supply of school materials (under sixteen years of age).

Girls who have spent three years with honour in the Association of the Children of Mary receive a dowry of *One hundred francs* when they marry. This sum is handed over, on the favourable opinion of the council, on the very day of the wedding, in the presence of all the young bride's companions.

The wedding day of a Child of Mary is a feast day for the whole Association. On the eve, the members go and bring their companion

the wreath of orange blossom. The next day, the entire Association attends the Mass; a farewell hymn is sung at the altar of the Blessed Virgin. On leaving, the young bride is taken into the Sisters' garden, where so many times she played and prayed during her girlhood. She hands to the Sister in charge the blue ribbon of a Child of Mary, which she has kept on throughout the ceremony. She receives the kiss of all her companions. One of the founders addresses a few words of praise and advice, at the same time as he presents the dowry of One hundred francs.

After these ceremonies, the young wife is taken home. Standing on the threshold of her house, she receives a last farewell from her companions. She is no longer a *Child of Mary*; a new Association, that of the *Christian Mothers*, opens its ranks to protect and help her until her last hour.

The girls of the Employer's family enter the Associations as soon as their age allows.

Each of the three Associations has a particular Sister as director, and a council appointed every year. Every week, the Sister in charge gathers the council to organise the following Sunday and to stir up everyone's zeal, so that the meetings may be as attractive as possible.

3. *Association of Christian Mothers.*

127 members.

From her entry into marriage, the young wife finds protection, advice and help in the Association of *Christian Mothers*.

Each month, on a weekday, there is a meeting in the chapel, in the afternoon, with a special instruction on the duties of their state, then confession. The next day, early in the morning, Mass, which all attend, and at which the greater number receive Communion.

Every Tuesday, the Mothers who can give some of their time are invited to work in the sewing room to make the clothing stock of the Association. A certain number come regularly, and work in the afternoon with the Ladies of the employer's family.

Like all the other Associations, the Christian Mothers have a council, presided over by the Employer's wife. It meets every month, and helps powerfully in the development and the smooth running of the Association. It looks after the sick, and in particular the young mothers. All too often, lack of care leads to the most serious accidents.

The council provides a charwoman, who, for ten days, spends half a day doing the young mother's work, so that she can take the time to recover. In addition, a cradle, with a small layette, welcomes the newborn.

Every year, a great raffle is drawn, the tickets for which are given at each meeting to the Christian Mothers present.

Every year also, the Christian Mothers, and they alone, are invited to a great evening entertainment. Their little children form its most attractive part. Nothing delights the mothers so much as this evening, when they admire charming little scenes performed by very small children. During this evening, a talk on the Works shows them all the benefits these bring to the family, and encourages them to use their powerful influence to help those who direct the Works.

4. Associations of men.

1. St Aloysius Gonzaga, from nine to twelve years. Society in formation, 55 members.

2. Little Circle, from twelve to sixteen or seventeen years, 41 members.

3. Great Circle, over sixteen or seventeen years, 128 members.

Obligations: To attend Mass on Sunday; — to make one's Easter duty; — to give no cause for scandal.

The Works for men are all directed by the Brothers of the Christian Schools who teach the classes. These good Religious devote their whole Sunday to them, with a zeal that is never discouraged, and with the self-denial that is necessary for the success of the Works of God.

We think that, without the Brothers, the Works for men in the factory will be very difficult; and we rejoice to see sons of the Venerable de La Salle sitting on the Central Office of the *Union*. For us it is a pledge of the active support that Christian industrialists will find everywhere from these masters so loved by the people, for the Sunday meetings. These meetings are indispensable to reach the goal we have set ourselves.

Religious advantages common to the three Associations. — Each month. — A meeting in the chapel, followed by a general meeting at the Circle. There, the Director or the Employer gives advice, speaks of the events of the day that concern the Worker, etc. — Great fruit is drawn from these familiar talks, which come entirely from the heart, and whose whole merit lies in their aptness.

Each year. — A retreat twice a year: at Easter, to which all the men outside the Works are admitted; at All Saints, for the members only.

Four general Communion: at Easter, — on 15 August, — at All Saints and at Christmas. Moreover, individual Communion, according to each one's piety, especially on the feasts of the Sacred Heart, of St Joseph, of St Vincent de Paul and of the Immaculate Conception.

Choral Societies. — Two choral societies, one of the little, one of the great Circle, which meet in the chapel.

Entertainments. — The Circles are open on Sundays and feast days until ten o'clock in the evening.

Every month, in winter, a private evening. Theatre, comic songs. A talk. Every fortnight, in summer, a walk with a snack in the woods. A banquet on the feast of St Joseph. Once a year, a great outing by carriage or by railway (usually a pilgrimage). Two feasts each year: one, the Employer's feast day; the other, the Chaplain's. Every Sunday, gymnastics with a special class for each of the Circles. Military drill for the young men.

From time to time, games with prizes.

Children under 16 or 17 spend the whole of Sunday in the Work, except for mealtimes, which are long enough for the child to be with the family as much as is necessary. Of course, parents keep their children for as long as they wish, by informing the Brother.

Music. — In the great Circle there is a band made up of thirty-three players. The rules have been drawn up with particular regard to avoiding the dangers that several people have pointed out. These dangers would not exist if the Director were ready to sacrifice any one of his musicians whose conduct ceased to correspond to the spirit of the Catholic Works.

No more than the theatre is instrumental music dangerous in itself. These two pastimes have the same pitfalls, which must be carefully avoided. The music brightens the Circles every Sunday, and gives life to the meetings and the feasts.

Material and practical advantages. — Adult classes entirely free of charge, in winter, three times a week.

Supply of books, paper, etc., to the children of the members of the great Circle and to the Members of the little Circle.

A savings bank for the little Circle, giving: 1. annual interest of 5 per cent; 2. a bonus of 10 per cent on all deposits made from twelve to eighteen years of age and not withdrawn before twenty-one. A savings bank for the great Circle, giving 5 per cent on the smallest deposits.

Refreshments of every kind, except wines and spirits, at cost price.

A Conference of St Vincent de Paul and visits to sick members.

Recruitment of the firm's clerks preferably from among the Members of the great Circle.

Each of the three Associations of children, young men and men has its Council elected every year, a Brother as Director, and its own meeting rooms.

CONCLUSION.

That is what is being done, and that is what can be done wherever there is a Christian Employer at the head of the factory.

The Workers of the establishment whose organisation we have described have, for the most part, lived in a large town. It is of them that people go on saying that nothing can be done.

In the village where this factory stands, there is another one; within a radius of three leagues, there are twelve establishments often visited by the Workers we are speaking of; they have relatives in many of these establishments, where nothing whatever is done to improve the morals of the Worker; finally, in this same village, which has 2,200 inhabitants, the Catholic Works are exposed to all the vexations of the worst centres; there are two dances on Sunday, and no disorder of the great towns is unknown there.

You see, then, that if it is not the town, neither is it the true countryside, and morally improving results equal to those we have just described could be achieved everywhere.

Today the number of Christian Employers is much greater than one might suppose. What, then, is lacking? Union! that union which creates the Works and gives them lasting life.

The Works of the factory are the most important, since they embrace the whole family; they are the most urgent, and until now they have been the most neglected.

We believe that the hour has come to seek out the good wills that isolation renders barren, and that exaggerated fears paralyse.

Let us beware of letting this hour go by. The Congress of Poitiers was the starting point and the direct cause of the impulse that created so many new Works for men and for the young. May the voice of your rapporteur not have harmed the sacred cause he was charged to defend, and the Congress of Nantes will create the *Christian Organisation of the Factory*.

May we be permitted, in closing, to express our whole thought, at the risk perhaps of scandalising some of our fellow members.

The factory organised on Christian lines not only remedies the evils that are justly laid at the door of large concentrations of people, but also gives, for the education of children, a better result than the present state of the family. Today, indeed, even the farming family has lost almost all respect for authority; it presents nothing but the most complete anarchy; the child commands and the parents obey. This evil is so great that military service is regarded as a blessing, because there, at least, one learns to obey.

Now, in the Christian factory, we find again authority firmly established, powerful in its action, which does not aim merely at an outward discipline, but whose first object is the salvation of souls; so that, while it teaches obedience to men, it teaches above all obedience to God. By this twofold benefit, the twofold evil that is killing the family of our time is repaired. Is this not the occasion to apply the well-known maxim: *Optimi corruptio pessima*? We reverse the terms of the adage, and we dare to say that if the badly run factory is so powerful for evil, it must find again under Christian direction an equal power for good.

The Catholic Church has not grown old: she still possesses that astonishing strength which, in a few years, brought forth from the corruption of paganism a new world, whose courage and purity will be the admiration of all the ages.

Give the factory apostles, apostles who have faith and charity, and they will renew this wonder, and the factory will be transformed into *a work of faith and moral improvement*.

Resolutions adopted by the congress.

1. That a Committee be formed by the Central Office of the *Union* for the Christian organisation of the factory.

That these Works be sought out and encouraged, whether by direct contacts, by committees or by regional meetings, or by any other suitable means.

2. That the religious congregations of women support with their help, wherever they can, the Sunday Works for girls.

3. That all the Christian schools for boys have Sunday Works for youth.

4. To draw the attention of the legislator to the drawbacks of the compulsory division imposed by our laws of succession, and to show how real these drawbacks are for the Worker, for whom they make the hereditary ownership of the family home impossible.



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CONGRESS OF LYON

24 August 1874

TENTH COMMISSION

WORKS OF THE FACTORY

27th QUESTION

NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS IN THE FACTORY.

It is once again for the Church to do anew today, in other forms and with that variety of methods which her overflowing action allows, what she did so happily and so usefully in the past. (*The Bishop of Poitiers.*)

Last year, at the Congress of Nantes, in the report on the Christian Organisation of the Factory⁴, we could do no more than point out the questions raised by this vast subject. — Among these questions, there is one that was the least developed and probably the most overlooked; and yet it is the most important, for without it the greatest efforts will be almost useless. — This question is that of the Associations in the Factory. We shall speak to you of it today, basing our general observations on what is practised in the factory in the East, and we shall discuss with you:

4. The present pamphlet follows on from that first Report, to which it is indispensable to join it.

1. The necessity of their existence, because of the present situation of the factory workers;
2. The necessity of extending them to all the members of the family;
3. The necessity of organising them so as to meet the three great needs of the worker: Religious, practical and recreational needs;
4. The necessity of bringing together all the Associations of the Factory on certain days.

No more than last year do we claim to lay down for anyone the only course to follow. We shall tell, as we did last year, what we have seen, and the reflections that the facts have inspired in us, being well assured, moreover, that there are many other ways of doing good. All the works that save souls are excellent, and the Church may be compared to a magnificent flower garden, where the variety of the flowers brings out the ingenious power of the divine gardener.

Chapter I.

Necessity of the existence of the Associations, because of the present situation of the factory workers

There are today many Christian employers who sincerely desire the good of their workers. It is important for them to know the means of making this desire effective. Now, we affirm, and experience is on our side, that the Associations are absolutely necessary to arrive at a solid result. If they are not the only way, they are assuredly the surest, the shortest, the most unfailing way to Christianise the Factory.

Whether the worker is in the town or the country, whether he is a Christian or must be converted, whether you are founding a work or wish to keep it prosperous, count a great deal, count above all on strongly organised Associations. The wicked set us the example, and we know what power for evil they have attained through associations.

We have known manufactories where the employers had made serious efforts and seemed to have obtained very real results. A mere ringleader arrived, and his action of a few days was enough to tear whole populations away from the Christian influences that seemed to prevail over them. There were no associations, and the individual, left in his isolation, found himself powerless against those strong influences which arise and spread so quickly in large concentrations of people.

The necessity of the Associations appears more vividly still when one examines closely the present situation of the Factory in almost the whole of the north of France. Since the worker was withdrawn from the beneficent influence of the Church, ungodly masters seem to have striven to degrade him, by obliging him to work on Sunday, and by encouraging debauchery through the abominable Monday idleness.

This sad situation, common to all working people, is singularly aggravated in the factory by those confused crowds of men, women and children brought together in the same rooms, where a common work keeps them all day long. This mixing has produced a succession, or rather a permanence, of crimes unknown in times past.

These crimes have found their glorification in an unheard-of human respect, which has imposed an implacable tyranny in the workshops. This human respect imposes the most monstrous ideas about religion, the family, morality and society.

In the Factory, religion, its ministers and its worship are the object of a furious hatred. This hatred is fanned by abominable writings whose existence is not even suspected by those who have not lived in that milieu. The divine Eucharist is particularly blasphemed there. Materialism is extolled there: "When you're dead, everything is dead." That is an axiom accepted without dispute, and put into practice down to its last consequences. On the other hand, the most ridiculous superstitions are respected there; anyone who mocked them would be sharply rebuked by a neighbouring philosopher, in the name

of freedom of conscience. I have known some who worshipped the sun, and this devotion was considered most respectable.

In the Factory, the family is reviled. Poor little children hear dreadful talk about their mothers; there are sons of fourteen who speak of their mothers as a vile man speaks of a woman as vile as himself. — Needless to add that respect and filial obedience are hissed at there, treated as cowardice, and that the disregard of all family duties is taught and applauded there.

What is said of the corruption of peoples nearing their end may be said of most of our modern workshops. Vice is openly encouraged there, and, by a hateful refinement, those who have not been able to commit crimes great enough to arouse admiration invent some they have never committed. The most obscene talk is held there without regard for newcomers. It even seems that, for certain debauchees, there is an attraction, a kind of infernal delight, in corrupting the innocent. They are a prey that they fight over, and, thanks to this horrible eagerness, one sees girls who, through a monstrous precocity, know, barely out of childhood, as much evil as a long criminal life can teach.

Finally, with regard to society, revolt in all its forms is proclaimed there as the most sacred of duties; society is an enemy, each of whose setbacks is a gain for the worker. War is openly declared.

One day there was an election meeting in a workshop: a speaker stands up and proposes a candidate. “What are his qualifications?” comes the cry from all sides. “He stole 200 francs from his employer, and he was clever enough to escape prison! There’s the kind of man we need to defend the interests of the worker!” And the name was entered on the list.

After talking like the others, one must act like the others, and here you will allow me to break off my painful account. I shall say nothing of the increase in crimes produced by the action of corrupt foremen, and sometimes fanned by an action from higher still. Nor shall I say

anything of the ravages the Factory makes in the rural populations around it, nor of the punishments that the apostolate of evil adds to the punishments that overwhelm the poor worker without God.

That is the mould in which the poor families swallowed up by the Factory must be shaped. Do not think that there are not many secret protests; but they are carefully held back, and if, in the evening, at the family hearth, the father says a word about it, it is only with trembling: for the walls have ears, and woe to him who dares to take the side of honesty. He is a flatterer, a spy, a traitor, and then begins a series of cruel reprisals, which the law does not reach, which the indifferent employer cowardly tolerates, and which deliver the honest worker up to a veritable martyrdom.

Poor beloved children! whom the Church protected with such solitude, what has become of you in the hands of the false teachers? — They promised you every good thing. As worthy sons of the devil, they said to you: *Listen to us and you shall be gods*. As credulous as our first parents, like them you have been deceived. They proclaimed the right to work, and they refused you the right to rest. They promised you emancipation and happiness, and they gave you the worst of slaveries, the slavery of souls, which we have just depicted, and, on top of that, ruin and misery!

Many have contemplated these great disasters, probed these deep wounds, and they have sat down discouraged, unwilling to undertake anything to heal evils they judged incurable. Others remembered that the blood of Jesus the Worker still flows on our altars to heal the sick and raise the dead. They called on the Church, and the Church came running; she took the poor factory workers in the state we have described, and she made of them a family of Christians.

Through firmly established Catholic Associations, she formed centres of resistance against the tyranny of human respect. The first nucleus of these Associations, made up of more resolute characters, was strengthened in goodness; it grew little by little, then it asserted

itself, then it raised its head, and at last, when it was strong enough, it planted the standard of the Cross in the Factory, and on that day it won the victory.

Ah! gentlemen, how beautiful and radiant with hope were the first fruits of these dear Associations! As the chains of human respect grew less heavy, noble aspirations were seen to arise. Relieved of the weight that oppressed them, consciences breathed more freely. Soon the joy of the liberated soul was reflected in the relations of worker with worker, of workers with employers.

People learnt to love one another. Even the faces, transformed by the change of heart, recovered that engaging frankness so natural to the simple and honest worker. It had to be acknowledged that the factory worker is more oppressed than corrupt, and that in his vices there is more weakness and ignorance than malice.

Yes, ignorance and weakness, those are the two great social wounds. Everyone acknowledges it. How many different remedies! How many senseless systems tried to heal them! Has there not been talk enough, in recent times, of education, of meetings, of agreement, of rights, of improving one's lot! all of them legitimate things, but which cannot be attained without God.

In fact, the evil has grown and the worker has become more and more unhappy. It could not have been otherwise. God being the sole source of temporal as well as of spiritual happiness, man must learn again his duties towards God. This education is the only one that will give him back the power to become happy. The worker must be associated for good, and this association will give him the strength to free himself from the tyranny of evil.

To associate men in order to instruct them, to associate men in order to make them strong, such is, we believe, the only means of solving the social problem that frightens us all.

If we are thought bold in our assertions, rash in our promises, let it be remembered that our feeble voice is but the echo of a great, in-

fallible voice. Our illustrious and holy Father Pius IX never ceases to cry out to the world that Catholic Associations are the only dyke that can be set against the torrent of evil that is overrunning the earth. That we must make haste, for the hour is pressing. More terrible than the waters of the Flood, the waves of iniquity are rising, ceaselessly rising; all hearts and all hands are not too many to build the ark that will save society.

Let us heed this voice, let us create Associations quickly and everywhere. Without them, the best works have no stability, and we may lay down the following principle, which will be the conclusion of this chapter:

Necessary to raise up the worker, more necessary still to keep him upright, the Associations give, by their prosperity, the sure measure of the vitality of the Catholic Works of the Factory.

Chapter II

Necessity of extending the Associations to all the members of the family

We have established that the Associations are necessary; but could they attain their goal if they did not extend to all the members of the family? Does not the evil weigh on fathers as well as on sons, on mothers as well as on daughters? And since each age has different duties and needs, are not several associations needed for the men and several associations for the women and girls?

I. — NECESSITY OF THE WORKS FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN.

It is not without reason that the Church has always given quite particular care to the education of woman, and has had quite special prayers to help her fulfil her important mission.

It is on the mother, indeed, that the whole of society depends. If man is its head, woman is its heart, and the day there are no more Christian mothers, there will be no more worshippers of the true God.

On the contrary, even if it should seem that all men are subjugated by ungodliness, we can be certain of seeing the faith revive, if it still has the heart of woman for its refuge.

At the beginning of this century, it seemed that the revolution had succeeded in forming a society without God. But while it forced the sons to suck in the poison of the University, it disdained the daughters, who could be freely brought up in the convent. The Christian woman has triumphed. We all know that if France has become Catholic again, if we are witnessing this admirable movement of religious resurrection, we owe it to our mothers.

The enemy of mankind knows it well too; he has recognised his mistake. We see him today, as in the earthly Paradise, bent especially on driving God out of the heart of woman. Nowhere is this action more visible, nowhere does it cause more terrible ravages than in the workshops. If the evils of the Factory are fatal to man, they are a hundred times more so to woman, and if the Works for women have always been the most necessary in the world, one may say, all the more so, that they are the most important and the most indispensable among the Works of the Factory.

II. — Association of girls.

We cannot give here the details of the organisation of the various Associations of girls mentioned in the Nantes Report. That would lengthen still further a work that is already too long. We shall speak only of the Association of the Children of Mary, which takes in girls from fourteen or fifteen years of age until marriage.

To found an association with girls who most often had a very imperfect education and had been working for several years in Factories such as we have depicted might have seemed an unrealisable dream. It seemed wiser, and it was certainly more in keeping with the ideas of human prudence, to cut one's losses, to abandon what seemed lost,

and to begin with childhood, which at least offered new ground and a better-founded hope.

The facts have shown the falsity of this doctrine, which is moreover condemned by the constant practice of the Church. A better counsellor than human prudence, faith urges generous souls to holy daring, always crowned with assured success when it is the fruit of a humble trust in God.

The Work of the Children of Mary was therefore undertaken from the very beginning, and God blessed it.

We think it useful to speak of four obstacles that were met with, and which several will no doubt meet in the founding and the governing of this work: *the mixing of heterogeneous elements, haste in the first choices, the boredom that would soon arise from a lack of attractions, and lastly the indifference of the members to the progress of the association.*

For the rest, we refer to the Nantes report (p. 31 to 34).

1. *Mixing of heterogeneous elements.* — It was soon recognised how important it is to make up the association exclusively of girls working in the Factory, or at least belonging to the families who work there.

The factory girl does not have the same character or the same habits as the seamstress or the small shopkeeper's daughter. She has perhaps less dignity, but more simplicity, and, since simplicity is the surest road that leads to God, she reaches Him more directly, despite unfavourable appearances; and once she is there, she is more easily kept there. We lay great stress on this point.

When one founds a Work, one easily gives way to the temptation of seeing it prosper quickly. Now, if you open a Sunday refuge in a town, it will be easy for you to fill it with seamstresses and girls of the lower middle class, who will come to show off their finery there and to look for a genteel pastime. But these coquettes will frighten

away the humble workshop girl, and if the work was made for the Factory, it will never reach its goal.

Simplicity, which is the very consequence of work in the Factories, is so beneficial a virtue that we have been able to make the following remark: the rare desertions that the Sisters have had to deplore have come only from girls who left work in the workshop to occupy themselves at home. The reason is that all too often they left simplicity at the same time; and this virtue is so dear to the good Lord that even when it is forced, it prepares souls for the action of grace.

2. *Haste in the first choices.* — The second pitfall is admission made too easy at the beginning. At the origin of the Works, an exclusion can have disastrous consequences, by casting discredit on an Association that has not yet been able to make its benefits appreciated by the working population.

In the lamentable situation in which the Factory finds itself, it is impossible, at the beginning, to find many girls one can be sure of.

So quality was sought, and not quantity. Only a few girls were taken; not perfect ones, there were none, but those whose good will and strength of character gave some well-founded hope.

Great care was taken to form this first little nucleus with the patience and love that the Founders of religious Orders put into forming the first members who are to give its spirit to the Society.

Long devotedness was needed, because the deeper the evil, the more time it takes to heal it. But as soon as a passable result had been reached, the good suddenly spread beyond all hope, which made up for the fatigue and the length of the waiting.

One must not be put off by coarseness. Often, beneath an uncultivated and rough exterior, there lies hidden a choice soul, who will understand you better and be more faithful than soft natures, whose first approach nevertheless seems to promise more.

In the first little nucleus of which we spoke just now, there was a girl named Julie. Her circumstances were most unfavourable: her

father was a notorious drunkard and a debauchee of the worst kind; her mother, a poor ignorant woman, without education, had no religious ideas at all; her sister was given over to vice. She herself was unbelievably coarse and had an execrable temper. Julie took to loving the Sisters. Can a Daughter of Charity let slip an opportunity of saving a soul? The Sister showed her a wholly motherly tenderness. The poor child used the most shocking expressions at every moment, and such that no delicate ear could have borne them, had it not been, as it were, lined with the soft fabric of the love of souls.

Julie's unruly and capricious character brought some new vexation every Sunday. But the Sister felt that this rough and uncultivated bark hid an energetic nature, capable of great devotedness. These hopes, which only a mother's eye could conceive, were not disappointed.

The wretched father, finding in Julie's virtue a living reproach, often ill-treated her, and more than once put her, together with her mother, out of the house in the middle of the night; he had indulgence only for his bad daughter, his all too faithful image.

Julie's earnings alone came home; the father's stayed at the tavern; those of the dancer went to the milliner's. Without ever complaining of this injustice, the generous child kept for her parents and her sister the best of the family's wretched meals, and was often content with a piece of black bread.

Soon the dancer had a first child, then a second. Julie adopted them one after the other, and while the bad mother ran after other debauchery, Julie looked after the little children, dressed them, devoted part of her nights to them, giving them the tenderest motherly care. Every morning and every evening, she took them on her knees and had them pray to Mary, whose glorious livery she wore on her shoulders.

One day, Julie fell ill; she nearly died. She did not cling to life for her own sake, but how many tears she shed over those she called her dear little children!

If one day you go to the Factory, you will stop by a poor workers' house, where two bright-faced little boys are playing. When the workshop bell rings, you will see a Child of Mary coming in the distance, whom you will recognise by her blue ribbon. Her face, thin from suffering and privation, has lost the graces of youth, but it bears that lovely glow which Mary makes shine on the brow of her children. You will then hear the cries of joy of the two little boys running to throw themselves into the girl's arms, crying: "Hello, Mummy!" And you will be moved as you contemplate this lovely group. This girl is Julie; and when she has told you her life, you will understand what wonders the Association of the Children of Mary can work in the Factory.

3. *Third obstacle: The boredom that would soon arise from a lack of attractions.* — It would have been impossible to succeed with sodalities meeting only in church, and having as their sole bond a religious bond more or less strong; so the attempt was made to attract by the appeal of what is useful, at the same time as by innocent amusements and permitted pleasures. In this way it was possible to prove to the girls who shunned the Association in order to keep a dangerous liberty that they had fewer material advantages and fewer real joys than the Children of Mary.

By wisely varied pleasures and encouragement given at the right moment, a struggle was waged against that inconstancy so common in youth, which grows weary all the more as it has been more enthusiastic.

Terrible examples have established the deep line of division that exists between the joys of God and the false pleasures of the world.

A poor girl whom weakness kept in vice was led by her faults into such keen troubles that, in despair, forgetting the mercy of God, she

took her own life in circumstances that deeply impressed the population.

Another, on leaving the dance, was shot with a pistol by the very hand of her dancing partner, who saw no finer way of ending the festivities. We could, alas! cite other examples!

If the life of our girls of the Associations offers astonishing contrasts with that of the girls who live in evil, death offers still more astonishing ones.

Death carries a torch that brings light into hearts. No one lies any longer at that dread moment, and more than one poor girl who had led a scandalous life proclaimed aloud that all her pleasures had been poisoned, and that her conscience had never ceased to be tortured by avenging remorse.

A Child of Mary named Clémence, despite the fatal gift of beauty, had long kept herself in true piety. She had to leave the workshop to take the place, at the deserted hearth, of her mother, who had just died. Little by little, vanity took the place of simplicity. Flattery was listened to with more complacency, and the enemy seduced this poor child, wholly taken with herself. Clémence rolled down into the abyss and dragged with her Eléonore and Félicité, her younger sisters. For some time, unbridled debauchery was the daily lot of these poor girls. At last, Clémence contracted a mortal illness at the dance, and her illness was long and painful. Debauchery dries up the source of all devotedness; one morning, Eléonore and Félicité abandoned Clémence without warning her, and the poor invalid found herself alone, without care, without affection. Judge of her despair; but the Sister was watching over the stray sheep, with the solicitude of mothers who are always more grieved by the absence of their prodigal children than consoled by the presence of their faithful ones, however many they may be. She came to nurse the poor forsaken girl. The Children of Mary became the sick-nurses of the one who had dishonoured the Association. And the dying girl kept repeating to all her

former companions: “How happy you are! How unhappy I am, my God! What is left to me of all my pleasures? If I had listened to the Sisters, I should not have come to this. Let my experience serve you. Pray for me after my death; those I kept company with will not do so. Always remain Children of Mary!”

Her death was most edifying; her words touched hearts and contributed greatly to the prosperity of the Association. And thus it is that God turns even evil to His greater glory.

4. *Lastly, the fourth obstacle is: The indifference of the members to the progress of the Association.* — To combat it, the Association has been made into a true family, where each one feels loved and understands the saying of the sacred writer, the true motto of the family: *God has entrusted to each one the care of his neighbour.*

By meetings as frequent and as cheerful as possible, the attempt has been made to blend in charity the diversity of characters, all of whose sharp angles needed smoothing.

By succeeding in having the blue ribbon of the Children of Mary worn in the workshop, at home, everywhere in a word, a solidarity was created among them that imposed itself of its own accord, and they were *committed* in the eyes of the whole population, so that even the bad ones became helpers of the good. Here is an example of it.

One evening, two Children of Mary, having taken off their ribbons, had slipped furtively into a nearby dance. But they were soon recognised, and there was an outburst against the poor deserters..... “Look, where are your blue ribbons! Did you forget them? There they are, these hypocrites who want to have a taste of every party! We, at least, don’t make a show of virtue, and we don’t want to look like what we are not! Out with the hypocrites!” They fled, pursued by jeers, and thus it was that the children of darkness became for them the safeguard of their wavering virtue.

To protect the weakness of the girls, the Sisters have established the Good Angels. Under this name, the older girls look after the

younger ones; the older ones themselves accept this kindly guardianship, which is never imposed on them. They choose their good Angel on the discreet and intelligent advice of the Sister. This institution works very well: based solely on mutual affection and trust, it arouses no mistrust in those under protection. The girls willingly accept from their good Angels certain remarks that might be badly received if they came from the Sister. The renewal of the Good Angels each year, moreover, allows the necessary changes.

In the workshop, in each room, a councillor takes care of her companions and passes on legitimate requests directly to the employer, which are always received with kindness.

Lastly, we all know, and the Sisters are well aware, that the more devotedness there is in an Association, the more true life there is. And so they take good care not to do everything themselves. Without ever losing interest in the direction, they strive to make use of every good will and every aptitude. A large share is given to the action of the councillors, who hold frequent meetings, and they are real and precious helpers.

And since God gives the works of the apostolate a magnificent reward by increasing charity, by making faith more lively and piety more solid, the Sisters encourage these admirable works among the girls, sometimes towards their companions, sometimes towards the members of their families.

The results of this action have been most consoling; bad girls have been converted, wavering children have been strengthened in goodness, and families have become better.

One of the first Children of Mary belonged to a very large family that lived in complete indifference. Mocked by her brothers, tormented by her elder sisters, who wanted to force her to work all through Sunday, she showed such great gentleness, such great humility, that after several years she succeeded in converting her whole family. One incident will show her as she was:

One of her sisters was a regular at the Sunday dance. One day, when the mother had given a sum of fifty francs to each of her daughters, the generous Child of Mary went to find her sister and secretly gave her her own share:

“— You need it more than I do,” she said to her; “take it, your happiness is sweeter to me than all the finery in the world.”

This devotedness lasted a long time, without apparent success. But God measured the reward by the patience of the waiting. The dancer is today a Daughter of Charity, together with one of her sisters. The mother has become exemplary in her piety; the father and the brothers fulfil their religious duties.

As for the pious child who brought about this transformation, she has gone to join her mother Mary in heaven; she has called there a brother whom she had converted and placed in the seminary, and her memory has remained like a perfume for the Association and for the whole great family of the Factory.

III. — Association of women.

It had to be recognised that the Associations would be incomplete if they did not reach the mothers, who have a great influence in the family. Poor girls were harassed by their mothers, who had no understanding of their true interests. A very great weakness, coupled with deep ignorance and often with a deplorable upbringing, led poor women to hinder the development of the Works within their families.

Some Children of Mary, coming out from the Sisters' at nine o'clock in the evening in winter, found the door of the house shut, and sometimes had to wait two hours, in the rain or the snow, for their mother, who was at the weekly dance with the other daughters. — Weak mothers trembled before the arrogance of two dancing daughters, whose finery swallowed up the earnings of the whole family, and who took their revenge by a nameless tyranny towards the Child of Mary, whose patience and gentleness offered no resistance.

How many mothers never found the time to wash their children's clothes for Sunday Mass? How many complained of the time their daughters spent at the Sisters'? How many seriously thought that a good mother of a family can never go to church without neglecting the cares of the household?

The Association of Christian Mothers was established, and everything was changed. As for the Children of Mary, its members were recruited among the women belonging to the Factory; but admissions were made very broadly.

These poor mothers, even those who are ignorant of their duties, desire the Christianisation of their families, even without knowing it, through the sublime instinct of motherhood.

It was easy to prove to them that all the Works are really done in their interest, and that on their success depend the peace of the household, the obedience of the children, thrift, in a word everything that ensures the happiness of the woman; and the mothers have become the most active and the most reliable helpers of the Works of the Factory.

The infant school, the schools, the catechism classes were better attended. The Child of Mary became the pride and joy of the house, and the entry of the sons into the Works was regarded as the best guarantee of happiness for the parents.

Each monthly Meeting revives the courage of these poor women. This Association, the least costly and the easiest of all, soon became the most consoling through its almost immediate results. Suffering and devotedness are two sublime wings that carry us towards God. That is why the mothers quickly attain true piety. Most of them approach the Sacraments at each meeting. Who can tell the tears shed in secret for the conversion of a husband by women who did not even know God before the Association?

The last Easter retreat for men was announced a month in advance to the Christian mothers, and that month was spent in prayer,

amid anxieties unknown in former days. Will my husband be there? What sacrifice do you ask of me, O my God, to grant me this favour?

On the closing day, what tears of joy, which this time were no longer hidden!

— Oh! my dear friend, someone said to an old sinner who had just been to confession, how pleased the good Lord is with you!

— Ah! sir, I don't know whether I shall give as much pleasure to the good Lord as to my wife and my daughter.

— Look, sir, said another convert, never has my wife embraced me with such tenderness! I feel that our home is becoming a paradise, where we no longer know which of us loves the more and which of us is the happier.

With what ingenious patience, the secret of which woman alone possesses, is the husband's heart inclined towards the good Lord! The wife follows, with anxious solicitude, the progress of which the man himself is not aware; and one day a conversion breaks out, whose unknown artisan blesses the infinite mercy all her life long. We know women who were ignorant of God and who, through the Association of Christian Mothers, have become such generous apostles that they have joyfully accepted a life of moral torment for the conversion of their husbands.

Was an Association that has produced such consoling fruits made up of women brought up in the practice of the Christian virtues?

One incident will give you the answer.

One day, an unmarried mother asked to join the Association; her fault was of long standing, her conduct was irreproachable, and she had brought up her child very well. Nevertheless, her request, presented to the council, was rejected unanimously. This woman then went to the President and offered to plead her own cause before the Council, and, passing in review the ladies of the Association, she had no difficulty in proving that not all of them could cast a stone at her. The President could see for herself the danger there would be in at-

tempting the trial, and the applicant was admitted without fuss and without deliberation.

No doubt examples of conversions brought about by women are very frequent in history, but the instances we have cited are intended to show the immense importance of the Associations of women in the Factory.

The mother is the same at every rung of the social ladder and of the moral ladder; as soon as she becomes a Christian, she becomes the redemption of her family.

IV. — Associations of men.

The Works for men count too many apostles in this assembly for it to be of any use to demonstrate their necessity.

After citing families converted by daughters and mothers, we could cite others converted by sons and by fathers.

A worthy father of a family, brought up in the indifference and the prejudices all too common in our day, had been touched by grace and had been converted. His was a loyal and energetic nature. As soon as he had known the truth, he did not resist. But his wife remained the same, and the poor husband grieved to find in the mother of his children a hostility towards God whose consequences he dreaded. Every means of persuasion was without result.

One day the worker came to see the Sister. In his hand he had a small sum of money, the fruit of his Sunday privations over several months.

— Sister, it always grieves me to hear my wife speak of you, of the priests and of religion with contempt. Take this money, buy a good Sunday dress, and give it to her as a present from you. Perhaps her heart will be touched.

The dress was offered; the woman was all the more touched by so great a generosity because it came to her from people she had so often offended. She came to love the Sisters, and as it is not far from

there to loving the good Lord, she was soon converted, and the worthy worker went to set a candle at the altar of St Joseph, to thank him for the grace he had obtained for him.

Recently a worker, long rebellious to grace, felt his heart touched at a great religious demonstration to which he had been invited. He confided his embarrassment to a councillor who was one of his friends:

— I should very much like to become a member of the Circle, but I have forgotten everything: prayers, confession, catechism.

— Never mind that, replied the friend, I'll bring you up to date without anyone knowing anything about it.

And every evening, after the day's work, the convert of former days instructed his old comrade. If the master was patient, the disciple was very attentive; if the first was astonished at his role, the second was filled with wonder at the beautiful things he was being taught; in short, it lasted three weeks. God blessed them both, and when another general feast of the Associations came round, a new convert was joyfully seen in the ranks. Who had led him there? God alone knew! Just as he alone knows many admirable instances of the apostolate of the worker among the workers, his brothers.

It is thus that the Associations, by addressing themselves to all ages and to all the members of the family, bring about conversions by means whose very variety is one of the signs of the action of God.

We think we may conclude this second part, and that you will accept our second principle:

The Works of the Factory will not be complete if the Associations do not reach all ages and all the members of the family. This network of Associations, firmly established, will lead the whole family towards God by a continuous and truly effective action, and then the Factory will become completely Christian.

Chapter III

On the necessity of organising the Associations so as to meet the three great needs of the worker: Religious, practical and recreational needs.

The Associations were organised to be an effective remedy for the ills from which the worker suffers.

God has been driven out of society; with him happiness has been driven out, and no one has suffered more than the worker from this exile, as senseless as it is impious. Let us not forget that there lies the true and only cause of all the present evil. The Associations have therefore been, above all, openly and frankly Catholic. Only in this way have they become an effective bond of Christian brotherhood and a strength for resisting the tyranny of human respect; have they raised souls towards God by solid religious instruction; have they freed them from the prejudices of the workshop by serious refutation and good reading. Lastly, only in this way, better instructed in its religious duties, has the working-class family been rebuilt on Christian foundations.

Care has also been taken to teach the worker that God is the source of all the goods of this world, and to procure for him health, through temperance and care given in good time; education and technical knowledge, through adult classes, talks and libraries; comfort, through provident institutions, thrift and cheap living; help in misfortune, through the care of the sick, of widows and of orphans; and lastly stability, through all the means we have just listed and the ownership of the family home, as far as this has been possible.

Nor has it been forgotten to remind the worker, by frankly Christian feasts and all permitted amusements, that God is the only source of all true joy.

It was thought that the three orders of goods, religious, practical and recreational, should be widely applied in the Associations of girls

and of women as well as in the Associations of men.

Everything in the Works of the Factory has been arranged to attract families, and for this purpose all the goods of this world have been used. — And this is just, for all the goods of the temporal order were created by God to raise souls towards him. They have therefore been restored to their original purpose, and great care has been taken to avoid the separation, made all too often, between the spiritual and the temporal. On the pretext of not mixing the sacred with the profane, some have made of the good Lord *a tedious and useless grandfather*. On the contrary, the Associations of the Factory show the workers that God is a *tender mother*, who has compassion on the ills of every kind that sin has brought upon mankind, a mother who dresses every wound, and who, not content with giving us heaven, procures for us, even here below, every true happiness.

Perhaps, as we end this chapter, we shall be asked what games are reserved for the mothers of families? — Ah! let me answer you very quickly that they are the best provided for. — First, the feasts of each Association are feasts for the mothers, who rejoice more in the joys of their children than in their own. Further, the mothers are specially invited to the feasts of their daughters: lastly, they have special feasts of their own, which are spoken of in the Nantes Report (folio 35). — They also have two great feasts of childhood in the chapel; on those days all the benches are filled with bright-eyed children, and with mothers carrying in their arms charming little babies with astonished and delighted eyes. The sermon is short, for the preacher could not obtain a long silence from these little birds of the good Lord, whose twittering moves and charms the hearts of the parents. At the end of Mass comes the solemn blessing of the children, followed by a hymn sung by harmoniously out-of-tune and delightfully hesitant voices; and everyone leaves the house of the good Lord with a soul perfumed by the fragrance of these little ones.

Chapter IV

On the necessity of bringing together, on certain days, all the Associations of the Factory

Apart from the meetings proper to each Work, it would be very salutary to organise, on certain days, solemn gatherings of all the Associations: recreational gatherings and religious gatherings.

The former could have as their attraction a performance given by young workers before their mothers and sisters as well as before their fathers and brothers. All the spectators would be seated in good order, without confusion, under the protective care of the Sisters for the girls, and under the direction of devoted and intelligent Councilors for the children and the men. Special talks would be given there on subjects that are difficult to treat from the pulpit, and which nevertheless keenly concern the whole working-class family. The Christian employer would often be the best speaker there. We shall even say that he can and should speak there. If he lacks elegance of form, he has, together with love for the worker, a special and profound knowledge of his needs. He will easily put his finger on the wound; he will be appreciated by his whole audience, who will quickly have recognised in him the affection of a father joined to the knowledge of a practitioner.

The religious gatherings would take place in a church situated, as far as possible, in a working-class district. In the morning, a general Communion would bring together delegations from all the Associations. At a suitable hour the solemn Mass would begin, in which the choirs of men would alternate with the choirs of girls and women. A special sermon would give the feast its full character.

In the afternoon, the Associations would go in procession to the same church for the evening service. At the head, the banner of the trade; then, under their own banners: the little children, the girls' schools, the Associations of St Philomena, of the Holy Angels, of the

Children of Mary directed by the Sisters. — A small group made up of young orphan boys and girls of the working-class families. — The mothers, and at their head, around the banner, the wives of the Christian employers, then, in a place of honour, the poor widows. — The boys' schools, — the military band of the Circles, — the little Circle, — the great Circle, and, beside its banner, the employers who are at the head of the Works.

Who does not see how touching these demonstrations would be?

With what tender emotion would the worker not see all the members of the poor family file past, honoured in this way, the family, alas! so despised outside the Catholic Church? Would his prejudices not fall away? Would he not learn to bless a religion that has given him true friends?

Certainly, these demonstrations, so easy to hold, would touch hearts more eloquently and would do more for the recruitment of the Works than the finest speeches.

Is all that we have just said no more than a fine dream? No, Gentlemen. It has been granted to us to witness such sights, and, each time, our tears have flowed. You would not have been less moved than we were before this touching procession of a working population. The charming little children gave so much hope! The hearts of the young seemed to beat so truly for noble aspirations! The fathers and mothers seemed so proud and so happy in their conversion! — Oh yes, like us, you would have wept and hoped. In the folds of the floating banners, in the enthusiastic singing, you would have read the word of the future, and you would have said, like that poor old locksmith who had too long been rebellious to the voice of God: "How beautiful it is! How beautiful it is! I want to be part of it!"

Resolutions adopted by the congress

1. That all the true friends of the worker recognise the absolute necessity of Catholic Associations for converting factory workers and for preserving the faith of those who are Christians.

2. That the Associations extend to all ages as well as to all the members of the family.

3. That these Associations, Catholic above all, be organised so as to meet the three great needs of the worker: religious, practical and recreational needs.

4. That on certain days all the Associations of the Factory be brought together to show their unity.

Documents appended to chapter III

A. — At the feast of each Association, the Councillors read out various reports, which pass in review all the beneficent creations by which God has marked his reign in the Factory.

We shall mention here the reports read at the last feast of the Circles.

Chaplain's report. The first report, given by the Chaplain, deals with the religious and intellectual life of the Factory.

The chapel of the Sacred Heart is the hearth of religious life. Everything in the chapel speaks of the master of the house: at the far end his monumental statue; all around, the small trefoil stained-glass windows set above the large windows, and at the far end the great rose window repeat, under various and touching emblems, the litanies of the Sacred Heart. — No one tires of celebrating the divine patron. The month of June is one continual feast and, every evening, at the end of work, as in the month of Mary and the month of St Joseph, a large part of the working population comes to honour its God. On the

feast of the Sacred Heart, the Blessed Sacrament, solemnly exposed, sees fervent adorers succeed one another all day long.

On the last Sunday of June, the great closing feast takes place, with a procession of the Blessed Sacrament around the Factory. Lastly, the pilgrimage of the Children of Mary of the neighbouring town, and that of the Catholic Circles of the same town, give rise to new demonstrations of love for the Sacred Heart.

Religious instruction is given through the catechism classes, the details of which can be seen in the Customary.

General retreats for Easter, and special ones for each work, give fresh energy to Catholic life. Lastly, several Associations and Confraternities, canonically erected in the chapel, help the growth of piety. They are:

1. Apostleship of Prayer: men, 76, of whom 51 make the Communion of reparation.

Girls, 225, of whom 184 make the Communion of reparation.

Christian Mothers, 120, of whom 40 make the Communion of reparation.

Total: 421, of whom 275 make the Communion of reparation;

2. Association of Hearts Devoted to the Five Wounds of Our Lord (at Lyon, 61 rue de l'Enfance, at the Croix-Rousse): 276 associates who recite every day five *Pater*, *Ave*, *Gloria*, in honour of the five wounds of Our Lord;

3. The Third Order of St Francis of Assisi holds its monthly meetings, attended by thirty-one members of the Fraternity;

4. The Association of Our Lady of the Assumption, for the souls in Purgatory, has its Mass for the dead every Monday morning;

5. The Association of St Joseph, affiliated to that of Beauvais, has the names of all those who belong to the works.

Intellectual life is kept up by three adult classes held three times a week, in winter, for the men. The Chaplain takes the upper class and oversees the others.

The Brothers have too many classes to be able to take them on. (The girls have the same advantages at the Sisters'.)

Lastly, talks are the indispensable seasoning of the winter feasts. These talks deal especially with everything of practical concern to the workers: Sunday, the friends of the worker, the works of the Factory considered as a great benefit for the worker, the family, education, paternal authority, marriage, saving, life insurance and other subjects that are useful as well as interesting.

Report on the Fund. — Account of the receipts and expenses of the Circles, by the Treasurer of the District Council.

Report on the Great Circle — by the Secretary of the District Council.

The District Council is made up of all the foremen of the establishment; its monthly meetings are chaired by the employer.

This Council is not subject to election.

The Internal Council is made up of workers, and exceptionally of a few foremen who are very zealous for the Works and whose enthusiasm is necessary to the life of the Circle.

The Internal Council meets every Wednesday evening and attends to all the details of the good running of the Circle. It is re-elected every year. It has its President, its Secretary and its Treasurer, but the latter may make only very small payments, authorised by the Treasurer of the District Council, who holds the general Fund.

The report of the Secretary of the District Council gives an account of the running of the Association and of its progress during the past year.

In 1873 there were 115 Associates; in 1874 there are 144, and the report points out that the new recruits are almost all old workers who have been in the Factory for fifteen, twenty and twenty-five years, and who had until now kept outside the works.

Report on the Savings Banks:

1. Savings bank of the Great Circle: interest 5 per cent a year, payable every half-year.

40 depositors left, in 1873, 11,510.85 fr.

49 depositors left, in the first half of 1874, 5,010.85 fr.

Workers who came into the establishment with debts today have a capital of two, three, four and as much as six thousand francs, thanks to the Christian Works, which are a source of thrift and saving.

2. Savings bank of the Little Circle: Children from twelve to sixteen and seventeen years old: deposits of 0.20 fr. are accepted, interest 5 per cent a year, payable every half-year, plus a bonus of 10 per cent on deposits made between twelve and eighteen and not withdrawn before the age of twenty-one years. — 24 depositors left 238.15 fr. in 1873, and 20 depositors left 93.85 fr. during the first half of 1874.

Report on Life Insurance and the Relief Fund. — Importance of this Insurance, which gives security to families exposed to sudden destitution by the death of the head of the family.

22 heads of family are insured for 38,500 francs.

Relief fund, providing the doctor, medicines and burial free of charge, and half pay during illness;

Accident insurance, providing compensation for the injured and pensions for the crippled.

Report on the Little Circle, by the President, who is a member of the Great Circle.

Good spirit of the children, frequent outings, always very cheerful.

There were 41 Associates in 1873. There are 51 in 1874.

Report on the Society of Actors, by its President, a Councillor of the Great Circle.

This Society is in charge of everything concerning the evening entertainments: comedies, dramas, comic songs, Epiphany parties, etc., etc.

Report on the Band, by its secretary, a dignitary of the Circle.

The Band of the Circle numbers 43 players, forming a complete military band.

No one may belong to this Band without belonging to the Circle, and whoever leaves the Association leaves the band at the same time. — Every Sunday afternoon, from half past one until four o'clock, the military band enlivens the garden of the Circle in summer, and in winter the ground floor, which is specially reserved for it. — Every month, and on all the great feasts, the band leads the Associates of the Circle to the chapel, and brings them back from the chapel to the Circle.

No evening entertainments and no feasts of any kind without the band; it always brings liveliness, it charms hearts and disposes them to that brotherly union which quickly leads to Christian friendship.

Report on the Choral Society, by its President, a dignitary of the Circle. — The chapel is its special domain; every Sunday it forms the core of the plainchant, which all those present sing in two choirs.

On feast days, Masses with music, and every Sunday Vespers in fauxbourdon and Benediction with music.

Report on the economic works, by the Councillor who is specially concerned with procuring all goods cheaply.

For clothing, two sales a year at wholesale prices. For food, a cheap Butcher's and Bakery, constantly below the prices current in the district. — Coal and potatoes delivered by the wagonload and at the wholesale purchase price. — In winter, cheap soups. — Lastly, the Hostel, where orphans, and widowers with their children when there are no daughters, are fed at very low prices.

All these economic works are under the supervision of the Council: two Councillors on duty each week examine the purchase invoices and check the goods and the sales. — In this way the workers, openly initiated into these Works, can truly appreciate their benefits.

Report on the Library, by the librarian.

Newspapers. — 5 dailies: 2 *Champagne*, 1 *Journal de Florence*, 1 *Univers*, 1 *France Nouvelle*.

8 weeklies: *Bulletin de l'Union*, *Messager de Saint-François-Xavier (de Bruxelles)*, *Écho de Rome*, *Annales Catholiques*, *Clocher*, *Bulletin Catholique*, *Bulletin du Diocèse*, 40 copies of *l'Ouvrier*.

These newspapers pass through the hands of readers organised in series.

Library of 280 volumes.

Report on the Internal Council, by the secretary of that Council.

This report gives an account of everything within the province of the Internal Council: games, feasts, outings, the inner life of the Circle; — visits to the sick, moral and material assistance as needed; — school supplies paid for by the Association for the children and the brothers of the Associates.

B. — Particular care has been taken to restore that pious custom of the Christians, who had no other feasts than the feasts of the Church, thus uniting piety and joy. Each feast gives its own character to the festivities, which thus draw from it a pleasant variety, together with the delightful fragrance that the Church imparts to everything she touches.

The great feasts of the Factory are:

1. Christmas.
2. Epiphany.
3. Candlemas. — Visitation.
4. Forty Hours.
5. St Joseph.
6. Easter.
7. Patronage of St Joseph.
8. St Vincent.
9. Feast of the Sacred Heart.
10. Close of the month of the Sacred Heart.
11. Our Lady of the Angels, 2 August.

12. *Assumption of the Most Holy Virgin.*
13. All Saints.
14. St Cecilia.
15. 8 December, *Immaculate Conception.*

27th QUESTION

ON THE WORKS OF THE FACTORY IN TOWNS

Are the Works of the Factory possible in towns? To answer this question, we shall say how we understand the organisation of these Works. We shall then establish that they meet no essential obstacles, and lastly we shall show, by examples, that they are easier to found in town than in the country.

§ I. — On the organisation of the Works of the Factory in towns.

By the Works of the Factory we mean the works that are concerned mainly, exclusively if possible, with the workers who work in the Factories or live by that work. These Works, to be complete, must reach all the members of the working-class family and all ages through Catholic Associations. We give here the idea we have formed of these works, without in any way wishing to impose our way of seeing.

We know of no complete Work organised in a town. Practice alone can modify a plan, which cannot be definitive as long as it remains in theory.

Here is our dream:

Associations would divide into various groups: the schoolchildren, the boys, the men, the girls and the mothers. These Associations would each have, for their meetings, as many different premises as the size and extent of the town in which they were established would require. These various centres would be united by bonds of true

Christian brotherhood, which would preserve the unity of the Association. To give an example, if the town has several Circles for the workers of the Factory, the members of these Circles would often visit one another, would have common economic institutions and, while keeping the little customs peculiar to each district, would in reality form a single Association. Likewise for the youth clubs for boys, for girls, etc., situated in several districts of the town.

These various Associations themselves, while keeping their autonomy and their freedom in matters of detail, would be united by a common general direction.

This general direction would be exercised by a zealous priest, under the protection of a Committee formed of Christian employers and men of faith concerned for the salvation of their brothers.

This Committee would itself be assisted by a group of lady patronesses taking an interest in all the works, and concerning themselves especially with the works for women and girls.

The union of the associations of the Factory would further appear in common economic works, created for the whole family. Lastly, this union would be shown to the whole town by general gatherings in a large church, as we said in chapter IV of the report on the Associations.

§ II. — There are no essential obstacles to the creation of the Works of the Factory in towns.

The Works of the Factory are possible in towns, because their establishment meets no essential obstacle.

We take the Factory as it is, without demanding an improvement that the Associations alone will be able to bring about.

As for the workers, we accept them as they are: forsaken, gone astray, but eager for the salvation that has so long been denied them.

One is always astonished at their admirable eagerness to return to God; we have seen the houses opened by Christian love to these poor

brothers become too small before there was time to finish fitting them out.

The means proposed are known everywhere, exist everywhere, and on this side too there is no need to fear the obstacles of novelty. These means are:

1. The meetings of girls before their First Communion (Association of St Philomena);
2. The meetings after First Communion (Association of the Holy Angels and of the Children of Mary);
3. The meeting of mothers (Association of Christian Mothers);
4. Youth club for schoolboys (Association of St Aloysius Gonzaga);
5. Meeting of young men and of men (little and great Circles).

All these Works have been known for a very long time; the only new thing is their application to the most forsaken class, and yet the one most worthy of our devotedness. Above all, the only new thing is the union of these various Associations in one Christian bundle. But this union is a strength and a support for each of them.

The mothers will send their daughters, whom they will have learned to lead towards God, to the Associations of Children of Mary; the fathers will take their sons, to whom they will henceforth give a good example, to the youth clubs and the Circles. Lastly, the daughters and the sons will increase the number of the Christian Mothers and of the members of the Circle by the conversion of their parents.

Who does not see what power, what stimulus each isolated Association is bound to find in the general union?

Will there be any obstacle to finding a committee made up of Christian employers and of Catholics concerned for the salvation of their brothers?

We like to believe the contrary, although we cannot conceal all fear on this side.

This committee could have several sections to deal with the various Works: section of the Circles, section of the youth clubs, section of the schools, etc.

As for the group of lady patronesses, experience proves that the devotedness of these generous Christian women is always equal to every need.

While energetically supporting the action of the Chaplain-General, who would maintain the character, Catholic above all, of all the Works, the committee of the Factory would apply itself to creating economic institutions and institutions of vocational training.

The field is vast; everything remains to be done:

Hostel for workers who do not live with a family;

Christian boarding houses for families that have no mother any more, and where there are no daughters;

Family homes for orphan boys and girls;

Home for old age, and if such a home exists in the town, special rooms belonging to the Catholic workers' corporation;

Care of the sick at home and, when needed, certain beds in the hospital, where the sick of the Associations would be visited and comforted by their brothers;

In the cemetery, a special plot, where all those who had lived a certain number of years in the Associations would be brought together in an honourable burial place;

For *food, heating and clothing*, permanent sales, or sales at regular intervals, at wholesale prices;

Building or fitting out of healthy and moral *dwellings*;

Savings banks with encouragement bonuses;

Education encouraged by special visits, by competitions, by public quarterly sessions held on Sundays in the presence of all the members of the working-class family;

Vocational training in each Circle;

Developing family life by every means and seeking out feasts at which all ages and the various members of the family can be brought together without drawbacks.

And so Catholics would overturn this unjust prejudice, that the Church has lost her former solicitude for all the needs of the worker. So the social question could be solved, whereas it can never be solved as long as the good Lord is separated from all economic or provident institutions.

§ III. — *The Works of the Factory are easier in town than in the country.*

We think that the Works of the Factory are not only possible in town, but that they are even easier there than in the country; and we shall give six principal reasons for this. And since experience is worth more than reasoning, we shall show, by examples, that practice agrees with our theory.

No doubt the town presents special difficulties, but it also has resources the country does not know.

Statement of the principal reasons:

1. Financial resources are more abundant in town, and the burden falls on each industrialist only for a very small part.

In the country, on the contrary, the same employer is obliged to do everything at his own expense.

2. For the running of the works, a few devoted men are fairly easily found in a large town; in the country, the employer is almost always alone.

3. For religious help: missionaries, priests, chapels, Brothers, Sisters, Christian schools, everything is in the town and can be applied to the special Works of the Factory without new expense. The practical and recreational means likewise find facilities there unknown in the country, where everything has to be created.

4. In a town, acting on a larger mass, one quickly succeeds in grouping a fairly considerable number of workers. — From the very

first hour one has a respected work that immediately forms a strength against human respect. Thus at R..., where there are a hundred and twenty-seven steam-powered factories and more than twenty thousand factory workers, a hundred and twenty members of the Catholic circle make up only six per thousand of the working population. It is evident that a hundred and twenty men are a respectable group anywhere, even at R..., whereas in a factory of a thousand workers in the country, six men will never form anything but a ridiculous and despised number. — And so, whereas in the country the first nucleus is long and difficult to find, because of the courage the very small number needs to brave the jeers of the crowd, in the town this first nucleus is, from the start, large enough to command respect. We will add that if, in large towns, temptations are more numerous, human respect is less absolute there than in the country, where *even private* life remains in broad daylight, down to its most intimate details.

5. In the country, the stability of the Works of the Factory depends on the perseverance of a single family.

In the town, stability is guaranteed by a body of Catholics whose recruitment will become easier and easier.

Persons may disappear; the Work remains, with the spirit of energy and devotedness that presided over its beginning and its direction.

6. We shall go further and say that the Works of the Factory will impose themselves on non-Christian employers as soon as they have acquired a serious vitality.

Christian workers are the best, the most honest, the most hard-working, the most stable and, taken as a whole, the most intelligent.

Let us suppose that R... had, not two thirds like the Factory in the East (where would those fifteen thousand workers be housed?), but only two tenths of its population in the Works: what will happen? The employers who work on Sundays (and there are still some, alas!) will see their workshops deserted by this elite of the population. On

the other hand, the employers who support the Works and are at their head will be sought after by all the best workers. And soon, we are convinced of it, interest will bring over to our side those whom selfishness keeps away from us.

Example of how easy the Works of the Factory are in towns
The facts agree with the theory. And here we shall speak only of R..., so as to cite nothing that we do not know perfectly, that we have not seen and followed.

A little over three months ago, a Catholic Workers' Circle was founded at R.... — All the wise agreed that not a single Factory worker would be seen there, that it was a senseless undertaking. And so the house was thought too large. — The Circle was opened; its admirable president is here, and he can confirm to you that the house was too small before it was even finished. A new hall is being built, and when this new hall is finished, the house next door will have to be bought.

The wise are astounded to see a hundred and fifty workers, where they expected from ten to fifteen; they had fixed that as the maximum.

And yet what advantages do the members have?

The committee is so busy pushing back the walls, always too narrow, that it has not yet done anything on the practical side. And truly, apart from the pleasure of seeing at the Circle their excellent president, faithful at his post every Sunday, one can say in all truth that all these good people come there for the love of God.

Two years ago, the zealous and ardent parish priest of Saint-R... had installed three Daughters of Charity in the traditionally working-class district of R.... — Those who have read *l'Ouvrière* by Mr Jules Simon know what this deputy for the M.... thinks of the girls of R.... — Well, in spite of the discouraging judgements of Mr Jules Simon, in spite of the predictions of the prudent, the Sisters have established an Association of the Children of Mary.

At the present time they have a hundred and twenty girls from fifteen to twenty-five years of age received as members and eighty aspirants, two hundred in all, every one of them working in factories.

Do not think that these are Christian factories; several employers force the women workers to work on Sunday or to clean, which comes to the same thing; they care very little about the morality of their workshops; licence of language there is complete, and the girls who are Children of Mary are harassed there by the workers and above all by the foremen.

Some of these poor girls have had to leave their workshop in order to be able to go on attending the Sisters, and they did so generously.

And yet, does the Association of the Children of Mary have what we call the attractions of the useful? Not at all. The venerable parish priest, like the Committee of the circle, has quite enough to do in pushing back the walls. Ever since the Sisters have been there, he has never stopped building. Besides, the monograph on this Work will make it better known to you.

The example of Saint-R... has given rise, in another parish, to a similar Work, which has the same success. Lastly, the parish priest of Saint-A... has just installed, only a few days ago, three Daughters of Charity in a district inhabited exclusively by Factory workers.

The new Superior told us how happy she was at the sympathetic welcome she meets among these poor, so much slandered workers.

Do you believe that if, at R..., the Works of the Factory were established as we understand them, with all the means we have described, do you believe that a magnificent result would not quickly be reached, one that would very soon eclipse the poor Factory in the East?

We must set to work, and give our sick society the remedies suited to the ills that are eating it away.

In former times there was no need to concern oneself with the family; it was excellent. The Works had in view only the journeyman,

withdrawn from the wholesome and gentle influence of the home.

In those days the tour de France was a law to which one had to submit; no worker could set up on his own unless he had travelled for a long time. The Catholic Associations followed him everywhere, protecting his weakness and his inexperience.

In our day the tour de France is no more than a memory, at least in our industries, where the mere title of journeyman is a bad mark. Our young men no longer travel to perfect themselves in their trade. Machines have changed all the conditions of work. And if, in our manufacturing towns (I except Paris), one meets young workers on their own, they are, more often than not, only unruly sons, or at the very least indifferent ones.

Since all the conditions of society have changed, our means must change too.

The old guilds, which were sufficient for the journeymen's associations, would no longer be sufficient for our present society. We are facing an evil unknown to our fathers, and this new situation requires new remedies.

The family is no longer Christian; one might say that it no longer exists. We therefore have to remake the whole of society by remaking the complete family.

Let us not hide from ourselves that this is a gigantic work, one that calls for all the efforts, all the living forces of the country. Let no one think of reaching this goal through partial works, badly founded and without coordination.

Youth clubs alone, Catholic Circles alone, Works for girls alone, will achieve nothing complete.

The isolated efforts that have been made up to the present have not yet been able to halt the constant decline that is disorganising our working populations.

What is needed in our towns is energetic, simultaneous action, attacking all the endangered points at once.

Everyone must form a chain, everyone must work together, so that all the efforts united may produce a jet powerful enough to put out the immense fire kindled by Satan.

Do you not see that the state of division, of individualism, which governs all the Works makes every effort, if not useless for the few souls we save from death, at least useless for society, which is returning to paganism with frightening speed?

We therefore conclude that not only are the Works of the Factory possible in the town, not only are they easy there, but further, and above all, they are necessary there.

And without them society will be lost, and we shall end in an immense cataclysm, which will carry us away with all our isolated Works and will sweep away this generation that has driven out God.

Resolutions adopted by the congress

1. The Congress recognises that the Catholic Works for Workers in the towns will produce their full effect only in so far as they reach all the members of the working-class family directly.

2. The Congress expresses its ardent wish that these Works be established as soon as possible in all the manufacturing towns.

3. The Congress expresses the wish that in the towns the various Works for men, women and children be united with one another, in whatever measure is most suitable, so that they may lend one another mutual support.

28th QUESTION

ON THE MEANS OF POPULARISING THE WORKS OF THE FACTORY AND OF MULTIPLYING THEIR APPLICATIONS WITHOUT DELAY.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE FOR PROPAGANDA

The social question, which rises up every day more menacing and more insoluble, would be entirely solved if the Works of the Factory were applied everywhere.

It is therefore important, for the whole of society, that these Works be popularised and that their applications be multiplied without delay. We must make haste, above all because of the great number of souls that are lost every day. The Christian heart feels a deep sorrow at the thought of the countless dangers that surround Factory workers, and of the numberless crimes provoked by these great agglomerations without guidance. We hold the remedy in our hand, we know it; we must use all our energy to apply it everywhere.

For this we shall use three means: publicity, action, prayer.

Chapter I

Publicity

We must persuade in order to obtain action. We shall persuade only through publicity in its various forms: the press, the pamphlet and above all the spoken word.

The Central Office has done much to reach this goal, by a considerable distribution of the Nantes Report on the Factory and by introducing this great question at the General Assembly of the Catholic committees in Paris last April.

As nothing is more striking than examples that demonstrate the possibility of the works, they should be sought out and made known.

But a great pitfall must be avoided in choosing the models that are to be proposed.

Modern liberalism wants to save society without the help of God, and many excellent industrialists, even very good Christians, are imbued, certainly without knowing it, with these false principles. — They must be disillusioned. They must be shown that all the goods of this world come directly from the fulfilment of the law of God, and from there alone.

Founded outside religion, the whole of modern social economy is nothing but a lie, which is preparing new catastrophes for us.

With all the economic means known and yet to be known, will the worker be given one ray of true joy, a solid prosperity, and above all will the family, which is dying out among us, be given back its lost honour and dignity? No.

Can joy shine on the face if it does not exist within the soul through peace of heart? And can this peace of the soul with itself exist without peace with God?

Lasting prosperity is the daughter of thrift. Can thrift exist alongside this unbridled luxury that devours all earnings, all fortunes, without anything being able to fill this bottomless pit?

Who, then, will put a curb on this passion for *present* enjoyment, the enemy of foresight? Who will show the one who weeps and suffers that soon, tomorrow, eternal joys will be the portion of whoever has borne the sorrows of today? Who will take away from the seductions of vanity all their sway over young hearts? The law of God alone is strong enough to set up an effective dyke against these rising waves that everywhere assail inexperience.

Lastly the family, that blessed sanctuary of all joys and all goods: can the family preserve its august integrity without respect and good morals? Is there then in the world any other school of respect than Catholicism? Is there any other source of all the moral virtues than this admirable religion which, on the very day of its birth, planted with such great success the standard of chastity in the midst of the corruptions of paganism?

Religion is therefore the only source of joy, the only source of prosperity, the only source of the family's well-being.

The real evil, the only evil, the evil of which society is dying, is that God has been driven out, and that people do not want him to come back. — There is a blindfold over the eyes of our legislators and of all those who govern in our unhappy country. Of the lessons of the past, not one is of any use to us, and liberalism will destroy our society for fear of the reign of God.

The truth must be made understood: in driving out God, happiness has been driven out, and, in the forceful expression of Mr Le Play, *we have become, after eighty years of this abominable regime, the most unhappy people on earth.* This evil has spread to all nations.

Look at England! Is there a country where more attention has been paid to the well-being of the worker? And yet the English worker is the very type of destitution. The reason is that every religious notion has disappeared from among the English populations.

In France, the most prosperous populations are not those that earn the most, but those that best follow the law of God.

It is therefore neither cooperative societies, nor institutions for cheap food, nor relief funds, nor savings banks, nor higher wages that will save our society. If people persist in rejecting God, it will perish miserably.

God is the sun that gives life and the rain that makes fruitful; the economic works are the action of man, the ploughman who digs the earth and places the seed in it. In vain will the ploughman labour if he shuts out the sun and the rain of the good Lord. All his work will end only in the loss of the seed and the uselessness of his toil.

Yes! the Works of the Factory will concern themselves with improving the material lot of the worker, but things will be put back in their proper place:

God above, like a life-giving sun;

God below, like a fertilising rain;

And the work of man in between, as if drowned in the works of God.

Chapter II

Action. — Committee

Action requires a special committee, well organised and in close union with all the works concerned with the salvation of the workers. Frictions, all too common and very harmful to the good, must be avoided: that is why it is important that the Central Office should itself form this committee and keep its direction.

It could set up Provincial Committees on the model of the Central Committee; communications and frequent, reciprocal visits would give them a powerful and precious life.

As every work needs a certain unity, not of details, but at least of the whole, the General Committee would have what Mgr de Ségur so aptly called the *commercial travellers* of the Factory. These travellers would go into the manufacturing towns and countryside, would call forth devotedness, stimulate goodwill and carry the hesitant along.

Between the town and the countryside there are profound differences that require different means, of which we shall say a few words:

1. — Action of the Committee in the country

In the countryside everything depends on the employer of the Factory. If he is a Christian, he must be convinced of three things:

1. That he has charge of souls;
2. That the works are possible everywhere;
3. That they are easy, when one does not aim too high at the beginning.

1. Industrialists have charge of souls. — We touched on this point at the Congress of Nantes. Several great Catholic writers have shed light on this question. The Christian employer who believes himself quits with the good Lord because he has fulfilled his personal duties, without concerning himself with his workers, is like a father of a family who would be content with irreproachable personal conduct, without troubling himself about the salvation of his children.

Both have neglected the duties of their state, that is to say their most sacred duties, those that take precedence even over personal duties. God will call them to account for the children he has entrusted to them, and he will not be satisfied with the answer of Cain: “Am I then my brother’s keeper?”

2. The Works are possible everywhere. — The committee will strive to prove to every industrialist of goodwill that the factories in which the Catholic Church has so strikingly affirmed her eternal youth and her power of transformation were in the same conditions as all the factories that are despaired of.

Since last year we have been in contact with several truly Christian employers. Many continue to be persuaded that the factory in the East, cited at Nantes, has a special population invented for the Works.

One wrote that he admired it but could not imitate it, because of the special spirit of his workers, who are all Belgians and cannot be treated like Frenchmen. Another, after paying the same tribute of admiration, declares that he can take nothing from an organisation that is good for Belgians but inapplicable to a French population. (This last one knew that in the factory in the East there are many Belgians, as in the whole of that part of France.) A third lives in the town; for him everything is as impossible in the town as it is easy in the countryside. A fourth objects that, to succeed, he would have to dismiss all his workers in order to choose others like those of the factory in the East. We could cite many other objections, which can all be summed up in a word: It is very beautiful, but inimitable.

No doubt there are some who do not want to be converted, and for those there is no remedy.

But there are also some who have real goodwill, and who would go forward if they were persuaded of the certain success of their efforts. The souls of our brothers are perishing because no one will hold out a hand to them. It is not they who make the works impossible, no, never; and the employers who have not yet tried will be surprised at the ease they will find on that side.

3. *The Works are easy when one does not aim too high at the beginning.* — Several were frightened by the Nantes Report. They did not realise that they were seeing unfold, in a few minutes, the results of more than twelve years of struggle and persevering effort. It must be borne in mind that those who began this work had *no idea at all* of the result, at which they were the first to be astonished. They planted a tiny seed, they watered it every day, simply, without even asking God to make a tree grow. The Sacred Heart of Jesus made very modest efforts fruitful, and where only a blade of field grass was expected, a tree of Paradise has grown.

This is the story we repeat to our workers to lead them to thrift. Do you want to become rich? Set yourselves only the aim of saving

100 fr., and we answer for you. The first 100 fr. are hard to put by; at 2 fr. a week it takes a year. But when there is a little interest to draw, when the small capital, having passed *three figures*, holds out the prospect of the *fourth*, an *auri sacra fames* takes hold of the worker; delighted with his first success, he burns to obtain a second, and instead of 2 fr. he saves 4: there is nothing more to do but let him go on. He is on the right road.

So, when an industrialist can be brought to enter upon the way of the Works, according to his means, gently, and according to his strength; if his perseverance is not discouraged by the wait, sometimes rather long, for the first fruits of his efforts, a thirst for souls will be born in him, which will keep growing as God satisfies it; and then what he once thought impossible will become easy for him, and he will be astonished himself at his long hesitation and his unjust mistrust.

Thirteen degrees can be distinguished in the works of the Factory.

1st degree: what the Nantes pamphlet calls the *internal means*, that is to say: morality in the workshops, Sunday scrupulously observed, wise regulations, Christian clerks, and in any case the immediate removal of any clerk who has not a good spirit and good morals, pay arranged so as to be safe from overly dangerous temptations, management by the employer in person as far as possible, and always the absolute right reserved to the worker to appeal directly to the employer without going through the clerk, etc. Are not all employers bound to these duties, whatever their situation?

2nd degree. Christian schools attended *regularly*, actually taking the children to the Sunday services and supervising them there. This second point is easy, since we are not supposing *special schools*, but only the real and fatherly supervision of the employer over the children of his factory.

3rd degree. A special girls' school for the factory, run by Sisters.

4th degree. Regular visiting of the sick at home by the Sisters. (Their number and their resources to be increased accordingly).

5th degree. A great Workers' Mission.

6th degree. An annual Easter retreat, and, if possible, a special retreat for the men, and a special one for the girls and women.

7th degree. Associations of girls with meetings at the Sisters' house.

8th degree. A visit, at least every three months, from a zealous missionary, with special premises very close to the factory for meetings and confessions.

9th degree. A special chapel as soon as possible, however small, at least for the men's Communions, so as to spare their human respect.

10th degree. An Association of mothers, with a monthly meeting in the chapel or the church.

11th degree. A special boys' school for the factory, with Brothers.

12th degree. Associations of men under the direction of the Brothers.

13th degree. A chapel large enough for the factory, when it becomes possible, with a resident chaplain.

The industrialist must be encouraged to begin; let him not set himself a goal beyond what he believes possible. When he has reached the second degree, he will already have done something, and God will grant him the means of reaching the third, then the fourth, and so, without forcing anything, it would be possible in many establishments to have a part of the Works of the Factory.

Manufactories will be found where there are already Brothers, Sisters, a chapel, everything in a word, except the most important thing, *the Associations*. There at least the committee will be able to have the works completed with no other effort than that of enlightening the employers on the necessity of Catholic Associations for reaching a solid result.

Some have been concerned about the lack of stability of a work that depends solely on one employer: there may be changes, deaths, etc.

What then will become of these Works, undertaken in the midst of so many difficulties, pursued with so much love by the men and women religious who have devoted their lives to them?

Allow us to tell you our whole thought: this concern serves only to hinder the good; it is human prudence, always anxious about tomorrow, as if God did not exist.

Did they have any such concern, the Apostles, when they founded the Church; the missionaries who go to evangelise distant lands; St Vincent de Paul in his admirable foundations; the Little Sisters of the Poor, who are beginning again before our eyes purely Christian charity, we mean charity without *legal administration*, so contrary to the true interests of the poor?

The reason is that the salvation of souls is in itself an *eternal Work*, and if tomorrow the factory in the East ceased to be Christian, the Associations would nonetheless have produced as many *eternal Works* as they have sent souls to paradise. The only thing we need concern ourselves with is to save souls today.

God alone knows whether we shall be able to save any tomorrow. The future belongs to God; only the present belongs to man.

We shall add that, in our view, it would be impossible to take up the question of stability with an individual industrialist. It is hardly possible except with a large joint-stock Company, and even then only for Works in which its personal interest is more engaged than the glory of God.

II. — Action of the Committee in the town

In the town, the action of the Committee will be much easier, for the Christian industrialist will not have to bear the financial burden of the Works alone; many Catholics who are strangers to industry will willingly contribute to the necessary expenses. Likewise, for the share in the direction of the Works with which the employer alone can concern himself in the countryside, the head of a factory who lives in the town will be able to find zealous helpers in every class of society.

The Central Office will therefore have reached its goal if it can obtain from the industrialists who live in the towns:

1. In their factories, an internal organisation that prevents as much evil as possible. (See the Nantes Report, chapter II);
2. Their open, effective, affectionate sympathy for all the Works of the Factory;
3. Their cooperation in a committee of the Factory.

It can be seen that these three conditions are easy to fulfil.

It will then only remain to stimulate the local Committee and to guide it in establishing the network of Associations that make up the Works of the Factory.

When the Works have been founded, their stability can be assured by donations, which will provide revenues for the workers' corporation.

The Central Office of the Works of the Factory should apply itself to creating a certain method, as the valiant founders of the Catholic Circles have done. Experience has proved that its intervention was often very useful, I shall even say very necessary, to keep certain foundations on the frankly Catholic path and to prevent them from slipping into the liberal or philanthropic rut, which comes to the same thing.

This method, the fruit of experience, will be settled by time and practice, and should be recommended wherever the Works are found.

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Chapter III

Prayer

We ought to have begun with this means, the most powerful and the most effective. But precisely because of its importance, we wished to end with prayer, only too happy if all those who hear us will at least remember this third means and use it for the extension of the works of the factory.

Whoever we may be, we must not be indifferent to the salvation of our brothers. If not all Catholics can work for it by action and by the spoken word, all at least can pray, and all must do so.

And since the evil we wish to fight is the greatest danger of our society, we desire to see a vast league of prayer established, which will offer God numerous and constant supplications and will at last obtain for us the conversion of the Factory.

We propose the following prayer, which has been adopted by the Central Office; for a long time it has been recited every Sunday at High Mass in the chapel of the factory in the East, and, I have no doubt at all, the Sacred Heart of Jesus has willed to reward the humble prayers of these poor workers by making you love this great work, which is nothing other than the redemption of the working-class family:

Act of Reparation of the Works for Workers.

“Every day, O my God, sinners by their crimes diminish, as far as lies in them, your accidental glory and happiness; at the same time, they do themselves a harm that would be irreparable if you did not come to their aid.”

“By an admirable condescension of your infinite goodness, for which we shall praise you for all eternity, you have been pleased to

associate us with the great Work of Reparation for this twofold evil. We consecrate ourselves to it entirely.”

“By Communions of reparation, we shall console you for the abandonment in which you languish.”

“By attending Masses that are not of obligation, we shall ask of you the conversion of those who through negligence do not attend Mass on Sunday.”

“We shall pray during our work for those who do not pray to you.”

“Lastly, we shall offer you our sufferings for those who refuse you their hearts.”

“We know that all our actions have no value of themselves, but we shall make them all pass through your adorable heart, Beloved Jesus; you will purify them, and they will acquire an infinite value through their union with your actions, your sufferings and your death, O Word Incarnate, the one and necessary foundation of all Reparation.”

“Forgive all our infidelities and our ingratitude; grant that, prostrate and humbled to nothing before you, we may make you a special Act of amends for all the scandals, the blasphemies and the crimes of every kind that are committed in the workshops where you are not known.”

“Come to the aid of our brothers, thrown by necessity into these vestibules of hell, where souls are so easily lost. Raise up apostles of the Factory; may the workshop become Christian again, may your name be known and respected there. May the worker find you again, and with you happiness, the joy of the family, and the remedy for all the many ills that have fallen upon him since he went away from you. — And so that this Reparation may be more pleasing to you, we make it in union with Mary, your holy Mother, who, by associating herself with your sufferings at the foot of the Cross, became the Reparatrix of her race and the Mother of Christians. Amen.”

Let me tell you, Gentlemen, that for me prayer is my only hope. Sons and grandsons of industrialists who were the fathers of their

workers and lavished love upon them, we have inherited this passion. We have measured the wound in all its extent, and we have seen the unhoped-for results of Catholic action among those populations that were despaired of. Seeing the remedy so easy, we dreamed of it for so many poor souls who are lost every day, and you welcomed us at Nantes with so much sympathy that we thought the dream was about to become reality.

Your Central Office brought us into the Catholic committees, and here we are at the Congress of Lyon: for the third time we are raising the question in a great Catholic assembly.

Must I confess it? I never approach this subject without a deep sorrow. What is more dreadful than to witness the death of dearly loved brothers, without being able to bring them any help other than that of a vain word, which I feel to be powerless!

It would be better to veil one's face and forget. But up there, on the great mountain, I see Jesus Christ shedding his divine blood in streams for his children of predilection, the poor workers; his sorrow breaks my heart, and if I can bring him no other consolation, I want at least to weep with him. Perhaps others will weep with me, and these tears will do violence to heaven, which will at last send us Apostles of the Factory.

Resolutions adopted by the congress.

1. That the Central Office continue to use every means of publicity to popularise the Works of the Factory.
2. That the Central Office form a special Committee for the Factory, and that several of the members of this Committee go to the manufacturing towns and countryside to bring about, by every means, the establishment of the Works there.
3. That the Central Office form a league of prayer for the Factory and call down upon it the fruitful blessing of Pius IX.

APPENDIX A.



EXTRACT FROM THE BULLETIN OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC WORKERS' CIRCLES
(SEPTEMBER 1874 ISSUE)

UNION OF CATHOLIC WORKS FOR WORKERS

I. — CONGRESS OF LYON.

The Congress of directors of Catholic Works for Workers has just closed, or rather adjourned until next year, for in recent years three great Catholic associations have been holding their annual sessions: the Union of Works, the Catholic committees and the Association of Catholic Workers' Circles.

Each year these sessions become more important, through the number of Works that come to be represented there, and through the affirmation of the ideas put forward there and of the devotedness that carries them out.

But perhaps the deep designs of Providence had never been so clearly revealed as in the imposing and almost conciliar assembly to which Lyon has just had the honour of giving splendid hospitality.

Seeds of uneasiness seemed to lie dormant among these representatives of so many works, so many orders, so many regions, so many different conditions, and the spirit of particularism might have been expected to be the dominant note in their concert.

And yet, what was the outcome of the Congress? Its eleven Commissions, prepared and conducted with admirable intelligence and firmness by the Central Office of the Union, pass in review, in marvellous variety, all the efforts of Catholic charity for the salvation of the working classes; and behold, the general assemblies vote by acclamation for the printing of the reports that lay down *association* as the principle of all Catholic and patriotic action, such as those of the great industrialist who has become the apostle of the Christian factory after creating its model, — and that of the senior officer delegated by the Association of Catholic Workers' Circles.

These men are well aware that they are undertaking a senseless struggle against the modern spirit if the grace of God is not with them. — But the assembly, perhaps the most powerful there is in the world because each person in it is the son of his works and not of his promises, — the assembly imposes the struggle on them by its votes, by its acclamations, and will sustain them in it by its prayers, because it was struck by the marvellous agreement of the three great lines of its studies, which the eminent Father d'Alzon pointed out to it in these words: “the diocesan organisation of the propagation of the Works; the application of all the Works to the industrial population, where the family will be transformed by charity; lastly the affirmation of this great Association of Circles, which will once again bring a new society out of the catacombs.”

It is therefore to the service of the Works that can restore to the worker first the holy joys of the family, then the benefit of the trade guilds, that all devoted people are summoned, through Catholic association within the very class of employers, and through the application of their united forces to the development of the following Works for Workers: for children, Christian schools and youth clubs; for girls, the Association of the Children of Mary; for women, the Association of Christian Mothers; for men, the Association of Circles.

II. — JOINT PROPAGANDA COMMISSION.

Such is the summary of the resolutions of the Congress. To translate these resolutions into fact, it resolved to create — and this is a capital act in the work of militant Catholicism — a joint propaganda commission, made up of the delegates of the great Catholic associations, presided over by a holy and admirable bishop, Mgr de Ségur, and placed at the disposal of “the Apostle of the Factory”.

If one counts up the forces of these great associations, one finds in that of the Catholic committees two hundred local groups formed to serve all Catholic interests; in the Union of Works for Workers, a rapidly growing number of diocesan offices devoted to the propagation of these Works; in the Society of St Vincent de Paul, an admirable multitude of conferences, which, although struck by the government of the Empire, is still united by the bonds of charity; and lastly in the Association of Circles, an almost military cohesion and a resolute action which, concentrating on a definite goal, the creation of *Catholic association in the ruling class as in the working class, and the one through the other*, has taken the vanguard of the movement by taking the bull by the horns, so to speak, that is to say, the inertia of the well-to-do class through the heart, and the revolutionary hatred of the worker through trust.

Behind these contingents, whose heads are about to unite for the first time in common action, stand the priestly hierarchy of the Church, which guides their efforts, the devotedness of the religious orders, which supports them, and above this whole body of forces, the great figure of the Pope, who exhorts and blesses them.

III. — ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CIRCLES.

Just as in a military movement combined to storm the whole of the enemy positions no troop must lose sight of the special objective assigned to its effort, nor depart in any way from the order of battle, on

pain of bringing about only confusion and fatal disorder, — so in the collective action whose agents the delegates to the joint commission are to be, emulation alone is permitted, and competition would be an unpardonable fault. This means in particular that if our Committees and our correspondents were to go beyond the special field whose strict observance is the strength of the Association, in order to work in the domain of youth works for example, they would bring about a local good infinitely smaller than the general harm that would result for the Association, and would thus in the end push militant Catholicism back towards the state of organic weakness from which we are striving to bring it out.

This being established, what is the Association's part in the general movement of proselytism that is to envelop the working-class family? — This part consists in the preliminary arrangements and in the action that we shall now indicate briefly. — *Preliminary arrangements:* A — to become imbued with the principles set out in the documents that will be communicated to us, that is to say, so to speak, with the general strategic plan; B — to spread them methodically and intelligently; C — to enter into close relations with the local Works that contribute to the general plan. — *Action:* A — to exchange with the local Works the mutual service of making them all known among the members of each of them, so as to increase their respective recruitment; B — to come to an understanding with the local direction of each of them on arrangements of common interest, such as feasts to be celebrated together, good reading to be spread in the family, etc...; without ever mixing their respective directions, nor even uniting them to the detriment of the great autonomies; C — to keep the general direction fully informed of the progress of the action, and to show it a redoubled fidelity, all the more necessary as this action is vaster and more combined.

Lastly, we must not hide from ourselves that the spirit of these arrangements will not, in practice, be fully grasped by all the parties

they concern indirectly; but it would be no less culpable to doubt the grace from on high which is to make their success prevail, in spite of our infirmities and our weakness, if, faithful to the spirit of the Association, we know how to ask for this grace by prayer, and to merit it by devotedness in Our Lord to the working-class family.

T. C.

APPENDIX B.



ACCOUNT

OF A VISIT TO VAL-DES-BOIS AFTER THE FIRE
(LETTER TO COUNT A. DE M.)

Reims, 21 September 1874.

My very dear friend,

I am writing to you on the day after one of the most moving days of our militant life.

You know that as soon as I was told of the fire that had devoured the Val-des-Bois mill, I set off to bring the testimony of our heartfelt sympathy to its excellent employer, the man whom the Congress of the Catholic Works at Lyon called *the Apostle of the Factory*.

I found myself once again under the singular impression that his attitude at the Congress had made on me, when, carried away by his evangelical words, we placed ourselves by acclamation at the service of his apostolate: “Ah! Gentlemen,” he had said to us, his face marked with sorrow, “ah! Gentlemen, how your applause pains me at the outset of this great action that you wish to undertake with me! The works truly willed by God begin only with trial! I have always seen it so, and now you overwhelm me with applause and promises. — Ah! how you pain me!”

Three weeks after these prophetic words, the trial had come, — and what a trial! The fire, breaking out in the employer’s own office, had consumed his magnificent establishment in a single night, and destroyed at one stroke, along with his prosperity, that of a population of twelve hundred workers.

Mr H.... had sent his sons to meet me, and he himself was standing on the threshold of the smoking ruin, ready to receive the envoy of the Association of Circles.

He embraced me and took me to his father, an admirable old man, the creator of this edifice now vanished, and the patriarch of this fine Christian family, twenty-two of whose offspring gather each day around his table. Shall I describe to you this man, whose nobility is all Christian strength and simplicity? When he saw the fire break out that was to devour his house, he knelt down and made an act of abandonment to the Lord; — or these fine young men, true branches of the olive tree of the Bible? — or lastly this young girl, who has remained a mother to her little brothers, and who wears the blue ribbon of the Children of Mary, whose workers’ Association has just elected her president? I barely glimpsed them, and I shall never forget them, so made are their faces to inspire respect and sympathy!

But the employer has no time to lose: he introduces me to the President of the Circle, the head foreman of the factory, wounded by an axe blow while cutting through a burning roof, and barely leaves

me time to rest my eyes on the most violent heap of ruins — calcined stones, twisted iron, smoking beams — that fire can make of a building with a hundred windows and four storeys, and of machinery formed and maintained by generations of workers.

The employer, however, does not speak to me of “these details”; what he regrets above all is a library and notes devoted to the Works, which burned with his cash box and his books; but “God willed to impose this intimate sacrifice upon him.” On the way he shows me the point where the fire stopped: it is at the niche where a statue of the Blessed Virgin stood on a wooden pedestal surrounded by a paper lace still intact.

Then we climb the steps of the factory chapel — if one may so call a vast and lofty Gothic nave, where garlands of freshly renewed flowers frame the sacred images. The gallery and the pews are already filled with a recollected crowd; the whole population of the factory has come to gather one last time before its accustomed altars; tomorrow it will disperse into the manufacturing centres of the neighbourhood, where the employer, the victim of the disaster, has already managed to prepare workshops for all, in which they will not be out of work.

Today is the day of farewells — and it is the feast of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows; — the Children of Mary, kneeling in the front row, raise their pure voices in a hymn to the Virgin; — the singing of the workers answers it; — the organ, played by Mr H...’s daughter, accompanies their voices. — The chaplain of the factory goes up into the pulpit; he reminds those who are leaving of the exile of Israel in the land of the infidels, when God, remaining with his servants, was one day to give them back their country. — Then the blessing of the holy ciborium descends upon the bowed heads, and the leaving of the church takes place in religious silence; the population of the factory forms a circle at the foot of the steps. We remain alone on the porch,

the “Good Father” (that is what they call the patriarch), “the employer” and I.

Then, in a restrained but firm and easy voice, Mr H.... addresses to the emigrants his exhortations even more than his farewells; he shows them first the mercy hidden beneath the blows of Providence, then the duties and trials that await them: “You will perhaps be less well paid, less loved,” he says, “but you will love one another, and you will keep yourselves very faithful, and very worthy of your reputation for piety; then you will come back — the good Lord will surely allow it — to the factory rebuilt to receive you again.... One of the promoters of the Association of Catholic Circles has come to bring you a testimony of sympathy; he is going to speak to us in the name of all the Circles....”

I had to comply; but my throat was tight, my voice hissed instead of carrying down to the sobbing crowd, and the cries of a poor woman in a fit of nerves were only in harmony with my halting words. Nevertheless I spoke in your name, in the name of the Association; — then, between the “Good Father” and “the employer”, I took the road to the Circle.

All its members were gathered to receive a more personal farewell and more particular advice; I shall not try to repeat it to you; all the tender solicitude that the heart of a father, or almost of a mother, can bring forth was expressed there in kind words for each one: “You, you will take your musical instrument and play from time to time, on the march or in the evening, to cheer up our young people, for we must not give way to sadness; — you, you must take your wife with you even if she does not have work straight away, you are too young to stay apart; you, you will come by the house to fetch a blanket for the child. — Those who are going to X.... will gather around old N..., he will be your president and will correspond with us very faithfully; — for the rest of you, it will be M....” — And so on, I saw unfold the truly marvellous organisation of so many detachments for which

everything had been prepared and foreseen while the ashes of the fire were still warm, — wages, housing, relief, even the schools; each detachment takes with it, to run them, a Sister and a Brother of Christian Doctrine.

The moment of farewell had come: the “Good Father” and “the employer” stand on either side of the door, and one by one the emigrants file past and are embraced by each of them; the oldest worker of the factory and the “Good Father” who had founded it remain longer in each other’s arms; then a last farewell, a toast, glass in hand, to the Association of Circles, and to the comrades of the Reims Circle, who had hurried to Val-des-Bois at the first news of the disaster, to bring their purses and their hearts.

— And tomorrow morning, on waking, each detachment will set off with its leaders (the elected officers of the association), its convoy, its ambulances.

O familistère of Guise, O phalansteries of every sort and every country, O philanthropists of every doctrine save that of Jesus Christ!... What are you beside this Christian community which disperses under the hand of God, not to disappear, but to enrich us with its swarms?...

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The hour of departure has come for us too, — for the excellent president of the Reims Committee, who had brought me, and for me. We have the good fortune to be accompanied to Reims by Mr H..., and on the way he speaks to me only of the Association and seems to have no other care; I can scarcely obtain any details about his own work, and each of these details is marvellous: until 1862 the example and efforts of three generations of Christian employers had remained powerless to Christianise this working population, given over to all the miseries of its kind; then Mr H.... tries to make the idea of Catholic associations take root within it, and at the end of five years, in

1867, he has obtained an association of *four* workers, and then also of *three* Children of Mary, who wear its blue ribbon in spite of the sarcasm and torments inflicted on them on all sides; — then the associations grow, multiply and endure, although industrial crises bring about a successive and almost complete renewal of the population of the factory. Today three quarters of this population, recruited at random from the mills of Saint-Quentin and Reims, are formed into pious workers' associations[?]; the rest of the workers respect them and are gradually following them. And among these men, these women, these young people, scarcely any had been *preserved* from the contagion of vice before their arrival at Val-des-Bois, — all *converted* since! This is shown to me by details whose contrasts are beyond telling.

Here we are at Reims; for two months I hold the full powers of our fellow member to serve the propaganda of the united works, to which, at the end of this respite, he will devote himself once again. We embrace one last time; and after enjoying once more the cordial hospitality of our dear president of the Reims Committee, I go under his auspices to end the evening at the workers' circle that he has been able to open in the last three months.

My first greeting is for the chapel: scarcely have I knelt there beneath our banner when the *Song of the Association* rises from two hundred breasts. — “Hope of France, workers, let us be Christians!”

You are used to these celebrations, you whose life has become so perilous and so triumphant an apostolate; I myself had come from the Circles of Lyon and elsewhere besides, — and yet my heart swelled with emotion.

I enter the great hall, where all the members are drawn up in ranks around our valiant fellow member, who has known how to win their admiration and affection, — and first of all the worker president reads me a word of welcome as good, as loyal, as Christian, as firm as the resolute tone in which he delivers it, to the applause of all; then a

handsome young man with a bold bearing steps forward and, with the grace of the heart, offers me a magnificent bouquet of flowers.

Cheers ring out, the name of the Association and yours, dear friend, are greeted with joyful voices, and a true celebration, a celebration of the heart, will live again in my account, too short this evening to retell so many divine blessings.

P. S. — As every celebration — so I was shown at Reims — must have its bouquet, I bring you here that of a reply sent by the Circle of Val-des-Bois upon receiving the first subscriptions.

T. C.

“To the members of the Internal Council of the Circle....

Val-des-Bois, 1874.

“Very dear friends,

“We have received your letter of 27 September and your generous offering.

“Nothing is more touching for those in misfortune than this affectionate sympathy that comes to us from all sides, from souls unknown to us yesterday, whose memory will henceforth remain engraved in our hearts.

“It is above all in these sad circumstances that we recognise how necessary religion is for bearing our ills, and how sweet it is in the charity it places in the hearts of our brothers.

“In praying for one another, we also pray for so many poor workers whom the Revolution has turned away from God. For them misfortune has no consolation, whereas for us tears have their hope.

“Accept, very dear friends, the expression of our affectionate gratitude.

“Signed:

*“The President of the Catholic Workers’ Circle
of Val-des-Bois,
“N....”*

APPENDIX C.



TO THE WORKERS OF THE CATHOLIC CIRCLES

Paris, 24 September 1874.

Brothers in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

The first of your Catholic associations to come and range itself under the banner of the Association has just been struck by a cruel trial: fire has consumed the fine Val-des-Bois mill near Reims, and the three hundred working-class families it employed found themselves deprived of work in an instant.

All the members of this association are true Christians, and all remain admirable in their faith, their resignation and their devotedness to one another, from the employer, who sets the example of courage and prayer, down to the youngest apprentices.

Their suffering is nonetheless great, and our Committees could not come to their aid without diverting resources already devoted to the local Association.

But the workers of the Catholic Circle of Reims have given us a fine example, by bringing their subscriptions, of their own spontan-

eous impulse, to the relief fund of Val-des-Bois.

We bring these facts to your knowledge, so that wherever the banner of the Circles is unfurled their fraternity too may show itself, as God has surely willed in permitting this trial for the best among us.

You will not let slip the grace that is given you of being able to help your brothers, although you are poor yourselves, and your bread is scarce and hard.

The secret societies and all the enemies of Catholic France have their eyes on you, and we, just as we handed you your banners, do not hesitate today to entrust the honour of the Association to your hearts.

The Committee....

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This appeal has been heard; at the time of writing these lines, five thousand workers, members of our Circles, have shown their generosity to their fellow members of Val-des-Bois, where the first page of the Association's *Golden Book* is thus opened.

T. C.