

VAL-DES-BOIS

AND

ITS WORKERS' INSTITUTIONS

21 September 1890



PARIS

At the Secretariat of the ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC WORKERS' CIRCLES
262, boulevard Saint-Germain, 262

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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 1890 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 table of contents refers to the pages of this edition; each entry is a link.

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

leonharmel.com

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VAL-DES-BOIS AND ITS WORKERS' INSTITUTIONS¹

The Christian reform of the workshops is a concern of the finest minds. People wonder what private initiative can achieve in these industrial communities, which seem so contrary to the family, to morality and to thrift. With this in view, we have been asked for a brief summary of the Institutions of our mill. We have tried to meet the wishes expressed.

Our organisation has developed over time; we do not claim that everything we have attempted ought to be tried, nor that we have achieved everything that is possible. We know that others have done more and better. Each will choose what can succeed in his own surroundings.

We think we should begin with a short history:

The Val-des-Bois mill, founded on 10 June 1840, comprises wool combing, dyeing, carded-wool and combed-wool spinning, twisting and fancy fabrics². It is driven by the river *Suipe* and by three steam engines developing together a power of eight hundred horsepower.

The firm of Harmel dates from 1797; it had its first mills in the Ardennes, where one of its members still owns the establishment at Boulzicourt.

1. These Notes were written on the occasion of the visit of Mgr Doutreloux, Bishop of Liège, and of several directors of works, on 21 September 1890, the feast of Our Lady of the Factory (Notre-Dame de l'Usine). For a more complete history and fuller details, see the *Manuel d'une Corporation chrétienne*, and for the principles the *Catéchisme du Patron*. — At the Secretariat of the *Association of Catholic Workers' Circles*, 262, boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris.

2. A great many similar mills exist in the valley; there are about twenty within a radius of ten kilometres.

The successive generations have had only to follow the religious traditions of their fathers and, in their relations with their workers, the customs that established something like family ties among them all.

Mr Jacques-Joseph Harmel, who founded Val-des-Bois, took care of his new population; but he came up against almost insurmountable difficulties in achieving the good he desired. A deep disunity between workers and employer prevented the latter from taking any effective action; improvidence was natural to these labouring classes, which no longer had either guidance or tradition; the spirit of isolation delivered them up to the self-interested influences of social parasites; the materialisation of souls was the sad fruit of a general dechristianisation in our region; lastly, the disorganisation of the home had all too often banished respect, obedience and peace from families.

After devoting himself for a long time to the good of his workers, he had to acknowledge that his direct personal action was not only difficult, but without serious result. Nevertheless, as early as 1846, he had set up a Mutual Aid Society to help the sick and the injured; he had founded a Music Society to occupy the leisure of the young men. But these institutions were not powerful enough to reform the family. Experience showed him that without religion, which alone can change the will, he would not reach his goal.

On 2 February 1861 the Sisters were installed for the school, and at once began associations of girls. Soon the need for the help of the mothers was understood, and the Association of St Anne was founded. The Brothers of the Christian Schools opened their classes on 10 November 1863 and began to bring their children together. The employer tried to train a few men in devotedness, so as to make them the apostles of their comrades. Thus, little by little, without any premeditated plan, we were led to divide the elements of the family into different groups: father, mother, sons, daughters, children. These various associations were later called *fundamental*, because we began

with them, and because they have remained the basis of our action. They are at once family-based and apostolic. Those who have the same duties in the home are brought together and trained to fulfil their special mission in the family. The action of the workers on their comrades has been developed and encouraged; this is what is called *the apostolate of the worker to the worker*.

Through successive organisations, run by those concerned, who had the employer's kindly advice at their disposal, we have sought to make the workers themselves the arbiters of their destiny, the instruments of their own moral and material well-being.

Hierarchy has not been abolished, but it has made itself felt more in the secondary authority than in the principal authority, the latter confining itself to giving information rather than commands. As we advanced along this path, we developed affection and gratitude towards a fatherhood that had, so to speak, stripped itself of authority so as to keep only love. That is how our Father came to be called by the sweet name of *Good Father*. After his death (on 3 March 1884), one of his sons was designated to take up this title by the workers themselves, who continue to give him the affection they bore his Father.

To foster the family spirit, the dwellings and the workers' housing estates are arranged so that each one has his freedom; gardens attached to the dwellings allow the main vegetables to be grown; these are material elements of peace and comfort.

We have fought improvidence by means of economic institutions that encourage cash payment, and by organising savings banks and the corporative bonus. To put an end to isolation, so harmful to individuals, we have created many associations fit to develop the spirit of solidarity in all its forms. Present-day customs have taken us so far from these essentially Christian ideas that a kind of apprenticeship and education is needed to build new customs. The institutions established in our time, such as life assurance, mutual aid societies, etc.,

are based on individualism; each person has rights fixed, not by his needs, but by his financial stake. Strict justice may be satisfied, but not charity. The old guilds had solved the problem, and relieved the hardships of their members, not merely in an automatic measure, but in the intelligent and merciful measure of their needs. We have sought to reach this goal in our Mutual Aid Society, in the Provident Fund (for Pensions) and in the Family Fund. The workers' Councils in charge of them have a latitude that allows them to go beyond the law of figures in order to satisfy the law of solidarity; they can therefore take a greater interest in a large family and in more pressing needs, without anyone being able to call arbitrary measures that never diminish the rights of strict justice.

The chapel with its religious life, in which all family events find their affectionate echo, and instruction through catechism, sermons and lectures suited to particular audiences, raise minds above matter and remind the worker of his eternal destiny. At the same time, the various confraternities offer nourishment to the needs of souls. Feasts begun in the church, continued in the meeting places and then prolonged in the homes, gently move the heart and the imagination. We have multiplied them so as to renew joy and enthusiasm, so necessary to populations bent over a monotonous and unceasing labour.

These Notes will allow the reader to review quickly the manifold organisation that has resulted from all these efforts. We shall divide this work into four parts:

- I. — *The Fundamental Associations.*
- II. — *The Corporative and Economic Institutions.*
- III. — *The Moral Preservation Societies.*
- IV. — *The Works of Piety.*

Wherever we could, we have applied the rules of the *Association of Catholic Workers' Circles* (262, boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris). We are happy to belong to this Association. We all owe it great gratitude, for it has produced, in the social field, the most considerable

effort of our time for the recovery of our country. The studies it has boldly conducted in a domain where error reigned supreme, and the experience that has resulted from its many foundations, have been of great service to us in establishing our Corporation.

We call *Corporation* the religious and economic association formed between the families of the employers and of the workers. From it all the institutions spring, religious, economic and others. It is governed by a Committee that calls forth the workers' initiative. It is perfectly homogeneous from the professional point of view. The union of masters and workers is shown in it by the presence of the various members of the employers' family in the associations, by common religious practice in the chapel, and by participation in the same economic institutions.

Our Committee was affiliated to the *Association of Circles* in 1873. We shall first explain how it works, so as to make clear how it is the initiator of our organisation and the guardian of our rules.

COMMITTEE

(Article 3 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meetings on Friday, at 1.30 p.m.

The Good Father, *President*.

Harmel Félix, *Vice-President*.

Rev. Father Chaplain, *Secretary General, Head of the 4th Section*.

Pilardeau Émile, *Secretary, Direction of the Schools*.

Harmel Léon. *Vice-Secretary*.

Harmel Maurice. *Director General of the Professional Institutions*.

Harmel Jules. *Head of the 1st Section*.

Bureau Georges, *1st Section*.

Rev. Fr Benoit, *Head of the 2nd Section*.

Dear Brother Director, *2nd Section*.

Harmel Albert. *2nd Section*.

Harmel Alphonse. *2nd Section*.

Aulner Léon, *2nd Section*.

Godfroy Alexandre, *Treasurer, Head of the 3rd Section*.

Reimbeau Emile. *People's Secretariat*.

Terneaux Florentin, *Head of Supervision*.

Champion François, *Rule-keeper*.

With regard to the whole Corporation, the Committee fulfils the role of the Director with regard to his Work. It watches over the running of the machinery and the continuity of efforts; it encourages initiatives discreetly but perseveringly, whether by removing the obstacles that hamper the freedom to do good, or by maintaining the general autonomy of the Corporation, without restricting the freedom of action of each of the groups.

It is made up of the employers and of the helpers they choose; it meets on Friday of each week, at half past one in the afternoon.

The *President* and the *Vice-President* see to the observance of the rules and customs.

The *Secretary General* prepares the work before the sessions with the heads of Section. Each Section calls on a few helpers taken from outside the Committee, for which they become the nursery; in this way a more carefully studied collective work is produced. A weekly report on one part of the Committee's responsibilities makes it possible to review everything once a month.

The *Secretary* keeps the minutes. He has a questionnaire that enables the Committee to turn its attention to every useful point. He reads part of it at each session.

The *Head of the 1st Section* reports on the journeys of the Good Father and of the other members of the family, and on the social movement outside, especially in factories. He thus provides examples to imitate, as well as encouragement.

The *2nd Section* deals with the associations and institutions of the Corporation, and with Christian discipline in the mill. The seven Fundamental Associations are reviewed at each session, with the attendance figures for the various meetings or exercises.

The *Treasurer, Head of the 3rd Section*, gives the details of the accounts prepared by the General Accounts Committee. The Committee thus has an overall view of the financial situation of all the institutions. This Section also deals with the *People's Secretariat*, concerning the services to be rendered to the workers.

The *4th Section* has within its province religious instruction, lectures, the workers' retreats at Braisne, the religious feasts in the chapel, and the seminaries.

The *Direction of the Schools* deals with the infant school, the classes at the Brothers' and at the Sisters', and the vocational lessons for boys and girls. It keeps itself informed of the division of the pupils and of their timetable, of teaching methods, of examinations and of the results obtained. Its head makes use of the commissioners of the

Mutual Aid Society to see negligent parents and to stir up indolent children.

The *Head of Supervision* presents the minutes of the workers' Councils that should have been held during the week (about eighteen to twenty); the signatures make it easy to check attendance. The Committee gives its full attention to the regularity of the Councils, the only truly serious guarantee of the smooth running and the perseverance of our institutions. If a Council has been omitted, either completely or through insufficient attendance, its secretary is notified; if it happens again, one of the employers sees to it himself.

The *Rule-keeper* is the guardian of the traditions. Customaries have been drawn up which result, not from rules laid down *a priori*, but from the experience of the years. The Corporation as a whole, like each association or institution in particular, has its tradition fixed in writing; the *Rule-keeper* is responsible for bringing everyone back to it. To this end, he draws up in advance the customaries of the feasts and of the Councils of the month³ and has them posted in the meeting rooms. At each session, he reads out what is to be done during the following fortnight.

3. Here, as an example, is the *Customary of the Councils* for the month of September 1890:

<i>1st. Monday.</i>			
B. —	Little Circle	6.30 p.m.,	at the Brothers'.
D. —	Association of St Anne	2.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
U. —	Instrumental Music	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
AA. —	Rifle Club	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
<i>2. Tuesday.</i>			
A. —	Internal Council	6.30 p.m.,	Good Father's office.
E. —	Singers	6.30 p.m.,	at Mrs Félix's.
F. —	Holy Angels	6.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
<i>3. Wednesday.</i>			
K. —	Aid Society	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
Z. —	Dramatic	6.30 p.m.,	at the Father Chaplain's.
AE. —	Our Lady of the Factory	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>4. Thursday.</i>			
C. —	St Aloysius Gonzaga	11 a.m.,	at the Brothers'.
E. —	Children of Mary. Games	2 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
L. —	Joint-Stock Company	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
P. —	Hostel	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
AC. —	Blessed Sacrament	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
AD. —	Third Order	1.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>5. Friday.</i>			
	Committee	1.30 p.m.,	private office.
D. —	Lady Patronesses	2.30 p.m.,	at the Good Father's.
I. —	Professional Council	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
V. —	Choral Society	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
<i>6. Saturday.</i>			
O. —	Refreshments	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
<i>7. Sunday.</i>			
AB. —	Conf. of St Vincent de Paul	after Mass,	Council room.

G. —	St Philomena	4.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
<i>8. Monday.</i>			
B. —	Little Circle	6.30 p.m.,	at the Brothers'.
C. —	St Aloysius Gonz. Committee	1.30 p.m.,	private office.
S. —	Youth Society	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
<i>9. Tuesday.</i>			
A. —	Internal Council	6.30 p.m.,	Good Father's office.
E. —	Workshop Councillors	2.30 p.m.,	private office.
F. —	Holy Angels	6.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
<i>10. Wednesday.</i>			
Q. —	Approved Suppliers	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
Y. —	Gymnastics	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
AG. —	Confraternity of St Joseph	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>11. Thursday.</i>			
C. —	St Aloysius Gonzaga	11 a.m.,	at the Brothers'.
E. —	Children of Mary. Games	2 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
J. —	Fire Brigade	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
R. —	Accounts Committee	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
AH. —	Apostleship of Prayer	6.30 p.m.,	at the Father Chaplain's.
<i>12. Friday.</i>			
	Committee	1.30 p.m.,	private office.

D. —	Lady Patronesses	2.30 p.m.,	at the Good Father's.
D. —	Third Order. Women	2.15 p.m.,	at Mrs Maurice's.
N. —	Direct Purchases	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
X. —	Orchestra	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
<i>13. Saturday.</i>			
M. —	Butcher's Shop	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>14. Sunday.</i>			
F. —	Holy Angels. Monthly Council	2 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
G. —	St Philomena	4.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
AB. —	Conf. of St Vincent de Paul	after Mass,	Council room.
<i>15. Monday.</i>			
B. —	Little Circle	6.30 p.m.,	at the Brothers'.
D. —	Association of St Anne	2.30 p.m.,	at Mrs Jules's.
U. —	Instrumental Music	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
<i>16. Tuesday.</i>			
A. —	Internal Council	6.30 p.m.,	Good Father's office.
F. —	Holy Angels	6.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
<i>17. Wednesday.</i>			
K. —	Aid Society	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
<i>18. Thursday.</i>			
C. —	St Aloysius Gonzaga	11 a.m.,	at the Brothers'.
E. —	Children of Mary. Games	2 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
H. —	Union Council	6.30 p.m.,	Good Father's office.
<i>19. Friday.</i>			
	Committee	2.30 p.m.,	private office.
D. —	Lady Patronesses	2.30 p.m.,	at the Good Father's.
I. —	Professional Council	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>20. Saturday.</i>			
O. —	Refreshments	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
<i>21. Sunday.</i>			
G. —	St Philomena	4.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.

AB. —	Conf. of St Vincent de Paul	after Mass,	Council room.
AH. —	League of Retreatants	after Low Mass,	sacristy.
<i>22. Monday.</i>			
B. —	Little Circle	6.30 p.m.,	at the Brothers'.
S. —	Youth Society	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
<i>23. Tuesday.</i>			
A. —	Internal Council	6.30 p.m.,	Good Father's office.
F. —	Holy Angels	6.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
<i>24. Wednesday.</i>			
Q. —	Approved Suppliers	6.30 p.m.,	Mr Félix's office.
Y. —	Gymnastics	6.30 p.m.,	Council room.
AF. —	Rosary	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>25. Thursday.</i>			
C. —	St Aloysius Gonzaga	11 a.m.,	at the Brothers'.
E. —	Children of Mary. Games	2 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
T. —	Good Reading	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>26. Friday.</i>			
	Committee	1.30 p.m.,	private office.
D. —	Lady Patronesses	2.30 p.m.,	at the Good Father's.
N. —	Direct Purchases	6.30 p.m.,	private office.
<i>28. Sunday.</i>			
E. —	Children of Mary. Monthly Coun.	2 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
G. —	St Philomena	4.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.
AB. —	Conf. of St Vincent de Paul	after Mass,	Council room.
<i>29. Monday.</i>			
B. —	Little Circle	6.30 p.m.,	at the Brothers'.
<i>30. Tuesday.</i>			

A. —	Internal Council	6.30 p.m.,	Good Father's office.
F. —	Holy Angels	6.30 p.m.,	at the Sisters'.

Finally, the Committee examines the various plans submitted to it; if it cannot decide at once, it has them studied by a committee. It thus has the twofold mission of sanctioning initiatives and of maintaining the customs and rules which, in works, are necessary guarantees of prosperity.

I.

FUNDAMENTAL ASSOCIATIONS

Article One of the Internal Regulations.

“If the guilds set the world of labour free, and gave craftsmen mutual help and a true fraternity, unknown in our age, it is because they were based on the confraternity or religious association. Indeed, a fair distribution of interests can be ensured only by the Christian spirit, which leads people to avoid injustice and teaches charity, that is to say devotedness to others.

“That is why our Corporation is based on the religious associations, which we call fundamental. It does not, for all that, cease to have as its exclusive object the study and defence of economic, industrial and commercial interests, in accordance with the spirit of the law of 1884.”

Article Two of the Internal Regulations.

“The Fundamental Associations are:

“**A.** — Association of men over seventeen, under the patronage of St Joseph. Meeting of the Council on Tuesday, at half past six in the evening;

“**B.** — Association of young men from First Communion to the age of seventeen. Meeting of the Council on Monday, at half past six in the evening;

“**C.** — Association of St Aloysius Gonzaga for boys before First Communion. Meeting of the Council on Thursday, at eleven in the morning;

“**D.** — Association of St Anne for mothers of families. Meeting of the Council on the first and third Mondays of the month, at half past two in the afternoon;

“**E.** — Association of the Children of Mary, girls from the age of fifteen until marriage. Meeting of the Council on Thursday, at two in the afternoon, and on the last Sunday of each month;

“**F.** — Association of the Holy Angels, girls from First Communion to the age of fifteen. Meeting of the Council on Tuesday, at half past six in the evening, and on the second Sunday of the month;

“**G.** — Association of St Philomena, little girls before First Communion. Meeting of the Council on Sunday, at half past four.

“The members of these various Associations, all belonging to the Corporation or mixed union constituted at Val-des-Bois on 2 August 1885, enjoy the right of assembly under the terms of the law of 21 March 1884.”

Admissions are made or proclaimed in the chapel.

Three Brothers are directors of the three male Associations. The Sisters are directors of the Associations of girls and of mothers.

The seven workers' Councils, appointed by their peers for an unlimited term, govern the Associations by means of periodic sessions, which always begin and end with a short prayer.

The Director (man or woman) attends the Council. His or her function is to stimulate the personal initiative of each member, by praising zeal, making results easier, and discreetly suggesting the means.

The action of the Councillors is essentially apostolic; it never has a disciplinary effect. The affection won by services rendered is the only basis of their influence. Friendly remarks and, if need be, removal from the list of Members, which entails leaving the Corporation, are the only sanctions, and they have no repercussion on the professional situation of the individuals in the mill.

As the Fundamental Associations are the necessary basis of the whole organisation, economic and other, we have had to lay down principles in order to establish clearly the rights of a family to the benefits of every kind offered by the various institutions. Since the

grown man is the most important one to win, his entry into the Association is enough for the whole family to enjoy the advantages of the Corporation; when there is neither a father nor a young man over seventeen, it is the girl who has this privilege; and lastly the mother is enough where neither of these two exists. The Mutual Aid Society is the only one to which everyone belongs without condition.

A — MEN'S ASSOCIATION

(Article 2, paragraph A, of the Internal Regulations.)

INTERNAL COUNCIL

Meeting on Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m.

The Good Father, *Honorary President*.

Harmel Félix, *Honorary Vice-President*.

Rev. Father Chaplain.

Dear Brother Guy, *Director*.

Champion François, *President*.

Y. — Gymnastics.

AF. — Holy Rosary.

Chapel.

Relations with absent Members.

Varlet François, *Vice-President*.

O. — Refreshments.

Carded-wool spinners' workshop.

Sonnet Ferdinand, *Secretary*.

V. — Choral Society.

X. — Orchestra.

AA. — Rifle Club.

Gentilhomme François, *Vice-Secretary*.

C. — St Aloysius Gonzaga.

K. — Mutual Aid Society.

M. — Butcher's Shop.

AB. — Conference of St Vincent de Paul.

AC. — Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament.

Candidates' meeting.

Esqui Émile, *Assistant Treasurer*.

R. — General Accounts Committee.
Combed-wool spinners' workshop.

Jolivet Alfred.

I. — Professional Council.
T. — Good Reading Section.
U. — Instrumental Music.
AH. — Apostleship of Prayer.
Repair and engine workshops.
New workers.

Charlier Jules.

B. — Little Circle.
J. — Fire Brigade.
Dye works.

Scherrer Charles.

L. — Cooperative Joint-Stock Company.
Combed-wool preparation workshop.

Gérard Joseph.

AE. — Confraternity of Our Lady of the Factory.
Yards and labourers.

Dufour Augustin.

N. — Direct Purchases.

Courtois Ernest, *Games Commissioner*.

P. — Hostel.
S. — Youth Society.
Z. — Dramatic Section.

Lecoq Léandre, *in charge of refreshments*.

Q. — Approved Suppliers.
AG. — Confraternity of St Joseph.

Founded on 28 April 1867 with 37 members, gathered after several years of effort, the Men's Association, placed under the patronage of St Joseph, now comprises 289 active members and 18 candidates over the age of seventeen.

At first it was a Catholic Workers' Circle. Since 2 August 1885 the Circle no longer exists; it has been replaced by the legally constituted mixed union, to which the members of the Men's Association belong.

Their meetings, in the evening on weekdays, and all day on Sunday except during the hours of the services, in the halls of the Union, are therefore under the regime of the law of 21 March 1884.

The billiards and games of every kind are intended to withdraw the men from the pernicious influence of the taverns. To the misfortune of families, these establishments, whose fortune is based on the exploitation of vice and on the squandering of wages, have been multiplied without limit. Closing hours, pushed back indefinitely, have made the situation worse. We have regarded it as one of our most pressing duties to do everything possible to keep these dangers away from our population.

The monthly meeting is held on the first Sunday; at it one hears the report for the month, details on one or more institutions, and a lecture on the history of the Church from the social point of view, or on some other interesting and useful subject, such as questions of insurance, of investing money, of popular hygiene.

Exercises reserved for the men take place in the chapel for the Easter retreat and for the All Saints' retreat. We have four general Communion a year: at Eastertide, at the Assumption, at All Saints and at Christmas; four extraordinary Communion: on the Patronage of St Joseph, on the feast of the Sacred Heart, patron of the chapel and of the mill, on the feast of Our Lady of the Factory, and on the Sunday of the Forty Hours; lastly, Communion of reparation and of the confraternities.

For the daily devotions of the months of St Joseph, of Mary, of the Sacred Heart and of the Rosary, the men of each workshop have their own special day. Monday: fancy fabrics, small warehouse, packing; Tuesday: carded wool, carding, scouring; Wednesday: combed wool; Thursday: dyeing, continuous frames; Friday: labourers, stokers, joinery, repair shop; Saturday: clerks. A certain number are faithful every day, but all hold to their own particular day.

The feast of the Association is celebrated very solemnly on the third Sunday after Easter (Patronage of St Joseph). In the morning there is a Communion Mass, then High Mass with music, cake and refreshments in the Union halls, and the annual assembly with reports on the various institutions; in the evening, the St Joseph procession with instrumental music through the yards and in the mill itself.

This Association forms, as it were, the trunk of the Corporation, of which the other Associations are the branches. Through the professional, religious, economic and other institutions, legitimate desires and the interests of body and soul find a beneficent protection.

Experience shows how necessary it is to take care of young men in a special way. That is why we have established within the Men's Association a section called the Youth Society, of which we shall speak further on.

The *Internal Council* is appointed by an absolute majority of those voting, on a day of general meeting, and for an unlimited term. It holds its weekly sessions on Tuesday evening. It receives new members; if need be, it warns and excludes those who make themselves unworthy. It appoints the secondary Councils, or sanctions the elections made by a category of members (musicians, youth, etc.). In addition, one of its members is officially delegated to each of them; it thus maintains the unity necessary in a manifold organisation such as ours, where the spirit of division, to which we are inclined, could cause so much havoc. By this means the Employer, as well as the

Chaplain, who attend the sessions, can each week keep informed of how the institutions are working by questioning the Councillors on the progress of the secondary Councils. The special role of the Internal Council in the secondary Councils is to maintain the Christian spirit everywhere and always.

B — LITTLE CIRCLE

(Article 2, paragraph B, of the Internal Regulations.)

COUNCIL

Meeting on Monday, at 6.30 p.m.

Rev. Father Chaplain.

Brother of the first class, *Director*.

Charlier Jules, *Delegate of the Men's Association*.

Mailier Julien, *President and Secretary*.

Nicolas Joseph.

Antoine Léopold.

Georgelet Eugène.

Guyardel Léon.

Huyette Remy, *Delegate to the Music Society*.

Ladame Charles.

Liégeois Auguste.

LITTLE CONFERENCE OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

Weekly meetings.

Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

Guilloteau Hyacinthe, *President*.

Ladame Charles.

Mailier Julien, *Council*.

Nicolas Joseph.

Peck Alfred.

Peck Emile.

CADETS OF THE GYMNASTICS AND MUSIC SOCIETIES

Monthly meetings.

Peck Alfred.

Liégeois Jean-Baptiste.

Huyette Remi, *Council*.

The Little Circle (founded on 21 November 1872) brings together 65 young men, from First Communion to the age of seventeen.

Those who work at the mill have one hour of school every day, and catechism and a singing lesson once a week; those who attend the full-time school go to Mass every day. All follow the men's Easter retreat; in addition, a special retreat is given to them by the First Communion preacher.

The monthly Communion is general; the first Friday Communion and the Communion of reparation bring together the most devout.

The patron of the Little Circle is Blessed John Baptist de La Salle, whose feast is celebrated on the Sunday following 4 May: a preparatory triduum, general Communion, an outing and a tea.

On Sundays, in their own yards and premises, there are various games and lessons in gymnastics and music; as often as possible there are walks in the woods; four times a year, attendance sales reward the attendance tickets.

The little Conference visits the poor pointed out to it by the large Conference.

The cadets of the Gymnastics Society and those of the Music Society take lessons during the week and on Sunday, so as to prepare recruits already trained for these two Societies. But the cadets are strictly forbidden to have meetings or outings together with their elders before the age of sixteen. Experience has shown the necessity of this rule.

The Council meets every Monday, at half past six in the evening. The Councillors strive to exercise among their comrades an apostolate suited to their age. They are also responsible for leading the Sunday games, each according to his aptitudes.

C — ASSOCIATION OF ST ALOYSIUS GONZAGA

(Article 2, paragraph C, of the Internal Regulations.)

COMMITTEE

Monthly meetings.

Rev. Father Chaplain, *President*.

Aulner Léon, *Vice-President*.

Brother of the second class, *Director*.

Martin Jules, *Secretary*.

Gentilhomme François, *Delegate of the Men's Association*.

Labbé Henri.

Gendarme Justin.

Saucourt Pierre.

Saucourt Jean.

Saucourt André.

COUNCIL

Meeting on Thursday, at 11 a.m.

Brother of the second class, *Director*.

Evrard Justin, *President and Secretary*.

Alacoque Jean.

Champion Léon.

Glatigny Louis.

Jolivet Victor.

Jupin Philogène.

Lallemand Jules.

Longueville Emile.

Viéville Clovis.

The *Committee* is made up mainly of young men who, in turn, on Sundays, lend their help in amusing the children.

The Association of St Aloysius Gonzaga includes boys from the age of seven up to First Communion. Its purpose is to train them early in the habits of association and to make them understand its benefits. It was founded only in 1872. It now has 71 members, all schoolboys, divided among three classes taught by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. (The Brothers were installed in the mill on 10 November 1863.) The children attend the seven o'clock Mass every day; a certain number make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament when classes are over.

On Sundays the meetings and games take place under the direction of the Brother of the second class, with the help of the members of the Committee.

The lady patronesses provide them with games and organise attendance sales four times a year.

The Council meets on Thursday, at eleven o'clock; its object is the individual apostolate among their comrades, and the liveliness to be brought into recreations and walks.

D — ASSOCIATION OF ST ANNE

(Article 2, paragraph D, of the Internal Regulations.)

LADY PATRONESSES

Meetings on Friday, at 2.30 p.m.

Mesdames

Jules Harmel, *Association of St Anne.*

Paul Saucourt, *Young Mothers.*

Reimbeau, *Sewing Room.*

Georges Bureau, *Charity Meeting.*

Maurice Harmel, *Chapel.*

Félix Harmel, *Schools.*

The lady patronesses of the Association of St Anne hold their sessions on Friday. Reports are made orally by each of the Ladies on the matter for which she is specially responsible: on the first Friday, on the Association of St Anne and the Young Mothers; on the second, on the accounts of the Sewing Room and of the Charity Meeting; on the third, on the accounts of the Chapel; on the fourth, on the state of the Schools. In this way the Ladies are kept informed every month of everything that concerns them.

The *Charity Meeting* takes place on Friday, at half past two. Its purpose is to relieve the poor and to visit the sick. It keeps in touch with the Conference of St Vincent de Paul, whose minutes are handed to it every week, so as to avoid duplicating the relief given to one and the same family. The Ladies take special care of all that concerns young mothers and widows.

COUNCIL

Meetings on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month, at 2.30.

Mesdames

The Sister Superior, *Directress*.

Jules Harmel, *Patroness President*.

Gilmaire, *Worker President*, cour de l'Usine.

Andry-Liébert, *Secretary*, Censes district.

Aulner, hot-water wash-house.

Déroche, Pont district.

Esqui, cités Saint-Paul and Saint-Jacques.

Féry-Ninet, chemin de Rethel.

Génisson, Sisters' district.

Mailier, Censes district.

Mangin, rue Camus district.

Sambucucci, upper Village.

Scherrer, les Marais.

Schmidt-Glatigny, le Pré and Malakoff.

Urban, Grande-Rue.

The purpose of the Association of St Anne is to bring mothers together for their own sanctification and that of their families. Founded on 10 February 1868, it is affiliated to the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of Sion, in Paris. It comprises about 220 women, married or widowed.

The meeting of the Association takes place on the first Monday of the month, at the Sisters' house. First of all some explanations are given about an economic institution already established or being planned, for the Corporation attempts nothing without first having the assent of the mothers of families; it is anxious to make them know and love the organisations founded for the moral and material well-being of the workers. The Father Chaplain then gives his instruction on the duties of state of married women. The following day, Tuesday, is devoted to confessions. The general Communion takes place on Wednesday, at six in the morning; the Mass ends with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by the reception of the new mem-

bers. On the following Saturday, Mass for widows (for the departed husbands).

All the members are called to funerals ; the banner of the Association is carried by one of them; the corners of the pall are held by four others; lastly, the wreath, offered by the Association, is carried behind the coffin by a Councillor. In the following week a Low Mass is said in the chapel for the departed.

A good number of members are enrolled for the Communion of reparation, and every day several mothers represent the Association at the Holy Table.

There are two retreats a year: one in preparation for Easter Communion, the other during the summer.

Four times a year, the children who have reached their third month are presented in the chapel on a Sunday or a feast day, at the end of High Mass, and solemnly consecrated to the Sacred Heart, to Our Lady of the Factory and to St Joseph⁴.

Every fortnight there is the meeting of the sewing room, to make layettes for the largest families. The lady patronesses and a certain number of women workers attend it faithfully.

The patronal feast takes place on the Sunday following 26 July; in the morning there is general Communion; in the afternoon the members take coffee at the Sisters' house, then go into the gardens, where a tombola delights the little children who come with their mothers.

In January, on a Sunday afternoon, an attendance sale of household articles and linen allows the most regular members to buy useful things.

The Council recruits its own members. The Councillors are chosen from the different districts, so that they can share out the members of

4. Here is the formula of Consecration read by the father of one of the children presented: "Sacred Heart of Jesus, friend of the workers; Immaculate Virgin, mother of grace; St Joseph, patron of the workers' Corporation, we consecrate to you this child whom God has given us. May he live and die a Christian, so as to gain heaven. Amen."

the Association among themselves and be of service to them. They have a notebook, brought up to date every quarter, containing the names of the women of their district. They meet twice a month: once for the governance of the Association and for religious interests, under the direction of the Chaplain, and once for economic interests with the Secretary General of the economic institutions. At each of the meetings, they deal with the care to be given to young mothers and to the sick.

THIRD ORDER

(Section for Women and Girls)

Monthly meetings.

Mrs Reimbeau.

Mrs Maurice Harmel.

Mrs Paul Saucourt.

Mrs Gilmaire.

Mrs Urban.

Miss Marie Lanotte, *Delegate of the Children of Mary.*

Miss Marie Belva.

Miss Elvire Mahot.

The Third Order of St Francis of Assisi has its Fraternity of women, which includes mothers and girls together. It gathers the more devoted souls, of whom more can be asked, whether to react against luxury or to give a good example in the Christian direction of the family. It is a kind of chosen nucleus, by means of which the great virtues that regenerated the world in the thirteenth century can be developed among the workers. The tertiaries at present number 52. They meet on the second Sunday of the month, after High Mass.

The Discretory, in its monthly sessions, deals with everything relating to the Third Order and to the eucharistic works among the women. It takes a special interest in the religious vocations of girls, which, thanks be to God, are fairly frequent at Val-des-Bois.

ASSOCIATIONS OF GIRLS

General remark: The girls wear the ribbon and the medal of their Association, not only in the chapel, but in the workshop, in the family and in the streets, on weekdays as on Sundays. This excellent custom honours the girl, at the same time as it reminds her of her Christian obligations. The ribbon is pink for the members of St Philomena, purple for the aspirants; red for the members of the Holy Angels, green for the aspirants; blue for the members of the Children of Mary.

The receptions take place solemnly in the chapel, where the medals and ribbons are blessed and conferred.

E — ASSOCIATION OF THE CHILDREN OF MARY

(Article 2, paragraph E, of the Internal Regulations.)

COUNCIL

Meetings on the last Sunday of the month.

Rev. Father Chaplain.

The Sister in charge.

Marie Lanotte, *President*, delegate to the Third Order.

Angèle Harmel, *Vice-President*.

Berthe Darbois, *Secretary*, delegate for Singing.

Marie Nicolas, *Treasurer*.

Philomène Pétry, *Sacristan*, delegate for Games.

Emélie Fèvre, *Sacristan*.

Maria Depiesse, *Librarian*.

Adèle Wavreille, *Rule-keeper*, delegate to the Holy Angels.

Palmyre Gillet, *Rule-keeper*, delegate to the Blessed Sacrament.

Emélie Nollet, *Infirmarian*.

Marie Evrard, *Infirmarian*, delegate to St Philomena.

Newly arrived girls are first gathered on Sundays, on trial, by a Councillor of Honour; they can then be received as aspirants and finally as members.

At present the Association (founded on 15 August 1863) comprises 137 members or aspirants, from the age of fifteen until marriage. They go to the Sisters' house on Sunday, at four o'clock, for the sodality meeting, and during the day and in the evening for walks or games, according to the season. At nine in the evening, the mothers come to fetch them. From time to time, special amusements are provided for them, such as pilgrimages, long excursions, dramatic performances in which they are at once actresses and spectators. In

this way the dangers of worldly gatherings, so common in the valley, are avoided.

In the workshop, morning prayer is said, and during work, the Hour of Guard is kept in turn in each workroom. One or two women workers in turn leave their work to attend the daily Mass on week-days and to make the Communion of reparation in the name of their companions. On leaving in the evening, a certain number say their prayers in the chapel. There is a monthly general Communion and a fortnightly or weekly Communion of reparation.

The patronal feast is solemnly celebrated on the Sunday following 8 December. On that day the singing is performed by the girls alone. At midday a banquet brings them together at the Sisters' house, and in the evening a dramatic performance ends the day.

To make it easier to build up dowries, the Good Father has undertaken (until the end of the year 1895, reserving the right to renew the undertaking afterwards) to pay the young bride as much as she has herself paid into the Savings Bank, up to a *maximum* sum of one hundred francs, on condition that at the time of her marriage she is still a member of the Association⁵.

5. Here are some calculations which will show the results obtained by saving over a fairly long period. We reckon the year at 50 weeks instead of 52, to allow for omissions. We give the sums produced by the capital and the accumulated interest:

	5 years.	10 years.	15 years.
0.25 fr. a week	70 fr.	160 fr.	275 fr.
0.35 fr. a week	98 fr.	224 fr.	386 fr.
0.50 fr. a week	140 fr.	321 fr.	551 fr.

The marriage of a Child of Mary is the occasion of touching displays of piety and Christian affection on the part of the employers, the Sisters and all the members, who are anxious to honour Christian marriage. When the girl no longer has parents, the wedding meal is given at the Good Father's house; he presides at table and on this oc-

casion takes the place of the absent father. The new bride leaves the Association only to enter the Association of St Anne by right and without probation.

During illness, the Children of Mary are visited and watched over by their companions. At their death, they receive the honours customary in the sodalities, and the members make it a duty to attend the funeral, their heads covered with a white veil.

The Council meets, under the chairmanship of the Reverend Father Chaplain, on the last Sunday of each month. It is responsible for admitting or excluding aspirants and members, and for organising the inner life of the Work.

Housekeeping school. — A housekeeping school is established at the Sisters' house. It covers knitting, sewing, mending and the cutting-out of clothes; a laundry for practising washing and laundering; general guidance on food and on housekeeping, and elementary notions of hygiene and of nursing in case of illness. During the sewing, readings chosen in advance are made from two very practical books: *Le Chemin du bonheur domestique* and *Le Bonheur domestique*⁶.

6. Here is some information borrowed from these books:“It is important to know the nutritive value of the most common foods. An adult man loses 20 grams of nitrogen and nearly 300 of carbon every day. This loss must be made good by food, the choice of which therefore cannot be a matter of indifference. Taking one kilogram as a basis, here is how nitrogen and carbon are distributed in the following foods:

	GRAMS			GRAMS	
	Nitrogen	Carbon		Nitrogen	Carbon
Beef	30	110	Salted herrings	30	230
Bacon	13	710	Wheat bread	10	280
Fat	—	830	Haricot beans	45	220
Butter	7	830	Peas, broad beans	48	410
Cheese (Dutch)	45	400	Lentils	43	400
Eggs	25	135	Potatoes	3	110
Salt cod	50	160			

Le Bonheur domestique, conseils aux femmes sur la conduite de leur ménage, page 276; Delachaux, at Neuchâtel (Switzerland).“It takes 12 to 15 kg of potatoes to give as much nourishment as 1 kg of haricot beans, peas or lentils. Nothing is more nourishing than pulses, when they are thoroughly cooked and seasoned with fat.“In relation to price, the highest proportion of nutritive matter is found in milk and bread; then come fish and pulses, and lastly meat and eggs. If we take for comparison 1 franc’s worth of meat (about 800 grams), 1 franc’s worth of peas, broad beans, haricot beans or lentils (2 to 2.5 kg) gives three times as much nutritive matter; 1 franc’s worth of skimmed-milk cheese (2.5 kg) gives four times as much.” — *Le Chemin du bonheur domestique indiqué aux jeunes filles*, pages 86 and 87; L. Grandmont, at Liège (Belgium).

Women workers over sixteen go to the housekeeping school on Saturday, from five o’clock to half past six, without any deduction from their wages; women workers under sixteen go there for one hour a day; lastly, the schoolgirls devote Tuesday afternoon and the whole of Thursday to it; in addition, every day, a few of them in turn are given practice in housework.

COUNCIL OF HONOUR

Quarterly meetings.
Marie Belva, *President*.

Elvire Mahot, *in charge of newcomers*.

Mélanie Courtois.

Léonie Dufour.

Aurélie Faudier.

Joséphine Guyot.

Alice Nollet.

The Council of Honour is made up of the members who have belonged to the Council of the Association for ten years.

It is the guardian of the traditions, which are the best guarantees of stability and perseverance. Its sessions take place every three months. The Sister in charge gives an account of what has been done in the previous quarter and asks for the Councillors' observations; then together they draw up the Customary for the following quarter. By this means the customs are maintained in their spirit as well as in their form.

WORKSHOP COUNCILLORS

Monthly meetings.

Marie Belva, *President*.

Elvire Mahot, *Reeling*.

Joséphine Guyot, *Carding (carded wool)*.

Alice Nollet, *Carding (combed wool)*.

Mélanie Courtois, *Roving frames*.

Aurélie Faudier, *Roving frames*.

Marie Nicolas, *Gill boxes*.

The mission of the workshop councillors is to see that, during work, the dignity and Christian honour of the women workers are respected, both in their own conduct and in their dealings with others. They are the official spokeswomen of the women workers for any request or complaint whatever to the employers; they seek to render their companions every possible service. The employers make it a duty to receive their observations favourably, and in particular, when

necessary, to have a woman worker moved to avoid a dangerous neighbour.

Much devotedness and tact are needed to carry out this mission, which demands constant attention and a high idea of the value of souls.

The Guard of Honour that is kept in each workroom during work is entrusted to their care.

CONFRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Monthly meetings.

Palmyre Gillet, *Delegate of the Council of the Association.*

Euphrasie Evrard.

Marie Evrard.

Sophie Fèvre.

Marie Gilardin.

Henriette Jacomély.

Désirée Nassogne.

Elise Nicolas.

Marie Nollet.

Caroline Pétry.

Zélonie Viéville.

The promoters of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament meet on the Thursday before the monthly adoration. They form the groups of adorers who, for half an hour, occupy the prie-dieux set out in the nave, their heads covered with long white veils.

The Council also strives to develop eucharistic practices (visits to the Blessed Sacrament, Communions of reparation, etc.).

CHORAL SECTION

Meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month.

Marie Belva, *President.*

Berthe Darbois, *Delegate of the Council of the Association.*

Ernestine Ladame.

Marie Liégeois.

Angèle Schmidt.

The girls' Choral Society is responsible for the Communion Mass and part of Benediction every Sunday, and for the daily devotions of the months of March (St Joseph), May (Mary), June (Sacred Heart) and October (Rosary); in addition, it performs a Mass set to music on the feast of the Immaculate Conception. It rehearses twice a week. It celebrates its feast on the Sunday following St Cecilia's day. Its Council meets on the first Tuesday of the month.

GAMES SECTION

Meeting on Thursday, at 2 p.m.

Lucie Fèvre, *President.*

Philomène Pétry, *Delegate of the Council of the Association.*

Philomène Antoine.

Louise Forest.

Julie Foulon.

Marie Gilardin.

Marie Gillet.

Elise Jacques.

Julie Lanotte.

Elise Nicolas.

Caroline Pétry.

Juliette Servais.

Zélonie Viéville.

Games are very useful, even for girls. It is in the free expansion of play that the Sisters and the Councillors can form characters and gently accustom them to Christian suppleness.

The Games section meets on Thursday, at two o'clock. It decides the programme of walks and recreations for the following Sunday. Its

members are responsible for bringing the liveliness and cheerfulness that should make the evenings pleasant. It also takes care of the girls' performances and theatre.

F — ASSOCIATION OF THE HOLY ANGELS

(Article 2, paragraph F, of the Internal Regulations.)

COUNCIL

Meeting on Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., and on the second Sunday of the month.

Sister in charge.

Adèle Wavreille, *Delegate of the Children of Mary.*

Martine Pétry, *President.*

Louise Joris, *Vice-President.*

Blanche Peltier, *Secretary.*

Eugénie Evrard.

Joséphine Gilardin.

Anna Holaender.

Joséphine Incoul.

Lucie Lallemand.

Adeline Wavreille.

Founded on 15 August 1864, the Association, placed under the protection of the holy Angels, receives girls from their First Communion until the age of fifteen or sixteen. It has 63 members.

Those who hold the necessary certificate of education may work at the mill after the age of thirteen. At the Sisters' house they have one hour of housekeeping school a day, except on Tuesday, which is kept for catechism.

On Sunday there is the meeting of the Association at four o'clock, and games during the day and in the evening. Two sales a year reward regular attendance; two theatrical performances are given in winter by the members. Prayer is said in the workshop in the morning, the Hour of Guard of the Sacred Heart is kept during work, and a visit is made to the Blessed Sacrament on leaving in the evening; there is a retreat in preparation for Easter Communion; in summer, a

retreat with the Children of Mary; monthly Communion on the third Sunday of the month; Communions of reparation for the most devout.

The patronal feast is celebrated on the first Sunday of October: solemn Mass, then a banquet at the Sisters' house; at Benediction, reception of new members.

The Council holds its ordinary sessions on Tuesday evening at half past six, and an extraordinary session on the second Sunday of the month, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Father Chaplain. Its function is to admit new members, to bring liveliness into the boisterous games that suit this age, to maintain a good spirit and to promote the practices of piety: visits to the Blessed Sacrament, love of the Blessed Virgin and of the holy Angels.

G — ASSOCIATION OF ST PHILOMENA

(Article 2, paragraph G, of the Internal Regulations.)

COUNCIL

Meeting on Sunday, at 4.30.

Sister in charge.

Marie Evrard, *Delegate of the Children of Mary.*

Emilie Pilardeau, *President.*

Jeanne Harmel, *Vice-President.*

Céline Hallet, *Secretary.*

Pauline Eme.

Jeanne Jolivet.

Céline Richard.

Irma Nicolas.

Jeanne Foulon.

This Association (founded on 15 August 1869) at present comprises 47 children, from the age of seven to First Communion. Its purpose is to make them appreciate early on the benefits of the Association. During the week the members go to school; Tuesday afternoons and the whole of Thursday are devoted to the housekeeping school.

On Sunday, at four o'clock, there is the sodality meeting; the rest of the day is spent in the families, at the services and in games or walks with the Sisters. Attendance tickets allow them to buy useful or pleasant things every year at several sales specially organised for them. For school, the usual prizes are given at the end of the month.

The patronal feast is celebrated on St Philomena's day : solemn Mass with blessed bread; in the afternoon, a tea party.

The Council, made up of children of eight, nine and ten, holds its weekly sessions on Sunday, at half past four. The Councillors report on the efforts they have made to be pleasant and useful to their com-

panions; they learn that devotedness to others is a great good for oneself, as well as a duty.

They take care of the *Holy Childhood Society*, organised among the members and the children of the infant school. Each one has her list of subscribers and at the end of the month collects the sou for the ransom of the little Chinese children. In the month of January the feast is celebrated; two children dressed as Chinese take the collection at High Mass, and in the evening the members of St Philomena give a theatrical performance for the benefit of the *Holy Childhood Society*.

II. CORPORATIVE AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

H — UNION OR CORPORATIVE COUNCIL

(Article 12 of the Statutes.)

Meeting on the 3rd Thursday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

Employers' group

1 The Good Father, *President*.

2 Harmel Félix, *Vice-President*.

3 Champion François, *Secretary*.

4 Terneaux Florentin, *Treasurer*.

5 Pilardeau Emile.

6 Godfroy Alexandre.

7 Aulner Léon.

Workers' group

8 Varlet François, *Vice-President*.

9 Gentilhomme François, *Vice-Secretary*.

10 Esqui Emile, *Assistant Treasurer*.

11 Jolivet Alfred.

12 Gouverneur Louis.

13 Charlier Jules.

14 Scherrer Charles.

15 Sacotte Adolphe, *Secretary General of the Economic Institutions*.

The workers' family of Val-des-Bois is the natural society of employers and workers brought together by the needs of the business, and united by the practice of the reciprocal duties that justice and

charity impose on them⁷. It was to make the fulfilment of these duties easier that we first founded the Fundamental Associations, then in 1875 constituted the Christian Corporation, formed by the union of the existing Associations and of the professional and economic institutions. The law of 21 March 1884 allowed us to give this situation legal form, which we did on 2 August 1885. The Statutes of the Professional Union of the Employers and Workers of the Christian Corporation of Val-des-Bois were adopted in General Assembly and deposited at the town hall. The Union Council is divided into two equal groups: the employers' group, chosen by the employers from among the members of the *Committee*; the workers' group, chosen from among the members of the *Internal Council* and appointed for an unlimited term by the worker members of the Union.

In its monthly meetings, it brings together in one view the institutions whose every detail each Council follows. It seeks to improve the organisations that promote family life, intellectual and professional development, health, thrift, the stability of engagements, economic interests, mutual assistance and material life. It studies the plans for new institutions and entrusts their implementation either to an existing Council or to a new Council. Finally, it approves or modifies the expenditure or allocations of the budget, bonuses and resources of every kind proposed by the General Accounts Committee.

The *Secretary General of the economic institutions*, appointed by the Union Council from among its members or from outside, devotes all his time to the works. It is he who sends out the notices of meeting for each Council, so as to make the meetings more regular.

7. *Catéchisme du Patron*, question 17.

I — PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL

(Article 28 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the Friday after pay day, at 6.30 p.m.

16 Harmel Maurice, *Employer-President*.

11 Jolivet Alfred, *Internal Council*.

17 Geysel Georges, *Secretary, Offices*.

18 Nollet Jean-Baptiste, *Scouring and Carding*.

14 Scherrer Charles, *Preparing*.

19 Andry Emile, *Combed-wool spinners*.

20 Thiry Joseph, *Combed-wool spinners*.

21 Jolivet Ernest, *Carded-wool spinners*.

22 Poncelet Edmond, *Carded-wool spinners*.

23 Charlier Désiré, *Ring frames and Doublers*.

24 Féry Constant, *Packing*.

25 Schmidt Edmond, *Dyeworks*.

26 Pierret Joseph, *Labourers*.

27 Béglot Henri, *Engines*.

28 George Edouard, *Fitting shop*.

Professional hierarchy. — As far as possible, the overseers, foremen and office clerks are chosen from among the members of the workers' family. In this way intelligence and work find their natural reward. At the same time, the services rendered to the mill are more complete when they are rendered by men brought up in the professional and moral spirit of the house. Lastly, a man who has gone through the various stages of the work he has to direct gives orders that are more precise and better heeded. Convinced of this truth, the employers who have succeeded one another in the family have made their children begin with the humblest work, rising to run a workroom, then to keep the accounts for labour, handling and sales, so as to be ignorant of nothing that they will have to direct later on. In this

way the professional hierarchy has the power to be just and beneficent, knowing from experience what it demands of its subordinates.

The Professional Council, made up of representatives of each workroom appointed by the Internal Council, has a consultative voice in the following questions: internal discipline of the workshops, permanence of engagements, vocational training and apprenticeship, accidents.

Discipline. — In the mill, the higher authority has reserved to itself the hiring and dismissal of workers. The power of the secondary authorities is limited, as in the army. The overseer, the foreman and the clerk can impose only very small fines, which must be countersigned at the office. In the case of a serious fault, they make their report to the employer, who pronounces the punishment: either a reprimand at the office, or a suspension from work for one or two days, or finally dismissal. In this way one prevents punishments which, under the sway of bad temper, can all too easily be exaggerated, even by Christian foremen. The total of the fines did not exceed 63.10 fr. in 1888, and 54.15 fr. in 1889, for a population of more than 650 workers (the fines are paid into the Mutual Aid Society). While keeping intact the authority necessary to the head of the mill, the Professional Council can put forward the wishes of the workers in everything that concerns work.

Permanence of engagements. — The Council is called on to give its opinion on rewarding long-serving workers, whether by medals for those with more than 30 years of service, or by a jubilee celebration in honour of those who have worked 50 years, or finally on the use of

the income provided by the Provident Fund managed by the General Accounts Committee⁸.

Apprenticeship. — Apprenticeship is too often neglected in workshops; the result for adults is an incomplete vocational training, which prevents them from ever becoming skilled. The foreman and the head workers must therefore see to this practical instruction. As far as possible, fathers are put in charge of the apprenticeship of their own children, elder brothers of that of their younger brothers. Several circumstances make this task easier for us: first, the permanence of engagements; next, the nature of our work, which allows us to employ all the members of the family; and lastly, custom, which leads children to follow their parents' trade. Their instruction is completed by courses in drawing and mechanics. We hope to add to our primary school a teaching of manual work useful in the home (shoe-making, the elements of joinery and gardening). Nothing is better suited to developing dexterity of hand and sureness of eye, while also enabling savings to be made in the home later on.

Moral precautions are taken for the girls and boys, so as to avoid the dangers of being left entirely to themselves on leaving school, and of the first contact with the workshop. One hour of school a day until the age of sixteen keeps them from forgetting what they have learnt, and the Sunday meetings preserve for them the salutary influence of the Brothers and the Sisters.

Accidents. — The members of the Council are responsible for watching over the prevention of accidents and in general of everything that may harm the workers' health. It is with this aim that appliances have been installed to reduce the heat usual in wool-spinning mills, as well as fans to renew the air in the workrooms. The

8. 14 families have from 25 to 30 years of service.

6 families have from 30 to 35 years of service.

5 families have from 35 to 40 years of service.

1 family has from 40 to 45 years of service.

7 families have more than 45 years of service.

employers have taken out subscriptions with the *Association for the Prevention of Steam-Engine Accidents* and the *Association for the Protection of Workers against Industrial Accidents*. The inspectors of these Associations make frequent visits, followed by detailed reports on everything that needs to be done. In addition, each Councilor, in his workroom, studies the causes of danger and reports not only injuries, but the slightest grazes caused by the machines. He proposes the measures needed to prevent them from happening again.

The Professional Council is also called on to render great services in maintaining between employers and workers, on all professional questions, that affectionate understanding which cements peace and union.

J — FIRE BRIGADE

(Article 24 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the Thursday before the 2nd Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

29 Bureau Georges, *Captain*.

7 Aulner Léon, *Second Captain*.

30 Sacotte Léon, *Sergeant Major*.

13 Charlier Jules, *Standard-Bearer, Internal Council*.

31 Thiry Remy, *Sapper Sergeant*.

10 Esqui Emile, *Sergeant*.

32 Mangin Armand, *Sergeant*.

33 Kohler Jean-Baptiste, *Bugler Corporal*.

34 Eme Grégoire, *Corporal*.

35 Raux Ernest, *Corporal*.

The Fire Brigade, at present made up of 45 members, was founded in 1863. It is recruited from among the most devoted men, especially former soldiers. It proved its worth above all on 13 September 1874, when the mill was devoured by fire in a few hours. Before and since, it has hastened to bring help wherever a fire has been reported, in the commune or in the neighbouring villages. The good spirit that animates the Brigade makes the duties easy, and the frankest comradeship reigns among all its members. The motto inscribed on the flag, “God, Family, Fatherland”, sums up the programme of these volunteers, who spare neither their time nor their devotedness. On the second Sunday of the month drills are held, with the aim of familiarising each man with the various posts he may be called on to occupy in case of fire.

The Council meets on the Thursday before the second Sunday of the month. It is responsible for the administration of the fund and for everything that concerns the Brigade. The fund is supplied by an

annual grant of 180 fr. from the employers, and by a monthly subscription of 45 centimes paid by each of the members.

K — MUTUAL AID SOCIETY

(Article 5 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on Wednesday, the eve of pay day, at 6.30 p.m.

36 Reimbeau Émile, *Secretary*.

15 Sacotte Adolphe, *Treasurer*.

9 Gentilhomme François, *Internal Council, Preparing room*.

28 George Edouard, *Fitting and Joinery*.

18 Nollet Jean-Baptiste, *Scouring and Carding room*.

13 Charlier Jules, *Dyeing*.

11 Jolivet Alfred, *Combed-wool spinners*.

35 Raux Ernest, *Carded-wool spinners*.

The Mutual Aid Society was founded on 21 January 1846; it now has 711 paying members⁹. This institution, so necessary to families, has been extended to all without distinction. It is the only organisation that does not draw its vitality from the free choice of its members. Its resources are provided by the subscriptions of the workers, who pay each month the sum to which they are entitled per day of sickness¹⁰, and by the employers, who pay a regular sum every year and an extraordinary subscription as needed.

10. The workers' subscriptions amount on average to 1.50 fr. to 1.75 fr. per 100 fr. of wages.

9. The 711 paying members break down as follows:

Adult men	315	
Boys from 13 to 16	33	348
Women		49
Adult girls	69	
Girls from 13 to 21	93	162
Mothers of families	152	
	staying	
	at home	
	and	
	paying	
	15	
	centimes	
	a week.	

The Society provides the following benefits:

1. To members and to the members of their families, the care of the doctor and medicines. Every day the doctor holds a free consultation in a special room near the dispensary; a Sister immediately makes up the prescriptions. The dispensary supplies everything necessary free of charge; it is under the supervision of a neighbouring pharmacist, who sees to it that it is stocked with new medicines. In addition, the doctor visits the sick at home every day;

2. Members who work at the mill receive a cash allowance for the duration of their illness;

3. In case of accident, a supplementary allowance is added to the first. The injured who cannot resume their usual work receive a pension varying, according to their wages, from a minimum of 300 fr. to 700 fr. a year;

4. Christian burial and all the incidental expenses are likewise provided by the Society;

5. In case of exceptional and pressing need, the Commissioners may grant extraordinary relief.

The Commissioners, appointed by their fellow workers and chosen from the various categories of work, administer the Society, visit the sick and make sure that the rules are carried out. They meet every fortnight to examine the files of the sick (doctor's certificate, days off work, etc.) and to issue the allowance vouchers.

As the schools (infant school, girls' schools, boys' schools)¹¹ are reserved for the mill, the council of the Mutual Aid Society has been entrusted with the task of ensuring regular attendance. The absence lists are passed on to it. The Commissioners, when making their visits to the sick, see negligent parents and reprimand them. Instruction is free; the Fund supplies school books to the children of widows and in families where there are more than five living children. Every year several certificates are obtained in the examinations at Reims and Rethel. Attendance at classes, one hour a day until the age of sixteen, is compulsory for young male and female workers.

MUTUAL AID SOCIETY OF VAL-DES-BOIS.

First half-year 1890.

DEBIT

Opening balance, debit	565.90 fr.	
Sickness allowances:		
1,404 days for men, amounting to	1,572.85 fr.	
942 days for girls, amounting to	579.25	2,152.10
Supplementary allowance for accidents		125.30
Doctor	750.00	
Midwife, 9 confinements	135.00	
Medicines	636.15	1,521.15
Burial expenses		227.25

11. They are at present attended by 305 children or adults.

Accident insurance premiums	1,064.20	
Share of the firm of Harmel frères	579.25	484.95
Sundries: Printed matter		25.50
		5,102.15 fr.
CREDIT		
Members' subscriptions	3,781.20 fr.	
Subscriptions of honorary members, Messrs Harmel frères	100.00	
Gift from Messrs Harmel frères	1,000.00	
Gift from Messrs Harmel frères, for a supplement of 5 fr. for the care of young mothers	45.00	
Disciplinary fines of the mill	25.75	
From the Insurance Company for the injured	125.30	
Closing balance, debit at 30 June 1890	24.90	
	5,102.15 fr.	

L — COOPERATIVE JOINT-STOCK COMPANY

(Article 8 of the Internal Regulations.)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting on the 1st Thursday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

1 The Good Father, *Honorary President*.

2 Harmel Félix, *President*.

4 Terneaux Florentin, *Manager* (Bakery).

5 Pilardeau Emile, *Deputy Manager* (Butcher's Shop).

37 Béchard Athanase, *Deputy Manager* (Direct Purchases).

15 Sacotte Adolphe, *Secretary*.

14 Scherrer Charles, *Internal Council*.

19 Andry Emile, *Delegate for the Butcher's Shop*.

38 Aubry Dyonisse.

3 Champion François.

24 Féry Constant, *Delegate for the Butcher's Shop*.

11 Jolivet Alfred.

8 Varlet François, *Delegate for Direct Purchases*.

39 Périn Jules.

The Cooperative Joint-Stock Company of the Christian Corporation of Val-des-Bois, with variable capital, was formed on 6 October 1879; it is managed by a Board of Directors appointed in accordance with the Statutes. The capital is 20,000 fr., divided into 200 shares of 100 fr., of which 10,650 fr. has been paid up.

It is established under the law of 1867.

Its purpose was to set up a bakery and a shop for clothing, footwear, linen, hosiery, etc.

Later the Company had to set up a butcher's shop.

The Board of Directors meets once a month, and more often if useful. The Manager reports on the Company's operations and sets out what is needed for buying, selling and the contracts to be con-

cluded. He obtains authorisation for expenditure. Every half-year he takes an inventory, draws up the balance sheet and proposes the distribution of the profits.

The Company gives its shareholders 6 per cent interest, plus one eighth of the profit, which has yielded a dividend of 4.50 per cent, making 10.50 per cent a year.

The cooperators receive seven eighths of the profits, which have yielded on average 5 per cent of the amount of their purchases.

Since its foundation the Company has built up a reserve of 7,011.20 fr., which amounts, to within a few francs, to two thirds of the paid-up capital.

The profits made in ten years have amounted to 44,910.95 fr., more than six times the paid-up capital, if one considers that for four years this capital was only 3,325 francs. A splendid result, owed to the energy and devotedness of the members of the Board of Directors. Every week two of them are on duty.

The Cooperative Joint-Stock Company is divided into three distinct parts or sections: the Bakery, the Butcher's Shop and Direct Purchases. — Each of these three sections is the subject of a special chapter.

We give the general table of the turnover and results of the whole Company over the last ten years. It will be easy to work out the annual averages from it:

Dates

	TURNOVER			General profit	Interest	Dividends	Corporative bonus	Reserve	Doubtful debts and works	Sundry gifts
	Bakery	Direct Purchases	Butcher's Shop							
30 Sept. 1880	29,100.50	–	–	2,248.85	99.75	139.65	990.80	131.10	–	887.55
31 March 1881	27,920.10	–	–	2,219.15	99.75	139.65	982.40	159.00	231.05	607.30
30 Sept. 1881	24,397.20	–	–	1,512.20	99.75	119.70	838.50	450.15	–	4.10
31 March 1882	27,474.70	–	–	916.00	99.75	93.10	653.95	65.90	–	3.30
30 Sept. 1882	27,459.45	–	–	523.50	99.75	46.55	319.90	55.40	–	1.90
31 March 1883	23,544.10	–	–	774.90	99.75	73.15	535.70	63.60	–	2.70
30 Sept. 1883	21,070.05	–	–	99.75	99.75	–	–	–	–	–
31 March 1884	21,841.70	11,784.65	–	2,043.65	174.45	111.60	837.65	813.60	–	106.35
30 Sept. 1884	22,526.05	24,223.15	–	3,629.80	319.50	255.60	1,761.20	1,284.40	–	9.10
31 March 1885	22,118.90	28,234.55	–	3,786.30	319.50	276.90	1,909.50	1,070.50	–	209.90
30 Sept. 1885	23,635.80	26,006.70	–	4,400.25	319.50	287.55	1,915.95	1,567.05	200.00	110.20
31 March 1886	22,450.60	27,879.95	–	3,723.30	319.50	287.55	1,933.30	522.75	400.00	260.20
30 Sept. 1886	20,591.40	22,536.15	–	2,687.60	319.50	213.00	1,710.50	240.00	146.60	58.00
31 March 1887	22,398.35	27,618.75	–	3,751.35	319.50	287.55	1,942.90	411.20	180.00	610.20
30 Sept. 1887	25,090.20	21,657.30	–	3,457.15	319.50	276.90	1,887.95	646.90	166.00	159.90
31 March 1888	24,535.95	24,826.50	–	3,503.05	319.50	276.90	1,933.00	577.05	100.00	296.60

Dates

	TURNOVER			General profit		Interest	Dividends	Corporate bonus	Reserve	Doubtful debts and	Sundry gifts
30 Sept. 1888	23,833.50	23,400.45	27,844.60	1,801.75	319.50	138.45	992.80	197.50	–		153.50
31 March 1889	27,203.40	–	16,710.35	1,760.40	319.50	85.20	1,174.80	180.90	–	–	
30 Sept. 1889	29,660.55	–	22,447.70	1,821.50	319.50	159.75	1,055.10	262.15	–		25.00
31 March 1890	28,791.60	–	23,030.00	2,618.75	319.50	213.00	1,396.90	539.35	–		150.00
	495,644.10	238,168.15	90,032.65	47,279.20	4,706.70	3,481.75	24,772.80	9,238.50	1,423.65		3,655.80
Loss at 30 September 1883			821.20								
Works at the Bakery, September 1886			1,547.05	2,368.25				2,368.25			
				44,910.95	4,706.70	3,481.75	24,772.80	6,870.25	1,423.65		3,655.80
Reserve from the first half-year of 1880								140.95			
								7,011.20			

1. BAKERY.

The Bakery was set up on 6 October 1879. It was with the Bakery that the operations of the Joint-Stock Company began.

Before that time the Corporation had an approved baker who gave it back 5 per cent on sales of bread and undertook to supply bread of the first quality at 0.10 fr. per 3 kilos below the Reims prices.

The workers having had cause for complaint, the Cooperative Society founded a Bakery which, after some trial and error, has never ceased to give excellent results.

An agreement with the journeyman baker guarantees us $44\frac{1}{2}$ loaves of 3 kilos (that is, 133.5 kilos) per 100 kilograms of flour.

We give the table of operations and results for the last ten years:

Opening stock	Flour & Bran	Wood	Overheads	Labour	Profits	Dates	Sales	Loss	Closing stock	Cooperators
4,832.90	22,243.35	2,623.80	462.90	1,750.00	2,248.85	30 Sept. 1880	29,100.50 –		5,061.30	990.80
5,061.30	23,815.80	859.70	703.35	1,847.55	2,219.15	31 March 1881	27,920.10 –		6,586.75	982.40
6,586.75	18,369.20	804.00	624.05	1,534.85	1,512.20	30 Sept. 1881	24,397.20 –		5,033.85	838.50
5,033.85	27,058.55	758.00	918.20	1,747.35	916.00	31 March 1882	27,474.70 –		8,957.25	653.95
8,957.25	20,109.00	1,997.00	847.65	1,821.75	523.50	30 Sept. 1882	27,459.45 –		6,796.70	319.90
6,796.70	28,979.45 –		1,011.80	1,648.50	774.90	31 March 1883	23,544.10 –		15,667.25	535.70
15,667.25	9,130.15 –		1,185.35	1,864.75	99.75	30 Sept. 1883	21,070.05	821.20	6,056.00 –	
6,056.00	16,555.40	2,075.00	1,045.40	1,717.00	1,040.65	31 March 1884	21,841.70 –		6,647.75	490.90
6,647.75	15,510.15 –		1,353.65	1,556.80	1,026.10	30 Sept. 1884	22,526.05 –		3,568.40	931.95
3,568.40	18,957.90 –		1,124.35	1,822.35	1,298.30	31 March 1885	22,118.90 –		4,652.40	955.20
4,652.40	17,128.95	2,100.00	1,356.30	1,883.20	2,696.70	30 Sept. 1885	23,635.80 –		6,181.75	987.45
6,181.75	15,759.50	56.00	1,135.50	1,919.30	1,789.05	31 March 1886	22,450.60 –		4,390.50	895.15
4,390.50	17,680.00 –		1,264.95	1,755.45	1,349.05	30 Sept. 1886	20,591.40 –		5,848.55	825.65
5,848.55	15,413.25	940.35	1,159.65	1,884.00	2,019.85	31 March 1887	22,398.35 –		4,867.30	970.35
4,867.30	17,775.20	70.00	1,102.00	1,864.60	2,272.10	30 Sept. 1887	25,090.20 –		2,861.00	1,044.15
2,861.00	22,338.50	2,401.50	1,359.25	1,979.15	2,225.85	31 March 1888	24,535.95 –		8,629.30	1,066.60

Opening stock	Flour & Bran	Wood	Overheads	Labour	Profits	Dates	Sales	Loss	Closing stock	Cooperators
8,629.30	14,317.25 –		1,216.55	1,876.35	1,603.55	30 Sept. 1888	23,833.50 –		3,809.50	992.80
3,809.50	20,110.35	3,056.80	1,730.75	1,884.60	1,760.40	31 March 1889	27,203.40 –		5,149.00	1,174.80
5,149.00	22,999.90 –		1,797.10	1,956.55	1,821.50	30 Sept. 1889	29,660.55 –		4,063.50	1,055.10
4,063.50	21,281.15 –		1,689.50	1,857.70	2,618.75	31 March 1890	28,791.60 –		2,719.00	1,396.90
4,832.90	385,533.00	17,742.15	23,088.25	36,171.80	31,816.20	Ten years	495,644.10	821.20	2,719.00	17,108.25

M — 2. BUTCHER'S SHOP

DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Monthly meetings.

5 Pilardeau Émile, *Deputy Manager*.

15 Sacotte Adolphe, *Secretary of the Joint-Stock Company*, cité Malakof and cours de l'Usine.

9 Gentilhomme François, *Internal Council*, rue Camus.

19 Andry Emile, *Board of Directors*, rue des Vagériaux.

24 Féry Constant, *Board of Directors*, rue des Champs.

40 Brassel Joseph, cités Saint-Joseph and others.

41 Dufour Augustin, rue des Censes.

42 Dupuis Victor, chemin de Rethel.

43 Hallet Gustave, rue des Censes extension.

44 Leclère Jean-Marie, Thibault houses and surroundings.

45 Magis Maximilien, les Marais.

26 Pierret Joseph, le Pré.

20 Thiry Joseph, rue du Pont and rue de la Gare.

Before 1888 we had an approved supplier for meat. Like the others, he gave a rebate of 5 per cent on the meat sold.

The Board of Directors wished to try a cooperative Butcher's Shop. It was founded on 6 January 1888 and has always run to the satisfaction of the consumers, but not to the profit of the shareholders. The first three half-yearly inventories showed nothing but losses. We believe we have come to the end of our trials, thanks to an agreement made with our butcher which protects us against all ill fortune.

Twelve District Commissioners have been appointed by the Board of Directors; each of them is responsible for promoting the shop among those around him and for receiving the customers' complaints. Monthly meetings allow the Commissioners to make their reports in good time.

We give the accounts of the Butcher's Shop since its foundation:
BUTCHER'S SHOP

Opening stock	Purchases	Labour	Sundries	Profits	Dates	Sales	Hides. Tallow	Loss	Closing stock
–	25,820.60	1,954.65	2,739.35	–	30 Sept. 1888	25,374.75	2,469.85	590.75	2,079.25
2,079.25	15,419.85	900.00	1,083.95	–	31 March 1889	15,174.25	1,536.10	377.45	2,395.25
2,395.25	22,181.25	900.00	554.40	–	30 Sept. 1889	20,742.20	1,705.50	753.50	2,829.70
2,829.70	20,299.75	900.00	1,055.75	76.70	31 March 1890	21,902.50	1,127.50	–	2,131.90
–	83,721.45	4,654.65	5,433.45	76.70		83,193.70	6,838.95	1,721.70	2,131.90

N — 3. DIRECT PURCHASES — GOODS

(Article 8 of the Internal Regulations.)

COUNCIL

Meeting on the Friday before pay day, at 6.30 p.m.

37 Béchard Athanase, *Deputy Manager*.

41 Dufour Augustin, *Internal Council*.

15 Sacotte Adolphe, *Secretary*.

8 Varlet François, *Board of Directors*.

46 Peck Edouard.

31 Thiry Remy.

This section of the Joint-Stock Company has the task of buying and selling the goods most necessary to the worker, apart from those reserved to the approved suppliers. In its purchases it aims above all at good quality and low prices. To avoid considerable outlays of funds, it prefers to deal with suppliers who sell on consignment.

We give the accounts of this part of the Company. For various reasons it has had to stop for the time being; its resumption is on the agenda:

GOODS

Opening stock	Purchases	Overheads	Profits	Dates	Sales	Closing stock	Cooperators
–	14,506.80	750.00	1,003.00	31 March 1884	11,784.65	4,475.15	346.75
4,475.15	20,767.45	750.00	2,603.70	30 September 1884	24,223.15	4,373.15	829.25
4,373.15	27,155.10	1,050.00	2,488.00	31 March 1885	28,234.55	6,831.70	954.30
6,831.70	21,795.70	1,097.00	1,703.55	30 September 1885	26,006.70	5,421.25	928.50
5,421.25	27,795.00	1,225.25	1,934.25	31 March 1886	27,879.95	8,495.80	1,038.15
8,495.80	17,099.35	1,482.85	1,338.55	30 September 1886	22,536.15	5,880.40	884.85
5,880.40	25,140.95	1,236.25	1,731.50	31 March 1887	27,618.75	6,370.35	972.55
6,370.35	17,857.75	1,633.80	1,185.05	30 September 1887	21,657.30	5,389.65	843.80
5,389.65	22,026.55	1,648.70	1,277.20	31 March 1888	24,826.50	5,515.60	866.40
5,515.60	16,786.80	1,898.85	198.20	30 September 1888	18,937.60	999.00 –	
			Transferred		4,462.85		
–	210,931.45	12,772.70	15,463.00		238,168.15	999.00	7,664.55

O — REFRESHMENTS

(Article 10 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the Saturday after pay day, at 6.30 p.m.

47 Sonnet Ferdinand, *Secretary*.

8 Varlet François, *Internal Council*.

48 Lecoq Léandre, *in charge of Refreshments*.

14 Scherrer Charles.

49 Périn Martin.

35 Raux Ernest, *Delegate of the Fire Brigade*.

32 Mangin Armand, *Delegate of the Fire Brigade*.

50 Fournier Auguste, *Delegate of the Musicians*.

20 Thiry Joseph, *Delegate of the Musicians*.

The Refreshments Committee is made up of nine members, appointed by the Internal Council. It meets on the Saturday after the fortnightly pay day. It is responsible for buying and selling wine, beer and liqueurs, either to be consumed in the Union hall or to be taken home. In its purchases it strives to provide wholesome drinks; in its sales it seeks to favour the consumer, so that he is better treated than in the cafés of the locality.

Every six months, through the Corporative Fund, the profits are paid over to the Internal Council, to help it meet its expenses (lighting costs, outings and festivities). The turnover of this section amounted in 1888 to 9,710.30 fr., and the profit produced to 568.75 fr.; in 1889, to 9,550.50 fr., and the profit to 653 fr.

P — HOSTEL

(Article 9 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the 1st Thursday of the month.

51 The Dear Brother Director, *President.*

52 Guilloteau Hyacinthe, *Secretary.*

53 Courtois Ernest, *Internal Council.*

54 Labbé Henri.

55 Magnier Paul.

56 Sambucucci François.

57 Corvisier Stéphane.

The Hostel Council, whose meeting is fixed for the first Thursday of each month, looks after the young men who live away from their families and board with the Brothers.

Its aim is to guide these young men along the path of duty, while allowing them wholesome recreation in the moments that work leaves them. Through one of the boarders, the Hostel Council receives their wishes and grants them as far as possible; each of them may turn to a member of the Council with any complaints he may have to make, and these requests are always given serious consideration.

Q — APPROVED SUPPLIERS

(Article 6 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the Wednesday after pay day, at 6.30 p.m.

58 Déroche Jean-Baptiste, *Secretary*.

48 Lecoq Léandre, *Internal Council*.

8 Varlet François.

59 Dupont Jean-Baptiste.

60 Laporte Léon.

61 Rudler Charles.

Since the Corporation could not stock every article itself, it has taken on approved suppliers; and through this institution it has let the tradesmen of the district share in the benefit.

The approved suppliers are shopkeepers who sell directly to the members in return for a rebate fixed by contract, in exchange for cash payment. By cash payment is meant purchases paid for within the month. The rebate is not given directly to the buyer, but is credited to his corporative passbook.

The approved suppliers may not change the prices of their goods without notifying the Council at least eight days in advance. They must post up the new prices in the usual places for notices.

At present our approved suppliers are: a grocer and haberdasher, two pork butchers, and a dealer in eggs and poultry.

The Council keeps samples of goods in order to check and compare prices and qualities. It inquires about the prices at the Établissements économiques of Reims and in the surrounding area, so as to obtain the lowest prices. Finally, it is called upon to check deliveries, and it receives all complaints on this subject.

The neediest father of a family is served just as well as the best-paid clerk, for the supplier knows that he is being watched and that the poor are particularly protected. Now, however little a supplier

cares about sales to a poor worker, he shows himself full of respect for a clientele of twelve hundred consumers.

R — GENERAL ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

(Articles 11 to 29 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the 2nd Thursday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

4 Terneaux Florentin, *Treasurer, Secretary.*

10 Esqui Emile, *Assistant Treasurer, Internal Council.*

47 Sonnet Ferdinand, *School Savings Bank.*

5 Pilardeau Emile, *People's Secretariat.*

19 Andry Emile.

3 Champion François.

28 George Edouard.

49 Périn Martin.

36 Reimbeau Emile.

The General Accounts Committee, appointed by the Union Council, is responsible for all the accounts of the entire Corporation. Its administration comprises seven branches: the Corporative Fund, the Corporative Patrimony, the Corporative Bonus, the Savings Banks, the Provident or Pension Fund, the Advances and Loans Fund, and the People's Secretariat.

I. — CORPORATIVE OR UNION FUND.

This institution has two quite distinct purposes: supervision and management.

a) The *supervision* of the budgets of the associations and institutions. On the receipts side, these budgets are made up of the employers' gifts, the workers' subscriptions or payments, the profits or bonuses of various institutions, the proceeds of concerts, lotteries and subscriptions, etc. The expenditure side contains the sums foreseen and an estimate of the unforeseen ones.

b) The *management* comprises the collection of receipts and the payment of expenses. Payment is made on supporting vouchers (endorsed by the Secretary and the President of the institution, some-

times by all the Councillors, as in the Mutual Aid Society); whoever acts as *treasurer* (*man or woman*) in each institution has a cash book in which receipts and expenses are entered as they occur. In this way each Council always knows its financial position; at the same time no expense can be made irregularly, and material losses resulting from negligence or disorder are avoided.

We give a table of the budgets:

ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE WORKS OF THE VAL.

	Sundry receipts, Bonus, Collections, etc.	Workers' Subscriptions	Employers' Grant	Total
Fundamental Associations				
A. — <i>Men's Assoc., Int. Council:</i>	From refreshm. 600	600	800	2,150
Men's journey to Reims for Our Lady of the Factory			150	
B. — <i>Little Circle</i>		75	150	225
C. — <i>St Aloysius Gonzaga</i>			25	25
D. — <i>St Anne:</i>				905
Sale and present. of the children			225	
Charity meet. (ladies' subs.)			480	
Hot-water wash- house, 0.10 fr. per fortn. and fam.		200		
E. — <i>Children of Mary:</i>			685	685
Outings	225			

Sales	100			
Banquet	110			
Sundries	250			
F. — <i>Holy Angels</i>		150		150
G. — <i>St Philomena</i>		50		50
Institutions				
J. — <i>Fire Brigade</i>		100	180	280
<i>Carried forward</i>	600	975	2,895	4,470
<i>Brought forward</i>	600	975	2,895	4,470
K. — <i>Mutual Aid:</i>				11,020
Regular payment		7,800	1,720	
Extraordinary relief			1,000	
Schools: Infant school (prize-giving)			100	
Boys —			200	
Girls —			200	
Societies				
S. — <i>Youth Society</i>	Int. Council 100			100
T. — <i>Good Reading:</i>				2,950
Subscriptions		2,800		
Good Father			150	
U. — <i>Instrumental Music</i>	Int. Council 420			420
V. — <i>Choral Society</i>	Int. Council 50			50
X. — <i>Orchestra</i>	Int. Council 150			625

	Sundries 150			
	Hon. memb. 325			
Y. — <i>Gymnastics</i>		60	50	110
Z. — <i>Dramatic Section</i>	Sundries 225			225
AA. — <i>Rifle Club</i>	Sundries 170			170
Works of Piety				
AB. — <i>Conf. of St Vincent de P.:</i>	Collections 100			1,200
Family Fund (payments)			300	
do. capital 4,500 (interest)			225	
do.	Lottery 500			
do.	Coop. Soc. 75			
The poor			600	600
AD. — <i>Third Order:</i>	Collections 15		10	2,125
Seminary costs (children of the mill)			2,100	
AF. — <i>Rosary Association</i>			50	50
AG. — <i>Confraternity of St Joseph</i>	Collections 85		10	95
AH. — <i>Apostleship of Prayer:</i>				600
First Communion at the Val			150	
Retreat of the mill workers at Braisne			450	
Totals	2,965	11,635	10,210	24,810

N.B. — These tables do not include the costs of the chapel and the schools, nor the Provident Fund, these charges being borne exclusively by the employers.

II. — CORPORATIVE PATRIMONY.

The corporative patrimony is an inalienable common property, accumulated to ensure the perpetuity and independence of the Corporation. It is a true reserve, such as prudence advises in any long-term undertaking. It is touched only in extraordinary circumstances. If in time a large sum can be built up, it may be used to found a new institution. In any case, nothing may be spent from it without the consent of the Union Council.

It is fed: 1. by a gift from the Cooperative Society and the Consumer Society at each inventory; 2. by the 5 per cent rebate granted by the approved suppliers on the deductions made from families not belonging to the Corporation; 3. by the 5 per cent rebate asked of creditors on the deductions made on their behalf from families who wish to pay their debts; 4. by any gifts and legacies that may be made.

III. — CORPORATIVE BONUS.

The corporative bonus is a rebate made by the approved suppliers and by the Cooperative Society. By a decision of 12 May 1878, taken in General Assembly, this rebate is placed in the Savings Bank until the holder has reached his fiftieth year; every half-year it grows by its interest, calculated at 5 per cent a year. It can be repaid before the age of 50 only on the advice of the Union Council, in case of departure, death or permanent disability. Those over 50 may draw it; but most of them have chosen to go on leaving it as a reserve for their old age. Large families, whose life is hard and who have to be helped by the Family Fund, nonetheless enjoy this reserve, which every year swells the parents' small savings; several have passed five hundred francs,

which grow every day. This sum will come in very handy when their children are grown up and found homes of their own in turn¹².

We consider the bonus and its compulsory investment more advantageous than any of the other institutions, because they lead every family to have some savings or other; whereas voluntary deposits require an energy and a spirit of foresight that can never be made general. To shelter this sacred reserve from creditors, we have declared it non-transferable and exempt from seizure. A single exception is made in case of departure from the mill, and only to repay the Cooperative Society.

The bonus is usually 5 per cent. It is fixed by agreements with the suppliers, and for the Cooperative Society by the General Assemblies. The corporative passbook, issued to the families who belong to the Corporation, is brought up to date every half-year for the corporative bonus.

IV. — SAVINGS BANK.

The factory worker has great difficulty in saving; his wages are exposed to the greed of those who live off his earnings (shopkeepers, publicans, etc.). Hardly does he have his fortnight's money in his hand when he is besieged by offers so tempting that he would have to be a hero to resist them. He therefore needs to be protected in order to save.

First of all, in order to draw up the household budget, the mother must be able to prevent the wages from being scattered; that is why we have introduced family pay slips, containing the detailed accounts of each member of the family; the sums thus totalled are handed to the father or to whoever he designates. The second means is cash payment, which truly multiplies the wage; the economic institutions

12. A family with an annual bonus of 25 fr. would reach in 25 years a capital of 1,230 fr.; a bonus of 50 fr. would form a sum of 2,460 fr.; a bonus of 100 fr. a year would give 4,922 fr. over the same period of 25 years.

are organised for this purpose: they prevent the debts that grow in the shadows and one day rise up, threatening and terrible, at the risk of discouraging the worker and casting him into irremediable pauperism. The third means is the option of leaving at the mill office whatever one wishes to save; this avoids the real difficulty there is in carrying a coin to the Savings Bank past the pitfalls of which we have spoken. Finally, the mill encourages deposits by paying 5 per cent interest on the smallest sums. The Accounts Committee also offers its advice on investing savings once they have reached a certain amount.

Thanks to these various means, blessed by God, and to the stability brought by the Associations, we have achieved very considerable yearly savings.

The *School Savings Bank* is responsible for collecting, at the infant school, at the schools and in the Associations of young men and of girls, the small savings that the children can make out of their Sunday money; in this way we seek to instil the habit of saving from an early age and to keep it up as they grow older.

The Corporative Bonus section of the Savings Bank receives, as we have said, the bonuses of holders who have not reached the age of 50.

Here is the table of the three Banks over the last ten years:

Years	Savings Bank	School Bank	Corporate bonus	Total	Average % of wages paid	Depositors S. B.	Depositors Sch. B.	Depositors C. B.	Depositors Total
Year 1880	37,362.40	2,762.90	3,784.65	43,909.95	10.40%	89	174	103	366
Year 1881	18,971.15	2,444.80	2,777.70	24,193.65	5.73%	89	170	103	362
Year 1882	33,417.45	3,013.50	3,189.55	39,620.50	9.12%	94	168	145	407
Year 1883	35,433.95	3,108.20	2,469.25	41,011.40	8.99%	103	182	164	449
Year 1884	33,421.90	2,901.70	2,675.25	38,998.85	8.39%	111	201	177	489
Year 1885	45,409.30	4,192.75	3,123.85	52,725.90	10.35%	106	206	160	472
Year 1886	53,572.75	2,370.75	2,855.60	58,799.10	12.79%	110	202	154	466
Year 1887	45,956.30	1,545.30	3,209.15	50,710.75	10.43%	120	190	159	469
Year 1888	51,860.90	1,227.70	2,245.85	55,334.45	11.92%	109	175	165	449
Year 1889	36,938.55	984.80	1,798.05	39,721.40	8.75%	104	154	166	424

Most of these sums are invested either in purchases of property or in securities, as the firm can keep only a limited amount for each depositor.

Years

Savings Bank	392,344.65
School Bank	24,552.40
Corporate bonus	28,128.90
Total	445,025.95 ¹³
Average % of wages paid	9.71%
Depositors S. B.	103
Depositors Sch. B.	182
Depositors C. B.	150
Depositors Total	435

V. — PROVIDENT FUND.

This Fund, provided entirely by the employers, produces an income devoted to giving a pension to the workers who have more than 30 years of service in the firm and can no longer work. The pensions are proposed to the Professional Council by the Committee.

We are studying the means of completing this institution with individual pensions from the State Fund. The payments would be made, for the workers' share, either from part of the corporative bonus or in some other way. Retirement pensions, which could secure the independence of elderly parents, would be of the greatest service. In our setting, as long as the children work at the mill, the parents are cared for as they should be; but when the children scatter, or when the family leaves our family centre, the old people fall into a lamentable abandonment, and their last days pass in sorrow and destitution. So we shall count ourselves happy when we have succeeded in securing the livelihood and security of elderly parents.

VI. — ADVANCES AND LOANS FUND.

Cash payment may be considered the greatest boon for working-class families. This economic reform leads to saving and brings genuine comfort; whereas buying on credit breeds waste, poverty and a true slavery, for the debtor no longer has any freedom with regard to his seller, and the latter can take any liberty with him.

Two obstacles stand in the way of cash payment: the existence of previous debts, which take away freedom, and the prospect of illness, which would require advances in order to avoid credit. The two objections have been resolved in the following way:

The *payment of debts* is made by the Treasurer of the General Accounts, who draws up the list and the amount of the debts with the head of the family. The latter undertakes to leave a fixed sum out of his wages each fortnight or each month. The Treasurer in turn binds

himself, in the name of the Corporation, towards each of the creditors, for a certain percentage each quarter, until notice to the contrary. As long as the family keeps its promises, the Corporation keeps its own; if the head of the family ceased to honour his engagements, the Treasurer would immediately write to each of the suppliers to recover his freedom. Thus the Corporation never gives more than it receives. As for the debtor, most often the savings resulting from cash payment help his repayments considerably, and he can free himself without its really costing him much. How many families have thus escaped from the most cruel difficulties, passing in time from the condition of insolvent debtors to that of small capitalists!

Advances. — When a worker is in some accidental hardship or when, in the summer and winter seasons, the family's clothing has to be renewed, he applies to the Committee, which studies the matter and decides on the advance that can be made and the period within which it must be repaid without interest. It is a true loan on trust, since there would be a loss for the Corporation, and consequently for the comrades, if it were not all repaid. Guarantees are therefore required, among which good conduct is the most important. Despite all precautions, death or departure may make a borrower insolvent; to provide for this eventuality, the Joint-Stock Company has a special reserve for doubtful debts.

VII. — PEOPLE'S SECRETARIAT.

The purpose of the People's Secretariat is to get the worker out of all the difficulties in which he may find himself. For marriage, the necessary documents are obtained, free of charge when possible, with the help of the Society of St Francis Regis. A member of the Committee has had himself accepted as a tax assessor, so as to be able to resist the constant increase of taxes which, in our democratic society, manages to reach the very least of the proletarians. The settlement of small inheritances or of jointly owned property is no longer im-

possible or ruinous, thanks to the advice given, the letters written and the steps taken. If a brawl, an offence against the excise or the customs, or some accident exposes an honest young man to the police court, a way is found, often to avoid it, always to lessen the penalty. Fire and life insurance are obtained on the best possible terms. If a death occurs and a family council is needed, it is carefully prepared by a Member of the Committee, who even agrees to sit on it; he makes the declarations of succession if need be and strives to spare the family expense and trouble. In a word, there are no events or circumstances of life for which the worker cannot usefully call on the help of the Corporation. He will always find the employers and his comrades ready to be of service to him.

III.

PRESERVATION SOCIETIES

To restore to the home harmony and that wholesome cheerfulness which is its charm: such is the purpose of these societies. They give festivities in which all can take some part; they keep away the harmful influences of the bad press and of dangerous pleasures by means of sound reading and decent recreation.

It will be understood that such institutions are aimed above all at young men; however, the help of mature men is not neglected, who pass on to the young the devotedness they themselves once received.

S — YOUTH SOCIETY

(Article 4 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meetings on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

62 Harmel Léon, *Honorary President*.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

53 Courtois Ernest, *Internal Council*.

55 Magnier Paul, *Treasurer*.

64 Ladame Armand.

54 Labbé Henri, *Secretary*.

65 Gendarme Justin, *Deputy Librarian*.

66 Gérard Alphonse.

67 Glatigny Louis.

68 Gillet Théodore.

69 Abraham Constant, *Outings*.

70 Pierret Edmond, *Indoor games*.

71 Fèvre Henri.

72 Mailier Jules, *Outdoor games*.

73 Lanotte Victor.

In the Men's Association there are about a hundred young men. They have more leisure than the fathers of families and at the same time they are exposed to far more dangers. This is what led to the organisation of the Youth Society. It is placed under the patronage of St Michael, whose feast it celebrates solemnly on 29 September or the following Sunday. It has its own organisation and its special meetings. This section is the nursery of all the recreational societies (music, drama, etc.).

Several evenings of the week and the whole of Sunday are devoted to games. We consider that games are necessary to the young for their physical and moral development; they train them in the union of minds and hearts; they give liveliness and cheerfulness; the mutual affection they develop is one of the charms of life. This is therefore a

point that calls for the attention of chaplains and directors, for whom these gatherings are excellent opportunities to make themselves loved and to do good.

Its Council performs the office of the Council of Dignitaries in the Workers' Circles. It keeps up the spirit of devotedness among the young, and it is responsible for organising festivities, outings, games and amusements. One Councillor sees to the indoor games, another to the outdoor games; all of them, by their liveliness, try to make the society pleasant, so as to attract their comrades and keep them away from dangerous company. In this way they preserve for them the most precious of treasures, that of innocence, which opens hearts and keeps in them an unalterable cheerfulness; that is the true beauty which shines on the face of the young Christian man.

T — GOOD READING SECTION

(Article 7 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the 2nd Thursday of each month, at 6.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *President*.

57 Corvisier Stéphane, *Librarian*.

65 Gendarme Justin, *Deputy Librarian*.

52 Guilloteau Hyacinthe, *Secretary*.

35 Raux Ernest.

11 Jolivet Alfred, *Internal Council*.

7 Aulner Léon.

58 Déroche Jean-Baptiste.

61 Rudler Charles.

28 George Edouard.

15 Sacotte Adolphe.

This section is governed by Councillors appointed by the Internal Council. It looks after the library, which has four hundred volumes, lent out on Sundays and Thursdays. In addition, a subscription to the circulating library established in the diocese makes it possible to renew the books it supplies as often as desired.

It was formed especially for the circulation of newspapers. The poisoning of minds brought about by the bad press has the gravest consequences, not only from the social and religious point of view, but from the point of view of families. For this unwholesome reading brings into homes the break-up that results from vice, the discord engendered by impiety, and the revolts that are the fruit of contempt and derision systematically heaped upon fatherhood, old age and holy things.

It has adopted the following newspapers: 1. *La Croix* of Paris and *La Croix* of Reims, 210 subscribers; these two papers together provide eighteen issues per fortnight for 35 centimes; 2. *Le Petit*

Moniteur, 13 subscribers, 1.50 fr. a month; 3. *Le Courrier des Ardennes*, 8 subscribers, 1.25 fr. a month.

L'Ouvrier and the *Veillées des Chaumières* each have 240 subscribers, making 480 in all, at 5 centimes a week.

In short, the Good Reading Society sells each year:

Daily papers.... 101,650

Weekly papers 25,000

126,650 copies.

As the average number of people reading the same copy is at least four, one can judge the good that is done. The Council is happy to note the increase in subscribers who understand that good reading is the health of the mind, whereas bad reading is the plague of the home.

U — INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

(Article 24 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meetings on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

2 Harmel Félix, *President*.

7 Aulner Léon, *Director*.

74 Ladame Léon, *Bandmaster*.

75 Martin Jules, *Secretary*.

11 Jolivet Alfred, *Internal Council*.

76 Evrard Emile.

77 Servais Joseph.

78 Dardart Aimé.

43 Hallet Gustave.

50 Fournier Auguste.

60 Laporte Léon.

20 Thiry Joseph.

The Val-des-Bois Band was founded in 1847. Its purpose is to provide young men with useful recreation and to add to the solemnity of religious and other festivities.

No one may belong to the Band without being a member of the Men's Association. Music lessons are given free of charge every day, from half past one to half past two, and from half past six to half past seven in the evening; full rehearsals take place twice a week, on Thursday and Sunday.

Every year the Society goes on outings, either to take part in competitions or to attend the Corpus Christi processions and the feast of Our Lady of the Factory in the Basilica of Saint-Remi. It plays every Sunday in the mill yards, at religious solemnities in the chapel, and at the corporative festivities in the various meeting rooms.

The Society receives a regular subsidy from the Internal Council, plus grants for the outings, in proportion to the size of the expense. The musicians who wish to buy instruments pay a very small sum

each fortnight, so that after several years the instruments are paid for without having caused the buyers any hardship.

The Band at present numbers 50 musicians and 5 pupils. It is made up mainly of young men; but the best musicians continue to belong to the Society after their marriage. Their devotedness is an encouragement to their younger colleagues.

The Council, appointed by the musicians and confirmed by the Internal Council, holds its fortnightly sessions, which are directed by the President or the Director.

V — CHORAL SOCIETY

(Article 24 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the 1st Friday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

2 Harmel Félix, *President*.

59 Dupont Jean-Baptiste, *Director*.

52 Guilloteau Hyacinthe, *Secretary*.

47 Sonnet Ferdinand, *Internal Council*.

7 Aulner Léon.

57 Corvisier Stéphane.

79 Liégeois Joseph.

There has always been a Choral Society at Val-des-Bois, though sometimes with a few interruptions. The present society was born in 1889, after one of these eclipses, at the call of the Good Father, who wished to see our religious solemnities recover their former splendour.

It now has 32 performers.

It made its debut on 14 July 1889, singing a Mass on the occasion of the ordination of Rev. Fr Gonzalve, whom we mourn today¹⁴.

Since that time, thanks to the efforts of its Director and the encouragement of its President, our little society, almost half of whose members cannot read music, has made constant progress and achieved a real success in the parish, on the occasion of the installation of the new parish priest.

Its rehearsals take place twice a week, on Tuesday and Saturday, at eight in the evening.

Its Council meets on the first Friday of each month; its budget is provided by the Internal Council.

14. Victor Harmel, in religion Father Gonzalve-Marie, a Franciscan, ordained on 15 June 1889, sang his first Mass at the Val on Sunday 14 July 1889. The Choral Society celebrated him again on Sunday 27 April 1890, on the occasion of his farewell. He then left for China, where he died on 4 September 1890, a victim of his devotedness.

X — ORCHESTRA

Meeting every two months.

2 Harmel Félix, *President*.

80 Delcour Alfred, *Director*.

54 Labbé Henri, *Secretary*.

47 Sonnet Ferdinand, *Internal Council*.

5 Pilardeau Emile.

37 Béchard Athanase.

39 Périn Jules.

The Orchestra, like its sister the Choral Society, was formed last year for the same occasion.

This society consists of 12 instrumentalists, including 5 violins, under the direction of its leader, Mr Delcour. It possesses instruments that are rarely heard in the countryside.

It has honorary members, whose subscriptions help it to meet the very high expenses that this kind of music requires.

It adds to the splendour of religious ceremonies by accompanying the Choral Society. It must give at least three concerts each year, which provide pleasant evenings for our great workers' family.

Thus in the month of February, at the time of the terrible influenza, it achieved a real success by organising a concert that enabled it to give more than 300 francs to the Conference of St Vincent de Paul.

Rehearsals take place every Wednesday, at eight in the evening.

The Council meets every two months, and also before and after each concert. It receives a grant from the Internal Council.

Y — GYMNASTICS SOCIETY

(Article 24 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the Wednesday after pay day, at 6.30 p.m.

81 Harmel Jules, *President*.

3 Champion François, *Vice-President, Internal Council*.

7 Aulner Léon, *Director*.

51 Dear Brother Director.

82 Ernst Frantz, *Secretary*.

83 Lacour Léon, *Instructor*.

84 Gillet Joseph.

85 Montagne Edouard.

86 Baudry Honoré.

87 Potier Victor.

The Gymnastics Society, founded in 1884, now has 26 members and 6 candidates. Its purpose is to exercise the young men who will one day be called to the colours, so that they find the beginning of their basic military training less hard. Practice sessions take place three times a week, on Tuesday and Friday at half past six in the evening, and on Sunday after High Mass.

The Instructor was chosen from among the members. He had a great liking for gymnastics, having belonged to the society from the beginning, and he perfected his skill during his military service. On his return, he was appointed instructor.

The funds are supplied by a grant from the Corporative Fund and by a monthly subscription of 25 centimes per member; every year one or more outings are made to the neighbouring villages; after a few exercises in the village square, a small snack is offered to the members at the society's expense.

The Gymnastics Society is placed under the patronage of St Stanislaus Kostka, whose feast is celebrated in the month of November.

A Council of six to eight members, elected by the members and ratified by the Internal Council, meets every fortnight, on Wednesday. It admits new members after making sure, through the delegate of the Internal Council, that they belong to the Men's Association; it arranges and prepares the sessions, outings and festivities, and sees to the application of the rules adopted by the Society.

Z — DRAMATIC SECTION

(Article 24 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the 1st Wednesday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

36 Reimbeau Émile, *Secretary*.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

53 Courtois Ernest, *Internal Council*.

75 Martin Jules.

64 Ladame Armand.

54 Labbé Henri.

The Dramatic Section, made up exclusively of young men, prepares three or four recreational evenings during the long winter evenings. In this it alternates with the Orchestra, so as to give one evening entertainment a month. The direction is reserved to the Rev. Father Chaplain, who chooses the plays, revises the comic songs and, in agreement with the Council, draws up the programme of the evenings. Care is taken to choose plays requiring many actors, so as to make use of as many willing helpers as possible.

It is in these small gatherings that the Chaplain wins the affection of the young men and can give them some encouragement, often necessary, to keep them on the path of duty.

The Council meets every month.

AA — RIFLE CLUB

(Article 24 of the Internal Regulations.)

Monthly meetings.

36 Reimbeau Emile, *Secretary*.

24 Fery Constant.

88 Aubry Edmond.

47 Sonnet Ferdinand, *Internal Council*.

52 Guilloteau Hyacinthe.

A useful complement to the Gymnastics Society is the Rifle Club. If the first makes the young man's limbs supple, the second teaches him to use the weapons that will one day be in his hands. Every year, a great shooting competition with the Gras rifle is organised in the month of July. Other shooting sessions take place on certain Sundays in summer.

The Councillors are former soldiers. They alone load the weapons, and they make the shooters take the regulation position. The Council meets every month in summer: it decides the dates on which the shooting will take place, appoints the Councillors on duty and sets the conditions to be imposed on the shooters.

The prizes won are distributed in the Union hall after the close of the competition.

This Society receives no grant and is maintained by the shooters themselves.

IV.

WORKS OF PIETY

Under this heading we place the institutions that have piety as their basis; but each of them has a particular social mission which truly brings it within the corporative organisation. Thus the Conference of St Vincent de Paul looks after the Family Fund, to make up for the inadequacy of wages; the Third Order brings its influence to bear on habits of simplicity and domestic order, while at the same time taking an interest in young men who intend to enter the ecclesiastical or religious state; the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Factory has taken on the mission of preserving the purity of the young; the Confraternity of St Joseph, that of watching over the sanctification of homes and of work, etc.; lastly, the Apostleship of Prayer is in charge of the chapel, closed retreats and everything concerning the public manifestations of religion.

Some of our readers will perhaps be surprised to see, among the responsibilities of the Councils, matters that seem to belong exclusively to the priest's province. No doubt, in the Corporation, the Chaplain loses none of his rights. But here, as in the exercise of the employers' authority, experience has shown us the usefulness of the workers' Councils. How, indeed, will the Chaplain, who may be new to the mill, know the traditions and the proprieties of his people? Will he not find precious light in the opinion of old workers who have been there for a great many years? By their seniority, they are the witnesses of the traditions; by their life in common with their comrades, they can point out what is best suited to the character, the needs and the habits of the workers.

Thus, in the old Confraternities, nothing was done in the chapels without the agreement of the Councils of the Confraternity.

Everything went in good order, since the zeal and initiative of the religious authority, informed by those concerned, could take practical measures adapted to the particular setting.

AB — CONFERENCE OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL AND FAMILY FUND

(Article 29 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on Sunday, after Mass.

7 Aulner Léon, *President*.

9 Gentilhomme François, *Vice-President, Int. Council*.

4 Terneaux Florentin, *Treasurer*.

37 Béchard Athanase, *Secretary*.

56 Sambucucci François, *Vice-Secretary*.

The purpose of the Conference of St Vincent de Paul is to develop among its members true piety, which shows itself in the most tender charity towards one's neighbour. Founded on 17 December 1877, it now has 21 active members and 10 honorary members. It meets on Sunday, after High Mass.

Its action is twofold: religious and social.

Religious action: *Visiting the poor*, regardless of their position with regard to the mill; as in all the Conferences, efforts are made to bring back to God ignorant people led astray by suffering, and to regularise irregular situations. Every year a certain number of children are clothed for their First Communion. Abandoned old people and the sick without resources are the special object of the brothers' solicitude. The feast of St Vincent de Paul is celebrated on a weekday by all the brothers, with the families who are assisted present; on the following Sunday, a large delegation spends the day at Reims, Charleville or Rethel, at the general meeting of the diocese, presided over by our Eminent Cardinal.

Social action: *Family Fund*. This Fund is administered by the brothers; its purpose is to help homes where there are many children and few wage-earners. It makes up, as far as possible, for the inadequacy of wages. If strict justice does not oblige anyone to pay

beyond the labour performed, humanity and the Christian law require that a man should be able by his work to meet the needs of his family. It is to achieve this end that the Family Fund was founded. An initial capital of 4,500 fr., which will later be increased by the generosity of the employers, provides a regular source through its income; in addition, the mill pays 300 fr. a year; lastly, a lottery completes the budget. Each fortnight the President receives the list of large families, with the wages stated and divided per head and per day. He can thus fix the relief with full knowledge of the facts. It is given in kind and taken to the homes by the members of the Conference.

Housing. — The Conference also concerns itself with housing from the point of view of morality, of healthiness and of the shortage of beds; it provides beds when necessary. The brothers see to it that families can have dwellings suited to the number of their members and provided with the rooms needed for separating the sexes. The ease with which they can enter their comrades' homes without arousing sensitivities enables them to render services that would be difficult for the employers.

AC — CONFRATERNITY OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

(Article 29 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the Thursday before the 1st Sunday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

81 Harmel Jules, *President*.

9 Gentilhomme François, *Internal Council*.

5 Pilardeau Emile.

37 Béchard Athanase.

30 Sacotte Léon.

3 Champion François.

89 Génisson Auguste.

15 Sacotte Adolphe.

32 Mangin Armand.

56 Sambucucci François.

The Confraternity of the Most Blessed Sacrament was erected in the chapel of Val-des-Bois in 1884. Its object is to provide adorers for the Blessed Sacrament exposed on certain days, and to foster devotion to the adorable Eucharist. It now has 80 members among the men and 130 among the women and girls.

The expositions of the Blessed Sacrament take place on the first Sunday of each month, on the three days of the Forty Hours, on the feast of the Sacred Heart, and on the day fixed for the Perpetual Adoration of the diocese. The brothers, divided into sections, keep a half-hour of guard fixed by the notices of convocation. These notices are distributed the day before by the heads of section; the latter are responsible for saying the rosary aloud and reading the act of consecration every half-hour. Most of the members receive Communion on the day of the Adoration.

The Nocturnal Adorations take place on the nights preceding the Forty Hours, the feast of the Sacred Heart and the Perpetual Adoration. The sections, joined by willing men, provide eight to ten adorers for each hour of the night. The time is divided between hymns and the recitation of the rosary, so as to ward off sleep.

In addition, every Thursday there is the exercise of the Holy Hour, from 8 to 9 p.m.

The Council, made up of the heads of section, meets on the Thursday before the Adoration. The Chaplain stirs up the eucharistic zeal of the Councillors and fixes the special intention for the following Sunday.

AD — THIRD ORDER OF ST FRANCIS

(Article 29 of the Internal Regulations.)

DISCRETORY

Meeting on the Thursday before the 1st Sunday of the month, at 1.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

81 Harmel Jules, *President*.

5 Pilardeau Emile, *Master of Novices*.

4 Terneaux Florentin, *Treasurer*.

7 Aulner Léon, *Secretary*.

The Third Order was truly the origin of religious action at Val-des-Bois. The entry of a few members of the family into it, on 17 August 1861, ensured the perseverance of our first attempts. A Fraternity was regularly established on 2 February 1865. We have spoken of the Fraternity of women; that of the men has 19 members and meets on the first Sunday of the month, after the Communion Mass.

The Third Order, following the thought of its holy Founder, has a twofold object: the sanctification of its members, and the improvement of the working-class setting in which it acts.

Its *inner action* is inspired by the Chaplain who, at the ordinary meetings, explains the rule in its spirit as well as in its positive obligations; he announces the feasts, indulgences and days of abstinence of the month, and he receives the novices and the professed. On Christmas Day, Easter Day, etc., the Chaplain gives the general absolution to the tertiaries at the Communion Mass.

Its *outward action* aims to spread among the population the true spirit of the Gospel. Voluntary poverty corresponds to simplicity of dress, moderation of desires and order in expenditure; mortification, to the acceptance of work, of hardships and of unavoidable privations;

temperance, practised and recommended by the tertiaries, tends to reduce the abuse of spirits, all too common in working-class circles; lastly, peace in families, an affectionate intervention to reconcile those who believe themselves enemies, and concord among all: such is the powerful aim of our brothers in their outward action.

They also take an interest in ecclesiastical and religious vocations, to procure for them the means to develop and reach their goal. The *Work of the Seminaries* is entrusted to them for the mill¹⁵.

The Discretory meets on the Thursday before the 1st Sunday of each month, at 1.30; it is responsible for governing the Third Order and keeping it in the spirit of its institution.

15. At present we have one novice with the Brothers, two young men at the Major Seminary, six at the Minor Seminary and four in an apostolic school; lastly, we have founded an aluminate in the mill, which has three pupils.

AE — CONFRATERNITY OF OUR LADY OF THE FACTORY

(Article 26 of the Statutes.)

Meeting on the 1st Wednesday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

1 The Good Father, *President*.

90 Gérard Joseph, *Internal Council*.

56 Sambucucci François, *Secretary*.

5 Pilardeau Emile.

10 Esqui Emile.

33 Kohler Jean-Baptiste.

91 Conrad Thiébaut.

46 Peck Edouard.

92 Lanotte Désiré.

19 Andry Emile.

22 Poncelet Edmond.

93 Pierret Nicolas.

The devotion to Our Lady of the Factory was born at Val-des-Bois. After the fire at our works, which occurred on Sunday 13 September 1874, a statue of the Blessed Virgin, set on a modest wooden base, was found intact together with the fragile paper lace that surrounded its humble pedestal. The fire had stopped there, sparing the annexe buildings that housed the preparing machines. This enabled us to keep most of our workers, by employing the women and girls in the preparing rooms, while the men worked on frames rented in a spinning mill a few leagues away.

The new buildings were blessed by His Eminence Cardinal Langénieux on Saturday 28 August 1875, the day after the close of the Congress of Reims. Four hundred members of the Congress, who had come for the occasion, attended the solemn blessing of the first

statue, under the title of Our Lady of the Factory, in the yards of the works, in the presence of the whole workers' family.

His Eminence at once sought from Rome the erection of the Archconfraternity of Our Lady of the Factory, whose seat was established in the Basilica of Saint-Remi. The feast is celebrated at Reims on the Sunday after the Assumption. A large deputation of our Corporation attends it, with its instrumental band.

Already, in many industrial towns of France, devotion to Our Lady of the Factory has been the starting point of the Christian reform of the workshops and the source of numerous favours.

Our Confraternity is affiliated to the Archconfraternity of Reims. In our chapel, the altar of Our Lady of the Factory is the object of special devotion and of touching tokens of it. The many ex-votos covering the wall bear witness to the gratitude of those whose prayers have been granted; at the Val, as everywhere the Blessed Virgin is especially honoured, confidence in this good Mother has produced true wonders. We celebrate her feast on the Sunday after 8 September (it is also the anniversary of the fire): in the morning, a general Communion Mass, then solemn High Mass; at four o'clock, a procession through the workshops and their outbuildings; in the evening at eight o'clock, a torchlight procession to the Lourdes grotto in the Sisters' garden.

Every Sunday, at the end of High Mass, the hymn is sung and then the prayer to Our Lady of the Factory is recited¹⁶.

The Council meets under the chairmanship of the Rev. Father Chaplain on the first Wednesday of the month. Its agenda is divided into three parts: to promote devotion to the Blessed Virgin, to watch over the working of the groups of ten, and to take care of the young men.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is shown especially by the exercises of the month of Mary, and by spreading holy pictures, medals and the *Annales de Notre-Dame de l'Usine*.

The **organisation of the groups of ten** is designed to obtain reciprocal services and constant mutual help. The leader of ten agrees to devote himself to the nine comrades assigned to him. He summons them to meetings, informs them of the importance and advantages of the institutions that exist or are to be founded, and renders them every possible service, whether in the difficulties of life or in their trade; it is a hierarchy of mutual help, in which, freely and with the discretion that gives services their value, the leader of ten holds himself at the disposal of his men in all circumstances.

The leaders of ten have special meetings; they are linked together by the members of the Internal Council who, besides their own group of ten, each look after two leaders of ten to help them in their duties.

16. Here is the prayer printed on the back of the holy picture:

"O Our Lady of the Factory, Mother of Employers and Workers, we consecrate to you today our persons, our families, our workshops and our country.

"Protect our work, defend us against all the dangers in the midst of which we live. Present us to Jesus, your divine Son; offer him our labours and our daily sufferings for the conversion of our brothers who have gone astray, so that they too may learn to know God, to love him and to serve him. May employers and workers, sanctified by your mercy, find again, in the restoration of the Christian Corporations, the union and prosperity that selfishness and impiety have taken from them.

"O Our Lady of the Factory, our Mother and our Sovereign, hear our prayers; and, after assisting us on this earth, receive us into the blessed fatherland. Amen.

"Our Lady of the Factory, pray for us."

Devotedness to the Young: The Councillors devote their care to gladdening our good Mother by protecting the purity of the young, that sweet flower which seems to belong only to heaven and which Mary came to bring to earth. They take pains to remove everything that may lead to evil, for example mixing and meetings that have escaped supervision, licentious talk or improper gestures, immoral newspapers. They encourage the societies for decent recreation; they follow the young men into the army in order to procure for them useful acquaintances in the garrison towns. And since Christian marriage is the crown as well as the safeguard of virtue, they make it easier as far as they can, sometimes by intervening with parents to remove objections that are not justified, sometimes by studying ways of helping girls to settle down. They study the economic or savings schemes that can provide modest but very useful dowries¹⁷. In this way they work to render families services of the first order, for the immorality of the young is the sorrow and the shame of parents, as well as the greatest grief of Christian hearts.

17. See, under the *Association of the Children of Mary*, the arrangements for dowries.

AF — ROSARY ASSOCIATION

(Article 29 of the Internal Regulations.)

Meeting on the 4th Wednesday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

3 Champion François, *Internal Council*.

52 Guilloteau Hyacinthe, *Secretary*.

61 Rudler Charles.

94 Lallemand Pierre.

69 Abraham Constant.

95 Debloudts Edouard.

96 Verlaine Jean-Baptiste.

97 Lefèvre Isidore.

98 Georgelet Emile.

70 Pierret Edmond.

The purpose of the Rosary Association is to respond to the urgent requests of Leo XIII by public and private prayers for the Church and for France. The Council meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month. It is in charge of the Confraternity, the Catechisms and the Pilgrimages.

Confraternity. — It now has about 100 members among the men and a greater number among the women and girls.

In order to ensure the constant recitation of the Rosary at Val-des-Bois, during Mass three decades of the rosary are said on Sundays and two decades on other days, with the mysteries announced. During the month of October, every evening at 6.30, a rosary is said before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, and on Sundays Vespers are replaced by the recitation of the whole Rosary with singing.

The Councillors form squads for the daily recitation of the Rosary, in portions suited to each person's time. They urge the brothers to celebrate the feasts of the Blessed Virgin and to attend the October

devotions regularly (at least according to the division by room indicated under the Men's Association). They spread the writings and pictures relating to this devotion, in particular the leaflets of the mysteries. They organise the distribution of the Perpetual Rosary tickets sent by the Apostleship of Prayer.

Each month, a meeting in the chapel enables the Chaplain to instruct his hearers on the benefits of the Rosary, to receive new members and to provide indulgenced rosaries to those who need them.

Catechisms. — Inspired by the spirit that presided over the establishment of the Rosary by St Dominic, the Council strives to spread religious instruction by stirring up the vigilance of parents so that their children attend the organised catechism classes punctually¹⁸, and by its members acting themselves as catechists to the young men who come to us without having made their First Communion¹⁹. Every three months, a public examination in the chapel before the parents enables the Council to reward those who know their catechism best.

Pilgrimages. — The Council also concerns itself with ways of making Pilgrimages easier, to Notre-Dame de Liesse, to Lourdes, and especially to Rome. For the latter, subscriptions are organised to make up half of the costs plus the lost wages, so that the family does not suffer from it. The pilgrim must save the other half of this total. In this way we were able to take 17 men to Rome in 1887 and 19 in 1889.

The Council, interpreting the workers' gratitude for the fatherly tenderness with which His Holiness Leo XIII has never ceased to overwhelm them, lets no opportunity pass of sending the Holy Father the good wishes of its filial piety.

18. Little catechism, from 7 to 9 years; — First Communion catechism, from 9 to 11 years; — catechism of perseverance, from 11 to 16 years.

19. This year we had six of them, aged from 16 to 22.

AG — CONFRATERNITY OF ST JOSEPH

(Article 26 of the Statutes.)

Meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

2 Harmel Félix, *President*.

51 Dear Brother Director.

9 Gentilhomme François.

30 Sacotte Léon, *Secretary*.

8 Varlet François.

45 Magis Maximilien.

31 Thiry Remy.

99 Vincent Joseph.

18 Nollet Jean-Baptiste.

100 Hotton Alexandre.

48 Lecoq Léandre, *Internal Council*.

75 Martin Jules.

St Joseph has always been honoured in a particular way at Val-des-Bois. As early as 1864 he had a small core of faithful devotees. It is almost the first devotion that the workers adopted, and they have remained faithful to it. The Confraternity was affiliated on 24 November 1864, at Beauvais.

Its Council meets on the second Wednesday of the month, at half past six in the evening. It sets itself a twofold action, religious and social.

From the religious point of view, the brothers work to develop the cult of their holy patron, in the workrooms and meeting rooms as well as in the families, especially during the month of March. They spread the pictures, books and annals relating to this devotion. At the twice-monthly meetings in the chapel, the Chaplain receives the brothers, invests them with the cord and reminds them of the many indul-

gences that can be gained. The daily devotions of the month of March bring together a great number of men every evening.

From the social point of view, the Councillors concern themselves with the sanctification of homes and of work. Taught by the Chaplain about the dignity of paternal authority and its duties, the necessity of maternal vigilance and of the obedience of children, the fruits of evening prayer said together, and the sweetness of peace and love in the home, they spread these ideas either by word of mouth or by small special tracts. They discreetly take an interest in the houses where there is neither crucifix nor holy picture, so as to offer them free of charge. They make it a duty to honour and help large families, either by themselves or through the established institutions²⁰. They watch over the religious family traditions: the presentation of children, the feast of First Communion, solemn reception into the Associations, the Mass for the departure of the conscripts, attended by all the workers who, in any capacity, are liable to belong to the army, a remembrance for young married couples, a religious family record book, a Mass on the day after the wedding for the newly married, a Mass in the week following a death, on a day convenient for the family, and a commendation for one year in the Sunday prayers from the pulpit.

For the sanctification of work, the prayer recited every Sunday at High Mass after the consecration sums up the programme of the Christian worker, by showing how fruitful his life of toil can be for

20. Custom has it that one of the employers is godfather to the tenth child.

reparation²¹. The Council sees to it that the morning prayer in the workshop is attended; it encourages the practice of making the sign of the cross before starting work, and the habit of burning candles or night-lights before the statues that stand in every workroom. When the worker's eyes meet the sacred image, the soul rises towards Heaven through the ceiling of the workshop, and eternal hopes light up and warm the heart.

21. Act of Reparation:

"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 repairing this twofold harm. We consecrate ourselves to it entirely.

"By Communion of reparation, we shall console you for the abandonment in which you languish.

"By attending Masses that are not of obligation, we shall ask you for 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 our actions have no value in themselves, but we shall pass them 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 our infidelities and our ingratitude; grant that, prostrate before you, we may make you special amends for 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 those vestibules of hell where souls are so easily lost. Raise up apostles of the factory, so that the workshop may become Christian again, and 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 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 sharing in your sufferings at the foot of the cross, became the Reparatrix of her race and the Mother of Christians. Amen."

AH — APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

(Article 26 of the Statutes.)

Meeting on the 2nd Thursday of the month, at 6.30 p.m.

63 Rev. Father Chaplain, *Director*.

81 Harmel Jules, *President*.

51 Dear Brother Director.

37 Béchard Athanase, *Secretary*.

11 Jolivet Alfred, *Internal Council*.

13 Charlier Jules.

101 Winé Joseph.

102 Gravisse Constant.

43 Hallet Gustave.

103 Incoul Odulphe.

68 Gillet Théodore.

The Apostleship of Prayer was established at Val-des-Bois on 6 March 1864. It is the *League of the Heart of Jesus*, to which the members consecrate themselves and whose devotion they spread. The Sacred Heart has always been the patron of the family; the chapel is placed under its name; its statue dominates the high altar, and the small stained-glass windows and the rose window depict its emblems. On the occasion of the second centenary of the Revelations of Paray-le-Monial, each of the Fundamental Associations was consecrated in turn to the Sacred Heart. The members were prepared by a triduum; before Communion they repeated together a formula suited to the family situation of the group. The whole month of June 1889 was taken up with these moving ceremonies, which ended on Sunday 7 July with the solemn consecration of the employers, the workers and the mill, before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on an altar of repose in the largest of the workshops. Plaques recalling this event are

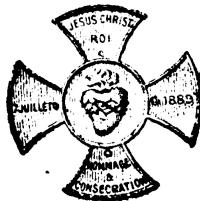
placed on the doors of all the dwellings, which are thus put under the protection of the Sacred Heart²².

The Council meets on the second Thursday of the month, at half past six in the evening, under the chairmanship of the Chaplain. It is in charge of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, the Inner Association, the Chapel and the League of Retreatants.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart. — The Sacred Heart is the King and Master of the mill, of the Corporation and of the families. On the Friday of his feast there is a Low Mass with singing in the morning, and solemn Benediction in the evening; then adoration by night and by day from Saturday evening to Sunday evening; lastly, a week later, a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, at which the general consecration to the Sacred Heart is renewed, at the altar of repose set up in the mill. The daily devotions of the month of June are followed like those of the months of March and May. The first Friday of each month gives rise to the most moving expressions of devotion to the Sacred Heart: many Communion, an act of amends before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, solemn Benediction.

The Inner Association is so called because it keeps among its members a discretion that seemed necessary to us in order to preserve in the sacrifice all the fragrance of its spontaneity. It is made up of generous souls who offer themselves as voluntary victims for the salvation of the workers. There is no rashness in this offering; it is, after all, nothing but perfect and voluntary conformity to all that God

22. Model of the commemorative plaque:



desires of us²³. We have obtained from it the most moving fruits: sometimes insurmountable obstacles have been smoothed away in a providential manner, sometimes the most difficult conversions have seemed to come about of their own accord. As for the members, experience allows us to assure them that those who are willing to fill up in themselves what is lacking in the passion of Our Lord, for the salvation of their brothers, may be sure of dying in a supernatural joy that changes the greatest sorrow here below into an ineffable consolation.

The Chapel. — Through the care of Cardinal Gousset and his venerable successors, the chapel has been endowed with the privileges

23. Act of Offering:

“O my God, allow me to offer you my sufferings and my life for the salvation of souls, especially for the members of my family and for the conversion of the workers.

“With these intentions, I undertake to ask you every day to accept me as a voluntary victim, and to lead me according to your good pleasure, by the way of crosses and sufferings, in the footsteps of your divine Son.

“Agonising Heart of Jesus, victim of love for us, deign to unite me to your holy dispositions, above all in the Garden of Olives and on the cross, and to offer me with you as a holocaust.

“Compassionate Heart of Mary, be favourable to me.”

necessary for the sanctification of the workers²⁴.

On Sunday, Communion Mass at half past six: hymns, reading of the Gospel, a short instruction, three decades of the rosary, prayers before and after Communion, aloud and together. High Mass at nine o'clock: reading of the Gospel at the pulpit announcements, when the workers in the army, the sick and the dead are commended to prayer; a sermon suited to the congregation; blessed bread offered in turn; reading of the act of reparation (see under the Confraternity of St Joseph). At five o'clock, Vespers of the Blessed Virgin and Benediction. The chants are sung one verse by the men and another by the women and girls, with a spirit that gives our services a particular appeal; and so the congregation is always large. On weekdays, Mass at seven o'clock, with Communion by trade, attended by the school-children and by those who are able; prayers said aloud in turn by the

24. Letter from Cardinal Gousset to the Parish Priest of Warmérville:

"Reims, 6 November 1865.

"Father,

"When I authorised the Harmel family to build a chapel in the centre of their vast establishment of Val-des-Bois, my intention was to make it easier for the working population gathered there to fulfil their religious duties.

"It is therefore a chapel of ease in the proper sense, in which one may satisfy the obligation of hearing Mass on Sundays and feast days, receive the sacraments of penance and of the Eucharist, fulfil the Easter duty, teach the catechism to the children and admit them to First Communion.

"The chaplain attached to this chapel is in charge of the whole service.

"However, the baptisms, marriages and funerals of persons belonging to the establishment are reserved to the Parish Priest of Warmérville; it is for him to decide whether they are to be celebrated in this chapel or in the parish church. He must preside himself or delegate someone to take his place.

"This letter shall be kept in the archives of the parish, so that recourse may be had to it in case of need.

"Accept, Father, the assurance of my most affectionate devotedness.

"† Thomas, Card. GOUSSET, Archb. of Reims."

These concessions were confirmed in Rome by the rescript of 19 September 1873 and by that of 15 March 1880.

little boys and by the little girls, two decades of the rosary; in the evening, prayers; daily devotions during the four months of March, May, June and October; Benedictions in Lent and on weekday feasts.

The chapel renders many important services that only experience can make known and understood. One of the chief ones is *confession during working hours*. Everyone knows what almost insurmountable difficulties factory workers meet in going to confession after the day's work. If they are numerous, they are condemned to spend the greater part of the night in a cold church, after exhausting work in a scorching atmosphere. The mill chapel makes it possible to hear everyone's confession during the day, without production suffering from it; and when the evening bell announces the closing of the workshops, hundreds of men and women workers have been able to go to confession conveniently, both for themselves and for the priests devoted to this ministry. We cannot conceal that it is to this facility that we must attribute the many Communion that gladden our hearts and the late vocations that, from time to time, come to light among our staff.

The Easter retreats and other retreats likewise take place during and immediately after work, without loss of wages and without real fatigue. The Easter Communion of the women on a Thursday and of the men on a Sunday brings together almost all the workers, even those who do not belong to the Associations. Lastly, everyone shares in the anxieties and sorrows of each, through the novenas and prayers said in the chapel for the sick and the dead, as well as for the various needs that families wish to commend.

First Communion in the chapel is one of the favours most appreciated by working-class families. The most important act of life is accomplished in the moving conditions that are usually the privilege of the well-to-do classes. A retreat of five days, during which the children are completely withdrawn from their usual surroundings, provides a good preparation in a recollection so difficult at that age. The Low Mass of First Communion takes place at half past seven in

the morning; nothing is heard there but the fresh, pure voices of the children singing hymns or saying the usual prayers together. This year, four boys who were behind (they were from sixteen to twenty-one years old) joined the little first communicants, with a family simplicity that the chapel made natural. More than three hundred parents accompanied their children to the Holy Table. Each family had its places reserved, according to the number of its members, so that all could follow the communicants with their eyes as well as with their hearts.

At ten o'clock the Band led the children in procession to the chapel; the Choral Society and the Orchestra performed a brilliant Mass full of gladness. In the afternoon, at Vespers, the chapel was packed with parents, happy to find their reserved places again. The whole congregation, with hands raised, renews the baptismal promises with the children. The nearness of the mill allows all the parents, even those who are obliged to work, to attend the Mass of thanksgiving the next day.

When one has seen these moving ceremonies, one understands the benefits that our Archbishops have obtained for the workers by this signal privilege.

The League of Retreatants was founded in 1888; it is made up of those who have been at least once on a three-day closed retreat at Braisne (Aisne). It now has 56 members, who meet every month. Closed retreats have the effect of supernaturalising the workers, of making them understand the importance of their salvation and the necessity of devotedness. The Council strives to maintain these good dispositions and to support the resolutions taken: monthly Communion and mutual apostolate.

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May we be permitted, in closing these Notes, to give thanks to Our King Jesus Christ. He alone revealed to the world the splendours of

human dignity and the sweetness of solidarity. Wherever He does not reign, man is despised by man, and the weak are oppressed by the strong. In the measure in which His reign declines among us, in that measure rises contempt for the human soul, and the scandalous violations of justice of which we are witnesses multiply. On the other hand, as could be seen in the towns where it has been tried, the restoration of the social reign of Jesus Christ in the workshops has re-established: among the employers a brotherhood unknown before, among the workers the most tender charity, and lastly, between employers and workers a Christian familiarity mingled with respect, but above all with confidence and mutual devotedness.

The world of labour tends to become a den of brigandage, where competing employers crush one another; where the workers are oppressed by a few ringleaders who claim to be their saviours; where the members of the workers' family, employers and workers, struggle relentlessly in a fratricidal war.

Glory to Jesus Christ, emancipator of humanity, glorifier of manual labour, whose dignity and importance He revealed. Let us proclaim as our own the motto of the Popular Lectures of Reims:

CHRIST AND LIBERTY.

21 September 1890.

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