Pierre-Joseph Proudhon
The Celebration of Sunday
1839

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sion of faith. But the time of the great reformers, like that of the founders of religions, is gone forever. It is up to societies to fend for themselves. Let them await their salvation only at their own hands. Men never lack truth, but they often lack the good faith and courage to recognize and follow it.

As for myself, I have not placed my confidence in anything new under the sun: I have faith in some ideas as old as the human race. All the elements of order and happiness, preserved by imperishable traditions, exist. It is only a question of recognizing the synthesis, the method of application and development. How has humanity still not succeeded in this? It is up to history to teach us. I could say something of it as well as anyone; but, in my opinion, the philosophy of history will exist only when the social problem is resolved. Truth is necessary to give the definitive reason for error. But can that truth itself be found other than in unity? It is when the most furious antagonism has been succeeded by general equilibrium, when the struggle of all the doctrines has given birth to the one and indivisible science, when the religions and philosophies have been joined at the altar of truth, that we will be able to shout: The times of testing are over; the golden age is before us! Yes, humanity will know that it has entered its legitimate path, when, looking upon itself, it can say: One sole god, one sole faith, one sole government, *Unus Deus, una fides, unum imperium.*

could make them suspect that they are also equals on earth, will traverse all the degrees of a materialist and pantheist superstition; and when they have been persuaded that God is All and that all is God, then they will return to fetishes and manitous. They will worship, as they once did, the trees and stones; they will believe in the power or relics, and carry amulets; and the wealthy, under the pretext of utility and tolerance, will protect the new devotion, saying: There must be a religion for the people.

However, they will sometimes encounter some proud souls, men who refuse to bow down before the golden calf. Those will want to compare accounts with the favorites of fortune. — Why are you so rich and we are so poor?—We have labored, respond the rich; we have saved, and we have acquired.—We labor as much as you, how is it that we never acquire anything?—We have inherited from our fathers.—Ah! You invoke possession, transmission, prescription. Well! We call on force. Proprietors, defend yourselves!

And there will be combats and massacres; and when force will again be established as *law*, when the *rebels* have been destroyed, they will write on their tombs ASSASSINS, while their victims will be glorified as martyrs.

And that will endure until God takes pity on us.

But who today will dare to speak in such language? Let us save ourselves from all illusions. Certain people imagine that a great personage must soon appear in the midst of humanity, one of those *providential beings*, as we call them, who will summarize all ideas, disengage truth from error, strike down the old prejudices, put all opinions on a new level, and with his strong hand launch the present generation down a new road—or a new rut. The nineteenth century will not pass, they say, before our prediction comes to pass. Some go further: the great man has already come; Elias has walked the earth; but the world has not understood. The Turk says: God is God, and Mohammed is his prophet. These modern *believers* make a similar profes-

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0h citizens! If you can't handle that medication, if you find this brew too bitter, stop complaining, ask for no medicine and rot in your own corruption. But listen to what will happen.

The sun will shine neither more nor less on the soil where you live. The dew and gentle breezes will refresh your fields and meadows in the same way. Your trees will not be less productive, your vines less fertile. You will not see hail, floods or fire desolate your towns or countryside more often. The elements will not be more murderous.

But opulence and misery, inseparable companions, will increase in an endless progression; large properties will invade everywhere. The bankrupt peasant will sell his inheritance; and when there are only landlords and tenants, lords and serfs, the first will give to the second a few clothes, lodging and some bread, and they will say to them: See how happy your are? What is liberty and equality? Long live harmony!

In those times, trivial talents and arts of luxury will be rewarded lavishly. We will see singers more wealthy than large villages are now. The wage of a comedienne will be more than the cost of a hundred bushels of wheat in a famine. The poor worker, the laborer's wife and the artisan will be humiliated.

The merit of women will no longer be anything but an evaluation of their beauty, their most sacred right, to be surrendered to the highest bidder. The wealthy will possess them all, because they alone can pay; the poor will be left with the disgraced and the cast-offs of luxury.

The ignorance and exhaustion of the proletarians will be at its height. They will not be prevented from learning, but they will not be able to live without working, and when they are not working, they will eat nothing. If someone among them shows talent, he will be encouraged, rewarded, and *enriched*; he will enter into the upper class and be lost to his own.

The people, who always follow the example of the rich and powerful, having lost respect and faith in the old religion, which at least taught them the equality of men before God, and

at least we have made a step towards it; for it is the people who are the *executive power*, and it is the law that inaugurates them.

And let us preserve, let us restore the solemnity of Sunday, so eminently social and popular, not as an object of ecclesiastic discipline, but as an institution that conserves mores, a source of public spirit, a meeting place inaccessible to the cops, and a guarantee of order and liberty. In the celebration of Sunday is lodged the most fruitful principle of our future progress; it is by taking advantage of Sunday that the reform will be achieved.

Let there rise in the midst of his brothers, with all the authority of virtue and genius, the reformer that some await. Let him come, powerful in words and deeds, to convert and to punish. Let him see the horror of our vices, and hear the tale of our follies. Let him lament our miseries and let him cry out: The cause of the evil is in the ideas. To heal the heart, you must correct the brain. Can you remake your understanding? Can you change your opinions, condemn what pleases you, hate what makes you laugh, love and respect what hardly concerns you? Do you believe these truths that you no longer understand?

Crime is imputable, satisfaction necessary, and punishment just and legitimate.

Labor is obligatory, property only usufruct, and inheritance a mode of conservation of shares; liberty is balance ; the inequality of nature is weakened by education, and effaced by the equality of fortunes. Marriage is exclusive and holy: fornication is an offense against nature, against persons and against society.

Reason oversees the senses; the conscience imposes a brake on the animal passions. Man's end is not to enjoy, but to cultivate his soul and contemplate the works of God.

Falsehood is the murder of the intelligence; the oath is inviolable.

The law is not the expression of a single will, nor of a general will; it is the natural relation of things , discovered and applied by reason .

The sanction of the law is in God, who gives it.

Preface

The celebrated Sir Francis Bacon was called the reformer of human reason for having replaced the syllogism with observation in the natural sciences; the philosophers, following his example, teach today that philosophy is a collection of observations and facts. But, certain thinkers have said to them, if truth and certainty exist in *philosophy*, they must also exist in the realm of *politics*: thus, there is a social science responsive to evidence, which is consequently the object of demonstration, not of art or authority, not, that is, of arbitrary will.

This conclusion, so profound in its simplicity, so innovative in its consequences, has been the signal for a vast intellectual movement, comparable with that which manifested itself in the Roman empire, at the time of the establishment of Christianity. We have set ourselves to seek the *new science*; and as the investigation cannot begin with anything but critique, we have arrived methodically at the negation of everything that makes up and sustains society.

Thus we have asked: What is royalty? And the response has been: A myth.

What is religion? — A dream of the mind.

What is God? — An eternal X.

What is property? — It is theft.

What is community? — It is death.

Christianity signaled its entry into the world in absolutely the same way; before positing its dogma, it said to itself:

What is Caesar? — Nothing.

What is the republic? — Nothing.

What is Jupiter? — Nothing.

What is nobility, philosophy, glory? — Nothing.

The negation that Christianity began against ancient society was then pursued against Christianity itself; and we told ourselves that the truth would appear to us only after we had demolished everything. When will this be accomplished? But,

if the present and the past cannot give us truth in its essential form, they contain it substantially, since truth is eternal, and eternally manifests itself. It is thus as much in the institutions that have been destroyed, or are at the point of disappearing, as it is in the facts that spring up anew each day, that we should seek truth in itself, the face-to-face contemplation of the absolute, *siculi est, facie ad faciem.*

Among the monuments of antiquity, the laws of Moses are unquestionably those that have most occupied the meditations of the *savants.* For ourselves, the sublimity of the mosaic system would astonish us, perhaps, if we did not know that by virtue of the laws of human understanding, every primitive idea being necessarily universal, every primitive legislation must have been a summary of philosophy, a rudiment of knowledge. What we have taken for profundity and divine inspiration in Moses and the other legislators of antiquity was, at base, only a general intuition and aphoristic conception; as for its form, it was the living and spontaneous expression of the first apperceptions of consciousness.

But how did the Sabbath become, in the thought of Moses, the pivot and rallying symbol of Jewish society? Another law of the intelligence will explain it to us.

In the sphere of pure ideas, everything is connected, supported and demonstrated, not according to the order of filiation, or the principle of consequences, but according to the order of coexistence or coordination of relations. Here, as in the universe, the center is everywhere and the circumference nowhere; that is, everything is at once principle and consequence, axis and radius. Moses, having to formulate the totality of his laws by deduction, was free to choose for the culminating point of his system whatever economic or moral idea he wanted. He preferred the weekly division of time, because he needed a sensible and powerful symbol which constantly recalled to the hordes of semi-savage Israel the feelings of nationality, fraternity and unity, without which any subsequent de-

ungovernable by any will that wants to be the equal, if not the ruler of the law; because, sooner or later, the Charter, whether awarded or consented to, rebels against the will which is not its own, and opposes it.

In it origins, religion was politics and science; the priesthood were thus also magistracy and teachers. Every social organization is contained in that trilogy. But it is necessary that the priest becomes dogmatic and intolerant, that the judge becomes violent and despotic, that the philosopher, contemptuous of priests and kings, makes himself their persecutor and curse; it is necessary that all mankind should bear the penalty of their follies, to teach us that the division of functions does not entail the separation of powers, and that if there is a contradiction between reason and conscience, between conscience and the law, that contradiction comes from us. Today, peace is on the verge of being concluded: the civil law recognizes its insufficiency, and calls for the support of religion; philosophy touches on the demonstration of the mysteries; faith, without abandoning any of its doctrine and traditions, offers rational explications. Who would dare to say that something greater than the code, philosophy and religion will not spring from these reciprocal concessions?

There was always, within the homeland, an elite of citizens, the first in science and virtue. Let their functions be to instruct, counsel and resolve. Let them form the greatest and most glorious university. Let them give to the people a perpetual example of equality and disinterestedness. Let their reward be to hear themselves called *prudent as well as wise and fathers of the nation.*

Let us abolish royalty without hatred and vengeance, because with royalty we are all guilty. Let us reject it, not only as vicious, extravagant, corrupting and unworthy, but as illegitimate. We dispute endlessly: *The king reigns and govern , the king reigns and does not gover*n. Let us begin by saying: *He governs and does not reign*; and if we are not still in the realm of truth,

lator, so eccentric to his plan, that the Jewish monarchs never believed that they could consolidate their power beside a law that they had not made and which troubled them in all their movements. That is what explains that dogged idolatry, that long apostasy into which the kings of Judah strove to lead the nation. And, indeed, to return to my subject, (which I have never abandoned, even when I seem to be diverting ever more from it,) what could have been more dreadful and odious for the sultans of Jerusalem, than these feasts and Sabbaths when the people were obliged by their religion to gather and to read the law, that law that taught them who they were and who was their sovereign? How could they bear those great solemnities of Passover and Tabernacles, which, gathering the whole nation as a single family, made them reflect on their strength and on the weakness of the corrupting and liberticidal tyrant? The schism of the ten tribes was accomplished in one of these great gatherings. Athaliah was cast down from the thrown during the feast of Pentecost. The Maccabees would use a Passover to rouse the people against the king of Syria, and this was also the occasion when the revolt of the Jews under Vespasian took place. According to the prescriptions of Moses, the king could only be a president of the republic. This was clearly the sense of the instructions given to the king in Deuteronomy, of which, until the time of Josiah, no one had been aware. To be king, truly king, as the Hebrew *melks* understood it, and as one always expects it to be, it is necessary to corrupt the people and separate them from the institutions: that was, it is true, what led to its loss and prepared the ruin of the throne. No matter, the kings would not hesitate. The seduction was accomplished, and it was total. It will last as long as the monarchy itself, since, in the words of the fourth book of Kings, it was an unheard of novelty that the Passover was celebrated under Josiah and, according to Ezra, the captivity had lasted seventy years, in order that the earth had the time to *rest and celebrate its Sabbaths*. As soon as a nation has right, even if granted [from above], it is

velopment was impossible. The Sabbath was like the common meeting ground where all the Hebrews should gather themselves in spirit, at the beginning of each week; the monument that expressed their political existence, the link that held together all their institutions. Thus, public and civil right, municipal administration, education, government, worship, customs, hygiene, family and city relations, *liberty*, *public order*: the Sabbath supposed all these things, fortified them and created their harmony.

The author of this discourse has been reproved for lending to Moses views that could not have been his own, but this reproach is unreasonable. Today, it is much less a question of knowing what the individual who wrote them thought of these laws, than it is to know the very spirit of his legislation. Certainly Moses was not thinking of the Catholics or protestants; however, the vigor of the institution of the Sabbath was such, that the Jews passed it on to the Christians and the Mohammedans; that from them it extended around the globe; and that it will outlive all the religions, embracing within its vast reach pre-historic times and the most distant future ages.

We do not know who first imagined the division of time into weeks. It doubtless sprung from that spontaneous genius, a sort of magnetic vision, which discovered the first arts, developed language, invented writing, created systems of religion and philosophy: a marvelous faculty, the processes of which elude analysis, and that reflection, another rival and progressive faculty, weakens gradually without ever being able to make it disappear.

Today, when the questions of labor and wages, of industrial organization and national workshops, of political and social reform, occupy public attention to the highest degree, we believe a legislation based on a theory of *repose*, if we can put it this way, could be useful. Nothing comparable to the Sabbath, before or since the legislator of the Sinai, has been imagined and put into practice. Sunday, the Christian Sabbath, for which re-

spect seems to have diminished, will be revived in all its splendor, when the guarantee of labor is won, with the well-being that is its prize. The working classes are too interested in the maintenance of the dominical holiday to ever let it perish. Thus all will celebrate the day, even though they don't attend the mass: and the people will see, by this example, how it is possible that a religion be false, and the contents of that religion be true at the same time; that to philosophize about dogma is to renounce faith; to transform a religion is to abolish it. The priests, with their scientific tendencies, march toward that inevitable conclusion: let them pardon us for having gone before them, and not refuse us the final benediction, because we have arrived first at the tomb of religion.

What should the duration of labor be? What will the intervals of rest be? Will the holidays be observed simultaneously by all the citizens? How will hygiene, morals, the family and the republic profit by them? Search the will of God.

It is thus that, in their political foundations, all the legislators and philosophers of antiquity would proceed. Never would they enter into the spirit of separating the rights from the man, of placing some under the protection of a justice armed with a sword, and abandon the others to the tutelage of religion. For them every moral proscription was civil law, and all civil law was sacred. With regard to religious rites, as those rights had for principle a reasonable and useful object, the greatest men submitted to them, conceiving no virtue and propriety without a rule, as they did not conceive justification without works.

From the unity of the law followed the unity of power: so it happened that Jeroboam erected a temple in Samaria, that Ozias wanted to award himself the censer, in Rome the consuls were at the same time soothsayers and supreme pontiffs, that the further one goes back into antiquity, the more one finds that the chiefs of the peoples brought together the three positions of king, priest and prophet. But soon all those notions would be obscured. The usurpations entered like a mob into the sanctuary and the temple of the law. The kings and priests, each on their side, would make a patrimony of the government and the church, and sometimes quarreling, sometimes associating their interests, too often made the yoke of fanaticism and tyranny weigh on the people.

Moses wanted to spare the Israelites these fatal drawbacks. He founded a police which, confided to a more faithful race, would certainly have led to the highest degree of domestic felicity and national strength. But the people, not knowing how to be free, wanted a king. Now, the establishment of a royalty was something so contrary to all the ideas of the legis-

children; *mystagogue*, master of sacred ceremonies.

titution. It is a question of knowing how that equality will be realized: for it is not for us the object of a restoration, but of an institution.

The command of an individual will only be counted for something to the extent that it conforms to reason: in this case, it is no longer the man who commands, it is reason. It is the law. It is God. Nobody has the privilege of interposing his will in the legal exercise of right, to suspend the law or sanction it. Thus all royalty is contrary to order; it is a negation of God. Everywhere royalty exists, even when subjected to some rules, even if it is beneficial and protective, it will only be an abuse that nothing can legitimate, a usurpation that no one can dictate. Its origin is always blameworthy. It is, if one will allow me this scholastic jargon, *ex ordine ordinando,* never *ex ordine ordinato*. —We must say as much of all aristocracy and democracy. The authority of some over all is nothing. The authority of the greatest number over the least is nothing. The authority of all against one is nothing, without the authority of the law, which alone cannot be contradicted.

It is good that some men be specially charged with instructing the others, with recalling them to their rights, warning them of their duties, teaching manners and religion, bringing up the young, settling contentions and disputes, cultivating the sciences and practicing medicine. These men are not masters, but teachers of the people, *demagogues*.[8] They command no one; they say what should be done, and the people carry it out. They do not impose belief, but show the truth. They neither give nor sell religion, philosophy and the sciences, for they are not their property. They are only their physicians and guardians. Their doctrine is true: all that they announce is the word of God.

It is necessary from time to time for men to rest, that they even rejoice: the soul must be nourished and the body repaired.

[8] *Demagogue*, conductor or tutor of the people; as *pedagogue*, tutor of

THE CELEBRATION OF SUNDAY

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

"Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work.

"But the seventh day is the rest of the Lord: in it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: That is why the Eternal has hallowed and blessed the day of rest."

Such is the literal text of the fourth paragraph of the first article of the Charter given to the Hebrews by Moses, and known under the name of the DECALOGUE.[1]

It is a question of penetrating the spirit, the motives and the aim of that law, or, to put it better, of that institution, that

[1] In our catechisms, the division of Decalogue is different from that which is presented here. According to the Hebrews, the first commandment teaches the *unity* of God; the second forbids the *fabrication of images*; it is an artificial, political. These two commandments have been merged into only one. The third forbids *taking the name of God in vain*; that prohibition is at once political and religious, completely within the customs of antiquity. We recognize here that *Punic faith*, to which imprecations and oaths cost nothing; Moses ordained that the oath by Jehovah would be inviolable. That precept is for us the second; it commands, it is said, to avoid *foul words and swearing*. The fourth commandment concerns the Sabbath. The tenth (for us the seventh), concerning covetousness, has been divided in two, in order to preserve the number 10. It is, on the one hand, the prohibition against desiring one's neighbor's wife; on the other, the prohibition against coveting his ox or his ass, etc. But in Moses this distinction does not exist.

Moses and the prophets would always regard as fundamental, and to which we can find nothing comparable among any of the peoples who have had a written legislation; an institution the whole scope of which even the most celebrated critics—Grotius, Cunéus, Spencer, Dom Calmet, l'abbé de Vence, P. Berruyer, Bergier, etc.—have not grasped; of which Montesquieu has not even spoken, because he did not understand it; that J.-J. Rousseau seems to have sensed, however far his thought was from it; an institution, finally, which our modern genius, with all its theories of political and civil right, with its niceties of constitutions and its vague desires for liberty and equality, has never measured up to. We know that, from the origins of Christianity, the weekly celebration of rest was transferred from Saturday, or the day of Saturn, to the following day, the day of the Sun; and that, in the thought of the Apostles, there should not exist, between the mosaic Sabbath and the Christian Sunday, any difference but a delay of twenty-four hours. The day of the observance was transferred for two reasons: to honor the resurrection of Christ, and to radically separate the two religions. Beyond that, neither the thing nor its spirit were changed; the obligation and the purpose of the precept remained the same. The intention of the reformers, as faithful disciples of their master, was never to abolish the ancient law, but to complete it. If then I should succeed in establishing that the object of the Jewish legislator, in that which concerns the holiday the seventh day, was quadruple; that that object, at once *civil*, *domestic*, *moral* and *hygienic*, was consequently the most vast, the most universal that the thought of a founder of a nation could embrace; if I could show according to what principles of a philosophy unknown to our age the fourth commandment was conceived, what its sanction was, what its consequences should be for the destiny of the people, I would have, I believe, satisfied all the conditions of the problem put forward; and by demonstrating the sublimity of the institutions Moses, I would have plumbed the depths of the question that I examine. It is nearly

Now, admit that the principles of that science have been fixed, with every application made by means of the principles of deduction and causation, and we will understand how Moses, starting from the absolute, found as the ultimate reason for his laws only the commands of God.

5 multiplied by 5 gives a product of 25. Why? It is impossible to give any reason for it, if not that this is a fact, that this is the logic of numbers, that our intelligence, whose laws are the same as those of nature—or God—make us understand the fact in this way.—Bodies weigh on the earth. Why? Because of gravitation. And what is gravitation? The order of God, said Newton.—Nitric acid shows a stronger attraction to iron than to copper. Why? That is perhaps the result of the shape, the density, and the different arrangement of their atoms. Why don't the atoms of all bodies resemble one another? It is because God wills it. — The elements of verse, in Latin, consist of prosody and measure; in French, in rhyme or measure. Why this difference? Because of the diversity of idioms. But, while the intelligence and organs of man remain the same, where can this diversity come from? From a multitude of causes which all amount to the decree of destiny.

To govern men, it is also only a question of seeking God's order. Everything that enters into that order is good and just; everything that strays from it is false, tyrannical and bad.

It is just to make, or to speak more precisely, to discover and ascertain the economic laws, restrictive of property and distributive of labor; Why? In order to maintain equality in conditions. But why should conditions be equal? Because the right to live and develop completely is equal for all, and the inequality of conditions is an obstacle to the exercise of that right. How is the equality of rights proven? By the parity of penchants and faculties; because God, in giving them to all, did not want them to be stifled or subjugated in one for the benefit of another. The equality of fortunes is the expression of the divine will, which has reserved for rebellious societies a terrible punishment, des-

atoms find themselves formed for all combinations. In the vegetable realm, the assimilating power is never deceived: we have yet to see the grapevine produce melons.

The animals are endowed with memory and imagination, and capable of some experience: they enjoy nearly from birth an entirely developed and innate intelligence, which we call instinct. Their movements are spontaneous, and their will is free; but that liberty only acts under a lawful order, and only obeys a sort of impulse, that of physical and sensible nature.

Compared with the animals, man has, with regard to thought, more intelligence, which reflects, counts, judges, reasons, combines, generalizes, classes and distinguishes; with regard to sentiment, more conscience, which dictates new laws to him, often contrary to the appetites of his sensibility. The field of human liberty is double: enlightened by reason, the masterwork of that liberty is to harmonize all his acts; its greatest effort, to sacrifice passion to duty.

The will of man, obeying two different impulses, has a composite movement. It is thus prone to going astray. In that case, man is at fault and always unhappy. The direction of the will demands the most attentive monitoring and the most discriminating temperament. It is in the study of the relations between the physical, the intellectual and the moral, that the best of mode education for the will is to be discovered.

But man is born into society: it is thus also necessary to study the relations between men, in order to determine their rights and sketch out some rules for them. What complications! There is a science of quantities which forces assent, excludes willful objections, and rejects every utopia; a science of physical phenomena, which rests only on the observation of the facts; a grammar and a poetics based on the essence of language, etc. There must also exist a science of society, absolute and rigorous, based on the nature of man and his faculties, and on their relations, a science that he will not *invent*, but *discover*.

useless to caution that I contemplate all the facts relative to the Jewish religion, as well as those relating to Christianity, from a purely *human* point of view: today one is no longer suspected of religiosity, because they discover reasonable things in a religion.

I

It is rare that a law can be well understood and appreciated at its true value, if we limit ourselves to considering it separately, and independent of the system to which it is linked: that is a principle of legislative critique which no one contests, and suffers hardly any exceptions. How is it that this rule has been so badly followed with regard to the laws of Moses, that no one has yet thought to present them in their totality? I would not exempt from this criticism even Mr. Pastoret himself, whose work on the legislation of Moses seems to have been composed under the dictation of rabbis who wanted to mock their disciple. How is it, I say, that no publicist has even tried to sum up that governmental machine, to show its workings, to show the correlation of the parts with the whole, and the exact proportion between them? We have given ourselves up to minute researches on the laws of Lycurgus; for them, we have exhausted all the resources of erudition; by means of sagacity and critique, we have managed to give, if not a complete idea, at least an approximate, of the political state of the Lacedaemonians. The same work on Moses would be much easier; most of the materials exist; and, in order to reconstruct the edifice, it is a question only of arranging the scattered fragments.

We would hardly believe such an insufficiency on the part of the commentators, if the causes were not found recorded in their writings. According to the rabbis, it is not necessary to seek any reason in the Jewish laws other than the autocratic will of God, no other motive than the absolute, *sic volo, sic jubeo*,

which allows neither examination nor verification. It is an impiety to probe the ways of the divinity. Obedience, in order to be meritorious, must be blind. Submission to the law loses all its prize, as soon as it is accompanied by science. That absurd opinion is ever so ancient and so profoundly established among them, that when a Pharisee, Saint Paul, came to proclaim before the nation that heretical aphorism, *Rationabile sit obsequium vestrum*, "Let your obedience be reasonable," a revolution was accomplished in religion.

On the other hand, Moses had not prepared himself to erect a dialectical monument; he did not want to make a theory. He never explained his principles. The needs of the people demanded a rule; Moses rendered an oracle. A question of right presented itself to be resolved; he dictated a law. But, despite that incoherence in the redaction, we need not imagine that his plan of legislation was as disordered as the collection of his decrees appears to us today, and that he had not had constantly in mind the archetypal idea of the simplest and most magnificent system. The Decalogue is the reduced expression and like the most general formula of that mass of detailed ordinances scattered in the Pentateuch. The very number of the commandments of the Decalogue and their sequence is not at all fortuitous: it is the genesis of moral phenomena, the scale of duties and crimes, based on a wise and marvelously developed analysis.

COMMANDMENTS	CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS
1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th	1. Impiety.
5th	2. Parricide.
6th	3. Homicides, assaults, etc.
7th	4. Luxury.
8th	5. Theft, rapine.
9th	6. Lies, perjury.
10th	7. Concupiscence.

Unfortunate one, how will you understand me, if you refuse to see the trend of my thought? My profession is this: that Moses believed in his own God; that he believed in his soul and conscience, and that he was imbued with that faith which alone established his authority and his strength. He adored foremost, in spirit and in truth, that *Jehovah* whose prophet he was. But his worship was not of the common sort.

God, as Moses conceived him, is living Force, effective Will, infinite Reason.

He is, he creates, and he commands.

As supreme being, he is the principle of all existence; as action and life, he moves, animates and preserves; as intelligence, he regulates all creation.

The extraordinary revolutions of the world, which are always destroyed and always restored, announce the eternity and immutability of his being; the constancy of physical laws, the permanence of forms, and the recurrence of movements attest to his inflexible will; the sequence of causes and effects, the exact disposition of each thing for a single end, demonstrates his wisdom.

The existence of God is not proven a priori, nor a posteriori, because he has no before or after. We see that existence and feel it. We think, speak, reflect and reason about it. God is necessity; the *alpha* and *omega*, the principle and complement of all. He is the Unique and the Universal, embracing all truths in an infinite chain. We grasp some links here and there, some more or less extensive fragments of that chain, but the immensity of its ensemble escapes us. Whoever expresses a thought,by that alone names God; all our sciences are only partial or unfinished expositions of the absolute science, which is the *scitum* and *fatum* of God himself.

The organisms that God has created are predisposed by him in such a way that, coming from his hands, they accomplish their destinies by themselves. Thus, the celestial orbs have each been weighted for the route that they will travel. Thus the

"He will take a tenth of your harvests, to pay his eunuchs and his domestics.

"He will take your menservants and your maidservants, the strongest of your young men, and your asses, and put them to work at his chores; he will take a tenth of your livestock, and you will be his slaves."

Samuel did not enter into a discussion with the people; he did not return to principles; he invoked neither rights, nor morals, nor the constitution. Like the democrats of 93, he showed royalty with all its extravagances, its usurpations, its vices and its tyranny; he reviewed its odious cortege, and he cried: *There is your king!*

Thus, when Moses, establishing the Sabbath, said to the people: *Thou shalt sanctify the seventh day, because it is the rest of the Lord who has brought you out of Egypt*, it is not necessary to believe, with the Anglican Spencer and the Calvinist Benjamin Constant, that behind these words are not hidden other motives, more direct, more human, and more capable of satisfying the scruples of a formalist and positive politics. But we must recognize in that language the necessities of the age. Moses, forced to proportion his message to the intelligence of his freemen, chose, from among all the reasons he could have given to his commandments, the most impressive and formidable, and let us say it boldly, in the last analysis, the most true, the only true one.

But I sense that my paradoxes become more and more appalling.

What! Some indignant philosopher will doubtless cry: You dare to say that God rests, that he is concerned with our feasts, that he must observe the Sabbath because he gives the example for it! to set up some rules, useful if you like, on revelations and oracles, when one claims to have better reasons! To make Divinity intervene where only reasoning is admissible! To lead men astray, instead of instructing them, that is what will be called truth! What is your philosophy? What do you profess?

What a magnificent creed! What philosopher, what legislator has there been but this one who has established such categories, and who has known how to fill out this cadre! Seek in all the duties of man and citizen something which does not boil down to this, but you will not find it. On the contrary, if you show me somewhere a single precept, a single obligation irreducible to that measure, I am justified in advance in declaring that obligation, that precept, outside of conscience, and consequently arbitrary, unjust, and immoral. We have exhausted all the forms of admiration and praise with regard to the categories Aristotle; we have not said a word of the categories of Moses. I will not do the same.

Supported by these certain foundations, the work of Moses was raised like a creation of God: unity and simplicity in the principles, variety and richness in the details. Each of the formulas of the Decalogue could become the subject of a long treatise: I will not explore even one of them in depth. The ordinance on the Sabbath is only one section of the first law, of which it forms the fourth paragraph.

"It is necessary," said J.-J. Rousseau (*The Social Contract*), "that there be fixed and periodic assemblies, that nothing can abolish or defer, so that on the indicated day the people will be legitimately called together by the law, without there being need for any other formal convocation."

What Rousseau asked, with the sole aim of forcing the people to show itself from time to time in all of their majesty, and thus to act as sovereign, Moses ordained, but not to gather a deliberative assembly:—about what would they deliberate? They have no right to claim, no privilege to destroy: all affairs, private or public, should be dealt with according to the constituent principles and by a sort of casuistic algebra. The marvel of modern times, the standing vote, taken on questions which could be resolved only by science and study, the preponderance of majorities, in a word, would then have appeared absolutely absurd. The laws like the institutions, founded on the observation of na-

ture and deduced from moral phenomena in the same manner as the formulas in a treatise on physics are deduced from the phenomena of bodies, were immutable; and there was a penalty of death for whoever proposed to change or remove them. For extraordinary cases, the ancients gathered themselves in the public square: they did not wait for the Sabbath. The government of the Hebrews was not, as some imagine, a *democracy* in the manner of the *Social Contract*; neither was it a *theocracy*, in the sense of a *government by priests*. Moses, founding his republic by making the people swear to be faithful to the *Alliance*, had not submitted his work to the judgment of the multitude: that which is just in itself, the absolute truth, cannot be the object of an acceptance or a pact. Free, at his own risk, to obey the voice of his conscience, man has not be called to compromise with it: so the Jewish people were subject to the law. As for the priesthood, we will see what it was later.

Moses knew that man, rather than being born for society, is often dominated without knowing it by an unsociable instinct which leads him to isolation; he knew that reason, interest, even friendship, does not always suffice to vanquish his natural sloth; that suffering and labor, far from bringing him closer to his fellows, pushes him from them, and that his somber sadness is increased by the energy of his thought and his silent contemplations. Who should be more disposed than the preacher of Mount Horeb to absolve the reclusive man? For forty years, alone with his genius, always lost in the infinite, conversing only with the beasts, he had tasted all the delights and all the rancors of meditation. His soul, exalted by continual ecstasy, had made enthusiasm a habit. And suddenly the anchorite of the desert said to himself: Man is not made to live alone; he must have brothers. The interior life is not of this world. On this earth, action was required. And he was soon on his way: Israel had a liberator.

What Moses wanted then for his young nation, was not associations or musters, nor was it rallies and fairs. It was not only

It is a capital crime to imitate the composition of the holy oil, *because*, said Moses, *such a counterfeit is sacrilege*. What made that oil so precious? It is because the mark of the clergy and royalty consisted in consecration; and what Moses called *counterfeiting the holy oil* was nothing less that aspiring *to tyranny*. It was primarily the crime of national lèse-majesté.

Pythagoras said in the same style: "Don't stir the fire with the sword. Don't sit on the bushel." He meant: "Don't provoke an angry man. Avoid idleness."

When Moses instituted a clergy, he did not go out of his way to explain to the people its nature and attributions; he told them nothing of the functions of that order, or of its prerogatives. He did not allow even a glimpse of the reason why no property was allowed to the Levites, while in Egypt the priests possessed a third of the land. He made God say: *I have chosen the children of Le vi to serve in my tabernacle; every intruder will be put to death.* And that was done to Core and Dathan.

The successors of Moses acted in exactly the same way.

Under the judicature of Samuel, the people demanded a king. What was the prophet's answer? Did he reason with the deputies of the tribes? Did he consider whether royalty is in itself a just and moral thing; if it is in the spirit of the constitution; if it did not wound the rights of the people; if it would not lead to a revolution in the State? No; he said to them:

"This will be the right of the king who will command you:

"He will take your sons and make them man his chariots; he will make them horsemen, runners, tribunes and centurions, laborers for his lands, harvesters for his wheat, makers of arms and chariots." Samuel seemed to threaten the Hebrews with conscription.

"He will make your daughters his perfumers, his cooks and his bakers.

"He will take hold of your fields, your vineyards, your olive orchards, and give them to his servants.

wanted it thus, and promising on his part a triple harvest for the sixth. Mr. Pastoret finds that it is not easy to justify that law. He even remarks that the triple harvest was always lacking. However, that law is nothing but an agricultural precept, and the abundance promised for the sixth year is the natural result of a renewed fertility. With more knowledge, the Israelites would have glimpsed the aim of the legislator, and they would have ordained that the Sabbath of the land would have taken place each year in one-seventh of the lands, so that at the end of seven year the whole territory would be rested. The law dictated that they content themselves, during the seventh year, with the products of the herds: it was an invitation to convert the fields into artificial prairies. Don't we know today that his mode of farming rests the earth and enriches the laborer?

Bestiality was punished with death; among us, that infamy would hardly be judged worthy of the whip. The wretch who soiled himself with it would excite more disgust than blame from the tribunals. But that crime, in the time of Moses, was part of idolatrous ceremonies; in Egypt, women prostituted themselves in public to the Goat of Mendes and to crocodiles, and similar customs were to be seen elsewhere. It is that execrable superstition that motivated the severity of Moses: none of that, however is reflected in the law itself.

He declares abominable anyone who exchanges their clothing for that of the opposite sex. Is it a question of simple disguise? That would be to be a slave of the text. Moses designated under an innocent surface the sort of infamy for which Sappho was famous, which the Greeks deified in Ganymede.

He forbade mixing any foreign seed in the vineyards, *lest*, he said, *the two plants harm one another and are ruined*. This is another law of public morality disguised under a rustic image. Moses, in prohibiting a custom honored since Sparta, which Plato wanted to introduce into his republic, taught the people to care more for conjugal inviolability than for the production of children.

the unity of government, nor the community of usages. All of that is consequence, rather than principle; it is the sign, not the thing. What he desired to create in his people was a communion of love and faith, a fusion of intelligences and hearts, if I may put it that way. It was this invisible link, stronger than all material interests, that forms among souls the love of the same homeland, the worship of the same God, the same conditions of domestic happiness, the solidarity of destinies, the same memories, and the same aspirations. He wanted, in short, not an agglomeration of individuals, but a truly fraternal society.

But, in order to sustain the social sentiment that he desired to give rise to, something tangible was needed. For the symbol to be efficacious, it would be necessary to bring together consciences. On the day of the Sabbath, the children asked their fathers: "Why these celebrations, these ceremonies, these mysteries, that Jehovah our God has instituted?" And the fathers responded to their children: "We were slaves of an Egyptian Pharaoh, and Jehovah took us from Egypt by the strength of his arms! He led us to this land that he had sworn to give to our fathers. That is why he instituted all these solemnities, testimony to our gratitude and token of our future prosperity." Let us note these last words. While the common Jew saw in the Sabbath only a commemoration of his deliverance, the legislator made it the *palladium* to which the salvation of the republic was attached. And how is that? Because every system of laws and institutions needs to be protected by a special institution that encompasses and sums it up, which is its crown and its basis; because the Sabbath, suspending the rude labors of an almost entirely agricultural population, and connecting minds through the connection of persons, a day of public exaltation, national mourning, popular instruction and universal emulation, stopped the speculations of interest and directed the reason towards a more noble object. It softened manners by the charm of a rest that was not sterile, aroused a mutual goodwill, developed the national character, made the rich more liberal,

evangelized the poor, and excited the love of the homeland in every heart. Let us examine some of these consequences.

Every man in Israel was required to read and meditate all his life, and copy with his own hand the text of the law. Some sentences drawn on the doors of houses and even on clothing, constantly recalled to memory that sacred law. Now, as there were no public schools, and as the entire week was filled by labor in the fields, it was during the rest of the Lord that the first writing lessons were given, and it was the BOOK which provided for this pious exercise. The first result, and the most important, of the sabbatical law, was instruction, and what instruction? That of religion, politics and morals. The teaching of the synagogue later developed the spirit of the letter that *kills*; the Levites and the prophets learned to sing it. "Such were," said Fleury, "the schools of the Israelists, where they taught not curious sciences, but religion and manners, and where on instructed, not children and some individual idlers, but all the people." Religion means, to express myself in our language, the science of government, political and civil right, the knowledge of duties, the principle of authority, obligation of discipline, the conditions of order and equilibrium, the guaranties of liberty, equality, or more accurately the original consanguinity. Our catechisms are, I cannot help noticing, a quite a ways from all that.

It is that spirit of religion that Saint Paul, so learned in the Hebraic traditions, tried hard to create among the Christians converted among the Gentiles. Already in his time, the pride of wealth and the luxury of sensual pleasures had crept in even among the *agapes,* or love feasts, which were taken in common. The wealthy did not want to eat with the poor, or eat the same food. "Each of you, St. Paul reproached them, brings home what pleases him: one gets drunk, the other dies of hunger." And he cried out indignantly: "Can you not stay in your houses to eat and drink? And do you come to the meeting (in *church*) only to insult those who have nothing?" How much these mer-

3. That its effects, mediate and immediate, is summed up in the following: highly developed sociability, perfect morality, health of the body and mind, constant happiness, always capable of increase and variety, according to ages and characters;

4. That it was eminently conservative of the social order, which conserved it in its turn.

It remains for me to clarify some difficulties.

If it is true that the plan of Moses was such as I have tried to describe, how did he let nothing of that plan appear? Why do we not find a word of it in the motives that he alleged, and he cited everywhere only to the absolute will of God? Why, instead of these fine political teachings, did he always resort to promises and threats?

Moses spoke to his century so that he could be understood by it; he explained himself as he had to. The law of the Sabbath was not the only one in which the name of Jehovah took the place, outwardly, of every motive and every sanction: the other laws, whether political, civil or criminal, as well as the detailed ordinances, were in the same position. It is always the same formula— *I am the Lord* — which is the supreme reason. Sometimes the benefit of deliverance is recalled, in order to add the sweeter bond of gratitude to the motive of fear. But everywhere the true spirit of the law is concealed: Moses seems to have wanted that knowledge to be reserved for the faithful, for it to become the prize of perseverance and meditation. Sometime he only half expressed it, and sometimes he wrapped his thought in a symbolic and figurative style, leaving to the attentive reader the task of penetrating the sense of his words. Never, however, did he deign to anticipate a *why* or a *how*, or to forestall a single objection.

Moses instituted a *Sabbath year*, that is he forbade the cultivation of the soil each seventh year, declaring that the Lord

supposing that chance alone had thus favored it, I would rather belief in a special revelation that had been made to him about it, or the fable of a sow writing the Iliad with its snout.

We rightly mock the foolish mania of those people who exalt the ancients beyond measure, and who discover the vestiges of the most sublime knowledge where the judicious observer only perceives the mark of good sense. But when the facts are multiplied and clarified by each other, when several monuments render a common testimony, the probability increases as the doubt diminishes. We have seen at the beginning of this memoir the septenary number figure in the categories of duty; the same number is present in the cosmogony of Moses and in a multitude of other circumstances, for example, in the symptomatology of the leper; finally, we have cited the reflections of Cabanis on the relations of numbers: were all these laws recorded by the ancients, or just dreamed up at random? The response would presume the very science of which I have spoken—and spoken too long, since I don't even know the name it bears.

V

If I have accomplished the task that I imposed on myself in beginning these researches, it remains certain and proven:

1. That the institution of the Sabbath was conceived on the principles of a higher politics, the greatest secret of which consisted in making the means arise from the end;

2. That this institution, analyzed in the circumstances of its origin and its reform, supposes liberty, equality, supremacy of religion and the laws, executive power in the people, absolute dependence of the functionaries, means of subsistence the same for all;

chants of Corinth must have made the apostle miss the brothers of Palestine, so fervent, so disinterested, so pure! But they had been prepared by the Jewish religion, while the others had foresworn from paganism only the worship of multiple gods. The same social tendency shows itself in the famous Apology of Saint Justin. We see there that the principle exercises of Sunday were, after the catechesis, acts of charity and mercy, that part of religion which could then be reconciled with the secular power and with the obedience that one believed due to it.

A people, it is said, must have spectacles. I am far from contesting it; but since in everything we encounter evil alongside good, the question is to know what spectacles it is suitable to give to the people. For that, it is necessary to consult the times, the places, and the men. The representations of Aristophanes would have been an abomination to Orientals; the fierce Roman preferred the butchery of the circus to the pomp of the theaters; our fathers, in the Middle Ages, interrupted the offices of the church in order to perform the mysteries in the presence of the bishop and his clergy; and I would dare say that after two centuries of admiration, our Greek tragedies begin to seem a bit too distant from us. Besides, we don't even have spectacles: among us there exist only curiosities—more or less amusing, and more or less costly—in which nine-tenths of the people do not participate.

It has been said that the Sunday vespers were the comedy of servants: that disparaging phrase, cast on the ceremonies of worship, and a thousand times more insulting to the people than to religion, shows better than anything I could say how much the mania for distinction stifles the spirit of society, and how little we in France respect divine or human things. What's more, the priests, by a deplorable emulation, try to justify that mocking definition; the opera music introduced into the church, the theatrical effects, the taste for charms and incantations, the search for unknown devotions and new saints, all that, we must say, invented or foreseen by the priests, de-

grades the majesty of Christianity more and more, and manages to destroy the little bit of religious faith in the nation that escaped the libertinage of the eighteenth century.

What more beautiful spectacle than that of a whole people assembled for the rites of its religion, for the celebration of the great anniversaries? Such a spectacle suits the taste of all men; no nation ever did without it. "The feasts of the Israelites, says the same Fleury, were true feasts, real rejoicings. They were not profane spectacles, and contented themselves with some religious ceremonies and the mechanism of sacrifices. All men were obliged to be in Jerusalem at the three great solemnities of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles; and women were permitted to come. The assembly was thus very numerous: each appeared clothed in the best that they had. One had the pleasure of seeing parents and friends again; one attended the prayers and sacrifices, always accompanied by music. After that, in the magnificent temple, followed the feasts where the peaceful victims were eaten. The same law commanded rejoicing, and united sensible with spiritual joy… It need not astonish us then that it was agreeable news that the festival approached, and that one would soon go to the house of the Lord; so, to go there, one traveled in great troupes, singing and playing instruments…"

These solemnities were rare, it is true; but each week brought their abbreviated image, and maintained their memory. The ceremonies of the synagogue finished, the fathers and elders gathered at the gates of the town; there they talked of labor, of the opening of the harvests, of the approach of the sheep-shearing, of the best methods for working the land and raising herds. There was also talk of the affairs of the country and of relations with the neighboring peoples. The young men, to the approving cheers of the women and girls, engaged in martial exercises: they held races, learned to draw a bow, tried to show strength and flexibility by lifting heavy loads, and by handling weights intended for that purpose. Sometimes they even

problems of the destiny of man, of the origin of evil, of the principle of our knowledge and of the foundations of certitude. But I have not been initiated in the sanctuaries of Heliopolis and Jerusalem, and I have not inherited the mantle of Elijah. Moreover, such a reconstruction, not being made of special fragments, but only inferred from the general spirit of the beliefs and institutions, would always preserve an arbitrary character, and however plausible one makes the ensemble and the details, they will attest less to the exactitude of the doctrine than the spirit of the critique.

Moses, having thus to rule in a nation the works and day, the feasts and holidays, the labors of the body and the exercises of the soul, the interests of hygiene and morals, political economy and the subsistence of persons, had recourse to a science of sciences, to a *transcendent harmonic*, if he will permit me to give it a name, that embraces everything: space, duration, movement, minds and bodies, the sacred and the profane. The certainty of that science is demonstrated by the very fact with which we concern ourselves. Reduce the week by a single day, labor is insufficient in comparison with rest; add the same quantity, and it becomes excessive. Establish a half-day of rest every three days, and the fragmentation multiplies the loss of time, and by splitting the natural unity of the day, you break the numerical balance of things. Grant, on the contrary, forty-eight hours of rest after twelve consecutive days of effort, you kill the man with inertia after having exhausted him with fatigue. I omit, for the sake of brevity, the mass of similar considerations that might suggest the inversion of relations in the family and city, and which would bring to light other disadvantages. How then did Moses calculate so well? He did not invent the week, but it was, he believed, the first and only thing that would serve for such a great purpose. Would he have adopted that proportion, if he had not calculated in advance its whole impact? And if it was not the effect of a theory he held, how are we to explain such a prodigious intuition! Moreover, as for

direct it, you must know all the orders of phenomena and the secret of their balance. Of all the studies, the study of man is the largest; of all the arts, that of governing him is the most difficult.

"When you raise a building, you use the plumb and lever to assure that the centers of gravity of all the stones meet in a single perpendicular plane; for you know by statistics that by neglecting that precaution you compromise the solidity of the structure. Likewise, you have observed that, to farm successfully, it is necessary to observe the times of grafting, germination, flowering and maturity, the advantages of the season and the soil, and all the rules of vegetable life. You can accelerate and multiply the development of that life, but you can only do it by virtue of its own laws: to act on it, you need a pressure point, and it is in that pressure that you will find it. Thus, the eagle that plane in the sky triumphs over gravity by the use of gravity itself.

"What! Man is order and beauty, and you will abandon his education to chance! His will is free, and, instead of directing him, you will impose chains on him! His conscience raises him towards his maker, and you will render that conscience impious! Under the pretext of emancipating reason, you will proclaim your republic without God! To build up the flesh and blood, you will recommend passion and deny duty! Legislator of swine, your barn will not stand: the conscience, the will and the intelligence will react against a blind tyranny, and since you have not been able to rule them, and you have been afraid to destroy them, you will see them burst out in a frightful confusion, until finally, exhausted by their excesses and obeying their nature, they return to their legitimate ordination and harmonize themselves in an eternal society."

I would like now to be able to say how, with that powerful method of induction, the ancient philosophy escaped the reef, so common today in a certain kind of shipwreck, of speculative and practical pantheism; how it resolved the subsequent

competed in wit and subtlety, by riddles and apologues. We find traces of all these customs in the Old Testament; for we need not believe that prior to the migration in Babylon, the observation of the Sabbath was carried to that point of superstitious fastidiousness that Jesus Christ criticized in the Pharisees when he said to them: *The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.* One of the most unfortunate effects of the sojourn of the Jews in Chaldea was to give them a taste for metaphysical reveries and a narrow, petty critique, a passion for disputes, a hunger for vain curiosities in speculation and refinement in practice. When we compare the Jews of the restoration of Cyrus with the Hebrews of the time of Samuel, Solomon and Hezekiah, we would think we see two different races. The greatness and simplicity of the Israelite genius has given place to the fault-finding, persnickety and false spirit of the rabbis; the good sense of the public seems eclipsed, and the nation has fallen. Between *Horace* and *Attila*, the distance is undoubtedly great; but between the Prophets and the Talmud, the contrast is monstrous. In general, we shouldn't seek the truth of the usages of the Hebrew people in the Talmudic traditions.

With regard to the government, the people should gather on the seventh day, not to make laws or vote on anything: I have already said that, according to Moses, all matters of legislation and politics are the object of science, not of opinion. The *legislative power* belongs only to that supreme reason that the Hebrews worshipped under the name of *Jehovah*: consequently all law, in order to be holy, should be marked with a character of necessity; all jurisprudence consisted of a simple exposition of principles, the knowledge of which was no one's privilege. To attribute to an official personage the right of *veto*, or of *sanction*, would have appeared to Moses as the height of absurdity and tyranny. Justice and legality are two things as independent of our consent as mathematical truth: to compel, it is enough for them to be known; to let themselves be seen, they demand only meditation and study. But,—and this will appear

unprecedented,— the assembled people, whom Moses did not recognize as sovereign, in the sense that the will of the people makes law, formed the *executive power*. It was to the people, gathered in its families and tribes that the charge of watching over the law was confided; it was for this great and sublime function that the legislator had wanted them to gather for a full week, judging that the people alone have a right to constrain the people, because they along can protect themselves.

What then was the legislator himself? A man inspired by God, which is to say a saint, a philosopher, a poet. Interpreter of that wisdom that founded the law, he was still, by his enthusiasm and his virtues, its herald and reflection. He commanded nature, conjured heaven and earth, ravished imaginations with the magic of his songs; but he spoke to the people in the name of God—in the name of *truth*. That is why he referred the guardianship of the law to the entire nation, why he allowed it that guarantee against the audacity of imposters and tyrants, the obligation to gather on a set day to oversee itself and its agents. Every citizen can affirm: This is true, this is just; but his conviction obliges no one but himself. The nation alone has the right to say: *We command and require…*

Such would be the institution of Sunday, if fatal circumstances, which did not exist for Moses and which time has not caused to disappear, had not stopped the development. In the cities, Sunday is hardly anything but a holiday without motive or aim, an occasion for parades for the women and children, for consumption for the restaurateurs and wine-merchants, of degrading idleness, and increased vice. On Sunday, the tribunals are closed, the public courts recessed, the schools vacant, the workshops idle, the army at rest: and why? So that the judge, casting off his robe and his gravity, can freely attend to concerns of ambition and pleasure, the scientist can cease to think, the student stroll, the worker stuff themselves, the grisette dance, and the soldier drink or just be bored. The trader alone never stops. If all of that was honest and useful, the aim of the

in knowing this invisible legislator, whose dictates arrest the appetites of the nature, this reason to act independent of speculative reason, no better by reducing it physiology, than you have by attempting to reduce it to sensibility, to reduce sensibility to attraction, or weight to expanse. We require *morals*: who will give them to us?

"The sciences we have just enumerated form so many systems, which are distinct but do not contradict one another. The facts proper to each being varied, but not opposed, can only give rise to different laws: the expression of one of these laws is not the negation of the other. On the contrary, the object of the second and the third of these sciences being the object of the first, plus a new element, *force*; the object of the fourth being the object of the first three, plus another element, *life*; the object of the fifth being the same as that of the previous ones, plus a third element, *reason*; the object of the sixth, finally, being the object of five others, plus a last element, *justice*, it follows that they form an ascending gradation, along the whole extent of which the mathematical formulas must find their application. There is thus a science of sciences, a philosophy of the universe, of which *number*, which is to say *rhythm*, *series*, is the object.

"Thus, all the sciences demonstrate one another, and serve reciprocally as cross-check and *criterion*. If, for example, the succession of days of rest, instead of corresponding to the arithmetic progression 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 36, etc., had the relation: 1, 6, 14, 25, 29, 39, 47, you could conclude, with no other demonstration, and by that fact alone, that the numbers 1, 6, 14, 25, 29, 39, 47, did not form a regular period, that such a distribution of holidays is contrary to hygiene, morals, and liberty.

"A living, intelligent and moral creature, a creature of both mind and matter, man is subject to the laws of life, thought and science; shape, force and number are the bases of his intelligence as was as his being. To understand something of this microcosm, you must have observed all of nature; to aspire to

teach you about living matter? Gravitation, the attraction of cohesion, the elective affinities, soon find the end of their action. The elementary combinations, once carried out, remain fixed. The spring released, the machine stops and everything returns to rest. There is no resurgence, no internal development, no perpetuity, and no center of operations. You will never explain life by weights and resistances, by molecular attractions or atomic combinations. We need, for this new order of phenomena, a new mathematics, a new physics, and a new chemistry. You may, if you like, call that science *physiology*.[7]

"But, Fate! What can physiology do for the theory of intelligence? Are ideas acquired as the organs grow? Are judgments formed by a digestion of the brain! Is it the nervous system or the vascular system that produces metaphysicians and geometers? You speak of organic predispositions, natural appetites, temperaments, etc.; that is to say that an organism is necessary as a *substratum*, or place of exercise, for thought, but not that it engenders the thought, just as matter is necessary to the production of force, and is not force; to the development of life, but is not life. No one knows the genesis of the soul. No one has sounded the abyss of his faculties.

"What use will man make of that light which illuminates his instinct? Isn't it to be feared that he will put it in the service of his selfishness, at the expense of all those around him?… A brake is imposed on his fierce greed; an inner voice warns him of what is allowed, of the rights he must respect, and of the punishments that await if he disobeys. Well! You will succeed

[7] "[A]ll the efforts of philosophers have not yet been able to discover matter in the act of organization, either of itself or by any extrinsic cause. In fact, life exercising upon the elements which at every instant form part of the living body, and upon those which it attracts to it, an action contrary to that which would be produced without it by the usual chemical affinities, it is inconsistent to suppose that it can itself be produced by these affinities."

G. Cuvier.

Introduction to the Animal Kingdom

institution would still be missed, and for two reasons: one, that all these amusements are without relation to the general good; the other, that they foment selfishness even in the connecting of persons.

In the countryside, where the people yield more easily to religious sentiment, the celebration of Sunday still preserves some of its social influence. The appearance of a rustic population, gathered as a single family to listen to their pastor, prostrate in silence contemplation before the invisible majesty of God, is touching and sublime. The charm works on the heart of the peasant: on Sunday, he is more gracious, more loving, more affable; he is sensible of the honor of his village, and he is proud of it; he identifies with the interests of his commune. Sadly, that happy instinct never produces its full effect, for lack of sufficient culture; for if religion has not lost all its influence on the heart, it has long since ceased to speak to the reason. And I do not intend this as a reproach: religion is immobile by its nature; it only modifies its discipline at long intervals and after endless delays. Moreover, the brusque changes that have occurred in our mores and social relations have, so to speak, taken it unawares. It has still not had time to adapt itself to the new order of things, or to harmonize itself with it. The people understand nothing of the ceremonies; the dogmas have no relation to their understanding. The prayers are not translated; and if sometimes they are recited in their language, the object of these prayers no longer interests them. Placed between the spiritual and the temporal, accustomed by their education to separate them, how would they grasp the connection? They believe that on entering the church they pass from one world to another, and rarely do they abstain, on that occasion, from sacrificing a present interest to some obscure and uncertain one. The priest teaches morals, but does he speak of the conditions of the social order, of the equality which should reign here below between the different classes of citizens, as it reigns among the orders of the blessed in the times that he heralds? Does he

speak of the duties of the government, of the majesty of the sovereign nation, of the independence of reason, which alone can legitimate respect for the earthly powers and faith in God? Does he speak of progress, of the incessant transformation of religious dogmas and political institutions? No, the priest does not speak of these things. The mayor and the bishop forbid it; he could not do it without kindling revolt and incurring the blame for himself.

Incedo per ignes: I have touched on a revolutionary question, resolved in the eyes of all parties, but on which I dare to battle the common opinion, and defend the paradox which forms the basis of my discourse: *I mean the identity of religion and politics.*

The separation of powers, consummated in the era of Constantine and Theodosia, goes back to Jesus Christ himself, who did not make a dogma of it, but tolerated it: it is the result of certain metaphysical oppositions which should resolve themselves harmonically in a higher form, but which the routine of the legalists, as much as the fanaticism of the devout, has claimed to render eternal. Since the world has become Christian, paganism has always existed in the civil life: at the very center of Christianity, the state has not entered into the church, nor the church into the state. The monarch of Rome and the pope are two different things. Some attempts were made in the middle ages, sometimes by the sovereign pontiffs, and sometimes by the bishops, to reestablish the unity of government among the people, which is not the same thing as universal monarchy, to which the vulgar accuse Gregory VII of having dared to pretend. It is no longer priestly theocracy, for religion is no more the supremacy of the priest, than the law is the government of the judge; but it is necessary to believe that this idea of unity, or, to put it better, of synthesis, fair and true in itself, was premature, since it has ended by collapsing under a unanimous disapproval. The declaration of 1682, composed by Bossuet, sanctioned the distinction of powers, and nearly made it an article of faith. I will return to this question.

from the bodies, that moves and directs them. The science of quantities can calculate the apparent proportions formulate the laws of that force, but it is unable to explain the principle. The knowledge of the effects of bodies, considered as acting on one another by their mechanical power, namely, their movement and their weights, gives rise to a new science, *physics.*

"You think you know something already: enter into the laboratory of nature, and all that you know will vanish like a dream, and leave you only the feeling of your ignorance. What produces between this inert masses this mutual penetration, these sudden metamorphoses, these aversions and preferences, these loves and hates? This is the second incorporation of force. An uncontrollable and certain power presides over all the combinations, and, varying its laws according to the variety and quantity, awaits before acting only contact or repose. See these products so different from their elements; admire the complex geometry of this precipitation. The snow, like a crystallization of transparent flowers, floods with its symmetrical flakes the heights of Mount Lebanon and the Caucasus, father of rivers: what paintbrush has ever drawn figures more regular, and more elegantly varied? But here, the more the intelligence sparkles, the more illusive the cause becomes: science is nothing but a series of names and phenomena. Each fact recorded by the observer blurs his classifications; each discovery is a refutation of his systems; and the deeper you penetrate into this labyrinth, the more its detours increase and entwine. There is still no *chemistry.*

"Who has examined the sources of life? Who has discovered the principle of the sensibilities? Who has seen the lighting of the torch of instinct? Tell me by what virtue plants and animals assimilate their nourishment; from whence comes the autonomy that preserves and guides them?… 0h, mystery! All living beings are armed for reproduction; individuals die, but species are indestructible. Before these marvels, what is the science of the chemist or the physician? What is it that gross matter can

to person that this notion is preserved in society. But they also thought that, reason having been given to us to contemplate the ineffable ways of the Divinity, no less than to admire his works, that reason extends his domain over that which is above him and that which is below; that he is within his rights to reduce the study of God and the world to one unique point of view, to subject that double study to a single mode of development, and to imitate the cosmogonic succession of beings in the synthesis that they exhibit. The universe, in their eyes, was an immense pyramid of which the visible substance formed the base, the phenomena that this substance proved made up its various tiers, and at the summit of which appeared the Spirit.

"Matter, said the Hierophant, is extended and impenetrable. These two properties, which signify for us only indestructibility, are essential to matter; without them we could not conceive of it. Considered with regard to solidity and surface, it gives rise to the *science of number and measures*, an infinite science, capable of absorbing the life of the man. The dimensions of matter will be sufficient for the exercise of the created intelligence.

"It is a fact that mass will rush towards a center; bodies seek one another, and matter is drawn towards matter: why is this? But while this tendency is general and constant, it does not appear essential to bodies; for we can conceive of them perfectly without gravitation, something that we cannot say of extension or impenetrability. What is more, there is, in this propensity of bodies to join, a circumstance quite contrary to their nature: they are limited and circumscribed, while their sphere of attraction is infinite. The intensity of that attraction is increased or diminished in certain proportions; it is never extinguished. If there had existed only two molecules of matter, they would have been drawn towards one another across all possible space: the subject is without proportion to the attribute. Bodies finally according to the relations of their masses, and by their resilience or expandability, halt, transmit or reproduce movement; they do not create it. There is an external force, distinct

II

What I have said of the civil effects of the Sabbath sufficiently explains the importance that the legislator attached to it, when he made the stability of the State depend on it. But that institution itself had need of safeguards: it demanded to be defended against the negligence of some, against the ill will of others, and against the ignorance and barbarity of all. Now, it is from the guarantees with which Moses surrounded it that we have seen born the influence of the Sabbath on family relations. For such is the admirable economy of the Mosaic system, and the close connection of all its parts, that in studying it one seems to follow an exposition of physics rather than a combination of the human mind. It is of the legislation of Moses that we can truly say, that in it *all converges*, *all conspires*, *all consents*. Pull just one of its stitches, and the whole thing unravels.

Moses would not have believed in the solidity of his edifice, if it had not concerned all classes of people. Beyond the accomplishment of certain religious duties, such as attendance at the ceremonies, participation in the sacrifices, etc., he demanded that on the day of the Sabbath every sort of servile labor be suspended, and he accepted no pretext or excuse. *You shall not*, says Deuteronomy, *do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the stranger within your gates*. That means: You will not labor, either by yourself or through another. The law allows no exceptions; it is the prerogative of all. The father of the family, representing in his person all those subordinated to him by birth, by natural domain, or by a consensual dependency, alone enjoyed certain civil privileges, such as those of sitting in council, to render justice, carry arms, etc. But there are some basic necessities that he cannot claim for himself alone, and rest after labor is among that number. Also Deuteronomy, or the second exposition of the law, adds: *So that your manservant and maid-*

servant may rest, as you do. Remember that you have also been a slave.

The laws of Moses, if we pay attention to them, are all, with regard to form, expressed in personal style, by the second person singular of the future tense. Now, as the expression always remains the same, whether it is a question of duties common to all individuals, or whether the law refers only to the heads of families, who alone were counted for some things, and as we might be able to quibble about the generality of the text, Moses added to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, following the standard formula— *Thou shalt not work* — the commentary that we have just read, in order to remove all means of bickering from inhumanity and avarice.

Four-fifths of the population were thus interested in the rigorous observation of the Sabbath. The servants, recognizing for a day their dignity as men, put themselves back on the level of their masters; the women displayed the luxury of their households, the elderly the gravity of their lessons, their children, in their noisy joy, learned early some polite social habits. One saw the young girls sing and form dancing choruses, where they unfolded all the grace of their movements and the taste of their ensembles. Attractions formed and led to happy marriages. With such festivities once known, what father, what husband, what master would have thought to deprive their own of them? What domestic authority would have triumphed over an institution so sweet, transformed by the legislator into a religious precept? No, if paternal despotism had had the courage, it would not have succeeded.

What could I add to this quick description, that I have not already said? Sunday is the day of triumph for mothers and daughters. Bright with health and youth, beautiful from the expression of her conscience, accepted in the parish mass among all her companions, what village woman, once in her life, would not believe herself the kindest, most diligent or most wise? What wife, on a Sunday, does not give her household

sought, in our own times, to recall attention to these objects of antique curiosity; but up to the time in which I write, they have only succeeded in giving caricatures or puerile allegories. It is not with the imagination, but with observation and fact, that we will create such a science. It will not be guessed. We must infer it from phenomena. Moreover, what renders it so difficult for us is the unequal development of the sciences: in order for a synthesis to be able to occur, there must be one single intelligence which embraces all the parts, which presumes either all the infinite sciences, or their parallel progress.

But were the sciences more advanced in Egypt, four thousand years ago, than they are in France in the nineteenth century? I will not speak about matters whose nature is foreign to me: perhaps the Egyptians had discovered methods and sciences of which we are unaware, as they were necessarily unaware of ours. In any event, according to Chainpollion, the arts and sciences appear to have been in decadence in Egypt from the reign of Senusret, 2,000 years before Christ. And I will add that, to judge by all of the propositions that one could extract from the most ancient Hebrew books, modern philosophy still lags behind its inspiration.

It was by a sort of methodical materialism analogous to the doubt of Descartes, that the ancient sages theoretically raised themselves to the knowledge of God and the soul, and let them deduce the persistence of the self beyond the tomb, and the eternally active and conservative personality of the Great Being. Very different in this regard are the modern spiritualists, who, always alarmed by the progress of a pretentious physiology, want to isolate it from psychology, and, to insure the subjective reality of thought, reduce all the phenomena of organic life, and even the determinations of the sensibility, to a crude mechanics,. They knew, these first observers of nature, that the notion of God and of a future existence had been revealed in the beginning to the conscience of man by a mysterious utterance, and that it is still by an immediate transmission from person

to conserve all its freshness, by wearying it inappropriately, when the state of remission commands it to rest. Everyone can observe in themselves these alternations of activity and languor in the exercise of thought: but what would be truly useful would be to restore its periods to fixed laws, taken in nature, and from which one could draw some rules of conduct applicable, by means of certain individual modifications, to the diverse circumstances of climate, temperament, age, in short, to all the cases where men can be found…

"Such is the data from which the different founders of religious orders began, who, by hygienic practices more or less happily combined, strove to adapt minds and character to the sort of life of which they had conceived the plan." (Cabanis, *Relations of the Physical and the Moral.*)

It is through an error of memory or attention that Cabanis proclaims Pythagoras *the first who applied mathematical calculation to the study of man.* Long before that philosopher, the secrets of numbers were known. What he knew of it himself was very little, and came to him from elsewhere. His glory is to have been their initiator and promoter in Magna Graecia. Nearly a thousand years before Pythagoras, Moses made use, in his legislation, of all the science of the Egyptians; and that science, already old in that period, appears to have consisted above all in a sort of metaphysics of rhythm and number, of which it is perhaps easier to conceive the general reason than to find the principles and facts. The Greeks retained something of it, which they expressed by the name of *mousiki*, which included aesthetics, moral science, poetry, oratory, and grammar, and which we properly call *music.* But the relations of the physical and the moral, those of religion and politics, the multitude of relations between all the parts of intelligent, living and animated nature, the analogies between the various branches of human knowledge, that the numerical operations served to calculate and formulate, all of that was excluded from their music, and philosophy itself has retained hardly any of it. Some have

a certain air of celebration or even of luxury, and does not willingly receive, in a more affectionate mood, her husband's friends?… The joy of Sunday spreads over all: sorrows, more solemn, are less poignant; regrets, less bitter. The sick heart finds an sweetness unknown to its stinging troubles. Sentiments are uplifted and purified: husbands find a lively and respectful tenderness, maternal love its enchantments; the piety of sons gives in more docilely under the tender care of the mothers. The domestic, that furniture in human form, born enemy of the one who pays him, feels himself more devoted and faithful; the master more benevolent and less hard. The farmer and the worker, stirred by a vague sense of equality, are more content with their condition. In all conditions man regains his dignity, and in the boundlessness of his affections, he recognizes that his nobility is too great for the distinction of ranks to be able to degrade and damage it. In all these regards the spirit of Christianity gets the upper hand over the Jewish spirit, always marked with a coarse sensualism. The religion of Moses is scarcely contemplative. Much given to demonstration, it speaks to the senses rather than the soul, as its law was addressed more to the mind than to the heart. Christianity is more unctuous, more penetrating, more expansive: incomparable especially when you want to astonish crime, terrify the conscience, break the heart, temper pride, and console the unfortunate. Why has the effective virtue of its dogmas not yet triumphed, in the political order, over human obstinacy?

The most dangerous adversary that Moses could meet, in instituting a weekly holiday, was greed. How was he to tear the rich farmers from multiple and pressing labors, manufacturers from the demands of the practices, traders from their indispensable operations? What could the Levite, charged with announcing with this horn that the rest of the Lord had begun, respond to these sophisms of interest: "Will you add a day to the week, or will you take responsibility for loading the harvest and working the fields?… What compensation do you offer us

if we withdraw this order, if we miss this investment?… Make your sacrifices anyway, and pray for us in the synagogue: we do not have the leisure to go there, our occupations do not permit it." What are we to say, once more, to people constantly alleging necessity, imminence, and unrecoverable occasions?

This is the stumbling block for all the adversaries of Sunday, ancient and modern. In order to give all possible strength to their reasons, I am going to quote the observations and calculations of a political man of the last century, of a man of the church, the abbot of Saint-Pierre, who, enjoying a fine abbey and having nothing to do, was perhaps not absolutely wrong to find the obligation to rest on Sunday unreasonable.

""It would be a great charity and a good work, more agreeable to God than a pure ceremony, to give to poor families the means to meet their needs and those of their children, by *seven* or *eight* hours of labor, and the means to instruct themselves and their children in the church, for *three* or *four* hours in the morning…

"To understand what a solace the continuation of their labor would be to the poor, we need only consider that of the five million families which are in France, there are at least a million who have almost no income except from their labor, who are poor; and I call poor those who do not have 30 Tours pounds of income, that is to say the value of 600 metric pounds of bread.

"These poor families could gain at least 5 sous each half-day of festival, one after another, during the 80 or so festivals and Sundays in the year. Each of these families would thus gain at least 20 francs per year more, which would make, for a million families, more than 20 millions of pounds. Now, wouldn't an annual charity of 20 millions be quite a hand-out, spread proportionally among the poorest?

"If, when the first canons on the cessation of labor had been made, the bishops had seen some of the cabarets and games established, if they had foreseen all the disorders that idleness can cause, they would have limited themselves to the hearing

if, lacking positive documents, I find myself reduced to giving some reports on that ancient philosophy, which, in the times of Moses, already bore the same fruits.

"Going back to the first days of humanity, we see the men who cultivated wisdom occupied particularly with three principal objects, directly relative to the perfecting of human faculties, of morals, and of happiness. 1) They studied man, healthy and ill, in order to know the laws which rule him, and to learn to preserve him and bring him health. 2) They tried to draw up some rules to direct their minds in the search for useful truths, and laid out their lessons, either on the particular methods of the arts or on philosophy, whose more general methods embrace them all. 3) Finally, they observed the mutual relations of men, but in that determination they included as necessary data some more mobile circumstances, such as time, place, governments, and religions; and from them arose for them all the precepts of conduct and all the principles of morals."

I would observe in passing that it is this linking of the moral and physical in the mind of the ancient legislators which has contributed everywhere to the assumption of a primitive pantheism, or worship of the soul of the world.

Pythagoras was the first who applied mathematical calculation to the study of man. He wanted to subject the phenomena of life to mechanical formulas; he perceived between these periods of feverish activity, of development or decline in animals, and certain regular combinations or recurrences of numbers, relations that the experience of the centuries seems to have confirmed, and the systematic exposition of which constituted what we call the *doctrine of crises*. From that doctrine followed not only several indications useful in the treatment of illness, but also some important considerations on hygiene and the physical education of children. It would perhaps not be impossible to still draw from it some views on the manner of regulating the labors of the mind, of seizing the moments when the disposition gives it the most strength and lucidity,

ening the mind. We must see the thing from higher up. Let us eliminate all pointless discussion.

Rest is necessary to health;
Now ,Sunday commands rest ;
Thus Sunday is beneficial to health

Thus would an inattentive observer reason, concluding too quickly from coexistence to likeness. This syllogism lacks precision, because rest is not linked to the celebration of Sunday in such a way that, the latter being suppressed, the former would be irrevocably lost. Where Sunday is no longer respected, it is clear that one does not labor more—and perhaps one will labor less. In the second place, the argument misses the question; for it is not here a question of rest in itself, an excellent thing, which has few detractors. Rest is the father of movement, generator of strength and companion of labor. Rest, taken moderately and at useful times, sustains courage, enlivens thought, fortifies the will, and makes virtue invincible. But all that has nothing to do with our subject: it is not as the sanction of rest that Sunday exerts an influence on hygiene.

What matters is this fixed and regular periodicity, which cuts, at equal intervals, into the succession of works and days. Why this constant symmetry? Why six days of labor, rather than five or seven? Why the week, rather than a period of ten days? What statistician first observed that in ordinary times the period of labor should be to the period of rest in a ration of 6 to 1, and according to what law? That the two periods should alternate, and why?

Doubtless no one expects me to respond to these questions: they are the despair of all science and modern erudition, and I pity whoever, facing this same matter, does not perceive that abyss. The origin of the week is unknown: as for the law of proportion between the duration of labor and that of relaxation, we don't even suspect the reason, and I do not believe that it has excited the attention of the economists and physiologists. Our ignorance is complete on all these things. Excuse me, then,

of the mass and the instructions of the matins." (Tome VII, page 73).

All these speculations are very nice, and the principle of this charity is very commendable; it only lacks a little good sense. For, as Bergier remarked, it is absurd to recognize, on one hand, that Sunday is instituted to give rest to the people, and to pretend on the other that this rest is itself harmful to them. In wanting to provide for the subsistence of the poor, we must have regard for the measure of their strength as well as their moral and intellectual needs. Our philanthropist is a cassock wanted to make the poor work *seven* to *eight* hours each Sunday, plus *three* a *four* hours of mass and sermon, which makes in all eleven to twelve hours of exercise on the day when others rest. And that *five sous* piece earned on Sunday, that fruit of an excessive labor, that wage of a people at bay, he charitably calls *alms*! Moses meant things in a rather different manner; his legislation had provided for all, and if the modern nations have not followed its windings, that was not the fault of the councils, which we would defend against the reproach of lack of foresight leveled against them by the abbot of Saint-Pierre.[2]

The Israelites, Fleury remarked, could not change place, nor enrich or ruin themselves excessively. The reason is easy to discover: among them the fortunes in real estate were equal, at least as much as the division flowing from successions and

[2] Here is the portrait that J.-J. Rousseau has drawn of the Abbot of Saint-Pierre: "A famous author of this century, whose books are full of grand projects and small views, had, like all the priests of his communion, desired to have no wife of his own; but, finding himself more scrupulous that the others with regard to adultery, it is said that he opted to have pretty servants, with which he repaired as best he could the affront to his species made by that bold commitment. He regards it as a duty of a citizen to give others to the homeland, and with the tribute he paid of this sort, he peopled the class of artisans..." If the Abbot of Saint-Pierre had the population so much at heart, why didn't he go, like another Vincent de Paul, to the Hospital for Foundlings? For, according to the same Rousseau, in order to have men, it is less a question of procreating than of providing for those children who exist.

unforeseen accidents could allow. A law, called *levirate*, had even been made to prevent the goods of one family from passing to another; and it was subject to various applications, as we see from the example of Ruth and of the daughters of Salphaad. From the beginning, the lands had been subject to an equal partition: a sort of general cadastre had been executed by Joshua, in order that in certain cantons the natural sterility of the soil was compensated by a greater extent of territory or by other equivalents. According to the law, no immovable good could be alienated in perpetuity; the legislator exempted from that measure only houses in towns surround by walls. And the motive for that restriction is blindingly obvious; while promoting the growth of the people, he wanted them to spread uniformly over the territory, instead of crowding and corrupting themselves in large cities. He found there as well a guarantee of independence and security for the nation: we know that the lure of the wealth of Jerusalem was the perpetual cause of the invasions of the kings of Egypt and Babylon, and, in the end, of the ruin of the whole people.

Every child of Abraham was thus obliged to preserve his patrimony. Each should be able, in the general prosperity, to eat beneath his own vine and fig tree. There were no large farms, no great domains. The unfortunate or insolvent Israelite could stake his inheritance, the legacy of his father, as he could hire out his person and his strength, but in the year of the Jubilee all the properties were freed of debt and returned to their masters, all the servitors were freed. It followed from this that property sales, being subject to repurchase, were negotiated with an eye to the greater or lesser proximity of the year of Jubilee; that debts were difficult for the same reason, which made lenders cautious; that the passion to acquire was arrested at its source, and that labor, activity, diligence, were inevitably maintained among the citizens. It also resulted from it, relative to the Sabbath, that the exploitable materials, or the patrimonial soil, not being able to be extended, could not be increased for anyone;

Decalogue, it is because he avoided with the most extreme circumspection allowing human motives to appear in his laws. He had observed that where the mysterious and impenetrable did not exist, reason, too soon satisfied, is uncontrollable, faith vanishes, and obedience slackens. Moses thus prescribe nothing in particular for the Sabbath with regard to hygiene, judiciously awaiting the effects of his institutions and of the numberless guarantees with which he surrounded them, which he would certainly have had more trouble obtaining by a rule regarding property. If he was not mistaken in his predictions, things should develop by themselves; he had only to command that which would produce by itself the zeal for religion and competition in propriety. Don't we see every day the most laudable efforts of authority fail before the indifference and idleness of individuals? The walls are covered with immense placards on the public roads, the cleaning of the sewers, the removal of refuse, the care of trees, etc.; what effect results from all this prefectorial eloquence? The people allow themselves to be eaten away at by gangrenous humors and infected by miasmas, rather than remove what poisons them. The insects eat them and they do not stir. But let opinion, the point of honor or passion be mixed in, and the people will work miracles: they will drain lakes, move mountains, exterminate swarming breeds; after which, not being able to believe in the prodigies that its strength gives birth to, they will glorify heroes and geniuses for it. That contradiction of the human mind, which accuses in such a conclusive manner the preponderance of sentiment over reason, and which the makers of passional theories have explained so little, Moses made the most powerful spring of his policy, and it is to that fact that we are still indebted for the only hygienic habits which triumph over popular apathy. I will linger no more on this section; for, if I exhausted all the reflections that the metamorphosis of the malign Sunday would suggest, if I countered in a thousand ways that vulgar thesis, I would not depart from this same idea. I would fatigue the attention without enlight-

first to suffer from the vices of the wicked, to teach them that it is up to them to prune society and make virtue flower again. If the just were never to complain, the wicked would never mend their ways; the contagion would always spread, and the world, soon all infected, would perish… Pray to God for me, Marie; that is all that a weak woman can do. But there are a million young men, virtuous and strong, all ready to rise up, who have sworn to save the nation… We will triumph or we will know how to die." Maxime was killed behind a barricade during the June days. From that time, his lover wore mourning. Orphaned from a young age and no longer having a mother, she attached herself to the aged mother of her fiancé. Her days were passed in labor and in the cares of a tender devotion. Every Sunday she was seen, in the dark chapel where she promised Maxime her heart and faith, assisting in the divine office. It is there that her heart, calm and resigned, was strengthened and purified in an ineffable love. And at night, after her prayers, heart full of the last words of Maxime,— *until I see you again,*— the sad Marie gazed sighing at the polar star.

IV

It remains to examine the importance of the Sunday celebration with regard to public hygiene. This text will perhaps appear rather petty after the serious subjects that I have treated; and I do not know if, by reversing the order of the question proposed, I could reasonably flatter myself that I had fulfilled the law of progression so recommended by the rhetoricians. However, I do not despair of succeeding: the reader will decide if my boldness has been felicitous.

There is no doubt that Moses, in establishing the law of the Sabbath, had in mind the health of the people and the healthiness of their homes; and if he did not invoke this motive in the

consequently, that no one could add a surcharge to his own fatigues, and hence, that it was easy to rule in advance the distribution of the labors of the week and even of the whole year, setting aside the Sabbaths and other feasts. And in cases of necessity, such as the approach of an enemy tribe, a fire or a storm, we must believe, in honor of the human spirit and of the Jewish nation, that the high priest who successor of Aaron was no more embarrassed to grant exemptions than the least curate in our villages.[3]

As for the merchants, artisans and foremen, the effect of the suspension was such for individuals of all conditions, that a delay caused by the Sabbath was not a delay, because that day no longer counted. No debt, no delivery of merchandise, no repayment of labor was due on that day. It is thus that, according to our laws and commercial practices, every commercial paper whose maturity took place on Saturday evening was only protestable on Monday.

Equality of conditions and fortunes was so much in the thought of Moses, that the majority of his civil laws and reforms were made with that aim. The right of the eldest had existed under the patriarchs: Moses abolished it, and only granted a bonus to the eldest. Among the Hebrews, it was the husband who made up the dowry, and not the parents of the wife, because the goods could never leave the family. Mr. Pastoret calls that *buying a wife*; today, it is the fathers who *buy the husbands* for their daughters. Which of the two is preferable? If a daughter found herself sole inheritor, without male children, she could only marry within her tribe, and, as much as possible, in her bloodline; and in that case, the goods that she brought were not dowry, but paraphernalia. The language it-

[3] During the war of the Maccabees, a troop of Jews having been attacked on the Sabbath day, they thought it better to let themselves be massacred than to defend themselves, for fear of breaking the law. Mathathias then made an ordinance that allowed the people to defend themselves on the Sabbath if they were attacked.

self enshrined that principle of all good society, the equality of fortunes: the words *charity*, *humanity*, and *alms* are unknown in Hebrew; all of that was designated by the name of JUSTICE.

But here an objection presents itself. Could Moses legitimately, and without injuring the right of free development of individual fortune, limit the right of property? In other words, is the equality conditions a natural institution? Is it equitable? Is it possible? On each of these points, I dare to answer in the affirmative.

Let me reassure you; I have no desire to warm over the theories from the famous discourse on *the inequality of conditions*; God forbid that I should here reclaim as an underpinning the ill-conceived thesis of the philosopher of Geneva! Rousseau has always appeared to me to have not understood the cause that he wanted to defend, and to have embarrassed himself in some of his baseless à priori arguments, when it was necessary to reason according to the relations of things. His principles of civil organization were like those of his politics, they were flawed at base: by founding right on human conventions, by making the law the expression of wills,—in short, by submitting justice and morals to the decision of the greatest number and the opinion of the majority,—he turned in a vicious circle: he sunk more and more into the abyss from which he thought to depart, and absolved the society that he accused. Not being able, at this moment, without leaving the scope of my discourse, to give myself to a deep discussion of this matter, I will content myself with submitting to the judgment of the reader the following propositions, urged solely by fraternity and solidarity, and whose necessary conclusion will be the same as Moses derived. Moreover, if I do not disavow the agrarian law, neither do I cast myself as its defender; I only want to prove to all the monopolizers of labor, exploiters of the proletariat, autocrats or feudal lords of industry, hoarders and triple-armored proprietors, that the right to work and live, given to a crowd of

Nature seemed to have predestined these lovers to happiness, by blessing both with simplicity and modesty. Diligent at work every day of the week, Maxime tried hard to increase his savings; Marie braided in silence her wedding crown. They only saw each other on Sundays; but it was beautiful, it was solemn for them, this day when it was sung in heaven: *Love is stronger than death!* It spread the influence of religion and innocence over their mutual affection! True lovers are never sacrilegious: full of a loving respect, what would the young man have dared? What would the girl have allowed, beautiful in her modesty and the joy of the Sabbath? Alone with their love, they were under the protection of God. The revolution of July came suddenly to destroy such bliss. Maxime was told to provide for himself: no more work, no more joy. He resolved to move away for awhile and make for the capital. On the eve of his departure, a Sunday evening, he took Marie's hand, and, without speaking to her, led her to the church.—"If I remain faithful, how shall I find you, Marie?"—"Do as you say, and you may count on my faithfulness."— "Will you promise me before God?" She promised. They went out; the night was fine; Maxime, according to the custom of lovers who part ways, showed Marie the polar star and taught her to recognize its position.—"Your eyes will no longer meet mine," he said to her; "but every Sunday, at the same hour, I will look in that direction. Do the same, so that at a single instant, as our hearts are united, our thoughts will merge. That is all that I ask, until I see you again." He left. Paris did not always give him work; his days of unemployment became fatal to him. At the instigations of some friends, Maxime joined a republican society. An invincible melancholy took hold of his soul and altered his character. "Do you know," he wrote to Marie, "why you are so poor, when so many shameless sorts live in luxury? Why I can't marry you, when so many men throw themselves into debauchery?… Do you know why I sometimes work on Sunday, when others play or indulge their boredom all week long?… God has allowed the good to be the

sult of the observation of Sunday: that cause is the increase of activity given to the mind by the rest of the body. It is up to those charged with the protection of the customs, the education of the young and the direction of the public amusements, to turn to the advantage of morals an institution which, after religion itself, is the most precious remainder that we have preserved of the ancient wisdom, and the excellence of which is demonstrated by the very debaucheries for which it furnishes the occasion.

Among the upper classes, Sunday is no longer recognized; the days of the week all resemble one another. For those only occupied with speculations, intrigues and pleasures, it hardly matters what day it is; the intervals marked for rest no longer mean anything. The people sometimes holds back its passions for a week; the vices of the great are not deferred. Is the impiousness of the rich, established in their habits, incurable? The people, more faithful to its traditions and less open to attack in their character, are always under the hand of religion. I would even dare to suggest that with respect to Sunday the last glimmer of poetic fire is extinguished in the souls of our rhymers. It has been said: without religion, no poetry. It is necessary to add: without worship and without holidays, no religion. But since poetry, becoming *rationalist*, has raised the veils that covered the Christian *myths,*since it has left the *allegories* and *symbols* to raise itself up to the *absolute*, it is true to say that it has killed its foster-mother, and with the same blow committed suicide. Among the people, on the contrary, the lack of devotion does not exclude every religious idea. They can detest the priest, but never hate religion. They blaspheme against the dogmas and mysteries, and they prays at the graves and kneel at the blessings. And when faith no longer resonates for them, the poetry of Sunday still thrills.

Blonde Marie was loved by the young Maxime; Marie was a simple working woman, and in the naïveté of a first love; Maxime, a hard-working artisan, combined reason with youth.

men who do not enjoy it, whatever one says, will be on the part of the beneficiaries not a bonus, but a restitution.

1. The man who comes into the world is not a usurper and intruder; a member of the great human family, he is seated at the common table: society is not a master to accept or reject him. If the fact of his birth does not give him any right over his fellows, neither does it make him their slave.

2. The right to live belongs to all: existence is the taking of possession of it; labor is its condition and means.

3. It is a crime to monopolize livelihoods; it is a crime to monopolize labor.

4. When a child is born, none of its brothers have a right to contest the newcomer's equal participation in the father's goods. Similarly, there are no junior members of a nation.

5. All the brothers have an equal duty to support the family: the same thing is true between the citizens.

6. After the death of the father, none can demand a share of the estate proportional to his age, to his strength, to the talent that he has been given, or to the services he says he has rendered: unequal division is essentially contrary to the spirit of the family. To accommodate one is to deny the other. — Just as the city recognizes neither pre-eminence, nor privileges of duties and employments: it accords to all the same favor and reward.

7. Man is a transient on the earth: the same soil which feeds him has fed his father and will feed his children. The domain of man, no matter is object, is not absolute: the enjoyment of goods must be ruled by the law.

8. We punish the man who burns down his house or puts fire to his crops; in this we do not have in view only the security of the neighbor and guest, but we also want to make it understood that, the man always receiving more from society than he could give back to it, what he produces no longer belongs to him. The artisan, the writer, and the artist, each in that which concerns his work, must be subject to that law.

A moment will suffice to appreciate what distance there is between such a doctrine and that of Jean-Jacques: the one established the respective rights of the citizens on the familial regime; the other on conventions and contracts, which always carry a germ of the arbitrary, and give rise to all sorts of despotism.

What pity they inspire in me, these makers of tear-stained homilies, these *friends of the people*, these *friends of the working class*, these *friends of the human race*, these *philanthropists* of every sort, meditating at their ease on the evils of their fellows, who suffer, in a feeble idleness, because the poor have only six days of toil, and never conclude anything from the insufficiency of their wages, except: "You must work! You must save!" Like that doctor who, treating a patient with scrofula, constantly applied a new patch to a new ulcer, and only neglected to try to purify the mass of the blood, these doctors always have on hand some topical of recent invention and rare effectiveness: nothing is forgotten by them, except one thing with which they hardly troubled themselves, which is to turn to the source of the evil. But let us not fear that they will engage in that search, which would infallibly lead them where they never want to look, at themselves. With their capital, their machines, their privileges, they invade all, and then they become indignant that one takes labor from the laborer. As much as they can, they leave nothing for anyone to do, and they cry that the people waste their time; all magnificent in their flourishing idleness, they say to the journeyman without work: "Work!" And then, when the canker of pauperism comes to trouble their sleep with its hideous visions, when the exhausted sufferer writhes on his pallet, when the starving proletarian howls in the street, then they propose some prize for the extinction of begging, they give dances for the poor, they got to the show, they throw parties, they hold lotteries for the indigent, they take pleasure in giving alms, and they applaud themselves! Ah! If the wisdom of modern times is exhausted for

orated, that his will is sharpened, and that he feels virtue bound up in his chest. It is thus that he begins with God himself, and that he learns from him, in conversations that none will repeat, what it is to LIVE, and what it is to DIE. Oh! Then, as all things are reduced to their just value, how little worthy it appears that for their sake we hold onto life, or that for them we would seek death! We ask fearfully what the best remedy would be for the epidemic of suicide which multiplies its victims every day. That remedy, which we have sought everywhere except where it was to be found, was furnished by homeopathy. Make life contemptible, and we will no longer want to leave it; we only esteem it if we find it to be a burden. The stoic who, in prosperity, knows how to sacrifice his existence, also knows how to bear pain; he even denies that it is an evil. The disciple of Epicurus, lazily in love with life, curses it as soon as it no longer offers him pleasure. It is among the tombs, a skull in his hand, that he must preach against suicide.

What heroic self-sacrifices and heart-rending sacrifices were consummated internally in these inexpressible monologues of the holy days! What high thoughts, magnificent conceptions, descend into the soul of the philosopher and the poet! What generous resolutions were made! Hercules, at the end of adolescence, offered a sacrifice to Minerva. Standing before the altar, after having made some libations and singing hymns to the goddess, he waited, immobile and silent, until the flame had consumed the offering. Suddenly he saw two women appear, two immortals, Pleasure and Virtue, who, displaying their charms, demanded his homage. Pleasure flaunted all her seductions. Virtue offered labors and perils with an incorruptible glory. The young hero chose Virtue. Woe unto those who do not have the same vision! Great woe unto those who do not choose as did the son of Jupiter!

According to the preceding observations, the same cause suffices to explain both the energy that the moral sense can acquire, and the excesses where libertinism is plunged as a re-

pered enthusiasm which produces knowledge of the good, the contemplation of ourselves and of the spectacle of nature.

The last night of the week is passed; the sun begins again its daily course; all the vegetation blooms and salutes the father of the day. Faithful to their instinct, the animals do not stop any more than the plants: the dormouse digs its burrow, the bird builds its nest, the bee collects pollen from the flowers. Nothing that lives suspends its labor: man alone stops for one day. What will he make of his long and drifting thoughts? He will hardly have roused himself from slumber, and already his inactivity will weigh on him: the evening arrives, and the day appears to him to have lasted for two days.

For frivolous spirits, Sunday is a day of unbearable rest, of frightening emptiness: they complain of the ennui which weighs them down. They blame the slowness of these unproductive hours, which they do not know how to spend. If they flee, in polite visits and worldly conversations, from the emptiness of their thoughts, they only add the void of the thoughts of others. From that arise the inventions of debauchery and the monstrous joys of the orgy.—Let those blame only themselves for the numbness that makes them stupid, the inconstancy of heart and understanding that exhausts them, and the dull paralysis that gnaws at them. When its partner lies idle, the spirit only goes more quickly: be careful, if you don't know how to feed its all-consuming activity, that it does not consume itself.

Happy is the man who knows how to shut himself us in the solitude of his heart! There he keeps company with himself; his imagination, his memories, and his reflections respond to him. Let him promenade then along the crowded streets, let him stop in the public squares, let him visit the monuments; or, more happily, let him wander across the fields and meadows, and breathe the air of the forests; it matters little. He meditates, and he dreams. Everywhere his heart, happy or sad, elegant or sublime, belongs to him. It is thus that he judges everything soundly, that his heart is detached, that his conscience is invig-

such lovely results, such was not the spirit of all of antiquity, nor the teaching of Jesus Christ.

We know the parable related in Matthew, Chapter 20, in which Jesus Christ proposes as a model the head of a family who had risen early in the morning to send out laborers to his vineyard. He paid one denier per day. As he had occasion to pass through the place several times during the day, each time that he saw some daylaborers without work, he brought them to his vineyard. When night came, he gave everyone one denier. There were murmurs and protestations: We have carried the burden of the day and heat, said some, while those have done almost nothing, and they are treated like us!—My friend, said the householder to one of the malcontents, I have done you no wrong: didn't you agree with me on one denier? Take then what is due to you, and go your way: if it pleases me to give to one as to another; can't I do what seems good to me, and must I cease to be human because you are envious? With me the last are like the first, and the first like the last.

This is the moral tale which has so revolted the equitable reason of the philosophers, and of which I have not always thought without outrage, though I ask pardon for it from the divine wisdom of the author of the Gospels. What truth is taught to us in that lesson of the householder? The very same truth of which I have just presented, in the form of a proposition, the principal corollaries: that every inequality of birth, of age, of strength or ability, vanishes before the right of the individual to produce their subsistence, which is expressed by the equality of conditions and goods; that the differences of aptitude or skill in the workers, and of quantity or quality in the execution of the work, disappear in the social labor, when all the members have done their *best*, because then they have done their *duty*; in short, that the disproportion of power in individuals is neutralized by the general effort. Here again is the condemnation of all those theories of division in proportion to merit or capacity, increasing or decreasing according to capital, labor or

talent, theories whose immorality is flagrant, since they are diametrically opposed to the familial right, basis of the civil right, and since they violate the liberty of the laborer and ignore the fact of collective production, the unique safeguard against the exaggeration of every relative superiority; theories founded on the bases of sentiments and the vilest of the passions, since they only turn on selfishness; theories, finally, which, to the shame of their magnificent authors, contain, after all, only the rejuvenation and rehabilitation, under perhaps more regular forms, of the same civilization that they denigrate while imitating it, a civilization which is worth nothing, but which they resuscitate. Nature, said these sectarians, shows us inequality everywhere: let us follow its indications. — Yes, responds Jesus Christ, but inequality is the law of the beasts, not of men. — Harmony is the daughter of inequality. — Lying sophist, harmony is equilibrium in diversity. — Remove this balance, you will destroy the harmony.

I halt myself, for I would not dare pursue this sacrilegious colloquy further. When Jesus Christ, explaining to the people the different articles of the Decalogue, taught them that polygamy had been permitted to the ancients because of the rudeness of their intelligence, but that it had not been thus in the beginning; that a bad desire is equal to a fornication consummated; that insult and affront are as reprehensible as murder and blows; that he is a parricide who says to his poor father: "This morning I have prayed to God for you; that will benefit you." He said nothing of the 8th commandment, which concerned theft, judging the hardness of heart of his audience still too great for the truth that he had to speak. After eighteen centuries, are we worthy to hear it?

Equality of conditions is in conformity with reason and it is an irrefutable right. It is in the spirit of Christianity, and it is the aim of society. The legislation of Moses demonstrates that it can be attained. That sublime dogma, so frightening in our time, has its roots in the most intimate depths of the conscience,

believed them to be in commerce with the gods. Solitude, when it is not the effect of a savage humor or a proud misanthropy, appeared to them the purest image of heavenly beatitude, and the fondest wish of a great soul would have been that all mortals know how to enjoy it and make themselves worthy of it. But if such is truly the highest destiny of man on the earth, in what sense is it sociable? How will its narrow residence suffice for a multitude of anchorites?

If Moses had had the power, he would never have had the thought to transform his farmers into effective hermits; he only wanted to make them men, to accustom them, by reflection, to seek the just and the true in everything. Thus he strove to create around them a solitude which would not destroy the greatest affluence, and which preserved all the prestige of a true isolation: that was the solitude of the Sabbath and the feasts. Constrained, under terrible penalties, to cease their labors for these solemn days, the Israelites submitted to the yoke of an unavoidable meditation; but, incapable by themselves of directing their attention and occupying their thought, they found themselves delivered up to the mercy of circumstances and the first comer: it was there that their teacher awaited them. I have already said what occupations had been assigned by Moses to the Sabbath day. That great and holy man had wanted all the Hebrews, from the children to the elderly, to be able to walk, by his example, with the Lord, and to live in a permanent communication with him. That is demonstrated, indisputably, by a passage in the book of *Numbers*, where it is related that Moses having chosen seventy men to aid him in the details of government, these men were animated with the same spirit as him and prophesied. And when Joshua came to say: "Master, there are still two men who prophesy in the camp; stop them.—"May it please God," he responded, "that all the people should prophesy!" Let us say, in a slightly more human language, that nothing seemed more desirable to him than to maintain in the intelligence that tem-

tions, purifications, expiations, abstinences, absolute prohibitions, and strict injunctions. He multiplied, almost to excess, anything that could inspire the idea of the highest sanctity, and carry the veneration almost to the point of terror. On imaginations more impassioned because they are less cultured, the opinion of a more present divinity is all-powerful. The majesty of the sanctuary seems to forbid the approach of crime, and more than once we have seen great culprits, seized by a divine panic, flee frantic and shaking from a refuge where their crimes would no longer find themselves safe. Moses transported that horror of sacrilege from space to time: he rendered certain days inviolable, as he had consecrated certain objects and certain places. And vice, surrounded on all sides by the forces of religion, had no rest, no longer knowing where to hide itself.

But this charm that Moses had cast on the Sabbath, this new sort of scarecrow by which he warded off evil spirits, took all its virtue from a rather vulgar accessory, scarcely worthy of respect or fear: it was, if I dare make use of this withering word, (which is, thank heavens, not from our language,) it was the *far niente*, doing nothing. A philosopher would not have been aware of it, but Moses seized it.

The ancients, greater observers than we like to believe, perhaps because we don't observe the same things, had remarked very well the effects of solitude on the morals of man. In solitude, the feeling of the infinite touches us, the passions fall silent; reason, clearer and more active, deploys all its strength and gives birth to miracles: character is strengthened and developed, imagination increases, the moral sense responds to the urgings of Divinity. The temples and oracles were placed by preference in remote places, planted thickly with trees, whose shadows invited meditation and contemplation. The wise, returned from the world and the passions, the lovers of the muses and nature, the legislators themselves, as well as the seers and poets, fled, sometimes in agreeable retreats, sometimes in frightening solitude, the indiscreet regard of the profane, who

where it is mixed up with the very notion of justice and right. *Thou shalt not steal*, says the Decalogue, which is to say, with the vigor of the original term, *lo thignob*, you will divert nothing, you will put nothing aside for yourself.[4] The expression is general, like the idea itself: it forbids not only theft committed with violence and by ruse, fraud and brigandage, but also every sort of gain acquired from others without their full agreement. It implies, in short, that every violation of equality of division, every premium arbitrarily demanded, and tyrannically collected, either in exchange, or from the labor of others, is a violation of communicative justice, it is a misappropriation. It is that depth of meaning that Jesus Christ had in mind in his parable of the workers in the vineyard, veiling by design some truths that it would have been dangerous to leave too uncovered, but that he did not want his disciples to be unaware of. Yes, he would have told them in his sublime language, if he had thought it useful to express himself without veils, he would have said to the ancients: "Thou shalt not steal. And I say unto you: Whoever imposes a tax on the field, the bullock, the ass or the coat of his brother, is a robber." Did he foresee that, despite the feeble attempts that have been made after his death, his doctrine would be unable to find its application for so long, and did he only want to entrust to his church a seed of salvation, which would be discovered again under more opportune circumstances? This is a possibility to which we cannot refuse our support, when we relate his thought to the anxious times in which we live.

Indeed, what do we see all around us? Here are some men, bored and discontented in the midst of opulence, and poor despite their wealth; there are some maneuvers which destitution prevents their reason and their soul from even dreaming of,—so that they are happy even when they find themselves working on Sunday! The excess of selfishness provokes general horror,

[4] The verb gandb means literally *to put aside*, *to hide*, *to retain*, *to divert.*

some sophists indoctrinate the multitude, but a providential instinct still preserves us from their unintelligible systems, and, in the midst of all that, Christianity, finger resting on the Decalogue, and without explaining more, upholds the celebration of the day which renders us all equals by making us all brothers. Does it not tell us clearly enough: there is a time to work and a time to rest.. If some among you have no rest, it is because others have too much leisure. Mortals, seek truth and justice; return to yourselves, repent, and reform…

Thanks should be given to the councils which, better advised than the abbots of the eighteenth century, have ruled inflexibly on the observation of Sunday: and may it please God that the respect for that day should still be as sacred for us as it has been for our fathers! The evil that gnaws at us would be more keenly felt, and the remedy perhaps more promptly perceived. It is up to the priests in particular to awaken spirits from their sleep: let them courageously grasp the noble mission which is offered to them, before others grasp it. *Property* has not yet made its martyrs: it is the last of the false gods. The question of the equality of conditions and fortunes has already been raised, but as a theory without principles: we must take it up again and go into it in all its truth. Preached in the name of God, and consecrated by the voice of the priest, it would spread like lightning: one would believe in the coming of the son of man. For it will be with that doctrine as with so many others: first it will be booed and loathed, then it will be taken into consideration, and discussion will be established; then it will be recognized as just at base, but ill-timed; then finally, despite all the oppositions, it will triumph. But straight away a problem will present itself: *To find a state of social equality which would be neither community, nor despotism, nor allotment, nor anarchy, but liberty in order and independence in unity.* And this first problem being resolved, there remains a second: *to indicate the best method of transition.* That is the whole problem of humanity.

Another distinction is still necessary. The moral effects of Sunday are either *mediate* or *immediate*. By mediate effects, I mean those which rise from the circumstances which accompany the Sunday celebration; such are the relations of family and city, with which I will not concern myself further; and by immediate effects I understand those that Sunday produces by its own special action, independent of every social or domestic influence. This distinction, relatively unimportant in practice, has the advantage of better specifying my point of view, and sparing me repetitions.

"Nature has placed within man the feelings of pleasure and sadness, which force him to avoid the physical objects that seem harmful to him, and to seek those that suit him. The chief work of society will be to create in him a rapid instinct for moral affairs, which, without the tardy aid of reasoning, would lead him to do good and avoid evil. For the individual reason of man, lead astray by his passions, is often only a sophist who pleads their cause, and the authority of the man can always be attacked by his love of self. Now, what produces or replaces that precious instinct, what makes up for the insufficiency of human authority, is the sentiment that nourishes and develops the compulsory exercise of worship; it is this respect mixed with fear that inspires for the moral precepts the full spectacle and majesty of the solemnities which consecrate and celebrate them."[6]

The thought expressed in this passage is ingenious and beautiful; what's more, it is perfectly true. That quick instinct, that second conscience, if I dare put it thus, has been created in the heart of the Israelite by the Sabbath, and Sunday lifts it to a higher degree than it does the soul of the Christian. Moses spared nothing to deeply instill respect for the Sabbath: ablu-

[6] Session of the National Convention for 18 Floréal, Year II, Carnot presiding. Report of Robespierre in the name of the Committee of Public Safety.

the character of the priest, in its conciliatory and apostolic aspects, shines in all its brightness. The visit of the parish priest is the joy of the rural family. Sickness relieved, the poor rescued, the unfortunate soothed, hatred quelled, enemies reconciled, spouses reunited, and all through the work of the parish priest!… Now the priest, especially in the country, does not have much time at his disposal. He must seize the moments as they pass, and it is on Sunday that his duties multiply, his works bear the most beautiful fruits; it is on Sunday that he discovers all the good that he can do.

III

I approach what is perhaps the most difficult part of my subject, because of the pitfall that it seems to cover: *moral utility*. What is the influence, on the morals of individuals and of society, of the observation of Sunday considered in itself, independent of the force that religion lends to it, and setting aside faith in dogmas and mysteries? Such is, at least, the manner in which I take up the question, and I do not think, I admit, that one could understand it otherwise. It is not a question of launching oneself into the vast field of religious opinions, to demonstrate the utility of public worship by the benefits of religion. All these questions are pointless and even, with regard to truth, trivial. It is not a homily on the effectiveness of Sunday as a source of divine favors that is called for, it is the indication of the relations that can exist between a conspicuous, public ceremony and the affections of the soul. Thus, it is necessary to separate the material from the spiritual, the nominal from the abstract, the human from the revealed, and say that what one practices apart from society, isolated, still preserves some moral utility; for the thought of the founder had to have been that every religious observance has its natural as well as its theological reason.

The equality of goods is a condition of liberty. Like liberty, the right of association, and the *republic*, are conditions of every civil and religious celebration: I need, in order to treat my subject thoroughly, to dwell on all the considerations which came before.

The firmest rampart of the institution of the Sabbath, and its most vigilant guardian, was the priesthood. The Levites did not form a congregation placed apart from the republic and completely foreign to civil society. On the contrary, they were the grand spring, the king-pin of the State. Their Hebrew name, *cohanim*, means ministers or functionaries. Thus, besides the multiplying duties they fulfilled at the sacrifices, in the synagogues, the majority of the civil employments were entrusted to them. "Justice," says Fleury, whom I always cite because I can think or speak no better, "was administered by two sorts of officers, *sophetim* (judges), *soterim* (bailiffs, sergeants, archers, executioners). These charges were given, there was no distinction between the tribunals; the same judges decided case of conscience and closed civil or criminal trials. Thus, only a few different offices were needed, and few officers, in comparison with what we see today. For it is shameful for us to be a simple individual… everyone wants to be a public figure."

The Levites, like the *fetials* among the Romans,[5] made the declarations of war and called the people to arms. In the army, they marched in the first rank, sounded the trumpet, and led the combatants. It was good that the same men who in times of peace served as counsels and teachers, led the citizens into combat. Thus we have seen in the most heroic century of our history, when the armies of the kings invaded the homeland, more than one schoolmaster armed with a rifle, harangue his students, and, all together, singing the hymn of war, rush off to

[5] *Fetials*, that is *denuntiatores*, heralds. This word comes from the verb *facere*, taken in the sense *to speak*, just as the Hebrew *dabar* means at once *to do* and *to say*, *speech* and *action*.

the field of batter, and conquer or die for liberty. Why shouldn't our priests emulate them?

The Levites alone administered nearly all the medicine, which was nearly limited to dietetics and hygiene. They were charged with the policing of lepers and all the legal impurities, which necessitated on their part some rather extended theoretical studies, and a painstaking diagnose. We can see in Leviticus the details of the prohibited foods, and the precautions taken to recognize the appearance of that formidable malady, leprosy.

After all that, one could believe that the preponderance of Levites in the body of the State was immense, and that it would constantly threaten the independence of the tribes: this was not the case at all. Among the Hebrews, there were no castes; or if you prefer, each tribe was the caste within the range of its territory. The Levites were the only cosmopolitans in the country and spread all through the nation according to the needs of their service. Having had no share in the division of the lands, they possessed no land of their own; they were only allowed to raise some herds on the margins of the towns where they lived. Their whole subsistence came from the people, by way of sacrifices and offering; these were the salaries that Moses had assigned to his public servants in a time and place where money was little used. The accuracy of their payment was only guaranteed by the Sabbath. Such was also the origin of the *casuel* paid to our own village priests. "The legislator, by entrusting the Levite to the generosity of the other families, wanted to increase the union of all. On his part, the child of Levi naturally clung to the law by which he held his means of living, to the peace and public abundance which brought abundance and peace to him. Even from self-interest, he had to respect that law in order for others to respect it; from self-interest, he had to publish it, so that no one forgot the precepts which sanctioned his right; finally, from self-interest, he had to oversee its full execution." (SALVADOR, *Institutions de Moses.*) But, since Moses did not permit castes or privileges, why assign one entire tribe

to public functions, and exclude all the others? Why, introducing a necessary order into the State, did he not leave it to that order to recruit for itself from among all the people? First, it is not true that the priests were the only public functionaries: there existed in each town a communal council composed of all the heads of families, which chose from its own ranks a large number of public officers. There was besides a sort of senate or elected national representatives for each tribe. Finally, the nation had at its head a supreme assembly, called the *Sanhedrin*, formed of the deputies of all the people. But by giving guardianship of the laws and such a great part of the executive power to the priesthood, Moses acted in conformity with the usages and opinions of his times. Everywhere, the priesthood was the privilege of certain families: India and Egypt are famous examples of this. Another reason for this conduct is that Moses desired the preservation of his work. After dividing the land between the eleven tribes, he had ordained that the Levites, salaried by the State, would have no place in Israel, because the principle of equality which was the basis of the constitution was incompatible with the accumulation of properties and places. To admit into the priestly order an individual capable of inheriting, would be to introduce property into public service public and to destroy the national equilibrium.—But, it is said, could Moses ordain that anyone who becomes a priest loses the ability to be an heir? I do not believe that this objection would be made by a jurist. The forethought of a legislator aims to make absolute laws and to avoid all qualification.

I believe that these quick reflections will not be regarded as beyond the scope of the work, since, taken in the context of our Sunday celebration, they encourage reflection, much more than a special discourse would, on the close affinity which unites the occupation of the priest with the happiness of the families. I will dispense then with making any comparison between the ancient and modern priesthood, and emphasize the common links, which we all know. It is on Sunday that